

**Troubling the taken-for-granted:
Mentoring relationships among women teachers**

by

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Abstract

This dissertation challenges the traditional patriarchal conception of mentoring, in which mentors are cast as experts and the task for novices is to assimilate their mentors' knowledge and proposes an alternate feminist conception in which mentors and novices are learner-teachers. The conception is based on practices of conversation and shared experience, through which mentoring partners develop trust and reciprocity. Through reciprocity, mentoring dyads move to a practice of thoughtful critique, in which they trouble taken-for-granted structures within schools. Central to feminist mentoring are issues of concern to the teachers involved, including issues of gender, race and culture as experienced in their own lives.

To explore the conception of feminist mentoring, a qualitative research study was undertaken. Data about four mentoring dyads and one triad were collected through a series of structured interviews with individuals and pairs of teachers during one school year. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and the resulting transcripts were analyzed for common themes.

It was found that more successful dyads formed on the basis of the beginning teacher's choice and involved considerable time commitment. Successful mentoring dyads participated in frequent conversations, both casual and planned, in which they talked about students, shared resources, and co-planned curriculum. Conversations centred on both work-related and personal issues. The most successful dyad created numerous shared experiences which provided opportunities for the partners to learn reciprocally. Mentoring conversations and shared experiences led to two complementary ways of coming to know about teaching. In percolated learning the beginning teacher came to know based on hearing and thinking about the mentor's experiences. Thoughtful critique is a more deliberate mode of learning in which the mentor and beginning teachers intentionally address issues of common concern.

Although there was some evidence of explicit thoughtful critique emerging within the mentorships, critique was expressed tentatively and cautiously. I suggest that the conditions of schools discourage critique and beginning teachers feel discouraged from being overtly critical. Mentoring dyads may need to work together for more than one year to develop a sufficient level of trust to move to a more critical feminist reconception of mentoring that supports and challenges both mentors and beginning teachers.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

Prologue

Journal entry

May 23, 1997

Congratulations!

Today is your day.

You're off to Great Places!

You're off and away!

You have brains in your head.

You have feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself

any direction you choose.

You're on your own. And you know what you know

And you are the guy who'll decide where to go.

I suppose, like the character in the Doctor Seuss story Oh the Places You'll Go (Geisel, 1990), I expected to choose my directions of my beginning teaching. In some ways, I was able to. I was hired in February despite not having completed my teacher education program or my final practicum. When I finished my practicum at the end of May, the principal at the school asked me to begin teaching there in September. I had no long anxious wait over the summer to find out if I had a job. I knew what grade I would be teaching; I was able to begin planning. I was hired to teach a grade my teacher education program had prepared me to teach. Additionally, in many ways I was, as Bullough (1987) might have described, "likely to do well" (p. 232). My mother was a teacher. I had worked in a day-care centre while going through university. I knew a lot about young children.

I was hired to be one of three kindergarten teachers at Oldfield School.¹ Luckily, the principal decided that since kindergarten was a new program in the district, he would hire two beginning teachers and one experienced teacher. When I arrived at the school in August I met Katie and Martha. Katie and I were brand new: naive, idealistic and extremely confident. The third teacher, Martha, had many years of experience in teaching.

Setting up my classroom was both simpler and more complex than I had imagined. There had been a rail strike over the summer and many of our newly purchased materials were sitting in rail cars somewhere across Canada. There wasn't a lot to arrange or organize! I began teaching kindergarten with borrowed crayons, play dough that I made at home, and dress-up clothes I purchased at thrift stores. Some of the excitement of the first few weeks was the continuing arrival of boxes full of wonderful things. It didn't occur to me that this was problematic. I had a classroom, I had my own students, and I had helpful colleagues.

Katie and I became friends. Martha became our mentor. It was a successful collegial relationship: her experience and knowledge of the system balanced and substantiated our enthusiasm and idealism. We planned together. Martha gave us ideas to support difficult students and problematic parents. She challenged the principal when his judgments seemed unreasonable to us. She negotiated with him how kindergarten unit plans and kindergarten report cards would look. She showed us that school administrators were not omnipotent, they could be challenged. The system could be questioned. Martha was also open to and interested in the things we wanted to try. We tried them together. It was a happy and successful experience.

¹ All school and individual names in this paper are pseudonyms.

The following year, due to downsizing, Katie was transferred to a different school. My mentorship continued and the relationship became more reciprocal. Martha and I team-taught in a double classroom. I wanted to try an integrated day, in which there would be few teacher-directed transitions, and much more choice for children. We implemented the plan and developed it through the year. The next year, I left the school to move on to a new teaching assignment. I saw less of Martha, although our friendship continued. Over time, our relationship lessened and finally dissipated as I formed other professional alliances. But my appreciation of it remains.

Martha was the first of many mentors I have had. The next one was Dawn, my second team-teaching partner for several years. Dawn had a gift for teaching grade one children. She was able to diagnose learning needs and suggest remedial strategies. She had a wicked sense of humour. I learned a great deal from her. When Dawn and I moved to a new school, I met Takako, a somewhat unusual school principal, who trusted teachers enough to question them about practice. Takako challenged my complacency about my teaching. She asked questions about teaching and learning that I had never heard before. She kept telling me she was trying to make my job easier, but it felt a lot harder to me. Over time I came to realize the value of questions and the questioning, that trying to see school from the children's perspective could be both enabling and disabling to teachers, that sometimes feeling disabled helped me to be a better teacher, or at least a more sensitive one. I discovered that I had my own gift for understanding children and that I could ask good questions too.

Martha, Dawn, and Takako are only three of the mentors I have had during my career. Mentors have made me believe I can do more than I thought I could. They have challenged me to be a better person and a better teacher. They have frustrated me, angered me, made me laugh, and made

me cry. Sometimes I haven't understood that they were mentors until they were gone. I still hear many of their voices and incorporate in my teaching many of the things I learned from them.

After many years as a classroom teacher, I worked as a faculty associate in a teacher education program. The student teachers spent 12 months learning to be teachers. As I worked with them during the final practicum, I realized that although they were ready in many ways, in many other ways they still had much to learn about teaching. I remember hoping that they would meet colleagues who would support them as they continued to learn, as they asked questions, and as they explored ideas about teaching.

When I returned to my school district, I discovered that my new school was to pilot a mentoring program that the district had introduced. The vice principal asked me to mentor one of two beginning teachers hired to the school for September. We first met in June at the district orientation session for mentors and beginning teachers. Kyra, my beginning teacher, was bright and bubbly. She was keen to begin meeting and talking about teaching. Fresh from my experience working with student teachers, I wondered how to be a mentor. As a faculty associate, I had been both a supporter and an evaluator. It was my job to respond to student teachers, but also to introduce new ideas and to intervene directly where I saw problems. Mentoring, I thought, was based on being colleagues. It would not be my place to evaluate or intervene. As a mentor, I would be only a supporter.

Kyra and I met together, first at her request, over the summer to plan, then in the last week of August to set up her room, and throughout the year. I learned to be a mentor. I learned that mentoring takes time: time that was sometimes difficult to find when I had my own classroom to consider. I learned that mentoring involves answering questions. Often, because I too

was new to the school, I didn't know the answers. Where were the textbooks stored? Why did we use this particular math series? Together, Kyra and I found answers. We spent a lot of time talking about planning. We spent more time talking about evaluation and report cards. Kyra suggested we try student-led conferences. She attended a workshop, gathered materials, and together we decided how we would do our conferences. The student-led conferences were very successful. We went to workshops together. We went out to lunch together. Gradually, because the other beginning teacher was not feeling supported by her mentor, we "adopted" Shari. As a triad we attended more workshops, had more lunches together, and explored criteria-referenced evaluation. I learned that mentoring also means asking questions and encouraging different kinds of questions: moving from "how," to "why" and "why not?" At some point, our mentorship slipped into friendship.

At the end of that year, I applied for and was hired to a job in the district board office. There, one of the projects I coordinated was the mentoring program. I suppose I took with me, as tacit knowledge, all of the experiences I had had as a beginning teacher, and all of the experiences I had had with beginning teachers at the university and during my year of mentoring. I believed that beginning teachers knew a lot about teaching and that they needed support to both realize and contextualize that knowledge. I knew that mentoring involved enhancing this understanding, not remediating it.

Several years later, I bring the same understandings, plus many more, to this dissertation. As I write, I think of Martha, Dawn, Takako, Kyra, and many other colleagues.

Beginning

Last year, I had the parents from hell. I was constantly confronted with—why are you teaching whole language, why don't you do phonics, where is spelling, you're too young, how much experience do you have—and on and on. I had some really hard battles. I never thought they would do that. I thought they would love me.
(Melissa, a second-year teacher)

For beginning teachers, the transition from university teacher education programs to *real* teaching jobs means crossing a complex and confusing chasm. Teaching is not simple, and the realities of busy classrooms, active children, and parents from hell arrive crushingly quickly. How do beginning teachers manage to survive and thrive in such settings? What is being done and what can be done to mitigate these challenges and assist novices in successfully crossing the bridge into teaching careers? Traditionally, beginning teachers have either survived in isolation or were lucky enough, as I was, to be naturally supported by caring colleagues. In an attempt to create more consistently supportive beginnings, many jurisdictions have instituted mentoring programs to induct beginning teachers into their teaching careers (Cole, 1991; Gold, 1996). Such programs are presumed to offer emotional support and to convey to beginners beneficial knowledge about teaching. Mentoring is even discussed as a reform strategy (Fullan with Steigelbauer, 1991) presumed to enhance the development of both novice and experienced teachers. When the goals of mentoring programs focus upon the sharing of knowledge about teaching, the resulting mentorships presumably become pedagogical relationships. Such goals create lofty and grandiose expectations, and in the light of such expectations there is a clear and strong need to look closely at what actually happens within mentoring relationships.

The period of beginning teaching has been extensively studied, resulting in a vast, growing corpus of literature focussing on transitions into teaching; the socialization processes involved in becoming a teacher; the knowledge base required of beginning teachers; and the shape, goals, duration, and effects of beginning teacher support programs. I propose that this dissertation will contribute to the literature a thorough

examination of mentoring relationships, in terms of the pedagogical processes of mentoring, and in terms of the content or "curriculum" of the relationships. I will argue that mentoring relationships are pedagogical in nature but that they should not incorporate a traditional pedagogy. Because they are collegial relationships, more egalitarian forms of pedagogy must be operationalized. In fact, many mentoring relationships exhibit characteristics and dilemmas common to feminist pedagogy. Further, when mentoring functions collaboratively, there is a possibility for mentorships to be epistemological relationships (Nelson, 1993), in which knowledge is constructed and standards of justification are shared. It is this possibility that incites my curiosity.

A Feminist Pedagogy for Mentoring

In broad terms, feminist pedagogy demands a reconsideration of knowledge, systems, and structures taken for granted as neutral within western society. Feminist pedagogy focuses on the relationship between the learner and the teacher, and on the curriculum or knowledge under examination within the relationship. Shrewsbury (1993) offered the following definition of feminist pedagogy:

Feminist pedagogy is a theory about the teaching/learning process that guides our choices of classroom practices by providing criteria to evaluate specific educational strategies and techniques in terms of the desired course goals or outcomes. These evaluative criteria include the extent to which a community of learners is empowered to act responsibly toward one another and the subject matter and to apply that learning to social action. (p. 8)

This statement might be used to describe a number of pedagogies; a central and crucial element of feminist pedagogy is its "unique" and central attention to gender (Briskin, 1990). I further explore how women teachers' mentorships focus on gender issues in Chapter 3.

I believe that when this kind of pedagogical mentorship develops—when a beginning teacher and a mentor talk about teaching and share experiences that centre on knowledge about teaching and being a teacher—the possibility exists for mentoring to be

epistemological in nature. In Chapter 2 I will further explain epistemological relationships, based on Nelson's (1993) model of epistemological communities.

I propose in this dissertation to examine the possibilities for and paradoxes of mentoring, distilling a framework of feminist pedagogy to support my analysis of cases of mentoring. Further, my discussion will draw upon my personal experiences with beginning teachers, along with the research data and mainstream discussions of beginning teaching.

In this study, I am concerned with the experiences of beginning teachers and the experiences of those who support them—their mentors. I will argue that beyond being a *nice* efficient way of welcoming new teachers to the profession of teaching, mentoring has the potential to be a rich, powerful context for both participants to come to know about being a teacher. I believe educators and teacher educators have not explored or developed the potentiality of mentoring as a pedagogical and epistemological relationship.

Mentoring as a Learning Relationship

From the day of our birth, we learn about our world and ourselves through relationships. As parents respond to our questions of "what's that?" and "why," they name the objects and experiences around us. According to Code (1993):

Other people are the point of origin of a child's entry into the material/physical environment both in providing or inhibiting access to that environment—in making it—and in fostering entry into the language with which children learn to name. (p. 32-33)

Nelson (1993) agreed that "interpersonal experience is necessary for individuals to have beliefs and to know" (p. 122). As we grow, we continue to learn through relationships due to the fact that we meet many people—teachers, friends and colleagues, among others. Each relationship reveals to us different knowledge: knowledge of the other, knowledge of ourselves, knowledge of our experiences, and knowledge of the world. Of course we

also come to know through our own direct experiences and our reflections on those experiences, but it is often in relationships that we clarify and express those understandings, and test them against the experience of the others with whom we are in relation. In effect we develop within these relationships shared standards to justify our knowing.

Journal Entry

February 16, 1996

The importance of relationship in knowing came to me vividly several years ago. I was teaching a curriculum course in Early Childhood Education. As I taught about topics I was less sure of, I had the sensation that someone else was speaking through my voice. When I taught a session on mathematics, it was Diane's voice I heard. When I taught art, I heard Ella's voice speaking. This was not a paranormal moment. I became aware that when I talked about particular ideas related to children's learning, I used the mannerisms and intonations of people from whom I learned those ideas and attitudes. Thus not only did I learn through the relationships, but in some ways the relationships percolated into my knowing and became part of my learning and of my being.

The first inkling I had that relationship and knowing were tightly bonded within mentoring was when I heard a story about Kyra, the beginning teacher whom I had mentored. The year after I left the school she was involved in interviewing a Classroom Assistant. In the interview, the vice principal asked Kyra to describe her classroom. As Kyra described her program, she looked up toward one corner of the room. The vice principal recognized this as one of my mannerisms when I was discussing philosophical ideas. What the vice principal did not know, was that I had absorbed this mannerism from Takako, one of my own mentors.

My personal experiences of being mentored and of mentoring led me to wonder about the constitution of mentorships. How did mentors conceive of their roles? What did beginning teachers expect from mentoring? What was to be gained by school districts or schools in suggesting, forming and supporting these relationships? Were mentoring relationships effective in inducting and supporting beginning teachers? Why? How? Were they more than just a nice idea? Could they be considered to be pedagogical relationships? Was sharing or constructing knowledge central to mentoring? These and many other questions have swirled in my mind for several years. The study presented here represents an attempt to address some of these questions.

The Research Questions

The questions that frame my study are:

1. How do women teachers co-construct mentoring relationships? What is the substantive content and process of mentoring among beginning teachers and mentor teachers?
2. How should a feminist pedagogy for mentoring be constructed and to what extent do the mentoring relationships described in my study reflect this representation of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring?

How do Women Teachers Co-construct Mentoring Relationships?

In synthesizing the first question, I am interested in learning how, in the absence of clear, ongoing external direction, women teachers in the roles of mentor and beginning teacher initially form and then subsequently develop their mentorships. Despite calls for more support for mentors (Feiman-Nemser, 1996) and greater clarity in program orientations (Gold, 1996), in many instances mentor teachers and beginning teachers are the individuals who must shape and direct their relationships. One tenet of feminist pedagogy is that the relationship between the "teacher" and the "learner" must be reconstructed to enable less hierarchical modes of learning. For example, the notion of the mid-wife teacher (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986) is based on a model of connected teaching, in which the teacher reveals her own fallibility, while supporting the student's

progress in "articulat[ing] and expand[ing] their latent knowledge" (p. 217). They "assist students in giving birth to their own ideas, in making their own tacit knowledge explicit and elaborating it" (p. 217).

I am interested in examining how mentors and beginning teachers negotiate their relationships and in discovering what exemplars are useful in conceptualizing mentoring. How do mentors and beginning teachers make their first connections? What elements affect beginning teachers' satisfaction with their mentors? What factors affect mentor satisfaction? What kinds of experiences and interactions are key to the development of the relationships? What interactions and experiences are detrimental to the relationships?

Journal entry

September 12, 1996

One of the first meetings Kyra and I had was in the last week of August, when she asked me to help her set up her classroom. When I met her in her new classroom, my first question was "how would you like your room to look?" Years later, Kyra told me it was at that moment she knew she was a teacher. She realized this was going to be her decision and her responsibility.

Interactions and experiences such as setting up Kyra's classroom represent the content and processes of mentoring: the "curriculum" of the mentorship. It is within these experiences that knowledge is developed and examined, articulated and expanded. If mentoring is to be considered a pedagogical relationship, we need to investigate the issues that mentoring dyads address. While many researchers have considered the issue of what beginning teachers *should* know, their conclusions vary. A. Reynolds (1995) contended that beginning teachers "should have command over the pedagogical principles that will enable them to perform the tasks of teaching, especially those interactive tasks required to implement plans and manage the learning environment" (p. 212). Is this a sufficient view of the curriculum of mentoring?

I will examine the interactions of mentors and beginning teachers to discern if they do, in fact, address the kinds of pedagogical principles that Reynolds advocates. Further, if beginning teachers and mentors engage in shared experiences of teaching, conferencing and professional development, I will investigate whether such shared experiences provide contexts for expanding the participants' knowing about teaching. Carter and Richardson (1989) asserted that, while there is a considerable body of knowledge that *student* teachers can acquire, a great deal of learning about teaching cannot occur until the first year of teaching when the "need to know" (p. 406) is real and immediate. It is this immediacy to which mentor teachers can respond. I am interested in understanding how mentors respond and when they intervene. I'm curious about who initiates conversations and shared experiences and how they do so. I want to know what topics, issues and themes beginning teachers and mentors explore together and I want to learn more about the processes they use to share and construct knowledge about teaching.

How Should a Feminist Pedagogy for Mentoring be Constructed?

The second question reflects a central issue for any study claiming to base its analysis on feminist pedagogy. I will first consider how a feminist pedagogy for mentoring *should* be constructed and then determine the extent to which the mentoring relationships in my study reflect this representation of feminist pedagogy for mentoring. To undertake this analysis, I will first suggest what I believe to be a viable conception of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring. As I have already stated, my analysis demands a questioning or "troubling" (Lather, 1995) of taken-for-granted structures and in particular, a critical focus on relationships and knowledge. Shrewsbury (1993) contended that "feminist pedagogy begins with a vision of what education might be like but frequently is not. This is a vision of the classroom as a liberatory environment in which we, teacher-student and student-teacher, act as subjects, not objects" (p. 8). This vision is at odds with the traditional goal of mentoring, which is to help beginning teachers survive the induction period and to "ease the entry of the beginning teacher into the rigours of classroom life" (Sullivan, 1989, p. 82). Mentoring and induction have to do with *bringing in*, implying it is the novice teacher who will change to fit the new circumstances of her life, while

feminist pedagogy aims to *bring out*, to change the individual and to change the circumstances. A feminist mentoring practice necessitates a central focus on critique, not only of one's teaching but also of the systems and practices of the institutions of schooling.

In undertaking this study, I want to determine if mentoring relationships can be sites where together, women teachers examine and name underlying taken-for-granted issues of teaching and of being a teacher. I refer to this troubling as *thoughtful critique*.

Journal entry

July 28, 1999

As I try to describe thoughtful critique, I am reminded of times I have myself observed and experienced thoughtful critique. I remember in 1986, when, after a week-long teachers' strike, the students in the grade seven class decided they were going "on strike" to express dissatisfaction with the teachers' actions. The students had decided they would not longer serve as crosswalk or recess ball monitors, nor would they be telephone monitors, answering the office phone during lunch hour. Takako, the principal, could have lectured them on their responsibilities. Instead, she asked them to think and talk seriously about their plans. The next day we were informed that the students would not do telephone duty, because they felt that was a service to teachers. However, they would undertake other monitoring tasks, as they saw those as service to other students. Takako allowed and facilitated the grade sevens' troubling of their taken-for-granted tasks. They felt free to interrupt the systemic continuity. They acted as subjects and communicated their critique. And it was Takako's troubling of her principal-as-authority role that acknowledged their subjectivity. As an observer to this event, I learned that there was space in schools for questioning and interrupting.

To foster thoughtful critique in beginning teachers is to adopt a view of schools as changing and changeable. Mentoring then becomes more than a socialization or assessment procedure and it will need to be grounded in what Fenstermacher (1992) called the "educative agenda." The educative agenda is the "deployment of educational resources on behalf of grand and noble ends" (p. 1). The concept of an educative agenda places value issues—such as the biased nature of curriculum and the power differentials among educators, parents and students—centrally in the consideration of knowledge for teaching. I wonder if mentoring can be a site where knowledge and values are problematized and where relationship is foregrounded (Gitlin & Thompson, 1995), a space where thoughtful critique is valued, modeled and fostered. My conceptualization of thoughtful critique as the heart of feminist pedagogy is developed further in Chapter 3.

The second research question also requires a comparison of my conception of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring to the stories of real women teachers engaged in mentoring relationships. Recalling Shrewsbury's (1993) suggestion that feminist pedagogy begins with "a vision of the classroom [or school] as a liberatory environment" and realizing instead that classrooms and schools are deeply submerged in patriarchy (Biklen, 1995), it seems obvious that a feminist pedagogy for mentoring will be a site of struggle—not struggle between participants—but a struggle to create and sustain a vision of how schools and classrooms might be different places. For example, Takako's support of the Grade 7 students' strike was controversial within the school. Some teachers strongly disapproved of her actions. Others supported the students' action. The cohesion of the school was interrupted and teacher struggled to deal with the consequences of Takako's vision.

In many school contexts, asking questions creates trouble. While that *troubling* is in fact the value of thoughtful critique, is it possible for mentors and beginning teachers, like Takako, to find alternate ways of doing things that create greater equity for all within a very overpowering system? Is a feminist pedagogy for mentoring unrealistic? In what circumstances do women teachers question and interrupt patriarchal structures? How do they challenge pervading traditional norms of, for example, privatization, individualism

and ethnocentrism? How do they deal with the contradictions of creating supportive mentorships in the conditions of individualism, and do the mentorships, once created, challenge those conditions?

It is my intent, within this dissertation, to explore these questions both conceptually and empirically, and to offer my thoughts about the value of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring and some suggestions for developing feminist mentorships.

Clarification of Terms and Definitions

In examining the literature about beginning teachers, I found several terms used in contradictory contexts. To improve the clarity of my own work, I need to explain my use of terminology about beginning teachers. Specifically, the terms I am attempting to clarify are *mentoring*, *beginning teacher*, and *induction*. Further, I will justify my adoption of the term *dyad* to describe mentoring pairs.

My research specifically concerns the experiences of beginning teachers and their mentors. However, the terms *mentoring* and *beginning teacher* are problematic within the literature and their specific usage herein must be defined. Both terms are used within three disparate contexts in scholarly literature: the first involving student teachers and their teacher-supervisors, the second referring to teachers without teacher education programs who are involved in "alternate route" on-the-job-training (Gold, 1996), and the third referring to certificated teachers in their first year of teaching following completion of a teacher education program and their colleague-mentors. This confusion of terms is problematic because the three contexts are different and the relationships between *mentor* and *beginning teacher* differ in many ways within the three contexts. One of the most significant differences is that supervisors (also called mentors) of student teachers and supervisors of alternate-route candidates are entrusted not only with their development, but also their evaluation. There is a clearly stated, institutionalized hierarchy within such supervisory relationships. In most mentoring programs (supporting certificated teachers), and certainly in the Portal school district program, there are no such requirements for evaluation. Indeed, collegial norms occlude such an evaluative stance. Thus while student

teachers and alternative route candidates are "beginning" and their supervising teachers do "mentor" them, the contexts and relationships differ dramatically from that of first year teachers and their more experienced, but still peer, supporters.

In this thesis, I use the term "beginning teacher" to refer to qualified and certificated teachers in their first year of classroom teaching following completion of a teacher education program, and "mentoring" to refer to a collegial relationship between a beginning teacher and an experienced teacher. In some instances, the beginning teacher may have had some limited experience as a teacher-on-call (a substitute teacher) and where this is the case, it will be so specified. The only exception to this usage is in discussing feminist accounts of mentoring. Most of these occur at the university level, in which a faculty member "mentors" a less experienced colleague or a graduate student. These accounts are important because of their critical feminist analyses and, while it would be preferable to use accounts of school-based feminist mentoring, none exist at this time. I will carefully delineate the links from these accounts to the concepts presented in my thesis.

The term "induction" is used within the literature to refer to experiences provided for beginning teachers that do not involve a mentor. These experiences might include orientations to the district or school, workshops, study groups or other activities. Support programs for beginning teachers may use both mentoring and induction as pedagogical practices or they may rely on only one of these practices.

Finally, in writing about the mentoring partners, I have chosen to use the term *dyad* as a descriptor for the pairs. The Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary (1996) defined *dyad* as "two individuals (such as husband and wife) maintaining a sociologically significant relationship" (p. 361). Given the conception of mentoring that I am developing, I contend that mentoring can be a meaningful relationship within the social dynamics of the school. Rather than the term *pair*, which simply suggests items that go together, I have selected *dyad* to indicate the significance of relating together through mentoring.

The Portal Mentoring/Induction Program

By providing this service, I feel that [this district] really values its teachers and I'm very happy to be working here. (Helen, a beginning teacher)

The mentoring program is one of the reasons I wanted to come here. That was the biggest reasons I wanted to come. (Taylor 1, p. 16)

The study reported on in this dissertation was undertaken in Portal School District, a suburban district which was one of a very few districts in British Columbia that had a formal mentoring and induction program in place. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Portal experienced rapid growth as a community, including a significant increase in school population due to immigration. Changes in provincial education policies regarding the inclusion of special needs learners and a comprehensive curriculum revision resulted in many changes in the schools. The rapid growth of the community, plus an increase in the hiring of special education and English as a second language teachers, led to an increase in the teaching population. Between fifty and eighty beginning teachers were hired every year from 1985 to 1997, resulting in a teaching population of about 1400.

In response to this rapid growth and with a desire to ease the transition of beginning teachers, Portal School District developed and introduced a mentoring and induction program, which was piloted in 1989 and made universal in 1990. The program was jointly sponsored by the school district and the local teachers' union, and was offered to all beginning teachers. The goals of the program were to provide a stimulating and supportive introduction to the profession, to create an environment of professional dialogue and co-learning, and to provide support in dealing with management matters. The project was organized to include the creation of mutually-selected² mentorships within schools for each beginning teacher, funds to provide classroom release opportunities for beginning and experienced teachers to co-plan and teach, and a series of

² Principals usually asked beginning teachers in Portal if there was a teacher on staff they would like to have as a mentor. Principals then asked the experienced teacher if they were available to act as mentor. This way, each participant had some choice in who her partner was.

optional workshops on topics identified by beginning teachers, such as assessment and reporting, working with parents, teaching diverse students, and long and short term planning.

Between the years of 1991 and 1997, I coordinated the mentoring program. This time frame includes the period of data collection for this study. Issues emerging from my dual roles as coordinator and researcher will be discussed later in this paper.

Entering into the Research Study

It was my work in the mentoring program as well as my own experiences as a mentor that led to this research. As a mentor, I was given little guidance about the role. I constructed my own role through experiences with Kyra and through a few conversations with a friend who was a mentor at another school. Although I was fairly satisfied with my relationship with Kyra, I wondered if I had done enough. As the program coordinator, I developed a component of support for mentors in the program. In addition to the one orientation workshop for both participants in the mentorships, two workshops were scheduled for mentors. The first workshop provided a framework for developing the role of mentor and encouraged mentors to explore issues and concerns. The second workshop focussed on reflective practice and encouraged mentors to move into more reciprocal practices with beginning teachers.

Still, I wanted to know more about what really happened within the relationships. Teachers attended workshops only a few times a year. For the rest of the time the relationship lay in their hands as one of many tasks they undertook as teachers. But I, along with other program planners, had grand hopes for these relationships. There was a gap in our knowledge about mentoring. Its realities were hidden. I wanted to find out more and it made sense to me to ask those involved.

Organization of the Chapters

This dissertation documents my journey of discovery. What began as personal experience and professional interest led me to the literature about beginning teaching. I explored

diverse and sometimes contradictory bodies of literature, pertaining to the mentoring and induction of teachers, to conceptions of knowledge for teaching and to feminist perspectives on teaching, mentoring and knowledge.

In Chapter 2, I locate the research problem within the related literature and assert that mentoring is an issue worthy of investigation. I develop the contention that mentoring and induction programs serve a range of specific purposes in the induction of beginning teachers, and that mentoring relationships are planned to accomplish definite intentions. In particular, I will focus on one of these intentions, the communication of knowledge about teaching and being a teacher. My review of the literature is also a critique, interweaving analysis of mainstream and feminist texts toward a suggestion that we need to revision mentoring relationships.

In Chapter 3, drawing upon the literature review, I develop a conception of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring that focuses not only on *bringing in* beginning teachers, but also on *bringing out* thoughtful critique as an important aspect of learning and teaching. In addition, I show how feminist mentoring can be both a pedagogical and an epistemological relationship, in which participants engage in intentional and fortuitous co-creation of knowledge. Central to this conception of feminist pedagogy is the notion of thoughtful critique, an intentional practice of troubling taken-for-granted structures and practices of schools. The image of feminist pedagogy for mentoring developed in Chapter 3 responds in part to the second research question because it outlines how a feminist pedagogy for mentoring should be constructed.

The first three chapters set the stage for a description of the study, which is a qualitative examination of five mentorships. Chapter 4 delineates the specific research design and processes used to explore the research problem and makes known the issues and dilemmas I dealt with in undertaking research in a familiar educational setting. I explicate the organization of the descriptive cases to be presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. I also introduce the framework I used to analyze the data and to identify shared themes evident in the experiences of these women teachers in their work in mentoring dyads.

Chapters 5 through 7 present the case studies of mentoring. Two of these, Marie and Samantha (Chapter 5) and Sue Ann, Tie and Emily (Chapter 6) are presented in more depth because they represent the "best" and "worst" case scenarios within the study. They highlight most distinctly the possibilities and paradoxes of mentoring and reveal many of the shared and "telling" (Sanjek, 1990, p. 409) themes. Chapter 7 recounts the stories of Maggie and Elizabeth, Michelle and Jenny, and Alisa and Taylor, showing a wide range of realities and possibilities for mentoring.

Chapter 8 focuses upon three structured tasks that were developed as part of the interview process. These tasks invited teachers to more directly distill meanings from their mentoring experiences. The three structured tasks stand as part of the research data but can also be viewed as the mentors' and beginning teachers' own analysis. Thus the tasks provide a useful form of triangulation within the analysis of the cases.

In Chapter 9, I draw together the threads of these cases to respond summarily to the two research questions. I present the themes that emerge across the five cases as well as the themes that are more idiosyncratic. The analysis of the cases provides a counterpoint to the conception of feminist mentoring developed in Chapter 3 and interweaving the two leads to a revised theory of what constitutes a successful mentoring relationship.

Finally, in Chapter 10, I will address issues that emerge from this research study. These issues suggest areas for further research as well as directions for policy development and for practice.

It is my hope that though this study, more can be learned about how women teachers co-construct their mentoring relationships. I anticipate we may learn more about how feminist models of mentoring can best be developed and supported. I also hope to recount five fascinating stories about women teachers working together.

CHAPTER TWO: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Journal entry:

July 10, 1998

*"What is REAL?" asked the Rabbit one day,
when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender,
before Nana came to tidy the room.*

*"Does it mean having things that buzz inside you
and a stick-out handle?"*

"Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse.

"It's a thing that happens to you". . . .

It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse.

"You become. It takes a long time.

*That's why it doesn't often happen to people who break easily,
or have sharp edges, or who need to be carefully kept."*

(Williams, 1922, p. 5-8)

*When I worked as a university-based faculty advisor, I began to use children's literature as a teaching device for adult learners. In my second year of teaching, my teaching partner and I decided to use *The Velveteen Rabbit* as a metaphor for becoming a teacher. We shared the story with the student teachers and referred to it often as we moved through the year. Later, one of those former students, Rob, told me how he understood the story. During his first practicum, he had FELT like a teacher, but, after graduating and having his own class, he KNEW he was a REAL teacher.*

I remember how delighted I was to find Ardra Cole's (1990a) article, Helping teachers become "Real": Opportunities in teacher induction. It made so much sense to me to think of learning to teach as a process of becoming.

Mentoring: A Strategy to Support "Becoming" Teachers

As stated in Chapter 1, mentoring programs have become a popular strategy to support beginning teachers in the process of "becoming." There is an extensive corpus of literature that focuses on transitions into teaching, socialization processes in becoming a teacher, the knowledge base required of beginning teachers, and the shape, goals, duration and effects of beginning teacher support programs. But these literatures are insufficient to examine and understand mentoring relationships. I contend there is a benefit to looking more broadly at literature about knowledge and pedagogy. In particular I have found that feminist literature casts new light on the mentoring phenomenon. It is not my intent in this dissertation to explore exhaustively all of these literatures. Instead, I have found specific insights that can further illuminate an understanding of mentoring and inform the practice of mentoring. In this chapter, I critically review literature that specifically addresses conceptions and practices of mentoring, as well as literature that explores issues related to knowledge for teaching. I attempt to specify the particulars of these literatures that cast light upon mentoring relationships among women teachers.

As this is a critical review, I juxtapose ideas from feminist literature about teachers with ideas from the mainstream literature. S. Acker (1995) spoke of the importance of developing better links between what she called "teacher research on gender" and "teacher research" (p. 141). She cited an example of the lack of connectedness among these literatures as she compared two recent works, Changing Teachers, Changing Times (Hargreaves, 1994) and School Work: Gender and the Cultural Construction of Teaching, (Biklen, 1995); "both books are about teachers' work, both are by sociologists, both draw on qualitative research, both frame their work in relevant theory, and both are high quality studies" (p.141). However, she added:

The consequence of their different frameworks is that while each writer has several hundred references to scholarly literature, I could find only 13 names in common. They do not cite each other. Yet their work can be seen as complementary. (p. 142)

It is my purpose in this review to weave these literatures together to provide a more textured analysis of the mentoring phenomenon. Feminist literature about teaching, about mentoring and about schools, casts light on what is often left in shadows – the fact that teachers' lives are not compartmentalized but lived as a whole and that gender is a powerful organizer within teachers' lives and work. S. Acker (1995) contended that:

there is a growing literature on women teachers and the impact of gender on various aspects of teachers' work, but there is also much literature that says little about gender yet has important insights to contribute or serves as an example of when gender *might* have been taken into account in a way not explored. (p. 101)

Conceptions of Mentoring

The modern concept of mentoring has its origins in ancient Greek mythology. According to mythological accounts described in Homer's *Odyssey*, when Odysseus set out for the Trojan War, he asked his trusted servant, the elderly, wise *Mentor*, to educate and guide his infant son, Telemachus, while he was absent (Clawson, 1980). This vision of mentoring is rooted in patriarchy. A brave warrior, going off to war (to rescue a woman), sought male assistance in preparing his son for the business of being a man and a soldier. *Mentor* had experience in these matters, which gave him power. He was not a scholar, but a practical man and a servant to whom Odysseus granted authority. From these roots, mentoring has grown as a conception of a particular kind of relationship, involving someone older and wiser, interacting closely with a novice. Notions of power, authority, experience and knowledge are the bedrock from which the image emerges. This is essentially a western patriarchal conception of mentoring. Yamamoto (1988) suggested an alternate view, grounded in eastern traditions. Mentoring, from Yamamoto's perspective, involves a mysterious experience of "transcendence" for the mentor, as she reexamines and reflects upon her being, and "transformation" for the novice, as the mentor helps her "see beyond" herself and her own experience to "become more fully human" (p. 188). Yamamoto's alternate conception of mentoring suggests that we need not be bound to western patriarchal structures, but that we can reconceptualize its image to better fit within a pluralistic postmodern society.

In modern western institutions, mentoring has transformed, or perhaps mutated from an interpersonal relationship to a systemic program. It has moved from the private into the public domain. Mentoring has been a common approach to initiation within many fields of activity. It has become formalized as a strategy for "moving ahead." Much of the early research literature about mentoring comes from the field of business, where mentoring has become the "exchange of a commodity or service between two parties, as in a business transaction" (Yamamoto, 1988, p.185). In the business domain, mentoring has continued primarily to serve the needs of men to succeed. Forrest (1989) explored how mentoring could work for women in business as well as men. However, the rationales and images she presented remain patriarchal. She suggested that mentors could help women managers, by assisting them in "strengthening their image in the workplace" (p. 12). Further, she stated that forming mentoring relationships was easier for young men than young women since men could more easily cultivate this type of relationship "in the relaxed setting of the local lounge or golf course" (p.13). This comment reveals that the original patriarchal conception of mentoring has continued to influence thinking about mentoring relationships.

The feminist literature about mentoring tends to describe the academic context, where women professors mentor women students or each other (Bower, 1993; Cain, 1994; Heinrich, 1995). The feminist view of mentoring contrasts with the patriarchal one: feminists recognize the novice as having her own goals and purposes for the relationship. According to Heinrich (1995),

The word "mentor" is derived from the word "advisor" meaning "remember, recall, counsel." Feminist scholars believe the term *advisor* refers to the goddess Athena's advising Telemachus what to do to find his father and reclaim his inheritance. In feminist terms, a mentoring relationship is composed of "individuals in relationship with one another with the expressed desire of assisting in a particular goal. . . involving *reciprocity*, *empowerment*, and *solidarity* [italics added]" (p. 465).

For women in academia, mentoring focuses on helping women survive and flourish within the patriarchal institution. Cain (1994) provided a critical account of her experience as a graduate student being mentored by her professor. Her purpose was to "speculate on new ways of understanding women-to-women mentoring relationships as well as to critique the traditional model of mentoring for its hegemonic perspective on an intimate and powerful exchange based in mutual trust and transformation" (p. 112). Cain experienced being mentored painfully, she struggled with what she felt was required dependency and gratitude as the dyad reached "for that place 'between' the private and public" (p. 114). Although the process was painful, Cain did describe an epiphanic "exchange of identity" (p. 115) when she came to recognize her ownership and authority over her own knowledge. In responding to her proclaimed purpose, Cain posed an important question, "is it possible to re-imagine the mentor model in terms of women working together in reciprocity and trust?" (p. 117). This is a central question that we need to explore through gathering more data and exploring different theory.

Mentoring and Beginning Teaching

Like Telemachus moving from childhood to manhood, student teachers undergo challenging transitions as they become *real* teachers. Huberman (1989) described the initial stage of beginning to teach as a time of "stability and discovery" (p. 33). The two conflicting themes of this period are reality shock and enthusiasm. In many professions, such as medicine or law, this induction interval is characterized by a gradual assumption of responsibilities as a novice works alongside a more experienced colleague. In contrast, in many settings teachers are expected to carry full responsibilities from the first day on the job. Beginners are expected to perform the same tasks as experienced teachers (Huling-Austin, 1990a). Many teachers report that they experienced their first year of teaching as the most challenging aspect of their teaching lives and that they went through this time unsupported (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991).

In recent years "the intensification of teaching" has been a well-described phenomenon. In 1993, the British Columbia Teachers Federation (British Columbia Teachers' Federation, 1993) conducted a study among BC teachers, which found that the array of

challenges teachers face in their work is becoming increasingly complex. Cole pointed to a similar trend in Ontario (1993). Beginning teachers must navigate complexities such as the mainstreaming of students with special needs, business partnerships, First Nations issues, increased cultural diversity, students who speak little or no English, increased violence in schools, the press of and for technology, rapid curricular change and new legislation. Densmore (as cited in S. Acker, 1995) expressed concern regarding the intensification phenomenon. Acker described intensification as "the pressure to do more work in the same amount of time formerly allowed; it extracts more labor, thereby reducing costs and increasing productivity" (p. 108). The constant publication of test scores serves as one check on teachers' productivity.

A result of intensification is that novices, expected to perform as proficiently as more experienced teachers, are leaving the teaching profession in significant numbers. Attrition rates, as commonly reported, range from 30 to 50% during the first five years of teaching (Bowman, 1991; Huling-Austin, 1990b). While the departure figures from Canadian contexts are dramatically lower (McPhie & Jackson, 1994), retention of teachers in the profession is an issue of concern within the literature. Personally, while conducting this research, I have met many individuals who confessed to me that they left teaching because of extreme challenges and non-existent support. Losing teachers from the profession also means that many teachers leave the profession in distress. This is a powerful reminder that retention is also a humane concern. Thus, teachers' early years can be a transition period from pre-service learning to ongoing professional growth, or a time of survival training that leads to the formation of a minimally effective idiosyncratic style, or an interval involving a painful journey out of teaching.

Studies into Mentoring

Three kinds of studies typify the literature about mentoring and beginning teaching. The first genre depicts case studies of beginning teachers (for example, Bullough, 1989; Jacka, 1995; Kilbourn & Roberts, 1991), both with and without the support of mentors or other induction strategies. The second genre consists of policy reports that advocate mentoring and induction programs for a variety of reasons (for example, Bowman, 1991;

The Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; The Holmes Group, 1986; Sullivan, 1988). The third type of study surveys existing mentoring and induction programs to determine goals, methods and outstanding issues (for example, Cole, 1991; Huling-Austin, 1990b; McPhie & Jackson, 1994).

Case Studies of Beginning Teachers

In the case study genre of research literature there are a number of case studies of beginning teachers. Studies involve one or more beginning teachers and must be carefully read to assure the reader that the beginner is actually a first year teacher, rather than a student teacher. Bullough's case study of "Kerrie" has resulted in the most material about a beginning teacher (Bullough 1987; 1889; 1990; Bullough & Baughman, 1993; Bullough & Baughman, 1995; Bullough & Baughman, 1997). In commenting on the challenges for first year teachers, Bullough (1989) stated:

As a complex, active bearer of habits, clauses and beliefs—as a unique person—[the beginning teacher] enters a set of established rules, relationships, ways of behaving, and understandings. . . that give a particular school its unique character. . . . In this setting the novice teacher must negotiate a place that is personally and professionally satisfying, as well as institutionally acceptable, which is difficult even in the best of circumstances (p. 5)

Bullough studied his former university student Kerrie as she began her teaching career as a grade seven teacher. His previous pedagogical relationship with Kerrie was instrumental in her selection as a research subject. "She was among the best students in the teacher education cohort group. . . . She possessed several of the qualities. . . . identified with public school teaching success. . . . She was chosen, in short, because she was likely to do well" (1987, p. 232). Kerrie was a mature person and a mother with children in school. Bullough (1989) used Ryan's (1986) stage theory to analyze Kerrie's experiences as a first year teacher. She moved through the "fantasy" and "survival" stages into "mastery" but received little support from colleagues through her struggles as a

beginning teacher. Bullough's conclusion was that more advance supports should be provided in teacher education programs, since "clearly beginning teachers rarely receive the kind or amount of assistance they need" (1987, p. 249).

Jacka's (1995) narrative case study of "Paula" is remarkably similar to Bullough's. Paula was chosen as a participant for reasons "similar to those which Bullough cites" (p. 7). Like Kerrie, she was hired several weeks before the term began so she "had time to prepare herself for the year ahead" (p. 7). Unlike Kerrie, Paula was single and living at home with her parents when she began teaching her fourth grade class. Jacka's analysis of Paula's experience focused on her images of teaching and the battering that these take as she moves through her first year. Jacka found five important influences on Paula's teaching experience: the culture of the school, a lack of time and the magnitude of her workload, implicit administrative expectations, physical isolation in a portable classroom, and unreasonable expectations for students. Jacka noted that Paula was left by the principal to find her own mentor and that "by the end of the study in January, Paula did not yet have a mentor" (p. 19). Like Bullough, Jacka located the problem and proposed her solution in Paula's teacher education program. As well, she suggested that support should continue into the first year of teaching. In her conclusion, Jacka stated:

Paula's experiences as a beginning teacher were not unique. . . . Those agencies which had the greatest responsibility for her successful induction into teaching failed largely in their task. . . . It seems sensible. . . . [that] beginning teachers should continue receiving professional support throughout their first year at the very least. (p. 26)

What single case studies contribute to the literature about beginning teaching is their detailed accounting of the personal experiences of individuals moving through the transition from teacher education programs into teaching. It is possible to note common features of different individuals in different contexts. These common features reveal developmental patterns that have led to stage theories such as those proposed by Huberman (1989) and Kagan (1992). Further, in longitudinal research such as Bullough's study of Kerrie, we can see how novices move beyond their initial induction period.

While the case studies of mentoring reveal important insights into the experiences of beginning teachers and, when existent, their mentors, their gender-blindness is problematic. In the majority of these case studies, the beginning teacher is female (Bullough, 1989; Jacka, 1995; Kilbourn & Roberts, 1991), yet these studies make no mention of gender in their analysis of the beginning teachers' experiences, beyond stating the beginning teacher's gender as biographical information. Kerrie was a mature person and a mother with children in school. It is interesting to note that Bullough's (1987, 1989) earlier analyses of Kerrie's case made little reference to gender issues, but that later work (1993) described Kerrie's process of replacing "the mother metaphor" which had apparently guided her first years of teaching. Two key assertions from feminist writings highlight the strangeness of the omission of any inclusion of gender in case analysis.

First, feminists among other critical and radical scholars, have contested the idea that schools are neutral institutions. There is a considerable feminist research literature that reveals schools to be gendered organizations:

To say that an organization, or any other analytic unit, is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. Gender is not an addition. . . . Rather it is an integral part of those processes. (J. Acker, 1990, p. 146)

Formalized mentoring programs are largely constructed by school district and government administrators, most of whom are male and have achieved their positions through a masculinized career path (Biklen, 1995). It must be expected that the norms and structures they develop will be biased according to mainstream malestream (Spender, 1981, cited in Hughes, 1995) thinking.

Second, the proportion of teachers who are women is steadily increasing. Grumet (1981) described the feminization of teaching as a phenomenon that began in the nineteenth century as women began to enter the teaching profession. The feminization of teaching

continues today (Gaskell & McLaren, 1991). In British Columbia, in 1991, 66% of teachers were women (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1991). In Portal, during the Fall term in which I began my research project, 73% of beginning teachers hired were women. Grumet (1981) stated that the analysis of teaching cannot ignore teaching's association with the feminine:

A gender analysis of teaching must strive to depict how those women who were teachers experienced their femininity and the ways in which their sense of gender in turn influenced their pedagogy and the curriculum of the schools in which they taught. (p. 175)

Mentoring is a practice that exists in gendered schools and therefore, gender is a factor that must be addressed in analyses of mentoring. In this study, I have chosen to focus on women teachers since the majority of teachers (at least in the Portal mentoring program) were women and I believe a description of their relationships will contribute to our understanding of mentoring.

While case studies such as Bullough's and Jacka's provide a personal, although gender-blind view of beginning teaching and mentoring based on observation, policy reports move beyond the personal to the systemic. A number of key policy reports have advocated mentoring programs for a variety of reasons that attend to the effectiveness of the educational system as a whole, as well as for the benefit of the individuals involved. These reports "have pinned high hopes on mentoring as a vehicle for reforming teaching and teacher education" (Feiman-Nemser, 1996, p. 3).

Policy Reports

Mentoring and induction programs are a relatively new strategy in education. Huling-Austin (1990b) found little reference to mentoring and few programs in existence prior to 1980. In the United States, programs mandated by state regulations began to appear in the 1980s. At this time too, the literature about mentoring and induction began to proliferate. A key factor in the development of many programs was a series of policy reports, which linked mentoring and induction to school reform. Huling-Austin cited three reports as

having a profound impact on the spread of mentoring and induction programs: the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education report, NCATE Redesign (1985), the Holmes Group report, Tomorrow's Teachers (1986), and the Carnegie Forum report, A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st century (1986).

In Canada, the call for mentoring and induction programs as elements of school reform has come more recently (Jackson, 1994). In the report, Teacher Education in Ontario: Current Practice and Options for the Future (1987), Fullan, Connelly and Watson proposed that an "induction phase be mandatory as part of the teacher education program" (p. 99). Elsewhere, the New Brunswick Commission on Excellence (1992) recommended that beginning teachers' teaching assignments take into account the "need for greater preparation and self-evaluation time and for mentoring by a successful senior colleague" (p. 29).

In BC the call for mentoring and induction programs to support beginning teachers came through the Sullivan Royal Commission on Education (1988), although previous interest had been shown in developing an "internship" program for novice teachers (Ad hoc committee to the BC Ministry of Education, 1982). The Sullivan Commission was a comprehensive examination of the education system in the province. Among its other proposals for change within the school system, the report stated:

During our study, the Commission became concerned with the placement of teachers during their first year of teaching and the way in which they were inducted into the profession. While first year teachers typically feel prepared for classroom life, they are frequently faced with unreasonable teaching assignments and placed in situations where there is an insufficient response to their professional needs (ready access to instant and expert advice on the many problems they encounter for the first time during their first year of teaching). In order to ease the entry of the beginning teacher into the rigours of classroom life, induction programs, designed to provide more manageable rites of passage, are often suggested. Successful programs require the application of resources—both

human and financial—and *might involve more experienced teachers as mentors* and formative evaluators, counselors and, perhaps, modified teaching assignments. [italics added] (p. 40)

This call was echoed by Bowman (1991) in his Report to the BC College of Teachers on Teacher education in British Columbia. Bowman observed that teacher education programs cannot meet all the anticipated needs of the first year of teaching and that teacher education needs to be recognized as a continuum. He stated: "the implications of accepting the principle of a continuum in a meaningful way are far-reaching. They include. . . the need for all parties involved in education to generate induction programs for first year teachers" (p. 42).

These reports generally link mentoring and induction support for beginning teachers to educational reform. One way that programs are anticipated to contribute to reform is through improving the teaching practices of novice teachers. According to Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), there is probably a strong relationship between how teachers pass through the induction phase and how likely they are to progress to "high levels" of teaching competence. A second potential of mentoring and induction programs as reform strategies is to mitigate the isolation and thus reduce the necessity for survival skills that can continue to frame teaching beyond the induction period (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). Induction programs contribute to developing norms of collaboration and collegiality by encouraging teachers to plan together and to reflect on the resulting practice, and by making teaching visible to other teachers. Real collaboration is rare and fragile, but its advantages are well documented (Little, 1987). The third way that these reports consider mentoring and induction to contribute to school reform is that support programs may attract and maintain teachers in the system (Jackson, 1994). By making induction and mentoring programs a high priority, policy writers anticipated benefits that are financial, humane and pedagogical.

While these aims are benevolent as well as economic, feminist authors have been critical of many of the reports that link mentoring to educational reform, although they have not

specifically addressed mentoring. Freedman (1990) argued that the reforms presented in the American reports were based on an interest in "remodel[ing] teaching—or more precisely the work and orientation of a selected group of teachers—along the lines traditionally employed in professions dominated by white men" (p. 239). In particular, the reports advocated strengthening the hierarchical structures in schools and increasing supervision and monitoring of teachers. In one report (The Holmes Group, 1986), the desire to improve schools through professionalization of teaching led to the proposal of "a three-tiered system of teachers with vastly different levels of responsibility, salaries, and job security for each level" (Freedman, 1990, p. 250). In addition to receiving more money, as teachers rose through the ranks, they were promised more authority over colleagues and less contact with children. Beginning teachers would be at the bottom tier of the organization both financially and in terms of power and autonomy.

S. Acker (1995) too objected to the increasing control over teachers as advocated in school reform reports. She saw this as a process of "proletarianization" or "creating a bureaucracy of control around an occupation" (p.108), which according to Acker, tends to occur in feminized jobs. Not surprisingly, such bureaucracy is typically created and controlled by men. In this context, the embedding of mentoring in a "bureaucracy of control" is not surprising, given the origins of mentoring itself as well as the history of the education system. There are many problems related to how mentoring is constructed within a "bureaucracy of control" and these must be investigated. Rather than refer to teaching as a profession, Acker consciously uses the noun, *work*, to:

highlight the fact that teaching is a service performed in exchange for pay and employee benefits, that it is done in institutions under better or worse conditions, that it is performed with colleagues, that it involves an initial period and sometimes further periods of training, that it has a career and opportunity structure, that it has produced unions or federations to look after member's interest, and so forth. (p. 102)

Freedman (1990) argued against constructing a deeper hierarchy within the profession to achieve some sort of status for teachers by promising successful teachers the opportunity

to escape from the classroom. She contended that instead, what is needed is increased respect for the work that classroom teachers already do: "improving the status of teachers *will not be possible* as long as one of the most important jobs of the teacher – that of understanding, working with, and emotionally supporting children – has little status outside of schools"(p. 256).

While Acker and Freedman's critiques are focussed generally upon these reform reports, their comments implicate mentoring proposals that emerge from such reports. In the following section, which describes the goals, structures and components of mentoring, it is easy to see how some mentoring program components do contribute to a "bureaucracy of control", while others attend more to an "educative agenda" (Fenstermacher, 1992). As stated in Chapter 1, the notion of an educative agenda places values issues centrally in the consideration of knowledge for teaching and thus is compatible with ideas from feminist literature. Where mentor teachers are themselves granted more trust to support beginning teachers in individual and responsive ways, the kind of valuing of caring to which Freedman referred may be more evident.

Mentoring and Induction Programs

The first genre of studies of beginning teaching I described was case studies of novice teachers. These studies reveal the struggles of the transition from teacher education into teaching, frequently compounded by the lack of support that many beginning teachers experience. The second genre proposes support programs, often linking these to reform and restructuring movements. The third genre of studies sharpens the focus to suggest how support programs might be structured and to examine existing programs. The focus narrows to goals, roles, and components of beginning teacher support programs.

Beginning teacher support programs incorporate a variety of purposes, strategies and stakeholders, but most aim to decrease the isolation of beginning teachers, favouring a more collaborative entry into teaching. Little (1987) painted two very different pictures of the work lives of teachers using the pallet of research literature about teaching. In one,

teachers are invisible to each other, working alone, "colleagues in name only. . . . a devastating picture of professional isolation among experienced teachers and trial-and-error survival of beginning teachers" (p. 492). This is the kind of experience that Kerrie and Paula endured. In the second picture, schools are organized to promote learning and working together, supporting people at the beginnings of their teaching careers. Little contended that the kind of environment described in the second picture does not develop by chance, but that its creation is possible by "ordinary people, relying on ordinary budgets and confronted with the ordinary ebb and flow of energy, goodwill and creativity" (p. 492). Mentoring programs are designed to ameliorate the isolation of beginning teaching and to embody the possibility of collaboration for novice and experienced teachers.

Goals of Mentoring Programs

Mentoring and induction programs have as their intent the provision of systematic and sustained assistance, specifically to beginning teachers for at least one year (Huling-Austin, 1990b). They are not simple orientations nor are they merely assessment programs. Rather they attempt to address the challenges of the induction process as it unfolds for each beginning teacher. Beginning teachers experience a variety of concerns, including classroom management, curriculum and instruction, evaluating students, being evaluated by administrators, dealing with parents, and dealing with fear, loneliness and feelings of incompetence. Most teachers report that they experienced their first year of teaching as the most challenging aspect of their teaching lives and that they went through this time unsupported.

In a broad survey of induction and mentoring programs in the United States (Huling-Austin 1990b) found a variety of goals, with five goals predominating in most programs. These goals include improving the teaching practices of beginning teachers, improving the retention of beginning teachers in the profession, promoting the personal and professional well-being of beginners, satisfying mandated requirements related to induction, and transmitting the culture of the system to newcomers. A survey of induction

programs in Ontario (Cole, 1991) found similar goals, with the addition of one goal, the inculcation of skills in self-assessment and habits of reflective practice.

In BC a survey of mentoring and induction programs was conducted by the Provincial Teacher Supply and Demand Committee, a joint committee including representatives from the Ministry of Education, from school districts, from the teachers' federation and from the faculties of education (McPhie & Jackson, 1994). The survey did not inquire explicitly into program goals, but did inquire into the perceived needs of beginning teachers. Survey data identified the top needs as emotional and instructional support. One might surmise that programs would attempt to respond to these needs, thus they represent implicit goals. It is not clear if the surveyed programs had explicitly stated goals, merely that the study did not inquire.

The program goals suggested above are organized around three underlying assumptions: that teaching is a commodity, that it is based in systems and strategies rather than relationships, and that teachers must be socialized to fit in to the system (Laird, 1988). The view of teaching as a commodity assumes a market analysis of teaching: seeing mentoring aimed at increasing the productivity of the beginning teacher and protecting the investment in the teacher's pre-service training (S. Acker, 1995). Teaching is seen as productive work, measured in many jurisdictions by student scores on standardized tests. This focus on improving the productive aspects of teaching ignores the reproductive functions of education, often associated with the feminine, "care, concern, connectedness [and] nurturance" (Martin, 1984, p. 348). Instead, Education is seen as dealing with what is deemed productive and political, without regard for the important work many teachers do in caring for and about students. Mentoring programs centred upon a view of teaching as a commodity aim to at increase teachers' production, to keep them in the classroom, focused on concerns of teaching such as *strategies* and *management* of students. Many programs measure mere retention of novice teachers in the school system as a sign of success (McPhie & Jackson, 1994), without regard for the systemic conditions in which teachers work. A further example of this market analysis is that in BC, the provincial

group most involved in the development of mentoring programs was the "Teacher Supply and Demand Committee." This committee was mandated to ensure that enough teachers were available to meet the demands of the system.

The goal of satisfying legislated or contractual requirements for mentoring implies a view of systems as more important than relationships. In an organization that values relationship, there will be no need for laws to enforce care. The result of this goal is frequently seen as a mentoring program that exists on paper only, in a collective agreement, but not in reality. In 1994, 26 out of 75 school districts in BC reported that they had mentoring programs (McPhie & Jackson, 1994). Only a handful of these districts provided information describing actual practices and events that supported beginning teachers. One district representative described his program as "spontaneous". In BC, mentoring programs have often been among the first programs to be cut when school funding dropped.

Beyond the economic goal of retention and the need to comply with hierarchical requirements for the establishment of programs, other patriarchal norms often suffuse the goals of mentoring. Many feminist authors have demonstrated that the education system is a patriarchal institution that has been and continues to be constructed by men (Biklen, 1995; Freedman, 1990; Griffin, 1997). Educational practices, policies and structures continue to advance male privilege and foster subordination of women and other groups marginalized by race, class, sexuality and ethnicity, etc. Grumet (1981) referred to three patriarchal themes that Lortie (1975) found underlying teachers' ideas about teaching—individualism, conservatism, and presentism (a focus only on the here-and-now of teaching, with disregard for time and context.) I suggest that these ideals also underlie common ideas of how to bring in newcomers. If those who design mentoring programs accept the values of individualism, conservatism and presentism, then context, relationship and support will not be seen as important. Even if program developers espouse collaboration as a value, conditions in schools will undermine collaborative efforts in the press for production.

In mentoring programs, the goal of cultural transmission fails to ask the question, whose culture? It seems that the culture in question is the existing patriarchal culture of schools. Male and female beginning teachers learn how to view themselves and each other within the established gendered structures. J. Acker (1990) advised that organizations such as schools are places where images of gender are invented and reproduced, yet there is a tendency to conceptualize structures as gender-neutral. Biklen built upon Gal's contention that:

Gender, as "a system of culturally constructed relations of power produced and reproduced in interaction between and among men and women" (Gal, 1991) is also present in the lives of teachers as adults working in schools. That is, teachers do not have to focus on gender for it to significantly mark their lives. (p. 6)

The Practices of Mentoring

A wide variety of practices is included in mentoring and induction programs with the aim of achieving the aforementioned goals of improving teaching practices, improving retention, promoting well-being, satisfying mandated requirements, transmitting culture and fostering reflective practice. In some jurisdictions, a significant component of mentoring programs has been the formulation of minimum teaching competencies (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). These competencies specify what beginning teachers must be able to do before gaining full certification. In programs that focus support on the achievement and evaluation of these competencies, various labels differentiate beginning teachers from experienced ones. Scotland provides a graphic example of this paradigm.

"Probationer teachers" (General Teaching Council, 1995) are those who have completed teacher education programs in a university or teachers' college. They are "provisionally registered" (G.T.C., 1995, p. 1) with the General Teaching Council for Scotland, the licensing body for teachers. Probationers must complete 380 days of teaching, the "equivalent of two years of successful probationary service" (1995, p. 2). During this period, the probationer must receive and submit to the G.T.C. a progress report based on a published set of criteria or "competences" (Scottish Office Education Department, 1993). Despite efforts by the General Teaching Council to ensure that the evaluation of

beginning teachers is more than a summative assessment of their capabilities, Draper, Fraser, Smith and Taylor (1991) found little evidence of ongoing formative assessments of probationers. Further, they found that despite having seemingly clearly stated, published competencies, beginning teachers remained uncertain about the standards used in their evaluation.

The association of mandated, measurable teaching competencies with mentoring represents a damaging nexus. Some programs cast mentors in the role of evaluators, impairing any sense of collaboration or collegiality. Job evaluation, J. Acker (1990) suggested, is a management tool that rationalizes hierarchy. Entangling evaluation with mentoring invokes a hierarchy of bureaucratic power and authority among colleagues.

Other jurisdictions, such as California, while not eliminating evaluation from beginning teacher support programs, have attempted to develop more performance-based assessment tools and focus more on teachers as decision-makers (Gold, 1996). However, they maintain the notion of a clearly described knowledge base. The press for mandated and standardized teaching competencies is not a feature of Canadian programs at this time (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991).

Within school districts, program components include some of the following: orientation and information packages, receptions and other social events, summer institutes and workshop series, and networks and newsletters (Cole, 1991). Within schools, mentoring and induction programs incorporate elements such as mentorships with more experienced colleagues, study groups, classroom observation, shared planning, and informal conversations (Cole, 1991; Little, 1987). Many individuals are named as being responsible for supporting beginning teachers, including experienced colleagues (Ganser, 1996; Huling-Austin, 1990a), school administrators (Cole, 1995), school district support staff (McPhie & Jackson, 1994), university faculty (Jacka, 1995), and union representatives (Thompson, 1997). The literature about mentoring suggests that each stakeholder group bears a specific responsibility for beginning teachers.

Roles and Responsibilities

Mentor Teachers

Mentoring and induction programs rely heavily on experienced teachers to support newcomers (Ganser, 1996; Huling-Austin, 1990a; Wagner, 1995). In keeping with Lortie's (1975) finding that the most effective source of help to teachers is colleagues, mentors are usually identified by beginning teachers as their most valued support. Although partnerships between experienced and beginning teachers are most often referred to as mentoring relationships, they may alternately be called "twinning, buddying, or peer coaching" (Watson & Cole, 1992). In a study of mentoring relationships in one Canadian school district, Rekrut and Wilson (1992) described the relationships as, "warm and friendly, collegial, professional, peer and paternalistic." They did not provide definitions for the terms they use. McPhie and Jackson (1994) identified seven important attributes of mentors. These include the ability to communicate professional knowledge, commitment to professional development, ability to work with adults, volunteering to be a mentor, teaching in the same school, teaching the same subjects, and teaching the same grades. Huling-Austin (1990b) suggested three different styles of mentoring. "Responders" are available to assist, but wait to be approached by the novice. "Colleagues" are more interactive: they "frequently initiate informal visits" (p. 44). "Initiators" take a more active role in facilitating the professional development of the novice.

Weeks (1992) wrote about her experiences as a mentor teacher. Her story is fairly typical when compared to much of the survey literature about mentoring within formal program structures. She had little preparation for her role and experienced much self-doubt as to her capability as she began. Through her early mentoring experiences as well as some training along the way, she began to feel more confident. She affirmed the importance of a "non-judgmental relationship" and "commitment over time" (p. 304-305). Weeks described how the relationship progressed through a series of "critical incidents" (p. 305) for the beginning teacher. Her conclusion was that she found the relationship to be "one of renewal for the mentor. . . . in which she had the opportunity to learn from the protege new skills and practice new techniques" (p. 306).

Dilemmas persist about decisions as to who should be a mentor, how mentors should be selected and prepared for the role and how the mentoring role impacts on teacher workload (Feiman-Nemser, 1992a; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Huling-Austin et al., 1989; Huling-Austin, 1990b). There are concerns about the "costs" to mentors of offering their support to beginning colleagues. These include a perceived risk in opening up to a colleague by sharing scarce resources and exposing one's teaching to public scrutiny. The investment of time, energy and risk can become overwhelming, even when programs are funded and supported well enough so that benefits to both novice and experienced teachers can be realized (Heller & Sindelar, 1991).

As in Weeks' experience, in many programs there is little or no preparation for mentoring and no discussion of the responsibilities of the role. Without preparation for the mentoring role and without belief in the purposes and value of collaborative work, experienced teachers may simply tell newcomers the rules of the school culture. Mentors have expressed several significant concerns about their participation in the mentoring and induction programs (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991). These include finding a balance between responsiveness and initiation in a collegial but differentiated relationship, and finding time amidst other responsibilities to enter into a mentorship effectively. Mentors may present a false facade, saying they are supporting beginners, but doing so in a superficial manner or not at all. They may interact with novices as critics rather than colleagues.

Mentoring does not cast off its gendered character in individual relationships between beginning teachers and mentor teachers. Gendered images have an impact even at the micro level of relationships. Rekrut and Wilson (1992) found that 35% of first year teachers categorized their relationships with mentors as paternalistic. The gendered character of the relationship is further complicated when the novice is female and the mentor is male. In speaking of mentoring relationships in business, Forrest (1989) alluded to a concern regarding "sexual innuendo" when male mentors work closely with female novices. Further, as I have shown, mentoring is an arrangement within the hierarchical

and patriarchal organization of school. Even when mentors are not formal evaluators, they are more experienced and knowledgeable of the context in which they work. Teachers value experience as the basis for knowing. Fuss contended that "it is the unspoken law of the classroom not to trust those who cannot cite experience as the indisputable grounds of their knowledge" (1989, p. 116). Carter and Richardson, (1989) suggested that, "it is a teacher who best knows what it means to be a teacher" (p. 5). Beginning teachers' lack of experience as a basis for knowing places them in a lower position than their more "experienced" colleagues (Fuss, 1989). It is essential to examine how this experiential discrepancy is dealt with within the mentorship.

Beginning Teachers

Beginning teachers are the intended beneficiaries of mentoring and induction programs. Regard for novices is one concern of mentoring programs and thus the development, needs, and interests of beginning teachers are well documented in the literature. Zeichner and Gore (1990) studied a broad range of literature that offered explanations for how teachers develop or become "socialized" as functioning members of the teaching community. They examined three forces at work within the socialization process. These are influences on prospective teachers before they begin the teacher education process, the impact of pre-service programs themselves, and forces within the workplace of schools. Prior experiences and accompanying beliefs are held to be a highly significant force in teacher socialization. Based on personal experiences as well as media images, prospective teachers assume they already know a great deal about teaching and frequently rely on previously held knowledge as they begin to teach. A variety of effects are attributed to teacher education programs, particularly when pre-assumptions are deliberately examined and questioned, but these prior beliefs linger as a potent influence. Finally, the school setting contains many controlling forces for socialization, both within the classroom and in the broader context within which teachers work.

Kagan (1992) looked at studies about student teachers and beginning teachers learning to teach and suggests some common themes in teacher development. She noted three key ideas: the central role played by preexisting beliefs, the importance of prior beliefs being

reconstructed through experience for professional growth to take place, and a movement thorough behavioural and conceptual developmental stages. Kagan described four major developmental tasks of novices: confirming a picture of self as teacher; accumulating knowledge of students and modifying one's self image accordingly; experiencing dissonance that creates further reframing; and developing procedural knowledge about classrooms.

A number of studies address the needs of beginning teachers. Gordon (1991) summarized these, saying that "no two studies have produced precisely the same lists of problems or needs" (p. 5). He referred to six "environmental" needs that are unforeseen by novices as they begin their teaching careers. These include difficult teaching assignments, lack of awareness of systemic expectations, a lack of teaching materials and resources, isolation, role conflict (particularly among younger adults) and "reality shock." Reality shock refers to the dailiness of much of teaching, such as collecting money and filling in forms. In addition to the six environmental difficulties, he listed 12 "high-priority" needs. These include classroom management, information about the school system, curriculum planning, evaluating students, motivating learners, teaching strategies, responding to individual students, collegial interactions, parent communication, adapting to teaching roles, and emotional support.

Theories about teacher socialization and about stages of development, as well as lists of perceived needs are useful beginning places in program or relationship development. But programs need to be planned with the particular individuals involved and relationships constructed between individuals. Watson and Cole noted that often, mentoring and induction programs are "generically developed and instituted, 'developmentally appropriate' in a broad sense" (p. 1). But other factors such as individual style and personality and school culture need to be responded to as well. Cole (1992) expressed concern about requiring the participation of beginning teachers in mentoring relationships, which may disallow forming other supportive connections with colleagues.

In their survey of beginning teachers, McPhie and Jackson (1994) found that beginning teachers wanted to be included in planning their support programs and in selecting their own mentors.

Other Participants in Mentoring and Induction

While beginning teachers and their experienced colleagues are the primary participants in mentoring and induction programs, there are important roles for program developers and planners, including principals and district staff (Cole, 1991). School administrators assume much of the responsibility for supporting mentoring and induction at the school level. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) described administrators as being in the middle of a relationship between external ideas and people and the internal managing of the school and teachers. Mentoring and induction programs are one of many commitments administrators must balance. Cole (1993) undertook a study that looks at school administrators' perceptions of their roles in supporting beginning teachers. She interviewed 23 school principals and vice principals in Ontario to develop an understanding of the issues they deal with in supporting beginning teachers. Cole noted that they face a number of dilemmas, including balancing the "dual role of supporter and evaluator" (p.17), avoiding overburdening other staff with mentoring responsibilities and obtaining the guidance and support they need to be knowledgeable and skilled in meeting the needs of beginning teachers.

McPhie and Jackson (1994) surveyed school administrators in BC regarding their perceptions of mentoring and induction in their districts and schools. They found that the two main roles administrators take in regard to beginning teachers are direct assistance to novices and support for mentoring relationships. McPhie and Jackson found that school administrators are very active in the selection of mentors, even when school board guidelines specified that beginning teachers should be able to select their own mentors. The administrators in this study did not express concern regarding the duality of their supporter/evaluator function, although beginning teachers clearly did see the conflict.

Cole (1991) noted that program design and implementation usually represent "a school board initiative usually by a team made up of representatives of central office and professional school staff" (p. 3). Program planners may have responsibility for providing orientation sessions and developing program materials such as beginning teacher handbooks. In program development, an important issue is the need for flexibility to respond to the actual needs of beginning teachers (Huling-Austin, 1990b). While there is an element of predictability to beginning teacher development (Kagan, 1992), individual teachers and teaching contexts vary. The flexibility issue is compounded in jurisdictions where assistance is entangled with evaluation (Huling-Austin et al., 1989). Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) suggested that a fixation on "basic competencies" pushes programs to focus only on "*minimum* competencies" (p. 307).

The success of individual beginning teachers, and of mentoring and induction programs is closely associated with hiring and assignment practices. Novice teachers are often given very challenging or inappropriate teaching assignments, encompassing difficult student populations, multiple preparations, lack of resources and extensive involvement in extra-curricular activities with students (Cole, 1993). Recent cutbacks in education have resulted in hiring occurring after the school year has begun. Late hiring complicates the challenges for beginning teachers (Cole, 1993) as any advance preparation is rendered impossible.

Researchers have argued that other educational stakeholders, such as universities, ministries of education, teachers' federations and school boards, might better collaborate or at least contribute to the implementation of mentoring and induction programs. As Jacka (1995) suggested:

One would think that the successful orientation of new teachers into their chosen profession would be of concern to all three parties (teachers' unions, school boards and faculties of education), since all of them, presumably, either have had or will have a stake in these novices' careers.
(p. 26)

Cole (1993) suggested that in Ontario, "it seems safe to say that a commitment to improve teacher education in general and the induction of new teachers in particular is pervasive" (p. 3). However, she went on to argue that more than a commitment in policy is required. The financial costs are an important consideration in developing, implementing and institutionalizing mentoring and induction programs. Adequate funding is a key feature because it provides time for preparation and support of mentors and for workshops and collaborations for beginning teachers. Funding also ensures that there is personnel to coordinate programs.

Currently in BC, the only sources of funding for beginning teacher support are district budgets or, in rare cases, local teacher association budgets. One-time grants were provided by the ministry of education, but for only a few school districts for pilot programs (McPhie & Jackson, 1994). Insecure funding cannot support ongoing commitments to mentoring and induction programs. However, if mentoring and induction programs can be shown to improve retention rates of beginning teachers, this may result in a financial benefit, since the costs of providing teacher education are conserved (Huling-Austin et al., 1989).

Jacka (1995) included teachers' unions as having responsibility for participating in mentoring and induction support for beginning teachers. When school districts and teachers' unions collaborate in mentoring and induction, there are perceived benefits (McPhie & Jackson, 1994). In Ontario, Cole (1991) found some involvement of unions in "orientation activities and sponsoring social events" (p. 3). Recently, both the Saskatchewan Teachers' Association and the British Columbia Teachers' Federation have begun to sponsor professional development conferences for beginning teachers. In addition, many unions have negotiated contracts that include the provision of mentoring and induction activities and, in some cases, specific funding for these must be provided.

The responsibilities that universities bear for supporting beginning teachers through their transition from teacher education into their teaching careers has been examined by several authors. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) suggested that mentoring and induction

programs must be considered "*in tandem*" with university pre-service programs in order to strengthen the developmental links between the two. Cole (1991) described the roles taken by some faculties of education in Ontario as "consultants, workshop leaders, group facilitators, researchers and spokespersons" (p 3). Rolheiser-Bennett (1991) described in some detail a collaborative induction program involving the University of Toronto and the Learning Consortium, a partnership of four school boards. One of the contributions the university made to this project was the initiation of an internet conference for beginning teachers in these boards. These studies suggest some of the ways that universities might be involved in mentoring and induction programs.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined literature pertaining to the mentoring of beginning teachers and I have shown that, while providing important understandings about beginning teaching, the mainstream mentoring literature is flawed by its gender-blindness. I have examined three genres of the literature that explore mentoring and beginning teaching – individual case studies, policy reports, and program and role description. Case studies of beginning teachers describe individual experiences of beginning teachers. They often allude to the gender of the subjects, but do not explore how gender is implicated in the experiences of those teachers. Policy reports call for support for beginning teachers but do not address the gendered nature of schools nor the general institution of education. Program descriptions and surveys of existing programs do not focus on gender as a significant element. Frequently, the proposed models are hierarchical and patriarchal in nature. This lack of gender analysis results in important issues of experience, relationship, power and autonomy, and knowledge being buried and thus, remaining unexamined.

By juxtaposing mainstream literature with feminist literature, I have shown that mentoring, originally a patriarchal construct, maintains its gendered character through policy, programs and relationships. However, I have also shown the importance of

supporting beginning teachers as an economic, collegial and humane responsibility. In Chapter 3, I will propose a direction for change in the mentoring of beginning teachers, a reconceptualization of mentoring that incorporates support for novices with awareness of gender as a central aspect of becoming a teacher.

CHAPTER THREE: A FEMINIST PEDAGOGY FOR MENTORING

Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I reviewed literature about beginning teaching and proposed a feminist critique of that literature. While supporting beginning teachers is a worthy goal and there is much evidence that such support is needed, the widespread model of mentoring is gendered and should not continue to develop as an unproblematic paradigm. I propose that there *is* a need to re-conceptualize mentoring "in terms of women [and men] working together in reciprocity and trust" (Cain, 1994, p. 117). I suggest that a feminist pedagogy of thoughtful critique can constitute that reconceptualization of mentoring. In this chapter, I will map out a conception of feminist pedagogy for mentoring as a response to my second research question: how should a feminist pedagogy for mentoring be constructed?

Conceptualizing a Feminist Pedagogy for Mentoring

In broad terms, feminist pedagogy demands a reconsideration of knowledge, relationships, systems, and structures taken for granted as neutral. It focuses on the relationship between the learner and the teacher, on the practices of teaching, and on the curriculum or knowledge under examination within the relationship. Shrewsbury (1993) contended that "feminist pedagogy begins with a vision of what education might be like but frequently is not. This is a vision of the classroom as a liberatory environment in which we, teacher-student and student-teacher, act as subjects, not objects" (p. 8). Shrewsbury's statement might be used to describe a number of pedagogies; however, the central and crucial concerns of feminist pedagogy are "gender justice and overcoming oppression" (Shrewsbury, 1993). This goal is at odds with the usual goal of mentoring, which is to help beginning teachers survive the induction period and to "ease the entry of the beginning teacher into the rigours of classroom life" (Sullivan, 1989, p. 82). Mentoring and induction have to do with *bringing in*, implying it is the novice teacher who will change to fit the new circumstances of her life as a teacher, while feminist pedagogy aims to *bring out*, to change the individual and to change the circumstances.

If mentoring is to be more than an induction procedure, then mentorships need to be sites where knowledge and values are problematized and where relationship is foregrounded (Gitlin & Thompson, 1995). I contend that mentoring relationships between women do focus pivotally, if not centrally, on gender issues, and they can support both participants in addressing issues of justice and oppression. I believe mentoring can be re-conceptualized, indeed I believe it is being reconceptualized by individual mentoring dyads. We need to know what these dyads are doing. The conception presented in this chapter is intended to inform the forthcoming examination (later in this dissertation) of actual mentoring relationships between women teachers.

Mentoring as Pedagogy

I believe that a feminist mentoring relationship must be a pedagogical relationship. Based on an analysis of literature about feminist pedagogy and literature about mentoring beginning teachers, I assert that a successful feminist mentoring relationship is primarily one in which the beginning teacher and the mentor engage in caring association. This relationship must be founded on a practice of shared experiences that facilitate a reciprocal process of constructing and examining knowledge. This is in keeping with a feminist pedagogical focus (Shrewsbury, 1993). Success within mentoring is not an all or nothing proposition. In this study, I am theorizing that there are specific characteristics of successful feminist mentoring relationships. The extent of the success can be seen when both participants describe the relationship as successful, positive or caring; when there are engaging collaborative shared experiences; and where there is evidence of a reciprocal process of knowledge construction.

In positing these characteristics, however, I am not arguing for a "one-size-fits all" approach; there is no universal template for success. If mentoring is to be a relationship, it must respond to personal preferences and individual ways of knowing. If it is feminist, it must allow each participant to be an authentic subject who acts and knows, not a generic object who is acted upon. The traditional programmatic nature of mentoring in schools may controvert relation and caring through inflexible guidelines, pre-determined evaluation competencies, and expectations about how and when to interact. The

characteristics described above—caring and trust, shared experiences and reciprocity in knowledge construction—describe a range of possibilities that lie between a "one-size-fits-all" approach and a "choose-your-own-adventure" approach (Thompson, 1999).

Mentoring as Relationship

While it may seem obvious to state that mentoring is a relationship, it is the relational aspect of mentoring that is central to its effect. Mentoring has the potential to be immediate, personal and contextual. It is framed by face-to-face encounters at critical moments in the beginning teacher's process of becoming a teacher. To be in relation in this way requires care for the individual and for her experience. The kind of caring mentoring requires is specialized and must be authentic, based not on roles and responsibilities but on care for the other:

Whatever I do in life, whoever I meet, I am first and always one-caring or one cared for. I do not "assume roles" unless I become an actor. "Mother" is not a *role*; "teacher" is not a *role*. . . . When I became a teacher, I also entered a very special—and more specialized—caring relation. (Noddings, 1984, p. 175)

Nodding suggested that in such a "caring relation" both participants must contribute appropriately. She described caring as "reactive and responsive", even "receptive" (p. 19). To be in a mentoring relationship imposes expectations on both participants. In examining the mentoring phenomenon, Gold (1996) cited Hardcastle's (1988) observation that "proteges were attracted to mentors who were wise, caring, committed to their profession, and who demonstrated integrity" (p. 573). It is the consistent embodiment and enactment of these qualities that leads to the establishment and development of beginning teachers' trust in mentors. Presumably, trustworthiness must also be demonstrated by beginning teachers for trusting relationships to prosper.

Trust is defined as an "assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something" (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 1996), and is a necessary quality of any close relationship. We need to trust the others with whom we are in relation. The used car salesman says, "trust me!" and we are immediately suspicious; a

close friend says, "trust me!" and we do. Trust implies a willingness to risk exposure to the other, to be willing to listen to them and perhaps to share one's own emerging thoughts. Cain (1994) explored the issue of trust in mentoring relationships among women university faculty and graduate students, stating her intent as "a political imperative to make such relationships better understood and valued and, in turn, to make their representations available for critique. This is not to idealize or sentimentalize these relationships but to 'tell the truth'" (p. 112). She suggested that part of being mentored is "learning how to learn when to trust and remain 'open' and when to question and be 'closed'" (p. 112). Trusting another is predicated upon their being trustworthy. Heinrich (1995) suggested that an unfortunate result of trusting can be betrayal, because when we reveal ourselves to others we risk their rejection, critique or their divulgence to outsiders. In exploring betrayals within graduate advisement mentorships, Heinrich described what she called "silent betrayals" (p. 450), situations in which advisors withheld needed and easy-to-provide support, "while advisees simultaneously betrayed themselves by keeping silent about their needs and their feelings of frustration, disappointment, or anger with female advisors" (p. 450). Thus, while a level of trust may be essential to a close functional mentoring relationship, it cannot be assumed that deep unconditional trust can or must develop between participants.

I have suggested that relationship is central to mentoring practice and that to be effective, mentorships must be caring and trustful. However, I have also argued for a need to examine closely the idealized model of mentoring. It is simplistic to assume that everyone wants, needs, or can be in an intimate mentoring relationship. Gold wondered:

One of the questions to consider is in regard to whether or not it is necessary to have close relationships that have deep meaning in which the mentor is the older, wiser person. Or do we need to reexamine the role of mentoring that is appropriate for the type of setting that education demands? (p. 573)

In exploring the notion of mentoring relationships, Cole (1992) agreed that in the "complex and ongoing process of personal and social interaction and interpretation" (p. 365) which characterizes beginning teaching, relationships are central to the beginning

teacher's experience. She contended that "the workplace, or professional context, is yet another venue for human growth and development" (p. 365) in which novices must interact with colleagues as they develop their practice. However, she argued that appropriating relationships by arranging mentorships interrupts the novice's process of socialization:

When relationships such as these are arranged or imposed, they are usually part of a larger organizational innovation or planned change strategy. More often than not such programs are generically developed and instituted, "developmentally appropriate" in a broad sense, and, most importantly, are based on the assumption of the existence of a casual link between teacher collegiality and teacher growth or the improvement of practice. However well intended, these programs seldom evidence appropriate recognition of and respect for the individuality of the teachers as developing persons and professionals. (p. 377)

Cole argued that such relationships are inevitably "contrived" and that they "cannot help but lose richness in purpose and meaning" (p. 377) for the individual teachers. I agree with Cole's general contention that some choice in the formation of mentorships is important. However, her concern about "appropriated" relationships suggests that we have individual will in the formation of all close relationships, belying the reality that many relationships are not naturally occurring, they are *required*—those with teachers, bosses, business, and in many non-western cultures, marriage partners. As teachers, we interact with a wide range of students and parents as well as colleagues, and we cannot choose not to. To see such relationships as "appropriated" and unworkable denies the reality that we can and do relate intentionally and positively in unchosen relationships.

Cole's work is laudable in that it develops a critique of the mentoring paradigm, problematizing what is often taken for granted, that mentorships alone will necessarily support the development of beginning teachers. While ideally we might desire caring and supportive collegial relationships for all beginning teachers, to assume that all mentorships will be this way is naïve. To design programs uncritically around this ideal is

irresponsible. In this paper, I am arguing that mentorships can be effective and powerful pedagogical relationships but I will not argue that everyone can be well served in a mentorship.

A Feminist Practice for mentoring

Assuming that a level of care and trust does develop in a mentorship, what feminist pedagogical practices would foster that development and what practices could emerge from that trust? How might the relationship develop into a feminist pedagogical mentorship? In Chapter 1, I described some of my own experiences mentoring Kyra. I cannot claim to have consciously attempted to construct a feminist pedagogy for mentoring. What I did was to try to respond to her questions, interests and issues. When she needed to set up her classroom before school began, we met there together and I asked her, "How do you want to arrange your room?" When she wanted help in planning, we planned together. It is from initial casual and caring encounters that a more deliberate pedagogical practice can emerge. This pedagogical practice will be centred on dialogue and experiences.

Mentoring Talk

Based on my own experiences as a mentor, I consider talk to be the central practice of mentoring. Unlike student teachers and supervising teachers who share a gaze on one group of children, beginning teachers and mentors teach separately. However, beginning teachers and mentors talk: they talk at recess, in hallways, in meetings, and possibly on the phone late in the evening. There are many kinds of talk: asking questions, giving advice, offering support, and complaining, among others. Biklen (1995) described the importance of talk to nourish and engage with each other:

Elementary teaching is both a nurturing act and an intellectual one. Teachers need community to make it an intellectual one and to draw upon reserves when needed for nurturing. Talk is central to this community. . . . Teachers need to be outside the classroom to be nurtured by other teachers. At the same time, much of the intellectual part of teaching could not be accomplished in the classroom. (p. 145)

While Biklen was describing elementary teachers, and it is not clear if secondary women teachers experience the same pressures to nurture (S. Acker, 1995), I would argue that most beginning teachers do need themselves to be cared for within schools. Biklen specifically identified four kinds of talk, "solicited advice", "clinical talk" (generally about students), "social talk" and "defending" in which the women teachers in her study engaged. As I reflect on my mentoring of Kyra, I can recall instances times that I gave solicited advice and times when we talked about children she was teaching. Other times, as we ate lunch together, we talked about our lives. Several times, I defended Kyra, "protecting" her from unfair circumstances. It is through talk that mentorships develop and these relationships will be constructed according to the norms of the institution and the individuals' ways of being with others. For example, talk can censure as well as well as sanction, it can attack as well as defend.

One of the kinds of talk between beginning teachers and mentors is questioning, from simple questions, such as "where is the supply room?" to more challenging questions such as, "why do we have year end testing?" Mentor teachers are well positioned to respond to these questions. Some of their responses will be direct and unproblematic: there isn't much to question about the location of the supply room. Other questions merit more complex and questioning responses. Mentors' responses to these kinds of questions begin to shape their mentorships as patriarchal or feminist.

A Questioning Framework

A critical underpinning for reconstructing mentoring according to a feminist paradigm is a questioning framework. When mentors encourage questioning they nurture within the mentorship a view that resistance and challenge are part of teaching, as they are part of learning. Beginning teachers and mentor teachers might question the power differential between them. They might question the knowledge they have been given by the university. They might question their relationships with students and with the curriculum. Through questions, biases of gender, race, class, age, ability and sexual orientation can become explicit, rather than hidden. Biklen (1995) stated that:

Questions that teachers talk over together about gender will weaken the effects of a gender system. . . . These questions bring to the surface ideological foundations

that are central to the occupation, moving them from the subtext into the text. Once in the text, they can be revised. (p. 187)

Hollingsworth (1992) described a kind of pedagogical talk that challenges existing norms. "Collaborative conversation" is a feminist pedagogical process of "working with [the participants] as a colearner. . . through nonevaluative conversation" (p. 375). According to Hollingsworth, in collaborative conversation, issues emerge from the "tangled nature of practice-situated attention" (p. 382). First, they come forth as "examples of real classroom problems, then [are] relocated within related but larger issues;" this theoretical or philosophical framing then leads to the formulation of plans and finally to "transformational understandings" (p. 383). Hollingsworth noted that this process can only unfold given sufficient time, since time is an essential component for relationships to develop. Hollingsworth's model of collaborative conversation goes far beyond my own emerging practice of mentoring with Kyra. While I responded to her practice-based questions and together we reframed them and created plans, we did not move to transformational understandings about the institution. We did not deliberately place at the centre of our analysis "gender justice and overcoming oppression" (Shrewsbury, 1993).

Thoughtful Critique

For mentoring practice to be feminist, I argue it must foster thoughtful critique. As introduced in Chapter 1, thoughtful critique consciously develops a critical stance toward the purposes and practices of schooling. Based on questioning taken-for-granted structures, practices and policies, a practice of thoughtful critique is important because beginning teachers, unsure of their knowledge and with temporary teaching positions, may be compliant and may wish to be perceived as compliant. Britzman, Dippro, Searle and Pitt (1995) suggested that student teaching experiences actually contribute to the learning of compliance: "research supports the view that learning to teach is neither solved by classroom experience nor even illuminated there. Much of this research critiques the apprenticeship model. . . suggesting that what is centrally learned is compliance to pre-existing routines" (p. 10). The demands of first year teaching create strong pressure for beginning teachers to seek definitive solutions to complex and

endemic challenges of teaching and to accept teaching conditions that are harmful to themselves and inequitable for children. Female beginning teachers may be inclined, due to socialization, to comply without critical analysis. However, in the long term, compliance does not serve well the individual beginning teachers, their students, nor the system.

In Hollingsworth's (1992) participatory study of beginning teachers, she found that as they explored their concerns, they initially felt prohibited from acting critically and teaching in the ways they wanted to teach. Over time and through "continuous cycles of critique, knowledge, construction, and social action" (p. 398), they found that:

adopting a critical perspective about the social norms of that climate—and receiving the support to move through the emotional stress that accompanies such a perspective—was crucial to claiming their own professional voices within their schools and attaining the personal and political freedom to reconstruct classrooms that supported diverse values and ways of being instead of restricting them. (p. 393)

When teachers question the things that are assumed and accepted within schools and school systems, such as grading practices, job assignments, school rules, and malestream curriculum, they interrupt and trouble the thought-less flow of events. One of my own experiences exemplifies this troubling. As an experienced teacher who had taught at a school in which the practice of thoughtful critique was encouraged, I arrived at a new school. During the first staff meeting the staff council chairperson passed out a paper, saying, "Here is a copy of the school rules that we should all be enforcing." I raised my hand and asked, "Are we going to be discussing them?" The teacher looked at me in shock, "Why would we discuss them: they are the rules!" She did not consider that they were rules constructed by a group of teachers and that they needed to be reconsidered by a new group of teachers. Rules were not to be discussed or questioned, they were to be enforced. My questioning and subsequent insistence on addressing the rules created trouble. I interrupted the flow of events at the meeting. While it may be unlikely that beginning teachers on temporary contracts and awaiting administrative evaluations will

engage in this kind of public thoughtful critique, I argue it is important for them to see demonstrations of thoughtful critique and to begin to be thoughtfully critical in a safer context, namely the mentoring relationship. Thoughtful critique is central to feminist mentoring and leads to the kind of transformational understandings needed to create more equitable institutions.

Voices and Silence

A feminist practice of mentoring alters the traditional balance of voice and silence within the dyad. Taking guidance from Nodding's (1984) concept of "receptive" caring and Hollingsworth's (1992) acknowledgement of the centrality of listening, I suggest that the focus within the mentorship should be the beginning teacher. Belenky et al. (1986) described this shifting focus through the metaphor of the "midwife-teacher" (p. 218) whose first concern is the student's "newborn thoughts;" "it is always clear that the baby is not theirs, but the student's." In a traditional apprenticeship-mentorship, the beginning teacher is the listener; in a feminist mentorship, the focus is on the novice's voice.

Hollingsworth (1992) described her personal process of learning to be, at times, silent :

The change was both methodological and philosophical, ...the conversational form. . . involved a shift in power, [it was] a process of working with them as a colearner and creator of evolving expertise through nonevaluative conversation.

To accomplish this shift, I had to be still and listen. (p. 375)

The goal here is not to be habitually silent, but to shift the balance of talk, to be still and listen before speaking and to speak with less certainty, to wonder along with the beginning teacher, to support them in "making their own tacit knowledge explicit and elaborating it" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 217). What must be stilled here is the mentor's "expert" status and authoritative knowing.

A Feminist Conception of Knowledge for Teaching

In this dissertation, I am arguing for mentorships among women teachers (and men) to be relationships centred on a feminist pedagogy involving the construction, communication and negotiation of knowledge. In a feminist mentoring relationship, the mentor and

beginning teacher talk about what they know, believe to be true, and are learning about teaching. Teachers acquire knowledge from many different sources as they are becoming teachers, including course work, practica, personal experiences as students or parents, and images of teachers in popular culture. Minimally, the mentoring relationship is another source. Some of the knowledge beginning teachers acquire and construct will be tentative. Some will be conflicting, coming from paradigmatically different sources. Some knowledge will be firmly held and beginning teachers will resist giving it up even when evidence suggests it should be discarded. Knowledge will be raced, gendered and classed. The mentoring relationship can be a site where knowledge is discussed and reconsidered and where new knowledge can be jointly constructed.

What is the knowledge component, the "curriculum" of mentoring? What should it be? The literature about knowledge for teaching is extensive and complex (Fenstermacher, 1994), even contradictory. However, together with feminist conceptions of knowledge, the literature about knowledge for teaching informs my developing conception of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring.

Different authors mean different things when they write about knowledge for teaching. In a comprehensive analysis, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (in press) described three conceptions of teacher knowledge: "knowledge-for practice" (often referred to as formal knowledge); "knowledge-in-practice" (or practical knowledge); and "knowledge-of-practice" (a conception closely aligned with teacher research) (p. 2). Each of these conceptions implies a different pedagogy for teacher education and for mentoring. Discussions about teacher knowledge are not merely academic debates, but dilemmas lived out in practice by all teachers and thus are basic to mentoring practice. Consider Melissa, the beginning teacher who was troubled by faultfinding parents who felt they knew better than she did what kind of curriculum she should have in her classroom. Who knows best about teaching? How can teachers justify their practices? Who are the experts? Underlying these debates are competing conceptions of knowledge for teaching and the acquisition or construction of that knowledge.

Formal Knowledge: *Knowledge-for-practice*

The first conception, knowledge-for-practice or formal knowledge, holds that knowledge is developed through university-based research. Fenstermacher (1994) suggested that much of this knowledge was developed in process-product research and that while most of this research resulted in correlational findings, many causal claims have been made, with results having been applied as rules of practice. Code (1993) agreed: "descriptive theories have normative force" (p. 30).

Formal knowledge or knowledge-for-practice, has traditionally been a primary focus in many teacher education programs (Britzman et al., 1995) and in competency-driven mentoring programs. Such knowledge continues to hold a place of authority within education beyond the classroom (Donmoyer, 1995) and in society at large. In her reconceptualization of the subjectivity/objectivity dichotomy in knowing, Code (1993) contended that, due to an emphasis on formal scientific research, it is the most "stringent aspects of [the positivist] program that have trickled down. . . to inform even well-educated laypersons' conceptions of what it means to be objective and of the authoritative status of modern science [and research]" (p. 18). Beginning teachers do use formal knowledge, but due to its indirect, rather than immediate application, novice teachers (as well as many experienced teachers) commonly negate the value of formal theoretical knowledge learned in teacher education programs, in favour of the more practical knowledge they believe they gain in classroom experiences during their practica and initial year of teaching (Richardson-Koehler, 1988).

The knowledge-for-practice conception has led to a view held by some, that there is or should be a specified and codified base of knowledge for teaching, (A. Reynolds, 1995). Reynolds described a large body of work that has constructed an image of "what newly licensed teachers should know and be able to do" (p. 199): the specific skills, attitudes and knowledge needed to teach successfully. While this view is has some validity in that it implies that "teaching is a job that can be learned, [and that] aspects of the job—not

necessarily the entirety of the job of teaching—can be defined in terms of requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities" (p. 200), the knowledge base paradigm creates several problems that impact upon beginning teachers.

First, in determining what beginning teacher should know, Reynolds contended that, among other things,

beginning teachers . . . should have command over the pedagogical principles that will enable them to perform the tasks of teaching, especially those interactive tasks required to implement plans and manage the learning environment. Less important is knowledge of professional issues. . . and philosophical and sociological influences on curricula. (p. 212).

The suggestion here is that beginning teachers should be able to use knowledge, but not think about it. The idea that beginning teachers should be able to apply knowledge without considering "philosophical and sociological influences" ignores the now commonly-held epistemological view that all knowledge is partial, biased (Belenky et al., 1986) and "inevitably political" (Donmoyer, 1995, p. 2). To suggest that beginning teachers need not examine underlying biases is to deny them the experience of thoughtful critique of the purposes and effects of education.

A second issue is that proponents of the knowledge base argue that this knowledge is intended to form a foundation upon which "professional judgment" (Gardner, 1989, p. x) is based. However, it must be remembered that "professional" is a category of privilege (Biklen, 1995) and that notions of a specific professional knowledge base were originally intended and are often still intended to shore up the status of particular employments. Are all judgments teachers make *professional*? Must they be founded in a specific knowledge base? Where is the place for knowledge based in other aspects of one's life, such as friendship, family, and other employment?

A third concern is that the idea of a knowledge base for beginning teaching has led to the establishment of rigid evaluation criteria that novices must demonstrate before becoming

full members of the teaching profession. The competence paradigm as described in Chapter 2 has a significant impact upon what knowledge can be considered within mentoring relationships. It implies a standardized view of teaching, regardless of context (Huling-Austin et al., 1989) and focuses beginning teacher support on achieving a standardized set of attitudes, knowledge and skills, again without encouraging thoughtful critique.

In feminist pedagogy, the problematization of mainstream knowledge, such as knowledge-for-practice, is considered essential. In speaking to female university students, Rich (1977) argued that:

What you can learn here (and I mean not only here but in any college or in any university) is how men have perceived and organized their experience, their history, their ideas about social relationships, good and evil, sickness and health etc. When you read or hear about "great ideas," "major texts," and "the mainstream of western thought", you're hearing about what men, above all white men, in their male subjectivity, have decided is important. (p. 232)

The conception of knowledge-for-practice implies that experts such as mentors who have acquired the knowledge base, can impart it to beginning teachers. This conception serves to silence women (both mentors and beginning teachers) (Belenky et al., 1986), and to denigrate women teachers' experiences and the unauthorized but considerable knowledge they bring to teaching. Feminist pedagogy encourages women to "examine their own experiences, instead of always examining men's experiences" (Gaskell & McLaren, 1989, p. 39), recognizing the limitations of malestream knowledge that suppress the examination of gender issues as well as other issues such as race, class, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. Elsewhere, Gaskell (1989) stated,

We are clearly on the side of those who argue that the ultimate goal is not to continue with two versions of knowledge, the male version and the female version, but to develop a new synthesis that is richer for paying attention to both male and female perspectives. (p. 43)

To accomplish this transformation, we need to look beyond researcher-generated knowledge-for-practice to acknowledge and address the realities of women teachers' lives and experiences.

Practical Knowledge: *Knowledge-in-practice*

Knowledge-in-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press) or practical knowledge for teaching is learned through experience, both in teaching and in life experiences. It tends to be more valued by teachers than formal knowledge (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). Knowledge-in-practice is knowledge about how to do things in the school and classroom (Fenstermacher, 1994). It is "embedded in the practice of experienced [expert] teachers" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press). It reflects "the individual's prior knowledge and acknowledges the contextual nature of that teacher's knowledge. It is. . . shaped by situations; . . . constructed and reconstructed as we live out our stories. . . and relive them through the processes of reflection" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 10). Practical knowledge may not be capable of immediate expression: "practitioners. . . know a great deal that they have never. . . tried to articulate" (Shulman, 1989, p. 12). Perhaps because practical knowledge is difficult to articulate in ways that maintain its contextual and holistic character, it is sometimes unfortunately expressed as rules of practice that are as limiting as any over-generalized research finding. An example of such codifying is the injunction often offered to beginning teachers, "Don't smile until Christmas."

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (in press) maintain that there are variant models considered under this broad conception. One model is "embodied narrative relational knowledge" or personal practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connolly, 1995, cited in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press), which is communicated through story (p. 23-24). Cochran-Smith and Lytle describe craft knowledge as "an amalgam of teachers' content knowledge (Shulman, 1987) and what [Grimmett and MacKinnon] call 'pedagogical learner knowledge,' or, 'pedagogical procedural information useful in enhancing learner-focused teaching in the dailiness of classroom actions'" (p. 24-25). Fenstermacher (1994) contended there are two distinct types of knowledge (formal and practical) while others, according to Cochran-Smith and Lytle, have disclaimed this dichotomy.

In mentoring relationships structured around the knowledge-in-practice paradigm, the focus is on coaching or helping "newcomers participate in dialogue with puzzling problems of practice" (Heaton & Lampert, 1993). The mentor is or should be an "expert teacher," one who acts wisely "in the midst of uncertain and changing situations" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, p. 25) in the classroom. Not every experienced teacher is considered to have expertise; they may be "not sufficiently competent, wise, effective or accomplished to be considered an expert" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, p. 27).

At issue within the knowledge-in-practice conception is the assumption within the profession that knowing or expertise is contextually related to current (or recent) and extensive classroom teaching experience (Biklen, 1995). The work of mothers and other caregivers has application in teaching, but this kind of experience tends to be devalued under this paradigm (Grumet, 1981). Beginning teachers lack teaching experience, however, they possess a great deal of knowledge that lacks the sanctioned authority of formal knowledge or teaching-based practical knowledge. This less authorized knowledge relates to other life experiences. For example, many parents believe their parenting knowledge is helpful to them in their teaching.

Even before student teachers enter teacher education programs, they have clear images and beliefs about teaching and visions of themselves as teachers. We come to be teachers with extensive experience as students in school, and with clear beliefs about teaching and learning that may be fanciful but are nevertheless difficult to change (Johnson, 1992). Many other life experiences contribute to forming beliefs about teaching and learning, including knowing adults who are teachers and reading stories and seeing movies about teachers. In some instances this prior knowledge is useful, in others it is less beneficial. Carter and Richardson (1989) found that beginning student teachers were confident and looked forward to helping children, although they had simplistic views about what this would involve. They had strong images of teachers, perhaps founded on remembrances of teachers they loved or on larger-than-life popular culture images (Biklen, 1995). Melissa,

the beginning teacher quoted in Chapter 1, expressed her belief that the parents would love her, as she had loved her grade one teacher, and expressed her dismay that they apparently did not.

Melissa's statement reveals how beliefs about teaching are held and expressed through images. Johnson studied the images held by student teachers as they moved through teacher education programs (1992). She found that images evolved from long-past experiences and these images guided current and future classroom actions. "Images are not usually consciously articulated without some assistance. . . . They form the subconscious assumptions on which practice is based" (p. 125). Women teachers may be particularly vulnerable to images of the all-caring and deeply-loved teacher, since they may have been socialized to perceive value in work that involves direct care or "emotional labor" (Freedman, 1990). Understanding the cultural images of teachers, as well as individual images, is an important component of understanding what teachers know, since these images seem to create filters through which beginning teachers will see their classrooms and the others with whom they interact. Thus expertise in teaching is not merely constructed in the classroom and the novice may have much to offer to the "expert."

The view of knowledge-in-practice does, to some extent, reflect a feminist perspective. It reconsiders some of the different knowledges women teachers hold and the ways these knowledges can be expressed and shared. However, the concept of experiential knowing is not unproblematic. Experience as a basis for knowing places novices in a lower position than their more experienced, expert colleagues (Fuss, 1989). This may serve to silence beginning teachers until they have more experience and expertise. Further, all knowledge is inherently biased according to attributes such as gender, race, class and sexual orientation (Briskin, 1990). Unless these biases are acknowledged and addressed, knowledge-in-practice may not adequately represent the changing context of schools. Moreover the conception of knowledge-in-practice does account for the expression of other manifestations of knowing, such as emotions (Jaggar, 1989). Despite a western

dichotomization of knowing and feeling, Jaggar contended that "emotions may be helpful and even necessary rather than inimical to the construction of knowledge" (p. 131).

Beyond Dichotomous Conceptions of Knowledge: *Knowledge-of-practice*

Cochran Smith and Lytle's (in press) third conception of knowledge, knowledge-of-practice, resolves many of the issues I have described in this chapter. In the knowledge-of-practice conception, "both knowledge generation and knowledge use are regarded as inherently problematic" (p. 35). Knowledge-of-practice is based on the assumption that, "through inquiry, teachers across the professional life span, from very new to very experienced, make problematic their own knowledge and practice as well as the knowledge and practice of others" (p. 37). As described earlier, this kind of problematizing of knowledge is an essential feature of a feminist pedagogy. It is the essence of thoughtful critique.

Further, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (in press) suggested that "knowledge is constructed within local and broader communities" (p. 38). While they did not explore the notion of the relationships within such communities, feminist epistemological theory does.

"Knowing other people" (Code, 1993, p. 19), refers to developing knowledge *about* those with whom we are in relation:

Knowing other people in relationships requires constant learning. . . . Such knowledge is not primarily propositional. . . . Nor is it reducible to the simple observational knowledge of the traditional paradigm. . . . It is acquired differently, interactively and relationally. . . . "Knowing how" and "knowing that" are implicated, but they do not begin to tell the whole story. (p. 3)

Code contended that knowledge about people is learned over time and it is learned within each unique relationship (such as a mentorship). One is constantly learning about the other person. Nelson (1993), agreed with Code that relationship is central to knowing:

"Feminists have argued that a solipsistic knower is implausible in light of human biology Interpersonal experience is necessary for individuals to have beliefs and to know" (p. 122). Instead of individuals as agents of knowledge, she saw communities as the primary constructors and acquirers of knowledge:

I do not deny that individuals know. My claim is that the knowing we do as individuals is derivative, that your knowing or mine depends on *our* knowing. . . . The "we". . . . is a group or community that constructs and shares knowledge and standards of evidence. . . . Such communities are epistemically prior to individuals who know. (p .124)

Nelson contended that "there are. . . no litmus tests for identifying epistemological communities" (p 149), but suggested that epistemological communities frame their standards of evidence in a contextual discourse. Nelson asserted that the underlying epistemology would be:

a naturalized epistemology. . . . A naturalized epistemology, as Quine advocated . . . would involve constructing accounts of how we go about building knowledge and of the evidence we have for doing so. . . . It begins with the assumption that we do in fact know. . . and that such knowledge will be justified. . . by its ability to make sense of and explain experience. (p 125).

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (in press) described a model of deliberate inquiry as central to knowledge-of-practice. In this model, "knowledge emerges from the conjoined understandings of teachers and others committed to long-term highly systematic observation and documentation of learners and their sense-making" (p. 40). The knowledge-of-practice conception proposes an expanded view of teaching practice that "entails expanded responsibilities to children and their families, transformed relationships with teachers and other professionals in the school setting, as well as deeper and altered connections to communities, community organizations, and school-university partnerships" (p. 41). To this account, a feminist pedagogy would include the lived connectedness that many women perceive, experiencing their teaching practice as

extending beyond classrooms, schools and related educational communities into their own lives. Biklen (1995) found that many of the women in her study saw themselves as committed to teaching even as they went through periods of absence due to childrearing. Many women teachers saw childrearing as connected to and an extension of their teaching practice.

In the knowledge-of-practice conception, teacher development is collaborative and communal, based on "an inquiry stance" (p. 9); "all participants. . . whether beginning teachers, experienced teachers, teacher educators, or facilitators—function as fellow learners and researchers rather than experts" (p. 45). The ideal of "inquiry communities" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press, p. 61) recalls Nelson's (1993) conception of "epistemological communities." Epistemological communities, like Cochran-Smith and Lytle's inquiry groups, frame their standards of evidence in a contextual discourse and a shared form of justification that can "make sense of and explain experience" (p. 125).

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (in press) asserted that a traditional mentoring model, based on presumptions of the automatic wisdom of experience and of a one way transmission of knowledge, is inconsistent with the assumptions of the knowledge-of-practice conception. Presumably, however, someone must initially facilitate and scaffold the inquiry. Someone must foster the exploration and critique. Further, there are many daily issues with which beginning teachers may wish more direct support. In her work with beginning teachers, Hollingsworth (1992) found that conversations focussed initially on issue of practice and relationships and only moved to more systemic and theoretical considerations when these initial concerns were addressed. Carter and Richardson (1989) referred to this kind of practice-based focus as "the need to know" (from Katz, Rath, Mohonty, Kurachi & Irving, 1981). Carter and Richardson contended that while there is a considerable body of knowledge that beginning teachers can acquire as student teachers:

Without experience and responsibility, however, [beginning teachers] cannot learn when and how to use a skill or strategy, how to balance one need versus another in the classroom, and which classroom disruptions to ignore in attempts to maintain their students' attention on academic work. (p. 407)

The practicum provides important opportunities to address some of these concerns, but Carter and Richardson argued that most novices are hired to teach in different situations than their practicum settings, and that much knowledge will not transfer directly to their new settings; "these new contexts require different strategies and timing than those learned in student teaching as well as expanded understandings of teaching activities and events" (p. 407). Despite obvious commonalities across teaching settings (for example, students, some form of curriculum, teaching colleagues and meetings), teachers experience new contexts each year, including new students, new curriculum and new colleagues among other conditions. For beginning teachers who have completed several practica in the same grade, school or classroom, I have observed that such newness can be surprising and alarming. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (in press) referred to a process of collaboratively constructing "local knowledge" (p. 66) which is generated and grounded in a particular context, but also directed toward larger structures and purposes. For beginning teachers, I have suggested the press of the local will take precedence over the global. Until they have teaching materials, until they know where to find student files, until they know what happens on parent-teacher night, the dailiness of teaching will hold beginning teachers' attention. Not until they begin to feel somewhat settled in a school will they be likely to think of larger issues. Mentoring relationships can deal particularly well with issues of context and the "need to know," while fostering deeper collaborative inquiry through thoughtful critique.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (in press) differentiated Himley's (1991) conception of "deep talk" from "casual chat of school hallways or lunch rooms" (p. 47). Deep talk shares many similarities with collaborative conversation (Hollingsworth, 1992). However, Cochran-Smith and Lytle asserted that deep talk, "although relational" does not "emphasize primarily the personal talk engaged in when offering moral support or empathizing" (p. 47). I argue that the trust needed for such talk to develop is dependent on *casual* and *personal* chat. Beginning to teach is not simply a work-related venture. Many beginning teachers are leaving home, forming life partnerships, becoming "working" mothers, or undergoing other significant life changes that accompany starting to teach.

While many women have sources of personal support outside the school, to dichotomize "personal" and "professional" dichotomizes teachers' lives. Friends who are not teachers may not understand the mind and body weariness teachers experience, nor the continual thoughts of students, content and planning that invade teachers' minds on weekends and in the middle of the night. Teachers do understand these phenomena and thus, colleagues may be in a strong position to offer personal as well as professional support, since the two cannot and should not be separated.

It may be problematic for some women teachers to participate in the kind of collaborative inquiry Cochran-Smith and Lytle (in press) advocated. This kind of systematic dialogue takes time, and groups or dyads of women teachers may struggle to find extended time they can devote to ongoing discussion. Further, Cochran-Smith and Lytle suggested that while this kind of critical inquiry "may fit comfortably within a university or school district's institutional agenda for reflective practice," teachers may also begin to "challenge and then alter or dismantle fundamental practices" (p. 69). Institutions that initially encourage teachers to work from an inquiry stance may later regret and discourage critique that moves in different directions than district imperatives.

Generally, the knowledge-of-practice paradigm matches well with a feminist view of knowledge and a feminist pedagogy for mentoring. It demands the kind of reconceptualization of mentoring that I am proposing. However, I have shown that taking on a feminist perspective does not make knowledge-of-practice unproblematic. While I support the development of models that foster life-long learning for all participants, I argue that beginning teachers deserve to have support focused on their unique interests and concerns, and that more experienced teachers can be facilitative in first addressing these concerns and then fostering a climate of thoughtful critique. Further, the developing mentorship can also support the mentor's life-long learning. Deliberate inquiry groups that pose and examine issues through a rigorous lengthy process will not be an effective

form of support for beginning teachers, but an inquiry stance can be developed through a more personalized form of collaboration. Mentoring may be one site in which inquiry, support and advice are mingled, where knowledge is offered as well as collaboratively generated. This form of support can be described as an epistemological mentorship.

Conclusion

Stories of women's lives are seldom represented from the perspective of feminine experience. Female friendships are rarely portrayed; female mentor-mentee relationships are even scarcer. (Cain, 1994, p. 112)

Mentors receive little specific preparation for their work and there is little in either mainstream (Feiman-Nemser, 1992b) or feminist literature (Cain, 1994) to guide them. It is because of this absence that I have proposed a feminist pedagogy for mentoring, founded upon the development of the relationship between the participants, on questioning interactions and on collaborative knowledge generated within the mentorship. I am arguing that this is how mentorships should be conceptualized and constructed. I contend that this model of feminist pedagogy for mentoring may prove useful in asking deeper questions and ultimately better understanding mentoring among women (and men) teachers.

Given this theory, it is now necessary to examine the relationships of the participants in this study to determine how these teachers really constructed their mentorships. What images from professional and personal experiences guided them? How were the mentorships initiated? Through what experiences did the relationships develop? How did mentorships end? Were these strictly professional relationships or did they also encompass the personal? Were gender issues pivotal within these women teachers' mentorships?

In this chapter I have suggested that mentorships have the potential to be relationships in which knowledge is co-constructed, shared and examined, and that this knowledge will be broad in scope and structure. What form do these processes of knowledge construction

and communication actually take? Are collaborative relational models, such as collaborative inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press), the midwife-teacher (Belenky et al., 1896), epistemological communities (Nelson, 1993), and collaborative conversation (Hollingsworth, 1992) possible alternatives to the traditional hierarchy of authority for knowing?

Through this dissertation, I am interested in knowing more about the potential of mentoring as a learning relationship, in which knowledge construction is central. A successful feminist mentoring relationship would be one in which the beginning teacher and the mentor engaged in a reciprocal process of examining knowledge, not merely sharing information, ideas, and beliefs. The extent of the success of each mentorship will be determined through an analysis of the presence and intermingling of the following elements: when both participants describe the relationship as successful or positive, when there is evidence of reciprocity within the relationship, and when there is evidence of critical knowledge being communicated, constructed and justified by both participants within the mentorship.

I wonder if mentoring is or can be a site where knowledge and values are problematized and where relationship is foregrounded (Gitlin and Thompson, 1995). I wonder, along with Cain (1994), if we can re-conceptualize mentoring "in terms of women working together in reciprocity and trust?" (p. 117). Is this a realistic expectation for mentoring relationships traditionally steeped in a patriarchal paradigm? Can we bring teachers *in* and at the same time bring them *out*? I want to know if mentoring relationships can be relationships in which all teachers, and specifically women teachers, together explore underlying issues of teaching. If mentoring is to be more than a socialization or assessment procedure, then it needs to be grounded in a feminist pedagogy of thoughtful critique.

I take forward into the research study as a theoretical framework this conception of feminist mentoring with the essential quality of thoughtful critique. The study was designed to first explore real mentorships and then to test the feminist conception. In Chapter 4 I describe the methodology of the study I undertook to explore the research questions and to learn more about mentoring among women teachers.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Journal: entry

September 18, 1997

I can't remember how many times as a teacher I have read or told the story of the three billy goats gruff. Each goat has to take a turn to cross the bridge to the green hillside meadow, knowing that the slightest sound will bring forth from under the bridge the evil troll. Each one starts off, "trip-trap, trip-trap." Out pops the troll, "WHO'S THAT TRIP TRAPPING OVER MY BRIDGE?" Each goat must come up with a good response that discourages the troll from crawling up on to the bridge to eat him. The goats' only defenses are trickery, and (in the case of the big billy goat) violence.

The bridge metaphor represents to me the chasm that beginning teachers must cross to move from teacher education to the "field" of real teaching. At least the billy goats had a bridge! I think in many cases beginning teachers must just take a flying leap and hope they land safely and can jump up and start running quickly enough. I'm amazed at how beginning teachers must begin: sometimes without classrooms, like Taylor (Chapter 6), or with the toughest class, like Michelle (Chapter 7), or finding out the course they were hired to teach has been cancelled, like Marie (Chapter 5).

What would it mean to the billy goats to have someone from the hillside meadow come over to guide them across the bridge? Or for the troll to say, "Come on across, glad you're here!"

Rationale for the Study

In Chapter 1, I described the path that led me to the research study described in this dissertation. I believe that, as educators, we must address the quality of the initial experiences of beginning teachers and that we need to learn more about *what* beginning teachers experience so that we can develop better ways to support them as they become teachers. For too long, teachers and teacher educators have watched silently from opposite sides of a deep chasm as novice teachers struggle unsupported, to leap between teacher education and the field of teaching. Mentoring and induction programs attempt to build bridges, but until we know which kinds of bridges are most supportive, we cannot proceed toward the goal of providing more supportive structures. As described in Chapter 1, the research problem I have focussed upon is the nature of mentoring relationships among women teachers, specifically the pedagogical and epistemological possibilities and paradoxes within these mentorships. The two questions that frame this study are:

1. How do women teachers co-construct mentoring relationships? What is the substantive content and process of mentoring among beginning teachers and mentor teachers?
2. How should a feminist pedagogy for mentoring be constructed and to what extent do the mentoring relationships described in this study reflect this representation of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring?

To investigate the research problems underlying these questions, I conducted a qualitative study of mentoring relationships among women teachers. As explained in Chapter 1, the participants were teachers in a public school district who were involved in a district supported mentoring program. The teachers participated as mentoring dyads, although there was one triad, involving a beginning teacher with two mentors. As previously delineated, all participants are women. Data collection took place through a sequence of qualitative interviews with each beginning teacher and mentor, as well as with the two (or three) together. The analysis of the data involved identifying key contextual features of each mentorship as well as intra-case themes. This process led to the development of descriptive case studies of the four dyads and one triad. In addition, I distilled a cluster of inter-case themes, which are also explicated in Chapter 9. To borrow from Ayers (1980),

the purpose of my research study was to learn more about the meanings of mentoring for the participants, in the hope that the individual and shared meanings will resonate with others and provide signposts for continued learning about how best to support beginning teachers.

In beginning, I knew I wanted to develop richly detailed representations of mentoring based upon "thick description" (Lincoln & Guba, as cited in Merriam, 1988). As much as possible, I wanted to tell the particular stories using the teachers' voices; I wanted to link individual experiences of mentoring to shared referents in teaching. For example, teacher union contracts largely prescribe how beginning teachers are hired and placed in teaching assignments, and how they are laid-off and rehired. Thus, teaching contracts strongly affect the experiences of beginning teachers. It is through shared referents as well as singular experiences, the "telling" cases as well as the "typical" ones (Sanjek, 1990, p. 409), that I hoped to make "sense out of an initially bewildering cultural or social form" (Ayers, 1980, p. 12).

Since feminist theory provides a frame for my study, I wanted to ensure that my research not only "illuminate[d] the lived experiences [of the participants]; it must also be illuminated by their struggles" (Lather, 1991, p. 55). My *a priori* feminist theories had to be considered dialectically with the experiences of the participants leading to "flexible theory-building. . . [that would be] respectful of the experiences of people in their daily lives" (Lather, 1991, p. 54). My interest in rich description and in highlighting context across several stories of mentors and beginning teachers directed me to a case study approach for my research.

The Methodology: Case Study

A case study methodology is particularly well suited to study the complex social phenomenon of mentoring, because of its focus on context and its utilization of multiple sources of data (Yin, 1994). Yin defined case study as, "empirical inquiry that. . . investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (1994, p. 13). Cases may seek to explore, to describe and/or to explain.

It is important to note that case study as a research methodology differs from case study as a teaching method. Unlike teaching cases, Yin contended that cases developed through case study research must be both "complete" and "accurate" if they are to be trustworthy. Merriam (1988) suggested that qualitative case study is:

- descriptive, resulting in "rich, 'thick' description of the phenomenon under study" (p. 11);
- heuristic, "explain[ing] the reasons for a problem, the background of a situation, what happened and why" (p. 13);
- inductive, relying on the examination of data to reach conclusions (p. 13); and
- particularistic, based in a "specific instance" (p. 13).

These characteristics led to Stake's (as cited in Merriam, 1988) claim that the knowledge generated by case study is of a different quality than other research knowledge; it is "more concrete", "more contextual" and "more developed by reader interpretation" (p. 15).

Wilson and Gudmundsdottir (1987) asserted that the principal issue in case study research is what is meant by a "case." While a case is generally assumed to be a "bounded system" (Wilson & Gudmundsdottir, 1987, p. 43), the question is how the boundaries of a case are to be determined. Wilson and Gudmundsdottir cited Shulman's question, "what is this a case of?" as being crucial to generalizability because, "to claim that something is a case study is to assert that it is a member of a family of individuals or events of which it is in some sense representative" (p. 44). Thus, to claim that something is a case, researchers need to be able to demonstrate that the phenomenon being represented has visible boundaries and they must be able to argue that the case is an exemplar of a larger category.

In establishing the boundaries and category of a case, theory plays a key role. Yin (1994) contended that theory has a main place during two stages of case study research, in the design of the study and in generalization. Merriam (1988) placed more emphasis on the

qualitative aspects of case study, "research is exploratory, inductive, and emphasizes processes rather than ends" (p. 17). Earlier in this chapter, I quoted Lather's contention that a priori theory must interact dialectically with the data so that each maintains its integrity.

In the book, "Saying lives: The good pre-school teacher", Ayers (1980) provided an exemplar of qualitative case study. In this multiple-case study, Ayers attempted "to capture descriptive accounts of teachers teaching as well as telling stories of teaching" (p. 1). His purpose was to create "individual portraits of teachers working" and to "expand our understanding of the meaning teachers give to their work, to perceive in the particular details of these portraits, patterns that will perhaps prove useful to them as well as relevant to others" (p. 1). In Ayer's study, each case is a well-developed portrait, a *case* of pre-school teaching. Each case is richly described and analyzed. While the cases have differences in context, they share sufficient similarities to be placed within a family or classification. Although Ayers described his methodology as "co-biography" or "life-narrative" (p. 8), it also meets the criteria for case study as described by Yin (1994) and Merriam (1988). Ayers demonstrated how case study research provides an occasion for "hear[ing] the voices of teachers" (p. 1), describing phenomena that are "individual, organizational, social, and political" (Yin, p. 1).

My selection of case study methodology flowed out of my experiences with beginning teachers and with mentoring. I knew there were rich and engaging stories to be told, and I hoped that these would not be completely idiosyncratic because I wanted to draw from them important ideas about how to better support beginning teachers. Two informal pilot studies furthered my belief in the value of beginning teachers' stories and contributed to the development of this study.

Pilot Studies

The first informal study took place while I was working in the Portal Mentoring program. In May 1993, as part of the ongoing evaluation of the program, the coordinators organized a focus group for second year teachers, with the purpose of learning more

about the first year teaching experience. Twelve teachers who had been involved in a second year option of the program were invited to participate in the focus group discussion. They were informed that the purpose of the focus group was to help program planners develop a clearer sense of the experiences and needs of beginning teachers. Of the twelve, eleven women teachers attended the teachers' center to participate in the focus group. Two facilitators met with the group, one to pose several open-ended questions, the other to transcribe the responses. Since I had been involved as a program planner, I decided simply to transcribe the conversation and to allow the conversation to flow without my input. The conversation was tape recorded and written notes were taken. The discussion took about one hour.

The participants were asked to respond to three questions: first to describe their teaching assignment during their first and second year; then to specify the supports they received during their first year; and finally to offer any advice that they had for the program planners. In the conversation that followed, six themes emerged most clearly:

1. Changes in teaching assignment between the first and second year with resulting consequences for individuals,
2. Increased feelings of confidence and belonging developing in the second year,
3. A clearer focus on professional development emerging in the second year,
4. A more holistic perspective on curriculum planning in the second year,
5. Concerns about the role of parents in schools, and
6. The value of support and of particular kinds support.

Several of these themes focus specifically on differences between first and second year teaching. However, two are particular to first year teaching. The theme, the role of parents, kept emerging throughout the discussion. Beginning teachers were uncomfortable with their relationships with parents and their responsibilities to communicate with and "educate" parents. This was a very emotional issue for least one beginning teacher, Melissa, who was quoted in Chapter 1. Melissa was surprised to find that she had to articulate her program to parents, instead of their just loving her, perhaps as she had loved her own grade one teacher.

The theme, the value of support, was one to which beginning teachers had obviously given a great deal of thought. The participants had a clear sense of their changing needs for support, while seeing some kinds of support as essential to their learning. Key supporters were principals, mentor teachers, other staff members, peers, and school district consultants. In particular, beginning teachers spoke of the importance of being able to ask questions:

It was nice having this person designated as my mentor and knowing that they didn't mind if I asked zillions of dumb, well not really dumb, but questions that might drive someone nuts. And they said—sure, they would love to help you with it. (Bindy, a second year teacher)

Although this focus group study was not undertaken with the intent of scaffolding further research, it did pique my interest in learning more about the experiences of beginning teachers and in particular about the role of mentoring in that experience. Further, it confirmed that beginning teachers could competently describe their experiences and articulate their concerns. The uncovering of at least two of the themes, involvement with parents, and kinds of support, foreshadows some of the results of the study described in this dissertation.

The second pilot study was undertaken during the school year of 1995-1996 and involved one beginning teacher. Mandy, a first year teacher and the sister of a colleague, agreed to meet with me to be interviewed once a month during her first year. My purpose in setting up an informal pilot study was to follow one beginning teacher through an entire school year, to develop a deeper sense of what the progression of issues, concerns and successes might be for a novice teacher. Mandy agreed to be involved in the study because she saw the interviews as taking the place of journal writing, which she felt did not fit her learning style. I provided her with copies of the tapes of the interviews and these afforded her as well as me an account of her first year of teaching. The interviews were loosely structured, focussing on her experiences and her perceptions of becoming a teacher.

In the interviews, Mandy spoke of the pleasures she found in teaching, such as working with children, and feeling supported by other teachers and by administrators. As she described her days and weeks, a picture of a complex role emerged, a role that included clerical tasks of photocopying and filing, custodial tasks of tidying up (and washing every piece of equipment in August), supervisory tasks of directing the work of a classroom assistant, pedagogical tasks of planning, instructing and interacting with children and resourcing tasks of finding classroom materials. The themes that developed during our interviews included:

1. The challenges of planning a program that meets the expectations of the curriculum guidelines,
2. Dealing with critical parents,
3. Working with and supervising a paraprofessional in the classroom, and
4. Working up to sixty hours a week.

It is interesting to note that many of the themes evident in my interviews with Mandy replicated those found by other researchers (for example Bullough, 1989; Jacka, 1995) and in the earlier focus group study. While the study of Mandy focused on the experiences of only one beginning teacher, it provided me with additional information about the experiences of beginning teaching and alerted me to some of the methodological issues I would need to attend to in the current study. These issues will be unpacked later in this chapter.

The Research Design

Site and Sample Selection

In Chapter 1, I described the context of Portal School District and the history and nature of the mentoring program. I chose Portal as the research site for several reasons. It had a mentoring program in place and the program was well established. Because so many beginning teachers were being hired, there was a reasonable pool of beginning teachers and mentoring teachers from which to select a sample. At the time, I was working in

Portal as a district program coordinator and was responsible for mentoring program. For this reason gaining entry was relatively straightforward (Bernard, 1994). What was problematic for me as a researcher in this site was my "insider" status (Wolcott, 1985). I will discuss this issue in describing my role as a researcher. Portal represented an "ideal setting" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995), since it combined easy access with a "high probability that a rich mix of the processes, people, programs, interactions, and structures of interest are present" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 51).

To receive permission to undertake this study, I submitted a proposal to the district principal responsible for research within the school district, who referred it to the Beginning Teacher Advisory Committee. This committee was composed of district administrators, representatives from the union, and the program coordinators, and it met monthly to consider issues within the mentoring program. I was a member of the committee, so at the point that I submitted my proposal in June 1996, I attended the meeting to explain the proposal, and then withdrew to allow the other committee members to make a decision about allowing the study to proceed. Shortly afterward, I was informed that I had permission to initiate the study.

I approached the entire group of newly hired beginning teachers and mentor teachers in early October at the first workshop sessions of the mentoring program. While it would have been preferable to approach teachers prior to the beginning of the school year, the majority of hiring did not take place until mid-September and mentoring relationships were not in place until several weeks later. Recognizing these realities, I prepared letters explaining the research study and distributed these at the first mentoring workshops. I explained the nature of the study and to ask anyone interested to contact me. Following the sessions, several teachers approached me to express interest. I followed up on these contacts, but still needed several more participants.

My plan was to select five pairs of beginning and mentor teachers for the inquiry, using a "simple criterion-based selection process" (Goetz & LeCompte, as cited in Merriam, 1988). I wanted to be able to argue that each of the teachers in the study is an exemplar of

the broader population. In her case study of "Paula", Jacka contended that since Paula's teacher-education program and practicum were similar to other programs in the area and since her first teaching school and colleagues were "representative of many boards", that she was "typical" enough to "represent one voice of the. . . [beginning] teacher" (Jacka, 1995, p. 22).

My first selection criterion was gender. As explained in Chapter 2, a majority of beginning teachers in BC are female, as are many mentors. I decided to include dyads in which both teachers were women. To increase/improve the generalizability/applicability of this study, I wanted to use "typicality" as the criteria for selecting a mix of grade levels (from kindergarten to grade seven) and schools, beginning teachers from different teacher education programs, and if possible, some diversity in age and race or ethnicity. I anticipated the need for some flexibility in selection and I recognized the importance of documenting the reasons leading to choices I would make to ensure my sample was as representative (or typical) as possible. Every participant was asked to sign a consent letter and was given a copy of the letter for their records, as well as additional information about the study. The participants were each asked to select pseudonyms.

Despite this carefully planned and articulated process for inviting and selecting participants, problems occurred. In every previous year, a significant number of beginning teachers had been hired. In the research year, only thirteen elementary beginning teachers were hired. Several of them were male. My scrupulously thought-out plan disintegrated and a new plan had to be quickly created. My only option was to broaden my criteria and therefore the pool of possible participants: I could include either male elementary teachers or female secondary teachers. I include an excerpt from my research journal that provides a more animated account of these events and my decisions.

Journal entry:

Sept 25, 1996

My first research crisis and I haven't even made it to the field. As we put together the list of beginning teachers today, it became apparent that there

are only 14 elementary beginning teachers, and 3 of those are male. Two of the women share a mentor. So how am I supposed to get 5 pairs out of that?? So what do I do? The only ideas I have are to add men and/or to add secondary. But after all the fuss I've made about only women, I don't see how my conceptual frame would stand adding men. And I know that there are different issues at secondary, so what do I do? I'm really pissed off that of all the years for the population to drop, it's my year!! The year when I needed about 35 or 30 pairs to draw from. So, I'm in this panic and I don't know what to do.

Fortunately, my dissertation advisory committee took a more reasoned approach, as did I when I calmed down and really looked at the problem. My decision was to retain the single gender focus I had originally decided upon and to broaden my participant pool to include elementary and secondary women teachers.

The Participants

Ultimately, thirteen women teachers became participants in the study. Of these, two dyads were secondary and the others elementary. Of the elementary participants, there was one triad, consisting of a beginning teacher and two mentors. This was an unusual situation, which is further described in Chapter 6. I later excluded the data from one elementary pair, because I discovered that the beginning teacher had in fact taught for several years in another province. While their story was very interesting, since the mentor and beginning teacher taught at different schools and had distinctive teaching assignments, I felt they did not fit the criteria closely enough. I did continue their interview sequence and shared their transcripts with them.

Although I did not ask for extensive personal information, through observation and free disclosure I learned that the participants' ages ranged from the mid-twenties to the mid-fifties. Five of the six mentors were married, and none of the beginning teachers were, although one was divorced and a parent of young children. One mentor also was a mother of young children and two had grown up children. The mentors had been teaching from

five to twenty plus years. Two mentors were women I knew well; I had worked with both and considered them to be friends. This was probably why they volunteered to participate in the study, although each was also interested in research and reflective practice as well.

Issue: Researching a Familiar Education Setting

Earlier, I referred to methodological issues that I anticipated might emerge for me during this research study. These issues resulted from my decision to undertake the study within a familiar educational setting: within a program that I coordinated and in my own school district. A familiar educational setting is one in which the researcher is working or has worked in the recent past. It is one in which the researcher or participants believe the researcher has membership. For a teacher, a familiar educational setting would be a school in which she was teaching or had taught. For a principal, a familiar educational setting would be a school in which she was or had been an administrator or a teacher. For a university faculty member, a familiar educational setting would be a university classroom or department or another educational setting in which she had worked recently. We are conducting research in familiar educational settings when we study our students, our colleagues or our specific educational cultures. This was clearly the case for me in this study.

A great deal of educational research, and particularly a great deal of qualitative educational research, is undertaken in familiar settings. This comes as no surprise. As educators, we are interested in our own work, and the opportunity to conduct research within the context of our work provides a rich learning experience. Teachers often want to study their own students, whether the students are in pre-school or graduate school. There is the prospect of learning something that will change and improve our practice, to find out what is working well and what might be better done another way. In this sense, research in familiar settings is praxis, a form of "critical reflection on practice" (Lather, 1986, p. 43). A significant factor in my choosing this research topic was to improve the mentoring program I was coordinating.

Familiar settings sometimes come with open doors. We may personally know the gatekeepers (as I did) and the procedures for gaining entry (Bernard, 1994) and we may find subjects more willing to participate. Several of the mentor teachers in the study were colleagues I knew well. Others liked the program and wanted to support its development through their participation. Knowing the context helps researcher know if a particular setting is a likely location for our research: whether it has the program or population we want to study. This was so in Portal. It was one of very few districts in BC that had a mentoring program.

Through the publication of research findings, there is the opportunity to share our successes and to present our concerns to peers who may offer new ideas and challenge our thinking. When we desire to conduct research in current or previous settings in which we have worked, these settings must be acknowledged as familiar, and as carrying both benefits and risks for the researcher, the researched and the reader of the research. I will explore the risks of conducting research in familiar educational settings as they emerged in my study throughout this chapter and the entire paper.

Case study research is a particularly useful methodology in familiar settings. For those educators seeking increased understanding about a setting in which they work, case study research provides an opportunity to collect a variety of data within that context and to analyze these data holistically. In familiar settings, a researcher is well positioned to determine the context and boundaries of a case. When educators study a familiar context, they are involved in a kind of teacher research, a study of the practice with which they are or have been involved. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) suggested that, "almost by definition, teacher research is case study research. The unit of analysis is typically the individual child, the classroom or the school" (p. 59). In this study, the unit of analysis is the mentoring dyad or triad. The purpose of research in familiar settings may be to take action: to find a better solution to a problem of practice, to reveal the complexities of a situation to others and/or to increase understanding. Cochran-Smith and Lytle titled their study of teacher researchers, "Inside/outside: Teacher research and knowledge", a

comment on the dual roles undertaken by practitioners researching their own work. They described the teacher researcher as a "permanent and observant participant" (Florio-Ruane & Walsh, as cited in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p.60).

Traditionally, in anthropology, qualitative research is undertaken by non-members of a culture, by "outsiders." This has been assumed to be the case in education as well. But even a cursory examination of qualitative research in education reveals that many studies are authored by those with a personal/professional interest in the context: teachers study their classrooms, administrators study their schools, university faculty study their students. In such contexts, researchers are not outsiders, we are insiders too. We are taking on a dual role, that of *insider-outsider*. Rather than being the traditional outsider of anthropology fieldwork, researchers in familiar setting are cast as insider-outsiders: *insiders* through our current or previous connections with the setting, and *outsiders* as we are taking on different roles as researchers within that setting.

As I was to discover, this dual status carries a set of dilemmas that must be addressed in research in familiar educational settings. There are a number of important issues that researchers can anticipate. Other issues will emerge through the course of the study and researchers must be prepared to respond at the time of their emergence. I have described the processes through which my research interest emerged and the ways I gained access. Undoubtedly, the fact that I was researching within a very familiar setting profoundly affected my research experience. As I have stated, several of the mentors were close colleagues and friends. I was known by other participants when I entered schools to conduct interviews. The familiar nature of the context was both an asset and detriment. My insider-outsider status required a continual interrogation of my positionality and its effect on the study.

Issue: Researcher Positionality

Journal entry

Oct 1, 1996

I had my first opportunity to speak to teachers about my research. I think I was nervous and did not sound like a competent researcher. Only one pair has returned my form so far. I spoke to the secondary group the next day as well. I think I sounded better, but guess what—only one pair from that day too. And I have to admit that both volunteer mentors are friends of mine. I guess I need to cultivate more friends! So much for the advantages of working in a familiar setting. On Friday I plan to phone some others to see if I can drum up interest. It feels like an inauspicious beginning.

The matter of positionality or status of the researcher is a central concern for qualitative researchers. "Insider" status (Wolcott, 1985) is problematic for researchers and research participants. Wolcott argued that being a member of school culture leads to "being so totally immersed in and committed to formal education, they [professional educators] are as likely to 'discover' school culture as Kluckhohn's proverbial fish are likely to discover water" (p. 198). Insider positionality brings to question one's capacity to really see what is going on in a setting and thus, to conduct a valid study. While a researcher must consider her own positionality in a familiar setting, the research participants will also be involved in defining the researcher's role. Others will see us in the research setting as insiders or as outsiders, regardless of our own conclusions about our status. I found that at least one participant, Tie, initially and regularly confused my role as a researcher in the interviews with my role within the school district. She frequently admonished me about what the district should be doing in a variety of areas, completely unrelated to mentoring.

The role dilemma is not solved by seeing ourselves or by being seen as outsiders. hooks (1988) had an ethical concern about outsider research, which also has implications for trustworthiness: "When we write about the experiences of a group to which we do not belong, we should think about the ethics of our action, considering whether or not our work will be used to reinforce and perpetuate domination" (p. 43). The issue of speaking

for others is sharpened when the others for whom we are speaking are our students or colleagues, since we must work in relationship with them as well as study them.

Christman (1988) contended that distinctions between who is an insider and who is an outsider are blurred. She suggested a continuum rather than a dichotomy: "It is not the scientific detachment of the researcher as a complete stranger that insures validity, but knowledge of where one is along as many dimensions of that continuum as possible" (p. 73). Further, Christman refuted the traditional research position (outsiders are best) as it implies that "participation could be learned, but detachment. . . could not. An outsider could be made an insider, but never the reverse." (p. 73). It seems that, "there is no final answer on whether it's good or bad to study your own culture" (Bernard, 1994, p. 154). A researcher's status as an insider-outsider needs to be identified and continuously reviewed because the researcher's perspective always influences data collection and interpretation.

One significant issue I dealt with throughout the research study and writing process was how much personal information about participants to divulge. Revealing information such as ethnicity, marriage status, and even specific subjects or grade levels taught could have the effect of jeopardizing anonymity within the familiar educational setting of the study. Not to include any such information would have left the cases unrealistic and barren. As a researcher in a familiar setting, I found that my desire to include large extracts of raw data bumped up against the need to maintain participant anonymity. The inclusion of lengthy excerpts of raw data necessitated the publication of intimate details that would be revealing to others in the setting. Thus, while including such data had the potential to enhance the quality of the study, I felt that this practice had to be carefully considered and cautiously undertaken. Even then, I found that certain details of demographic information had to be excluded, unless there was significant impact on the cases being developed.

The Interviews

The data collection process for the study consisted of a series of qualitative interviews with each participant as well as with pairs of teachers. I interviewed individuals in October/November, in January/February and April/May. Because one mentor (Elizabeth) was on a personal leave from February until April, I was not able to hold that dyad's interviews on this same schedule. Instead, Maggie and Elizabeth's second interviews were in early May and the third interviews were in mid June. I held the joint interviews with the dyads in November and February or March. This sequence was intended to provide an overview of much of the first year teaching experience and the mentoring experience, giving me eight interviews within each dyad and eleven with the one triad. I did not divulge what was discussed in the individual interviews within the joint interviews, although frequently the individuals themselves did.

To gain a deeper sense of what happened between the mentors and beginning teachers, I also asked each dyad to record one of their conversations to share with me and provided tape recorders to each dyad. I suggested they choose a conversation that they felt comfortable allowing me to listen to. In fact, only one pair did record a conversation. The others all intended to, but later reported that because so much of their mentoring was spontaneous, they did not record a conversation.

All interviews were tape recorded with the consent of the participants and took place at locations agreed to by the individuals involved. I initially hesitated to use school settings, since I felt this might jeopardize the anonymity of the participants. However, most teachers preferred to meet at their schools. Since I was known to work with beginning teachers and since I often visited schools in my role as Curriculum Coordinator, my presence in schools did not raise any questions. The interviews were later transcribed. The transcripts were sent to each teacher and teachers were invited to respond to the transcripts and, if they desired, prohibit the use of any sections. No one did so.

The interviews were semi-structured (Bernard, 1994), with a prepared but adjustable interview protocol for each interview in the sequence. The protocols are included in

Appendix A. I used the same general framework for all participants, but retained a degree of flexibility to follow threads that were suggested by the respondents. The purpose of this level of standardization within the interviews was to facilitate the revelation of common themes as well as unique experiences. However, the flexibility proved to be essential in at least one particular instance, the case of Sue Ann, Emily and Tie, which I will discuss in Chapter 6. I limited interviews to a maximum of one hour. Based on the pilot studies, upon research literature, and upon personal experience, I knew that beginning teachers have very little free time and I didn't want to impose unnecessarily.

Each interview centred on three or four questions. Limiting the number of questions permitted me to probe for further information and follow the lead of the respondents. It allowed the interviews to unfold in a conversational manner. In general, at least one question each time was a "grand tour" question (Spradley, as cited in Bernard, 1994), such as one for the beginning teachers, "Take me through a typical day in your life." In each interview I also made it a practice to ask if there was any thing else the interviewee would like to tell me. This question frequently drew out information I had not thought to ask about, yet that was invaluable to the study.

In all, I completed 51 interviews. This number of interviews resulted in many hours of transcribing and produced a considerable amount of data. As a researcher with a physical limitation (arthritis), the sheer volume of data to be transcribed was daunting.

Fortunately, I had two assistants, who supported me in this work, although I undertook the majority of it myself. In addition to the tapes and transcriptions, I recorded and then transcribed personal fieldnotes following each interview and maintained a research journal. These written data proved particularly useful when one of the interview tapes malfunctioned and I lost some tape-recorded data.

The interview process was lengthy, illuminating and challenging. As I have previously stated, my positionality as an insider-outsider was a complicating factor. During the interviews, I experienced this paradox as a dilemma regarding reciprocity.

Issue: Reciprocity

Reciprocity between the researcher and the participants is both an issue of ethics and an issue of validity. Reciprocity supports the generation of richer data and more believable theory: "When the researcher moves from the status of stranger to friend [she is] able to gather personal knowledge from subjects more easily" (Lather, 1991, p. 57). However, Fine (1994) described the researcher-researched relationship as problematic: "'Relations between' get us 'better' data, limit what we feel free to say, expand our minds and constrict our mouths, engage us in intimacy and seduce us into complicity, make us quick to interpret and hesitant to write" (p. 72). Lather (1991) suggested that reciprocity "operates at two primary points. . . the junctures between researcher and researched and data and theory" (p. 57). The first juncture deals with relationship between persons. The second involves people looking at the data gathered and the interpretations developed and will be discussed later as "dialectical theory building" (p. 55).

This issue of reciprocity among people is unquestionably further complicated by the duality of the insider-outsider role, in which the researcher is at once the researcher and also the teacher, supervisor and/or colleague. In my study, as I have alluded, the issue of duality complicated my work. The teachers who participated in my study worked with me in both my researcher role as well as my pedagogical role as a coordinator of the program. In addition, the research participants were required to take on a dual relationship with me as the researcher. In one sense they were the researched, in the other they were and are colleagues.

Power can become a critical element within this dual relationship. The research role carries power, as does the pedagogical or supervisory role, but, "often these power relations are hidden, because the researcher's power is often 'transparent, unspoken'" (Gorelick, as cited in Wolf, 1996, p. 19). Fine asked researchers to consider, "whose lives get displayed and whose lives get protected?" (p. 73). The coordinator role I held was largely administrative and supportive rather than authoritative, that is, I did not have power or authority to be critical of teachers' work. However, I was an experienced teacher and I did work at the school board office. It was important that I maintained

confidentiality and assured participants that I was doing so. This became troubling as I developed the cases and interpretations, as I will describe later in this chapter. There were no instances when I was aware of participants' uneasiness about my dual role; in fact many participants saw the research as part of my coordination. They were helping me to know more about their experiences so that I could improve the program for other beginning teachers and mentors. In response to Fine's concern regarding whose lives are portrayed and protected in a research study, I have attempted to display aspects of my life as the researcher and to conceal parts of the teachers' lives.

Based on an assumption that "someone other than the researcher should benefit" (Wolf, 1996, p. 24), reciprocity between persons may take various forms. The researcher can give back to the participants. The teachers in my study quite reasonably expected me to continue to offer support when I was acting as a researcher. They asked me questions and talked through problems with me. In some instances this provided an opportunity for the participant to reflect on her experiences for her own benefit. There were also numerous examples in the interviews where I moved from a *researcher* role to an advising role, providing information about resources and school district procedures, and in many instances, advice. I classified these as "Merrilee mentors." In providing advice, I broke Bernard's 'rule' to, "get an informant on to a topic of interest and get out of the way" (p. 212). But an ethical issue seemed to be involved for me. I felt and continue to feel that "a degree of reciprocity was required in our relations" (Young & Tardif, 1992, p. 142).

Another form of reciprocity involves the researcher disclosing details about her own life to the participants. I was asked in the interviews about my experiences as a beginning teacher and as a mentor. I was asked about my family and my work. I was asked about my dual status as student and as teacher. I initially struggled with concerns regarding interventions within my researcher role, but finally concluded that for the interviews to maintain a conversational form there were times that I had to respond as well as inquire. Further it seemed unethical for me to withhold information I could easily provide. I was constantly aware of the need for caution and intentionality in the interviews and reflected on each interview in my research journal.

I believe that intentionality is central to the interview process because the researcher's "apparently harmless remarks may somehow rather inhibit than encourage" (Young & Tardif, 1992, p. 142). A participant may be reluctant to describe her own experiences if she feels they differ greatly from those of the researcher. The opposite effect is a concern as well. Finch (as cited in Christman, 1980) suggested that there are ethical concerns for feminist researchers when developing relationships between researcher and researched lead informants to be very candid. An experience early in the study highlighted the concern regarding participant candidacy and disclosure. During one interview a beginning teacher became distressed and began to cry and I elected to turn off the tape recorder and just listen to her. It seemed too invasive to record her anguish. This was one time when "Merrilee mentored." Another time I sat and listened to an extremely hostile exchange that to this day feels toxic to listen to or read. I continue to wonder if I should or could have intervened to prevent it.

A final form of reciprocity involves giving back transcripts, which was discussed earlier in this chapter. All of these forms of giving back have downsides. For example, even giving back transcripts not unproblematic. There can be a problem of participants seeing their utterances for the first time, wanting "to 'unsay' their words" (Tripp, 1983, in Lather, 1991, p. 58). Although no one chose in my study chose to withdraw sections of their transcripts, I was always alert to the possibility.

Unlike researchers in unfamiliar settings, who have the luxury of retreating from the field upon the completion of research, in a familiar setting, the researcher may want to continue to work as usual. Therefore, considering issues of reciprocity is pragmatic as well as theoretical. While reciprocity appears to be a prudent approach and one which researchers in familiar settings must undertake, I have shown that it is not without dilemmas. Christman (1988) explored the issue of reciprocity in researcher-researched relationships, saying, "observation in any research situation has its own flavour—with the issues of reciprocity, researcher role, and ethics being played out in ways unique to the setting and those participants" (p. 79). As a researcher in a familiar setting, I was aware

that I might live long with the consequences of my research decisions and that, while reciprocity was essential, it was not a solution to the dilemmas imposed by the familiar setting.

Data Analysis

I began the process of data analysis with three principles in mind. The first was a strong intention to let the teachers' stories be heard. This intent was partly selfish: I wanted to know more about how mentors and beginning teachers experienced mentoring. Knowing some of the individuals involved, I anticipated that they would be able to describe their experiences with perceptiveness and sensibility. I wanted this perceptiveness and sensibility to be recorded, preserved, and heard. The second principle I followed was "flexible theory-building" (Lather, 1991, p. 54). I have previously described this principle, which requires that one's "a priori theories" be considered "dialectically with the experiences of the participants" rather than becoming "the container into which the data must be poured" (Lather, 1991, p. 62). The third principle was to consider what Anderson and Jack (1991) referred to as "conflicting perspectives:"

A woman's discussion of her life may combine two separate, often *conflicting perspectives*: one framed in concepts and values that reflect men's dominant position in the culture, and one informed by the more immediate realities of a woman's personal experience. (p. 11)

Anderson and Jack found in their own work that conversational constraints against "prying", resulted in transcripts that lacked "the complex web of feelings and contradictions behind [women's] familiar stories" (p. 13). I hoped that ongoing analysis during the interview timeline would facilitate returning to topics where conflicting perspectives emerged.

My plan was for data analysis to be continuing and dialogical. I wanted as much as possible, to negotiate meanings with the beginning teachers and the mentor teachers, by "recycl[ing] descriptions, emerging analysis and conclusions" (Lather, 1991, p. 61). This recycling was to become extremely problematic because of the timeline of the study and

the sheer amount of data to be transcribed. Unfortunately I could not provide transcripts as quickly as I had hoped. Thus, while all transcripts were eventually provided to participants, the time line was unsatisfactory. Instead at each interview I reviewed what we had talked about the last time. In addition, many topics were returned to by participants and new information was added to the cases as it was provided.

The actual process of data analysis was eclectic or ad hoc (Kvale, 1996), involving "the ad hoc use of different approaches and techniques for meaning generation" (p. 203). My process involved listening to the taped interviews and reading over the transcripts repeatedly until I had a good awareness of the data. As I read and listened I made informal notes of the stories, metaphors, conflicts and themes I could distill from the material. I compared these to my initial impressions as recorded in my field notes.

Following this initial engagement with the data, I worked through the transcripts more systematically, using four major strategies. These were "meaning categorization", "meaning condensation", "narrative structuring" and "meaning interpretation" (Kvale, 1996, p. 192-193). As I read through each transcript, I created descriptors that represented the themes of natural sections of text. I recorded theme descriptors from all of the transcripts of a case and gathered the theme descriptors together on large charts. By viewing all of the thematic descriptors of a case, I was able to note which themes permeated the case and which appeared only a few times.

Several kinds of themes emerged. One classification illuminated contextual factors that seemed to have an impact on the mentorship. These included among others, when and how the beginning teacher was hired, how the mentor was selected, what the beginning teacher's life was like, and supports the beginning teacher had. A second set of themes illustrated how the mentor and beginning teacher described and conceptualized their own and the other's role within the relationship. A sampling of these themes is: "mentor role–non-judgmental", "mentor role–confidentiality", "mentor role–encouraging risk

taking", "beginning teacher role–ask questions", and "beginning teacher role– initiate." A third group of themes was more eclectic. It included metaphors, emotions about teaching, and instances of my moving into a mentoring role.

The fourth set of themes, which formed the vast majority, I called "knowledge construction episodes" or "KCEs." These refer to topics, events and themes that both teachers within the dyad referred to over time. They seemed to hold great significance for the pair and were pivotal in the development of the relationship. Generally, both partners spoke of learning a lot through conversations and activities the two undertook together. For Samantha and Marie, the dyad described in Chapter 5, some knowledge construction episodes were:

1. Plagiarism/racism, a theme that refers to ongoing conversations between Marie and Samantha about a series of events at the school involving instances of overt teacher racism related to student plagiarism,
2. Phoning parents, an early topic that seemed central to relationship development for Marie and Samantha, and
3. Report cards, a topic that emerged during each semester as Marie developed marks for her students.

In analyzing the KCEs, which were distilled from rich ongoing conversation among the mentor, the beginning teacher and the researcher, I could consider what knowledge was being communicated or constructed, what events and actors precipitated the episode, how the knowledge construction was facilitated and how the beginning teacher and mentor experienced the episodes. The KCEs could be tracked over the set of interviews within a case. Some KCEs appeared across other cases as well, such as phoning parents and report cards.

The identification of the KCEs and the development of the other thematic codes, while crucial to understanding the cases, were insufficient as analytical strategies because they violated the completeness and natural meaning of the cases. To regain those qualities, it was essential to return to the transcripts for the actual language of the teachers involved.

At this point, I used a "meaning condensation" (Kvale, 1996) strategy to select lengthy quotations from the cases that represented the themes. By using the teachers' own words, I attempted to determine and preserve "natural meaning units" (Kvale, p. 194).

The charting of the themes also revealed their temporal order. This temporal thematization was significant as the study followed the beginning teachers and the mentorships over the first year of teaching. I expected certain topics and issues to be more important at different times of the school year. To maintain the integrity of each mentoring experience, I reorganized the themes in their temporal order and structured the cases in a modified narrative form. The purpose of the narrative form was to retain the natural flow of events and deepening of relationships through the school year, to provide the thick description I felt essential to telling the stories. This step required "a condensation or a reconstruction of the many tales told by the different subjects into a richer, more condensed and coherent story than the scattered stories of the separate interviewees" (Kvale, p. 199). I selected sections of text from both the mentors and the beginning teachers that narrated the emergence and development of each theme. In some cases, long sections of interview data were included. This was in keeping with Kvale's suggestion that, "when spontaneous stories appear during interviews, the interviewer can encourage the subjects to let their stories unfold" (p. 200). Thus, my challenge as researcher was to be both "a 'narrative-finder'—looking for narratives contained in the interviews, and. . . a 'narrative-creator'—molding the many different happenings into coherent stories" (p. 201).

Finally, as I alluded to in my second principle for analysis, I applied feminist theoretical conceptions, as they were pertinent, contributing to a deeper understanding of the particular phenomenon under study. Kvale described this technique as:

Meaning interpretation [which] goes beyond a structuring of the manifest meanings of a text to deeper and more or less speculative interpretations of the text. . . . In contrast to the decontextualization of statements by categorization, interpretation recontextualizes the statements within broader frames of reference. (p. 193)

In this study, I bring a feminist perspective on pedagogy and epistemology to the analysis of the cases. I have argued that such an analysis will reveal insights beneath the more readily apparent surface level ones. While the participants did not offer feminist interpretations for their own work, I believed that such an analysis would add to the richness of the cases and to my theory building. Gal (as cited in Biklen, 1995) suggested that:

Gender, as “a system of culturally constructed relations of power produced and reproduced in interactions between and among men and women,” is also present in the lives of teachers as adults working in schools. That is, teachers do not have to focus on gender for it to significantly mark their lives. (p. 6)

The lack of explicit reference to gender (or race, as in the case of Marie and Samantha's racism and plagiarism issue) may be an indication of "conflicting perspectives" (Anderson & Jack, 1991), which I earlier described as my third analytical principle.

It was these four strategies, meaning categorization, meaning condensation, narrative structuring, and meaning interpretation that formed the substantive framework for analysis of the cases. While I have described the strategies as functioning sequentially, in fact, the analysis was more interactive and recursive as I tried to categorize, concentrate, understand and interpret the complexities of the individual experiences of mentoring described by the participants.

Trustworthiness of the Study

All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner. . . . Studies must be believed and trusted; they need to present insights and conclusions that ring true to readers, educators, and other researchers. (Merriam, 1988, p. 164)

Given the discussion in this chapter of some of the issues related to this study's situatedness in a familiar educational setting, I conclude the chapter by addressing my

responsibilities as a researcher to the larger research community and to the reader. In particular, I address three issues drawn from Merriam (1990). These are "internal validity" or "credibility" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995), "reliability" or "dependability" (from Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and "external validity" or "transferability" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Together, these issues highlight concern for empirical rigour or trustworthiness within qualitative research. In the following section, I present some of the current constructs of validity and reliability in qualitative research and provide links to my own research design.

Merriam (1988) suggested it is the "applied nature of educational inquiry. . . [that] makes it imperative that researchers and others be able to trust the results of research—to feel confident that the study is valid and reliable" (p.164). Most authors agree that traditional standards of objectivity and replicability cannot appropriately be applied in qualitative research (Lather, 1991; Merriam, 1988) and pose alternate "canons" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Sanjek, 1990) and self-corrective techniques (Lather, 1991) to strengthen trustworthiness.

As related above, three elements of trustworthiness are commonly identified. These are: internal validity—the question of if "the findings capture what is really there" (Merriam, 1988, p. 166), reliability—"the extent to which one's findings can be replicated" (p. 170), and external validity—the concern about if and how "the findings of one study can be applied to other situations" (p. 173). A variety of practices is recommended to strengthen (although not to ensure) the believability of qualitative research. I have integrated many of these practices into my research design.

Internal Validity

In addressing internal validity, researchers strive to show that their findings are accurate representations of the phenomena studied. Merriam (1988) contended that, "one of the assumptions underlying qualitative research is that reality is holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing" (p. 167). It is therefore inappropriate to attempt to present one *true* representation of reality. Marshall and Rossman (1995) substituted the idea of

"credibility" for internal validity. Citing Lincoln and Guba (1985), they advised researchers to aim to "demonstrate that the inquiry was conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the subject [or phenomenon] was accurately identified and described" (p. 143). A collection of practices is recommended to further internal validity or credibility. The practices include: spending sufficient time in the field (Ely, with Anzul, Friedman, Gardner & Steinmetz, 1991; Merriam, 1988), involving research participants (Lather, 1991; Merriam, 1988), triangulation (Ely et al., 1991; Lather, 1991; Merriam, 1988), and searching for negative cases (Ely et al., 1991; Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

Time in the field

Spending sufficient time in the field means gathering data over a long enough period of time to document all of the important features of a case. Ely et al. (1991) contended that "one criterion for being credible is to engage in collecting data for such duration and in such ways that these are sufficient to help us understand what we set out to study" (p. 158). However, they also stated that, "what 'sufficient' means is often perplexing" (p.158). In a familiar setting, a researcher may begin by *knowing* what she will find, and in this instance, sufficient time might be time enough to be surprised into really looking and listening for what is happening. Time in the field is a necessary, but not sufficient element of internal validity.

In my study, I spent eight years "in the field," first as I mentored Kyra and then as I coordinated the mentoring program. I thought I knew the landscape well but I did not know what went on inside other mentorships. I had just one school year to collect data. While some mentorships do continue after one year (as did mine with Kyra) most dissipate as the beginning teacher moves into a second year. My research involved connecting with the mentoring dyads as soon as possible in the school year and following them through the year of their relationship. Spending sufficient time in the field meant that I scheduled as many interviews during the year as I felt teachers could reasonably manage. I had to resist the impulse to add more since to do so might have over-burdened

the participants. Although I believed I knew what I might find within the mentorships, there were many surprises, the worst of which was that having a mentor may create more difficulties for a beginning teacher.

Involving research participants

In determining when *enough is enough* in terms of data collection and in developing appropriate interpretations of data, a researcher may draw on the expertise of the research participants in a familiar setting. Lather (1991) asked researchers to reconsider the manner in which theory is constructed from data. She suggested the conception of *dialogic research* in which "respondents are actively involved in the construction and validation of meaning" (p. 63). This is a more intense form of reciprocity because it engages research participants in the construction of theory.

In this study, I provided to the participants copies of all of their own transcripts. I encouraged but did not receive any direct responses to the transcripts, although I knew most participants did read them as many asked who their pseudonyms referred to (having apparently forgotten the pseudonyms they chose). At the conclusion of the interview process I sent a completion survey to each participant, again asking for feedback on both the interview process and content. The survey is included in Appendix B.

Triangulation

Triangulation involves "using multiple investigators, multiple sources of data, or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings" (Merriam, 1988, p. 169). Including research participants in analysis and theory building may provide two forms of triangulation: "investigator triangulation"—by including different evaluators; and "theory triangulation"—by revealing different perspectives on the same data (Patton, as cited in Yin, 1994). If case studies are to speak to and about the participants, the resultant theory must evoke the situation and the setting studied, not only for the researcher, but also for the researched. Ely et al., (1991) noted that "no matter how unobtrusive and non-judgmental [the researcher's] presence is, it is heightening [the participant's] own awareness of what he is doing. . . . Once the reflective mode is introduced, this impulse

toward examination and impetus to change is inevitable and inexorable" (p. 196). I found that the participants reflected in different ways on the interview process between interviews. Elizabeth kept a journal, which she referred to during interviews. Marie phoned me a few days ahead of her interview to ask for the questions, so she could write out some notes for her responses. Taylor usually told me at the beginning of each interview that she had several things she wanted to be sure to say.

One of the significant forms of triangulation within this study was the sequence of interviews with the same participants. For example, the beginning teacher might introduce a topic in her interview. It would often be picked up by the mentor in her interview and sometimes the exact words would be used. The same topic would continue to be referenced as the interviews proceeded. A strong example of this is the plagiarism and racism theme in Marie and Samantha's case.

Searching for negative cases

By being alert to discrepancies or "negative cases", we are led to reexamine findings and emerging theories. "There are three outcomes that might result from a triangulation strategy. . . convergence, inconsistency, and contradiction" (Matheson, as cited in Ely et al., 1991). There is a "danger of throwing out useful information" (Ely et al., 1991, p. 98) when researchers are excessively focussed on "finding convergent evidence." Lather (1991) described "face validity" as "a 'click of recognition' and a 'yes, of course' instead of a 'yes, but'" (p. 67) and saw face validity as being "operationalized by recycling description, emerging analysis and conclusions back through at least a subsample of respondents" (p. 67). In a familiar setting, a diligent search for negative cases balances a tendency for face validity to come at the cost of complexity and contradiction. Through the *yes, buts* of participants the researcher is able to struggle with contradictory evidence which must either help to reform categories or be reported as anomalous.

Originally, in designing this study, I intended to provide my analysis to participants and invite their responses, both agreements and disagreements. It soon became apparent that this plan was highly problematic as participants disclosed in their individual interviews

information they did not want to discuss openly with their partners. I began to realize that to return my analysis to participants could have two serious effects. First, it would jeopardize the relationships that were being constructed. Many participants attended rigorously to the quality of their relationships. For example, in her first interview, Elizabeth expressed her concern about Maggie reading what was said about her teaching. This concern was so strong that at one point she asked that the tape recorder be turned off while we discussed the worry. However, after reading the transcript she did not request any changes or deletions. Over time, it seemed, the concerns lessened. Another example of this concern for relationship was Jenny and Michelle's refusal to relinquish their mentorship despite extreme challenges in finding time to meet together.

Many feminist authors have described the importance women teachers in particular (Biklen, 1995; Griffin, 1997) and women in general (Hochschild, 1996) place on

relationship. Attributing such a focus on relationship to women is problematic, according to S. Acker (1995), "on grounds of tendencies toward essentialism. . . and the difficulties of dealing with diversity among women" (p. 120), however many of the women in this study placed a high priority on maintaining relationship. Fractures to some mentorships did developed (due to other causes) and the mentorships were seriously impaired. I did not want to precipitate other fractures.

The second reason for not returning analyses to participants has to do with the quality of the data. I worried that some participants might withdraw sections of their transcripts, due to their immediate concern for the relationships. Yet those troubling sections of text contain stories that are important to tell. Mentoring is not unproblematic. The authentic struggles need to be explored to determine what happened and to ponder why. Only then will we know what happens within mentorships, a necessary step to better supporting beginning teachers and mentors. After much deliberation and with a nagging sense of discomfort, I decided not to return my analyses to the participants during my writing process.

The internal validity of this study is built upon the practices of spending sufficient time in the field, involving research participants, triangulation, and searching for negative cases. These practices are not isolated; instead they are interconnected and mutually supporting. In addition, the concern for internal validity or credibility flows into the next issue I will discuss, the concern for reliability.

Reliability

In considering reliability, we ask the question, "If the study is repeated, will it yield the same results?" (Merriam, 1988, p. 170). In traditional research, this is the issue of replicability. Since qualitative research assumes multiple valid interpretations and views the researcher as the primary research instrument (Merriam, 1988), the issues of reliability shift: "Rather than demanding that outsiders get the same results, one wishes outsiders to concur that, given the data collected, the results make sense- they are

consistent and dependable" (Merriam, 1988, p. 172). This is the alternate conception of "dependability" or "consistency" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A variety of practices is recommended to fortify dependability, including explicating the researcher's positionality (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Merriam, 1988; Sanjek, 1990), triangulation (Lather, 1991; Merriam, 1988; Sanjek, 1990), including fieldnote evidence (Sanjek, 1990), and providing an "audit trail" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1994).

Explicating the researcher's positionality

It is especially critical that researchers in familiar settings identify their positionality, as I have discussed earlier in this chapter. Familiarity does make a difference, and readers have a right to be aware of the positionality of the researcher when they determine a study's trustworthiness. Sanjek (1990) referred to "theoretical candour" (p. 395), requiring the researcher to delineate the theories that underlie her decisions. Reliable or dependable studies are those in which a researcher struggles to develop and to describe her own assumptions about a setting and her own relationships within that setting.

In Chapters 1, 2 and 3, I have explicated the theoretical framework I am drawing upon in this study. I have been candid about my dual roles in the study and my relationships with the participants. In the case analysis I have sought to question my assumptions and to consider alternate interpretations. I have lived and worked with the data for over two years. This time has provided a distance from which I can re/view the stories. In addition, over that time, my positionality has changed. In April 1997, Portal school district underwent a set of cutbacks due to funding shortages. Mine was one of the positions eliminated within the district. Since September 1997, I have not worked in the district or with beginning teachers. Instead, I am now working in a university teacher education program. Although this experience was a personal crisis, it has provided a new standpoint from which to view mentoring in general and the data in particular.

Triangulation

I have already presented triangulation as a strategy for enhancing the internal validity of a study. Merriam (1988) argued that when "multiple methods of data collection and analysis are utilized" (p. 172), triangulation enhances dependability as well as internal validity.

Including fieldnote evidence

Sanjek (1990) considered the inclusion of large portions of fieldnotes or transcripts to be an important aspect of strengthening dependability in qualitative research studies. For researchers in familiar settings, the desire to include large extracts of raw data may bump up against a need to maintain participant anonymity because inclusion of lengthy excerpts of raw data will necessitate the publication of intimate details that will be revealing to others in the setting. Thus, while including data has the potential to enhance the dependability of study, this practice must be carefully considered and cautiously undertaken.

From the beginning, I believed it was important to tell these stories, as much as possible, in the words of the teachers. Thus, I have used lengthy excerpts of teacher discourse in the case studies, connected by brief researcher narration. I have told the stories as they

unfolded, from the beginnings to the endings. Themes are included sequentially as much as possible. The analysis of the case follows the case itself and I have balanced my analysis with that of the participants when they have offered it. To protect participant anonymity I have used pseudonyms for not only participants, but also schools, school principals and others named in the interviews. I have made minor alterations in contextual details such as food preferences, hometowns, car types etc. Also, the amount of time that has passed since the data were collected increases the likelihood that outsiders will not recall specific details since they tend to be internal to the relationships.

Providing an audit trail

The notion of an audit trail comes from Lincoln and Guba (1985) and requires a researcher to "describe in detail how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry" (Merriam, 1988, p. 172). Sanjek referred to this practice as explicating the "ethnographer's path" (p. 398) and described it as a thorough description of how a researcher moved through her study, who she spoke to, how she made decisions and so on. When well-written, such a description makes it possible for readers to follow the flow of a study and the flow of the researcher's thought process, so that they can determine more confidently if they accept the credibility of the study. The caution in utilizing this practice is that a well-described audit trail can increase the risk to anonymity for participants in familiar setting research.

Throughout this dissertation, I have attempted to reveal the decision-making processes I underwent, such as the choice I made in broadening my participant pool. I have included excerpts from my research journal and fieldnotes. By undertaking the practices of explicating my positionality, utilizing triangulation strategies, including fieldnote evidence, and providing an "audit trail," I am attempting to include sufficient data and explanation so readers can decide for themselves if the study is dependable. I do so cautiously. Researchers must study well and describe well because if readers decide that a study is not dependable or credible, the efforts of all the participants are lost. I turn now

to a further consideration of how readers make sense of the completed research study. In particular, I address the issue of external validity in case study research in familiar settings.

External Validity

In Chapter 1 and again at the beginning of this chapter, I expressed my passion for supporting beginning teachers and my strong attachment to the project of mentoring. I want this research study to contribute not only to the scholarship about mentoring, but also to its practice and policy. To accomplish this goal, this study must have convincing external validity. External validity or transferability is the issue of showing the applicability of the research findings beyond the specific case studied (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Marshall and Rossman contended that "a qualitative study's transferability or generalizability to other settings may be problematic" (p. 144), because qualitative research places a high value on context as a critical component of interpretation. Ely et al. (1991) agreed with this concern; their reminder is that a case study is intended to be "about a bounded system such as one person, one event, or one institution" and that the purpose of case study is "to illuminate important findings about that person or about the entire social unit" (p. 173). Thus, some authors argue that generalizability is a contentious issue for qualitative research, and in particular, for qualitative case study research. Merriam (1988) suggested four alternative conceptions of external validity.

The first of these is re-conceiving of generalization as presenting "working hypotheses" (Cronboch, as cited in Merriam, 1988). A working hypothesis suggests a way of looking at the case study that also provides a new lens for the reader to view a similar situation. I believe my frame of feminist pedagogy provides such a lens. The second conception is "concrete universals" (Erickson, as cited in Merriam, 1988) which involves "studying a specific case in detail and then comparing it with other cases studied in equally great detail" (p. 176). Concrete universals emerge from multiple case studies that involve intra-case analysis. The cases presented in Chapters 5 and 6, "Marie and Samantha", and "Sue Ann, Tie and Emily" are written in depth to facilitate such comparison. The three cases

that follow in Chapter 7 are intended to provide deeper texture to the analysis. A third view of generalization is Stakes' (as cited by Merriam, 1988) notion of "naturalistic generalization," a form of generalization driven by the intrinsic desire of people to look for "patterns that explain their own experience as well as events in the world around them" (176). I hope that some of the patterns emerging from the five cases will resonate with readers' own experiences. The fourth form of generalization that Merriam posited is "reader generalizability" which involves leaving the extent to which a study's findings apply to other situations up to the people in those situations. This view of generalizability, from Wilson (1979), has already been presented as a strategy for dealing with issues of dependability. The previously stated caution about leaving the reader to assume what is really the researcher's responsibility also applies here.

However, given the applied nature of educational research (Merriam, 1988), it would seem that the reader has a critical, but not exclusive role to play in generalizing from qualitative research. Beyond the practices suggested to enhance internal validity and reliability, there is a final practice suggested in the literature that can provide readers with the substance that they need to form their own generalizations and to accept or disregard those drawn by the researcher. This is the inclusion of multiple case analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Merriam, 1988). Multiple case studies, such as Ayers' (1980) study of pre-school teachers, amplify the frame of reference for the researcher as well as for readers.

In designing my study, I wanted to include a number of cases to enable this kind of analysis. I felt that single case studies, such as those undertaken by Bullough (1989) and Jacka (1995) made important contributions to the scholarship about beginning teaching, but that multiple case studies are needed to better inform practice. On the other hand, I believed that survey style research would not provide the depth of detail I desired. I settled on six cases, one of which I was not able to use. Although I had originally hoped to work only with elementary cases, I now believe that the inclusion of two secondary

cases was fortuitous. These two cases increased the breadth, as we might expect, but surprisingly, they also increased the depth of the study, as I will explain in detail in Chapter 9.

Of the four conceptions of external validity described above, three are most applicable to this study: concrete universals, naturalistic generalization and reader generalizability. As I have explained, two of the cases are presented and analyzed in depth. These reveal the most contrasts. The other three cases are presented in less detail, but sufficient to suggest findings and draw conclusions across the five cases. What emerges may not be "universal," but it is certainly concrete, specific and well documented. The second form of external validity that is operational within this study is naturalistic generalization. I agree with Stakes (as cited in Merriam, 1988) that readers will seek their own patterns as they interact with this dissertation. Although I attempt to adhere to all of the practices that contribute to trustworthiness, I acknowledge that my interpretation is not only founded on the data and on my research experience, but also, as previously discussed, on my familiarity with the context and with mentoring as a practice. Compounding the complexity of my interpreting are my life experiences, which I cannot interrogate deeply here without losing focus on the stories I wish to tell. Readers with different experiences may draw alternate conclusions. This is reader generalizability, the third form of external validity I believe to be operational in this study. I argue that reader generalizability does not detract from my interpretation and I agree with Kagan (1992) that:

The themes I extract tell only one of the many stories that could have been constructed. In this sense, this is a somewhat subjective distillation. . . . I suggest that this does not testify to the weakness of the method. . . but does testify to the richness of the [data] (p. 131-132).

Others may indeed tell valid and important stories. It is not my desire to provide a conclusive *true* account of mentoring, but to broaden the discussion by suggesting another lens through which we may search.

Summary

In this chapter I have described and justified my research design and the research process for this study. Where there were discrepancies between the plan and the reality, I have explained both the reasons for the differences and the decision-making practices that led to the changes. It is my desire to produce a strong, well-articulated and trustworthy study. To accomplish such a goal in case study research in a familiar setting, I have argued that researchers must undertake such special responsibilities. Lather (1991) suggested that "researchers are not so much owners of data as they are 'majority shareholders' who must justify decisions and give participants a public forum for critique" (p. 58). In a familiar setting, where the researcher must also live and work alongside the research participants, one may freely be asked for such justification, both by those participants and by readers wondering why they should accept this interpretation of a case as believable. I contend that it is the researcher's responsibility to anticipate and respond to these queries. In a familiar setting we gain entry and find participants because we are trusted. Through the rest of the research process, including publishing a research report, we need to demonstrate that such trust is well founded in both the researcher and in the study. This is the responsibility I accepted in engaging in my study.

In the following chapters, the five cases will be developed and the mentoring stories told. Chapter 5 tells the story of Maggie and Samantha, two secondary teachers. Chapter 6 is the story of the only triad, Sue Ann, Emily and Tie, who are elementary teachers. Chapter 7 includes three cases—Taylor and Alisa, the other secondary dyad, Michelle and Jennie, and Maggie and Elizabeth. Each case is written using as much direct quotation as possible, with narration to integrate the themes and embed them in the conceptual framework I am developing. Each includes a description of the school context and the participants' backgrounds. Following this, the creation of the mentorship is explicated along with a description of the initial mentoring interactions and experiences. The themes are introduced in temporal sequence as the school year begins and advances. Any problems faced by the dyad are probed and the successes recounted. Finally the culmination of the school year is addressed and conclusions about the mentorship are suggested. It is there that my account of each story stops, although the mentorships do not

necessarily end. In some stories, we can predict a quick and perhaps relieving ending. In others, we can foresee a continuation of a rich collegial relationship or friendship:

I want to let you know that having you behind me never lets me be afraid to try new things and stretch my abilities. I hope next year in both our new journeys we can help each other along the way. (A beginning teacher, to her mentor)

CHAPTER FIVE: MARIE AND SAMANTHA*Journal entry*

October 30, 1996

Marie and Samantha were the first dyad to sign up for my research project. Perhaps this is because Sam and I worked together in the past; perhaps it was because Sam likes to be involved in a lot of activities. She has an amazing amount of energy. I'm glad she was interested and I hope that Marie is too. Sam should be the ideal mentor. She has worked both with experienced and student teachers and co-coordinated professional development projects. She also did her Masters thesis on teacher education. So, if anyone can be a successful mentor, it should be Sam!

November 12, 1996

I met Samantha in her classroom at three o'clock on Friday afternoon. This is a day that she typically goes to an arts and crafts club that another teacher hosts in the school. She asked if I would mind if she worked on her project, a paper angel, so through the interview she curled the paper strips that made up the angel's dress.

November 15, 1996

Marie's classroom is a small, internal classroom with no windows to the outside. There were lots of posters and other things up in her room, many of them made by the students. Marie had a great deal of difficulty selecting a name for herself but, looking at the posters of famous scientists that her students had done and that were displayed in her room, she finally selected Marie after Marie Curie.

The Characters and The Setting

Marie and Samantha taught at Sprucevale, a large secondary school. Samantha, a very experienced teacher, had been at the school for one year, as a Resource teacher¹. As a new graduate, Marie was fortunate in that she was hired during the summer to teach a specific science course on astronomy at Sprucevale. This was unusual: many beginning teachers are not hired until well into the fall term.

Samantha began teaching 14 years ago as a secondary general science teacher, following which she worked as a helping teacher and a university supervisor of student teachers. Samantha was involved in a number of professional organizations and was very active in her own professional development. Samantha was a bright, bubbly and articulate Chinese-Canadian woman. She had been married for several years and had a young child at home. In addition, she was expecting a new baby in February. Despite the busy-ness of her personal life, she was very excited to be mentoring a beginning teacher.

In part, her enthusiasm for the mentoring role was fueled by memories of her own mentors:

I had some very wonderful people in my teaching life. Mac Waterton was the very first colleague I met and the first thing he said was—at this school we share, here's the binders of resources. It was my first experience of people being that open with their time and energy. Then I went down the hall and another teacher gave me a big hug and said welcome to the school. . . . My first principal was fantastic. (S1, p. 7-8)

Perhaps Samantha was able to recognize the care she received from colleagues as a beginning teacher because her own life was imbued by an ethic of care (Noddings, 1984). She brought caring to her relationships because she felt she had been raised to be helpful to and caring of other people. Her mother had been a powerful influence in the development of this belief:

¹ A Resource teacher in the Portal district was one who assisted teachers in working with special needs students, both as they were integrated in regular courses and in a pull-out program in a separate resource room.

All my life, in my care at home my mother had always been very good about saying—be good to other people, always be good to other people, always be positive. When I started teaching, it was so much a human endeavor. . . . You've got to be congruent with your actions and words. When you say you're going to do something, whether it's for your kids or your colleagues, follow through. . . . So I think an important thing for teaching is to be congruent with your actions. Your actions must agree with your words and I would rather let my actions speak. (S1, p. 10-11)

Samantha had worked with teachers in a variety of professional development roles and she was able to articulate clearly her approach to mentoring. The intentionality of her actions came through as she spoke about the mentoring role:

I think my role as a mentor is to support her, to ponder with her when she is pondering and to give her some space to learn and to be there. . . . I don't treat her as a student teacher. I treat her definitely as an equal, like when we're both working on previews I say—I'd love to have your feedback and what you think of some of these activities. (S1 p. 4 & 7)

I try to share with her my experience through products [examples] as opposed to telling her. . . . I always say—I know that you're asking a lot of people for their opinion and advice and it's really important that you do, and then you've got to make your own decision. (S1, p. 14)

Marie was a new graduate from teacher education. She had completed her practicum in a neighboring community and was hired to Sprucevale to a full time teaching position. Marie was engaged to be married and her fiancé was living and working at a distant location. She lived at home, as a member of a closely knit Chinese-Canadian family, including a sister who was also a teacher and who was very supportive of Marie through her first year:

My sister went through Education. If I have things, I call her on the phone. . . . Everyday I do self-reflection. I don't write it down like the way they told us to in

practicum. Forget it! . . . For classroom management I talk to Samantha a little bit, but not that much. I talk to my sister mostly about those kinds of things. (M1, p. 18)

As previously stated, Marie was hired because of her background in one particular science subject area. Although she anticipated teaching other courses as well, she was specifically hired to teach that one particular science subject. As it turned out, due to a scheduling error at the school, the course was not offered. This led to a dilemma for Marie, and, when the time came for Marie to indicate who she would like as her mentor, as was the practice in the Portal program, the dilemma led to Marie choosing Samantha as her mentor.

Choosing a Mentor

Marie told how the dilemma unfolded:

Near the end of the first week John, the principal came in and he said—uh Marie, I got some bad news, your course won't be offered because the enrolment dropped from 18 to about 8. And then he goes—but also you're going to have to give up your grade 8 class, so you go from the 1.0 [a full time position] to the .71. And I go—oh there goes ten thousand dollars. But then he offered me—do I want to teach ESL Science² because they need 8 extra blocks and I wasn't sure at first because I thought—well I didn't have the background and my philosophy. I mean for the students, I wanted them to have the best education they can and have the best instructor they should be getting and I said—well I don't have an ESL background. But they gave me the weekend to think it over. Monday morning I was still thinking—well, the Science part I'm very comfortable with, the ESL Science part, but the language part in terms of the assessment, the evaluation, I lack theory and background in that area. So I wasn't sure. (M1, p. 3).

² ESL Science was a course for students who lacked the English vocabulary to succeed in regular science courses. It focused on strengthening science vocabulary while developing scientific understandings.

At this point in her decision, Marie happened to meet Samantha in the staffroom. Samantha told this part of the story and again, her valuing of care for others comes through in her actions:

How did I end up being a mentor? She asked me. . . . They asked her (to teach ESL) and there was nobody around to give her advice. So when she saw me she said what do you think of this and I said—you can do this. But anyway, she didn't ask me to be her mentor at that time. It was a couple of days after that. I didn't ever ask her why she chose me. I suspect it's because I took a real interest in making sure she got good work—a good diversity of work experience in her first year. I felt bad for her. . . she was hired full time and suddenly two of her classes got taken away. (S1, p. 1)

Marie was presented with a difficult decision for a beginning teacher. The assignment she expected disappeared due to confusion in scheduling. A further complication occurred in that another part of her assignment was given to a more senior teacher who faced a similar reduction of her/his assignment. Marie was left to decide whether to take on a new challenge with the ESL class or to drastically reduce her teaching load and her earnings. This dilemma is not uncommon for beginning teachers. It was Samantha who advised Marie to take on the new assignment by telling her that she believed Marie could do the job and that Samantha would support her. However, according to Marie, this was not the only event that led her to choose Samantha as her mentor:

I knew that I wanted Samantha as my mentor before that incident. Just from the way she was interacting with the new staff—very friendly, very warm, approachable and just really supportive. . . . So that lay in my mind—okay this is the sort of thing I want in my mentor, who's not going to be judgmental and can be supportive and just overall nice. I think that's the key thing. (MS1, p. 1)

Through Samantha and Marie's comments about the creation of this mentorship, it is obvious that Samantha's previous experiences had directed her towards a mode of "connected knowing" (Belenky et al., 1986). She was very focused on the others in her life, both in the personal and the professional realm, and in affiliating with them. Clinchy,

(1996) clarified "connected knowing as a rigorous, deliberate, and demanding *procedure*, a way of knowing that requires *work*" (p. 209). Certainly, Samantha's mother had encouraged her to be rigorous in her efforts to do for others. When Samantha had been a beginning teacher, colleagues supported her. This affiliation to others was evident in her early interactions with Marie. But beyond her sense of affiliation was a conscious, rigorous method of working in relationship with Marie.

First Samantha showed her interest in Marie. This was expressed as concern for the altered and inappropriate teaching assignment. The dilemma of accepting an inappropriate teaching challenge is common for beginning teachers (Cole, 1993; Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986). In an earlier internal evaluation of the Portal program, I had found that challenging teaching assignments, that is, those beyond the scope of the novice's teacher preparation, were a major cause of stress for beginning teachers. In advising Marie, Samantha recognized Marie's economic need to take the job and encouraged her to accept the position. At the same time she offered her support and expressed confidence that Marie could handle the challenge.

Marie responded consciously to this intentionality. We can recall her statement about observing how Samantha interacted with new, colleagues: "very friendly, very warm, approachable and just really supportive." Marie said of her observation: "That lay in my mind. Okay, this is the sort of thing I want in my mentor" (MS1, p. 1). This expression reveals the deliberate thinking going on in Marie's selection process. Yet the characteristics she was describing are affective in nature. This fusion of pedagogical elements with relationship being highlighted is reflective of feminist pedagogy (Gitlin & Thompson, 1995), as described in Chapter 3.

Beginning the Relationship

Marie and Samantha made an early connection through the experience of Marie's losing her astronomy course and taking on the ESL class. By October their relationship was fully in place. They engaged in a variety of activities together, taking advantage of the fact that Marie still had one non-teaching block and that Samantha was the Resource

teacher for two students in one of Marie's classes. Marie described their early relationship as follows:

It's very casual. It's not formal at all. We don't say—we're going to meet once a month and discuss my first year of teaching issues. It's more like—oh, there's Samantha after school or sometimes I drop in her D block if I have a student I'm concerned about because she's the Resource teacher for two of my students. . . . I think frequency-wise I think we go and talk to each other at least once a day unless we have lots and lots of meetings. But it's very casual. (MS1, p. 4)

To this description, Samantha added:

It's been very casual. Sometimes we sit beside each other in staff meetings, sometimes we sit in the same topic sharing groups, sometimes we talk about issues like at the pro-d day. . . and at other times we don't see each other. So, it's quite fluid. As the need arises she comes to me or I go to her. It's a good feeling. (S1, p. 6)

Clearly, the mentorship Marie and Samantha were co-constructing required a commitment of time. Marie had some time because she did not have a full time teaching load. She devoted her own time to the relationship. Samantha did not have this *free* time, but encouraged Marie to be with her during her teaching times. Samantha also devoted a great deal of personal time to Marie. As discussed in Chapter 3, the concern for time is endemic to mentoring (Hollingsworth, 1992), as it is with many aspects of teaching (Hargreaves, 1994). Time is needed for mentors to be available to offer support, respond to questions and to share resources. This offering of time leads to the development of trust.

The resources that Samantha initially shared with Marie related to her new ESL class:

After Marie got her science ESL assignment I gave her three or four big boxes of books. And also all my ESL stuff. I gave her my resources. And again, resources are resources. If you have the time to go through them, they make sense to you. (S1, p. 6)

They also worked on planning together:

Marie has never had a formal set of previews to write up, she has got a couple of copies of previews from colleagues in the science department, so again I try to make it a co-learning experience—let's compare notes. . . . So we went to the computer room to download my previews so she could actually look at it. So we just did some co-planning, because of my background in science I was able to work with her on science concepts for her Science ESL curriculum. It was just a matter of, I guess, me asking questions—what's most important for this curriculum because you can't do everything, where would you go from here, how would you assess? (S1, p. 7)

Marie appreciated Samantha's style of support, saying:

Samantha's a very good listener and she's very supportive in the way that if you mention specific problems, the next day she will still be thinking about it and come back and share her thoughts. That really helps, that it's in her mind, like she's sort of, I feel like that she's a mother, well I don't want to say mother hen, because, you know. She's very caring and supportive. She's very sincere and genuine in her support and the way she cares about her mentee, that's me. It's really nice to have that kind of relationship. (M1, p. 15)

The Study Skills Club

There were several pivotal experiences in this dyad's relationship. The first was a study club that they co-sponsored. Samantha explained the reason for suggesting this project:

I just thought it would be a good idea to start a study skills club. But I didn't want to do it by myself, because I enjoy collaboration. It's best to be working with somebody, so I thought it would be great to invite my beginning teacher into this process. . . . I volunteered to do the first session. I wanted to model how I normally operate with my kids. . . . I didn't want to tell Marie directly but I did

want to model for her. And then after I did the session, when we got together, she talked about it. So, I tried to show my ideas through modeling rather than directly telling, although we do debrief. (S1, p. 12-13)

Marie described how she came to be involved in co-sponsoring the club as follows:

She said—hey Marie, I thought maybe we could form a student study support group in the school to help students learn some strategies to help them cope better with school. . . . At first I go—oh is this going to be a lot of work. In my mind, honestly I thought—I don't really know anything. Like what do you mean I'm going to be doing test taking strategies, I don't know anything. So she has a lot of stuff on her files, she goes—here's some materials, so I just adapted and changed it a little bit for that session and then it was fine. (M1, p. 16)

In hearing about the study club, I was curious about how co-sponsoring the club affected their relationship and their learning. Specifically, I wondered if such a shared experience would deepen their dialogue:

Merrilee: I'm wondering if the group created a unique opportunity to do the debriefing around a shared experience.

Samantha: We just basically decided on our framework and our intents and Samantha presents the first one, Marie presents the second one, Norlan (the vice-principal) presents the third one and on the fourth one, we're going to debrief with the kids. The study group allowed us to actually see each other teach. When I saw her teach she was very dynamic, she made good connections with the kids, she followed up on their responses, she gave lots of positive feedback to the kids. It gave me a very different look at who she was. (S1, p. 15)

Thus, addition to casual and contextual interactions during staff meetings, informal lunch hours and consultations about students they shared, Samantha purposefully created opportunities for more intentional shared experiences such as the study skills club. The club was organized partly to encourage Marie and to facilitate a shared experience.

Samantha was pedagogically purposeful in her invitations and interactions: "I think my

role as a mentor is to support her, to ponder with her when she is pondering and to give her some space to learn and to be there" (S1, p. 4). Marie's participation in this process was to continue to respond, to be open to suggestions: "She helped me open up myself a little bit more and take a few more risks, it's just risk taking. . . and she got me to do Craft Club as well!" (M1, p.16-17).

These experiences created opportunities for "collaborative conversations" (Hollingsworth, 1992). Samantha and Marie engaged in collaborative conversations not only when Samantha planned them, but also in response to daily school events and experiences such as parent interviews, unit planning and problems such as plagiarism.

Plagiarism and Racism

The study group was pivotal in bringing Samantha and Marie together as colleagues. Another experience, or set of experiences, brought them even closer. This set of experiences developed around a spate of cheating and plagiarism that took place at Sprucevale over the early part of the school year. Initially, Marie experienced plagiarism within her own classroom and sought Samantha's support in dealing with the situation:

We had a famous scientist project and one student, his project was plagiarized. It was quite obvious and so I called his mom. . . . So she said—can I see you tomorrow after school. I said—okay. Then I went to Samantha and I said—I've got this mom coming. I'm not sure, but I think she's not happy with my instruction, she might be quite angry because her son's not understanding some science concepts at home when he does his homework, or thinks it's due to my poor quality of teaching. So I said—well how do you conduct parent conferences, because I've never had to do that when I was in my practicum. So I talked to Samantha. . . . So when the mom came in I was a little bit nervous and everything because I didn't know how she was going to be and she was alright because I guess the focus was on her son's learning and how to help him be the best learner he could be. (M1, p. 6-7)

In addition to helping Marie with the parent interview, Samantha also suggested that she check with the vice principal and department head regarding school policy. Further she encouraged Marie to document everything related to the incident. She helped Marie reconceptualize the problem from self-blame for perceived failure to a focus on a appropriate situational response. Samantha utilized these experiences to call forth conversation about parent relationships and student evaluation. While the situation in Marie's class was relatively easily resolved, the issue of cheating continued to be a factor in Marie and Samantha's relationship.

Other colleagues were apparently dealing with similar incidents in their classrooms and the issue came to an emergency staff meeting:

Samantha: Yesterday at lunch we had this emergency staff meeting regarding plagiarism. And one of the teachers that reported out said—all these ESL learners are really skilful and really crafty at cheating.

Marie: She used the word *Asian*. She's heard stories from another high school where these students, grade 11 and 12, when they're given a multiple choice test they would program their calculators with the answers—A-B-C-D, score for the 60 multiple choice. They would pass of their calculator to the next block. And this teacher's comment was—mostly this happens with Asian students because in order to do this kind of cheating, you need to have a lot of cooperation and I guess she implied that they're better at it because they're a more tightly knit group. And I'm sort of looking at Samantha and I said to Samantha afterwards when we left the staff meeting—well of course they're mostly Asian students, look at the population. There's about 80 percent Asian students. Of course if you count the numbers of students who are cheating or plagiarizing, they'll be higher because hey, look at our clientele. Like duh!

Samantha: So they're making these drastic comments and the thing is we can both feel the discomfort in the audience, because on our staff they hired a lot of Asian teachers³. This year we're got Yvonne, we've got you, we've got Jim, so we've got a lot of Chinese teachers. So we felt uncomfortable that she actually

labeled. And we didn't exactly speak up because she was just so adamant and she just said, her theme was—they're so crafty and they're so skewed towards this negative element and I guess the implication in that all non-Asians are not very crafty at cheating, they're not very good at cheating, you know. So we were very uncomfortable, but we debriefed it, we discussed it a little, but I know this will continue to come up. If the situation arises again in another situation or as our discomfort level rises. (MS1, p. 13-15)

The situation did arise again. In January, Samantha reported in her interview that a parent had accused a teacher of racism because of his response to a student apparently cheating on an assignment:

Plagiarism has become a hot issue in our school. Marie and I went to an after-school meeting where people from the union had come to describe the process of appeal and situations around cheating and plagiarism. . . . At that meeting the last part of the agenda was for the staff to read over this draft letter that a lady on staff had constructed and to sign a letter of support to be forwarded to the superintendent. Marie and I didn't consult with each other but at the end of the meeting but we both declined to sign at that moment. My reason for not signing was I had not read the letter over. It was too short a time frame. I had not discussed it with anybody.

The next day in the morning another teacher came to my room and said - well, you were at the meeting yesterday, Samantha, have you signed the form? I said—no I haven't signed the letter. And then in fourth period another person approached me with the teacher list to check off my name and said—have you read this, have you signed it? I felt pressured to sign. So I signed with the intent that the letter was asking the superintendent to begin developing policy around plagiarism and cheating. But I was really uneasy because there were some strong emotional language that I was very uncomfortable with and I had purposefully not signed. But the pressure to sign at that moment was very strong because she was checking off who was signing.

³ It is important to keep in mind that both Samantha and Marie were Chinese-Canadian.

And then that evening I debriefed with Marie how I felt and she felt exactly the same. She said the same person went into her classroom just as she was about to teach and said—you were at the meeting yesterday, have you signed? Here, sign now. So she signed, but she also had reservations because she said those emotionally charged words did not reflect her state of mind. So she too felt awkward. . . . Marie and I with some other colleagues talked about the process and again had very similar feelings. We didn't talk about it before but when the whole thing had been done and taken over to the board office, we talked about the whole process and how uncomfortable we were about how it went and how the letter did not reflect the whole staff. But we felt pressured to sign. . . . So we've been talking about that issue, that's been a heavy issue. I wouldn't say it's been an issue that had dominated Marie's life or my life. However, it was one incident that happened and it left us feeling uncomfortable. (S2, p.5-8)

It seemed to Marie and Samantha that the concerned teachers were not aware of the implications of their remarks about crafty Asians nor did they seem to notice that Samantha and Marie were also Asian. They discussed this issue in a joint interview:

Samantha: Some teachers just said—this is an ethnic thing, those Chinese people are really cooperative, they're really good at cheating. It's a culturally based behaviour. We both felt uncomfortable. We both did not say anything but we debriefed afterwards. And we were both uncomfortable sitting there while our colleagues were making these kinds of comments. . . . That's my take on it, being Chinese Canadian.

Marie: I couldn't say anything at a staff meeting but I went to a department get together and at that small close kind of thing, I tried to address that and I go—well I don't think it's necessarily more, more—

Samantha: Ethnic bound?

Marie: Ya, I said—I don't think that's the issue. . . I mentioned at that party—well think about the school, there's 80% of the school population is Asian. Of course 4 out of 5 kids you catch are Asian. The statistics doesn't justify you saying—oh it's mainly Asian people who cheat. . . .

Samantha: But has it affected me personally? Not really because I think that I'm uncomfortable hearing it. But how I view people is a person is a person is a human being is a person. So what about your skin colour? If you're behaving inappropriately in whatever fashion, it doesn't matter what skin tone you are.
(MS2, p. 3-4)

For whatever reasons, personal or professional, both Marie and Samantha continued to express concern and frustration about the issue of cheating and the link other teachers were making to ethnicity. They continued to debrief the series of negative experiences as they occurred throughout the year. Thus, while negative in tone, the incidents did contribute to the bond they were building as colleagues.

It is interesting to note, that although entire focus on cheating at Sprucevale was racist in nature, neither Marie nor Samantha referred to it as such. In fact, they avoided doing so, preferring to see it as a misunderstanding among some teachers.

The Resource Teacher Role

Because Samantha was a Resource teacher, her job involved both working with students with special needs and supporting their subject teachers. Samantha was the Resource teacher for several of Marie's students. This formal relationship enabled ongoing conversations about teaching strategies, working with parents, working with Classroom Assistants⁴ and adapting curriculum for students.

Samantha: We talk about students. I guess what we do is talk about the real thing and that is students and how they're taking all this in. And what else we could do to make it an easier way for them to take it all in, to learn, to be successful. Marie was struggling, we were both struggling, actually, we came to realize we were both struggling, although we didn't talk about it, with Donny not comprehending the written word or the verbal instructions. . . . So, together we

⁴ A Classroom Assistant is a para-professional who works individually with one special needs student to help him/her with modified assignments.

worked towards getting [Marie] a Classroom Assistant to support Donny and that just happened in the last week.

Marie: What really hit the point with me with this student was I had an assignment where you had to fill in the blanks and basically it was about safety rules. He put something like—always use the city or something. I said to Samantha—I think I have a problem here. And so I mentioned it to Samantha and she goes—okay, let's get you a CA.

Samantha: Because I noticed the same dilemma in my class because sometimes he is so divergent in his answers. He just has his own thinking patterns. So given a number of situations all happening within the same week, we recognized the need. (MS1, p. 18-20)

This interaction is a nice example of the kind of "transformational understandings" Hollingsworth (1992, p. 383) referred to as a central element of collaborative conversation. Hollingsworth stated that for beginning teachers issues emerge from the "tangled nature of practice-situated attention" (p. 382). The beginning teacher has an immediate "need to know" (Carter & Richardson, 1989, p. 406). In her study, Hollingsworth observed that issues emerged first as "examples of real classroom problems, then were relocated within related but larger issues", this theoretical or philosophical framing then led to the formulation of plans and resources and finally to "transformational understandings" (Hollingsworth, 1992, p. 383). Hollingsworth contended that this process can only unfold given sufficient time, since time is an essential component for relationships to develop. Over time her participants talked about the relationships of their work—relationships with students, colleagues, administrators and parents. This talk led to talk about the diversity of values among those they worked with and about power relationships inside and outside schools. It was within this relational context that issues about practice began to emerge, to be shared, reflected upon, reconsidered, and acted upon in "continuous cycles of critique, knowledge, construction, and social action" (Hollingsworth, 1992, p. 398).

Many of their collaborative conversations were driven by Marie's "need to know" and Samantha's willingness to ponder with her. However, in other instances, such as the experiences intentionally structured by Samantha, the need to know was not situational but created. Further, even when the root of the episode was necessity, the nature of the discussion often took the topic beyond the specific to the philosophical or theoretical. This process has to do with how topics emerged, were discussed, and then facilitated more transformative knowledge construction.

In the conversation about Donny, one of the special needs student they shared, Marie noted some of the unusual responses Donny filled in on his worksheet: "Basically it was about safety. He put something like—always use the city or something." Samantha, in her response, first acknowledged Marie's specific concern and immediately moved to a theoretical reframing of the concern leading to a plan to request a CA for the student:

I noticed the same dilemma in my class because sometimes he is so divergent in his answers. He just has his own thinking patterns. So given a number of situations all happening within the same week, we recognized the need. (MS1, p. 18-20)

This kind of reframing of issues was typical of Marie and Samantha's relationship. Another powerful example is the knowledge construction episode relating to cheating and racism, in which Marie and Samantha struggled with student and colleague relationships and attitudes, and had to confront issues of their own ethnicity. I argue that episodes such as these demonstrate both the pedagogical and epistemic nature of their mentorship through the intentionality of the interactions and the consideration of justifications to know.

Samantha took collaborative conversation a step further. She began to ask for feedback on projects she was undertaking with her own students. In response to these requests, Marie commented:

She asks for my feedback on some of the things she's developed too. And the thing is she genuinely welcomes it. She's not just saying—oh you want to look at

that kind of stuff? So she's wanting to grow as a professional and so that's something I sort of model after too. (M1, p. 16)

As previously stated, it was usually concerns about specific students that led Marie to visit Samantha during her preparation block. Samantha was teaching, but took time to talk with Marie. In addition, Marie had opportunities to observe Samantha teach. This observation helped her both clarify and express her own belief about child-centred teaching:

One thing that I look up to in Samantha is her relationship with her students. . . . She puts them first, they're the priority. And so when she does that with her students, she gains their respect and they will work hard for her. So I notice the students will work hard for you and they will respect you. (MS1, p. 25-27)

I believe in child-centred or more student-centred activities because I think of that constructivism way of learning. And when I went to university, the education program, I had this handout from one of my instructors about meaningful learning and constructivism and that made so much sense, you know. Like, having students just take notes, it doesn't work for me. . . . But one time I said—okay, I'll try giving some notes because this is a difficult concept and maybe they can't do it on their own. So I gave them the notes and then the next day we had a discussion and I felt like the retention or the understanding was not the same until they did it themselves and they discussed it among themselves. So just by observation, looking at that kind of empirical evidence I say, it makes more sense. And the idea about how you only learn 5 percent from lectures and 10 percent from reading and the most you learn is 90 percent in teaching. I have to believe that's true. (MS1, p. 30-31).

Throughout this flow of events there were many opportunities for Samantha and Marie to share their knowledge with each other and to offer justifications for it. Through these experiences, they developed shared standards of evidence, they developed an epistemological (Nelson, 1993) or inquiry-based (Cochran Smith & Lytle, 1999)

mentorship. How could they know if something was the right thing to do? They applied an "M.O." that they developed within their mentorship: planning, rethinking, debriefing. This M.O.⁵ will be explained in more detail later in this chapter.

Deepening the Relationship

The closeness that Marie and Samantha were developing was facilitated by a variety of out-of-work experiences that Samantha urged Marie to participate in. I first found out about these experiences when references to them were embedded in discussions of teaching-related issues. In Marie's first interview, she was describing a problem she was having with several students and how she had asked Samantha for ideas:

So she thought about my problem last night and we were talking about it in Chinese painting this morning. (M1, p. 14)

Later, she added:

She helped me open up my self a little bit more and take a few more risks, it's just risk taking. And she got me to do Craft Club as well. (M1, p. 16-17)

In her interview, Samantha described how she was trying to create more balance in her own life and was encouraging Marie to do so as well. They had both joined several craft activities at the school including Chinese painting and raffia angel making. Further, over occasional lunches and dinners out and in-school birthday celebrations, they began to discuss personal issues and interests, including families, relationships and plans for the future. In doing so, they moved beyond mentoring to friendship, where all topics were open and all aspects of life accessible.

In the first interview, they shared some of the things they knew about each other personally:

Marie: What do I not know about Samantha? It would probably be more of the personal stuff, like, I know you like futomaki. And you know what, I

⁵ Modus operandi

didn't know what the heck that was and on Saturday I went out with a friend of mine and we were eating sushi and it was one of those floating little river things with boats and there was this big huge roll rolling by and I said—what the heck is that. It's huge. And he said—that's a futomaki, so I ordered it and I go—oh that's what Samantha likes! That's a wee little gourd, that yellow thing in the middle. (MS1, p. 32)

Samantha: I know she lives with her family. She has a great rapport with her brother and her sister. They're just into sharing, which is like me. My family background is that I'm very close with my family. We're always in conversation. We visit each other, we talk, we celebrate birthdays, we always call each other on birthday days and say happy birthday. I see a lot of family support, which is what I had in my family. I had a very good childhood, a very supportive family. So I see how we are very similar through ethnic upbringing. So I don't have to really know a whole lot specifically, because I can feel the way she is as a human being and how I am and how I've grown and learned in my home experiences, and maybe transfer and understand why she is the way she is. (MS1, p. 32-34)

For Samantha, this closeness was one of the rewards of the mentoring:

It's been extremely rewarding and because I've been so intense with this one-on-one relationship with Marie, I've not bonded with any other educator as closely as I have with Marie. . . . This sustained relationship with Marie only is so rich and so meaningful. . . . It's been just exceptional. (S3, p. 10).

For Marie, it was surprising to find a colleague who became a friend, her previous professional experiences having been with male sponsor teachers, "Everyday she'll give you a hug. She's a very very affectionate person that way as well, so that's nice too. If she's not a male teacher it's okay. (M1, p. 15).

Science: A Subject, a Process and a Way of Knowing

Samantha and Marie had both undertaken their teacher education programs at the same university and focused on the same area, science. They had several professors in common and this supported their initial bonding. However although they had a common subject background, this was not an explicit focus of their relationship.

Perhaps because Samantha was at the time a Resource teacher and not involved in the school science department, she thought Marie saw her "from a pedagogical perspective" (S3, p. 17). Samantha said, "I think she sees me as a mentor or a colleague to chat with regarding pedagogy and philosophy. . . . She sees me more as a process person, how to work with kids and dealing with dilemmas and issues" (S2, p. 17).

Instead of focussing on science as a curricular area, Marie and Samantha used their common immersion within the "scientific method" as a basis for many of their interactions. Samantha described their process of working together scientifically as their "M.O.":

As for a scientific model I think that we do practise some of the principles of the scientific method. So if we have a problem that we're both agonizing over and we will go on one path and assess how it's going and we will revise it if we have to.

(MS1, p. 9)

We plan our words and our follow-up. . . . That's a pattern that we always have so that when we make decisions, it's a decision made at this time and this place. We always come back and revisit our decisions and we always are debriefing or talking about how things went. We always talk about the process. That's kind of like our M.O. We know we don't deal with an issue in one shot. We always revisit it. (MS1, p. 13)

Further, Marie tended to use a process of data gathering when she needed to make a decision or was struggling with a dilemma:

Samantha's a really good listener. If you have any kind of issues, she will be a very good listener and you might bounce off ideas off her. But she would not

really in any way be judgmental. And she won't say—well, if I were you, I would do this, unless something's very—. When would she do that? She would be direct and give direct advice, but she never really pushes her ideas onto people. She's always—here's a suggestion, take it or leave it. And she tells me to go around and listen to other people's suggestion or advice. And I actually do. I go sort of survey several teachers, and then I'll go back and do my own thing at the end. But I do that survey thing, you know—four or five other teachers. (M2, p. 8)

Samantha had observed this pattern and also described it:

She'll always seek out resources if she's struggling. If she's unsure, she'll always go and talk to teachers. She's very confident in that way, confident, receptive to hearing what other folks have to say. She'll go visit all her science colleagues and say—what are you doing in Science 10, not because she's a new teacher and she can get away with it, but because it's her personality. She will seek out. So, I'll be one of many people she'll consult with. Even though I'm her mentor. (S2, p. 17)

Thus, beyond a subject or a process, for Marie and Samantha, *science* seemed to allude to a philosophy, a way of being, of knowing, and of interacting. Marie explored this idea in some depth.

Marie: I talked to another teacher who was assigned a mentor from another department. And she told me—it wasn't useful at all because she can't help me, she's in totally another area. What worked for me was I found someone and we had sort of the same philosophical similarities.

Merrilee: What you're saying is really important. For the mentoring relationship to work it needs to be someone you will talk to and one of the things that's real obvious for secondary people is subject. Subject is important. But you're also saying that philosophy is important.

Marie: I think it is for when later on you talk about teaching strategies and evaluation philosophies and what not. Classroom management. If you have drastically different—well it's good to have someone who's not exactly the same as

you because if they're the same as you, it's like talking to yourself and everything you say is just reconfirmed for you.

Merrilee: So you want someone who will challenge you a bit?

Marie: Ya. I'm not saying people have to have really similar philosophies. But thinking back to the practicum where I know some student teachers found drastically different ways of dealing with things, that can become a source of conflict as well and add stress to the relationship. But that's true of any relationship—a marriage relationship [laughs]. Some people have their differences, whatever. (M3, p. 20-21)

Science also provided a metaphor for Marie and Samantha to describe their relationship—ionic and covalent bonding:

Marie: Ionic bonding is when usually you have metal and non-metal compounds. And how they bond together or how they join to form a compound is the metal donates an electron to the non-metal. So sometimes when I have a problem and I need help I go to Samantha. She becomes the metal; she donates her electron, that's her idea to me, the non-metal. And occasionally we do covalent bonding, which is compounds forming from non-metals and non-metals, like oxygen, O₂, and hydrogen H₂ gas. And what they do is because they're both missing some electrons in the outer orbit. To have a full stable orbit they will come together and maybe share their electrons. . . .

Samantha: To add to that analogy, when we truly collaborate, we sit together, we brainstorm, we plan, then we deliver together. So that's very covalent. And even in the ionic part, the electron transfer goes both ways. Sometimes I'm the metal, sometimes she's the metal and we both are recipients of each other's knowledge. (MS1, p. 8-9)

Being Evaluated: A Shared Experience

Through the year, Marie and Samantha had many shared experiences, some positive, such as the study skills club, and some negative, such as the plagiarism sequence.

Perhaps the most obvious and pervasive experience they shared was being evaluated by

their administrators. In Portal, all beginning teachers are evaluated, and continuing teachers are evaluated every 5 years after that. At Sprucevale, there was a comprehensive process of evaluation that consisted of administrator observations of the teacher, followed by post-conferences, and a written self-evaluation that teachers were expected to complete and provide to the principal. Teachers engaged in the process in varying degrees and with varying commitment.

Marie began the evaluation process with enthusiasm, seeing it as a supportive process:

I wasn't worried about being observed or evaluated because it's there to help me. If I can change my strategies in some way or find new strategies to help my students, well—wonderful. I'm open to it. It's good to be observed because there's a lot of things you don't notice about yourself. (M1, p. 11-12)

Later, she acknowledged a little more anxiety with the experience:

We're both being evaluated this year. We both might have a little bit of anxiety. I probably have a little bit more than she does. . . . So things like that I would tell Samantha. . . . She'll be nice and she'll come out—good luck Marie, good luck with your class today, I'm sure it will be fine. And then afterwards, after the evaluation, she will come over and say—well, how did it go? I remember John [the principal] came one time, and he made some really strange comments—let the students read the textbook, instead of you reading. . . . He didn't know what was happening, he sort of swooped in for forty minutes, swooped out and he missed, he didn't have time for a pre-conference with me. And that's not good, because he doesn't know what the unit is, what's the flow, what's the outcome. . . . And you don't want people to get a wrong impression of the way you teach, the way you are, your relationship with your students. Just because they came in for forty minutes out of a whole semester. Are they going to write something based on that? I'm a very strong advocate of myself. Because there's no one else, you know, if you don't speak up for yourself, what's going to happen? (M2, p. 10-11)

In talking about the evaluation process they were both undergoing, Samantha identified herself with Marie's apprehension:

We're both being assessed this year so we can both talk about the anxieties of being formally observed and how we feel about the observations. She got observed today and I got observed on Monday. So we talked about how he observes and how you feel after he observes and what happens when he debriefs. (MS1, p. 5-6)

Samantha recognized the potential of this shared experience in developing reciprocity between them:

I ran to Marie and said—hey, you got that form and so did I. I'm being assessed this year too. I think when you're being evaluated formally, you always feel nervous. . . . So we were able to share a common experience and the anxiety and uncertainty, which is very good again in learning, putting us both in the learner's role. (S1, p. 5)

She also assisted Marie in taking more control of the proceedings. In this exchange Samantha suggested a strategy for ensuring the administrator attended to her chosen focus, rather than concentrating on events he did not comprehend (as in the textbook reading example):

Marie: Before he came in, John asked me what he should look at. And I actually never got a chance to tell him that because he doesn't come in before the class begins, right?

Samantha: I put a little post-it note on my plans, I said please observe these three students, here's the data on them. So he actually had that in his package while he was getting some orienting. (MS1, p. 7)

After several observations by both administrators and several debriefing session with Samantha, Marie was able to reflect on the experience of being observed:

John and Mike (the vice principal) have different ways of observing. And John's more, you know, more advice-giving. Mike is less of that. He's more of the

question-asking type. So it creates a different response from me. See, now I know what John wants. . . . It so happened John came the day before, when we're doing—here's the parts of the microscope, now learn them because I'm going to refer to them tomorrow. So more of a daily maintenance type class he showed up on. And I told Mike that I was a little worried, and Mike goes—oh no, don't worry about that, John's not looking for those kind of things. But in a way, I think John was. (M2, p. 19-20)

Later in the year, the second part of the evaluation process began, when Marie and Samantha were expected to complete a written self-evaluation. Since this experience took place during Samantha's maternity leave, I have included it in the following section.

Separation: Samantha's Maternity Leave

From the beginning, we had known Samantha was expecting a baby. This did not deter her from becoming a mentor, nor did it seem to deter Marie. At their first joint interview, Samantha joked about her plans to mentor in absentia:

I've left the invitation open when I'm pregnant [on leave], as long as you don't call me in the delivery room [laughter]. . . . So I think it will continue, but maybe we won't see each other every day. But at least when things get crunchy or things get hot, she can always, she knows. (MS1, p. 17)

I was curious about what effect the leave of absence, from February until June, would have on the mentorship. Samantha had intended to begin her leave at the semester change in late January. However, she had a fall just before Christmas, injuring her back, and only came to school in January to finish a few tasks prior to beginning her leave. The suddenness of her departure did not lessen her interest in mentoring nor in completing the research project. In fact, Samantha called me to ask if we could move the second interview up so she could participate before she left the school. Samantha's baby was born just a few days later.

*Journal entry**May 14, 1997*

This was a delightful interview. Samantha is on a maternity leave so I went to her house for the interview. It took a while to get started because we had to wait for her husband to get home to look after their toddler. He did come home and they went out, leaving us with the baby, who is 4 months old. The baby was not sure he wanted Samantha to do the interview, so we had an exciting time. She tried to settle him in his swing, then tried breast feeding him and walking around the room, with me following with the tape recorder. Samantha insisted on continuing, although we did turn off the recorder a few times. He finally settled on the couch with us beside him. As long as one of us interacted with him, he was happy. So as Samantha responded to questions, I played with the baby and vice versa. It was fun. We did manage to do the interview.

Samantha has continued to mentor Marie over the maternity leave. Sam said in fact that she spent quite a bit of time on the phone with Marie in February when the new semester started and Marie had new classes, kids with special needs and a new Resource teacher (not Samantha). Marie was phoning about every 3 days in the evenings. It sounded like Samantha's husband thought this was a bit much, but Samantha insisted that Marie needed this time with her and so she put the time in to work with her.

Samantha did indeed continue to mentor through her maternity leave:

The first month when I just had my newborn and I had both kids at home and Marie was starting her semester, she would be calling very frequently. Probably once every three days and sometimes I'd be breast feeding and Bryan [her 2 year old] is still getting used to the whole sharing bit, there would be a lot of background crying. . . . But I knew that she needed to talk it though with somebody. . . . So she would always share her concerns. So being away from her did not stop her from sharing those concerns except that maybe at the school she

would see me every day and talk about things. . . . So whenever my husband would say—oh, doesn't she realize that you're having kids and all this—I would say—no, it's really important, she's a first year teacher. (S3, p. 1-2).

That Samantha did continue to mentor under these circumstances was indeed a tribute to her commitment to mentoring and to Marie. In addition, a sense of reciprocity helped sustain her engagement:

We're just so genuine; we're just genuine friends talking about our practice. And it's great. So even though it's long distance, it's been very intense and it's still been very very positive for both of us. (S3, p. 5)

From Marie's perspective, the separation was only physical. She still felt connected to Samantha and did not appear to feel any estrangement. In May we discussed their interaction.

Merrilee: So you find you talk to her every couple of weeks?

Marie: I probably talk to her every one and a half weeks on the phone.

Merrilee: And a lot of it is just friend talk but some of it is school talk?

Marie: Ya, like Astronomy 12 got cancelled, I'll tell her that happened. And then we'll say—wow, Bryan's speaking a lot more now. He can say 4 or 5 more words now. So we talk about things like that too.

Merrilee: So you haven't felt like you're unsupported in the time that you haven't had a mentor at school?

Marie: Oh no, I just call on the phone. [laughs] I get supported through the phone calls. Instead of in person, face to face, it's on the phone. (M3, p. 17)

It was during this time that Marie began to work on her written self-evaluation. This was one of the tasks Samantha completed during her last few days in school in January.

Samantha recounted how Marie approached her for advice on the exercise:

She came over one Saturday because she had worked on her self-reflection for her supervision report. And I was supervised this year as well and there were lots of things I had shared with her at school, like my previews, because she's never seen

a preview before. . . . And the other thing I gave her was my self-reflection for my supervision report. I had also given John a portfolio—data, evidence, stuff that gave credibility to some of the categories I was begin evaluated on. And Marie had been quite focussed in this data-collecting activity. So we did a lot of pre-talking on the phone. Because I'd given her a copy of mine and she recognized how seriously I took all this information and because of all the things I've done I was able to label my actions quite clearly.

And she had talked to other staff members and lots of them really did not have any self-reflection in their work and then they gave her very little direction. . . .

And then when she started to write hers, she was so keen about collecting data that on the day that she brought her draft reflection over for discussion, it was just phenomenal. The depth with which she reflected on her own work and she didn't show me her portfolio of evidence, but she had told me so much about what she collected—what students said, what she did—it was all packaged, all part of her portfolio. So I knew that she would have an over-powering, overwhelming portfolio of evidence. And Mike was writing up her report and I'm not sure whether he was overwhelmed, but I hoped that he would have told her this was incredible, because it was incredible! And I know that the stuff I had given her, I had no problems sharing my stuff with her, gave her a good set of directions. . . . We went though each category, each of the ten categories she had self-reflected and I was able to give her additional data and ask some questions of clarification and ask her to reflect a little bit more. We probably worked on it for four hours. . . . She came out specifically on the Saturday just to go through that. And as we talked, she was reflecting on her writing as well.

So she's now leaped. I mean if I had someone like that who shared some of their reflective pieces with me when I started out, I think I might have been more reflective when I started out. But I gave her a good model and she just took it and ran. (S3, p. 3-4)

In this instance, as in many others throughout this case, Samantha served as a facilitator and catalyst for Marie's reflection and thoughtful critique. She posed important questions,

she pondered alongside Marie, and she reframed issues in a broader and more theoretical context. This catalytic role may be an essential one for successful mentoring and will be addressed in depth in Chapter 10.

While Marie did not express any surprise that Samantha, a new mother, would devote a Saturday of her maternity leave to reviewing, she did express her recognition of Samantha's influence on her professional learning:

Samantha has just been really a gem in terms of ideas for professional growth. Even for things, like we're both being evaluated this year so some of the anxiety, talking about that, aspects of my teaching career. Even when I was doing my self-evaluation for Mike. . . . I just asked her—how am I supposed to do a self-evaluation? They give you ten categories of where you're supposed to look at yourself. I go—but what kind of format should that be done in? I talked to several teachers. I talked to other teachers who are being evaluated and who have been evaluated. A lot of them just take the form and just fill in the three lines after each category—ya, I'm pretty good at this. And they just do it in pencil and hand it in. I didn't want to do that. So I asked Samantha and oh my god, oh my god! [laughs] Ten pages, nine font, really small font.

But the interesting thing was seeing the way she did it. Her format is sort of—here's my philosophy, an "I believe" statement and then here are my actions that support my belief. And I go—oh that sounds good. So I went and did my own thing. It ended up about as long as hers was. But it was a really good thing. Because it really made me reflect upon where I went, where I am at this point. And from doing that too, certain categories, I thought—I don't really have that much to say here. So I think I have to really work more on this area. I probably don't have a lot to say because I haven't had a lot of experience. So I probably need some professional growth around this area. That made me think. . . . If I see the value and I see a blank spot. Well maybe I should think more about the community relations. Well I think—I haven't done a lot of field trips this semester,

I'm better do some more. So the second semester I did a lot more. . . . It helped me. After I did it, then I wrote my professional growth plan, after. Not the other way around. I guess that makes sense. (M3, p. 11-13)

It is interesting to note that Samantha and Marie were both extremely impressed by the work of the other and that they told the story in similar ways, both making reference to the limited ways other teachers completed the activity. Samantha summed up the reciprocal nature of this experience in saying:

I told her I wish that I had had this conversation with you about our supervision report prior to me submitting mine, because mine would look really different as a result of dialoguing with you around these issues. Because when I did it, I reflected and handed in the report quite quickly was because I was leaving on my maternity leave. . . . But I could have redone everything with a different set of lenses as a result of my dialogue with Marie. And I told her—I wish I had taken the time to sit and chat with you about the categories. (S3, p. 5)

Summary: Themes of This Case

Samantha and Marie conceptualized their relationship as initially collegial and then flowing into reciprocity and friendship. It was characterized by Samantha's initial caring interest, to which Marie responded trustingly. We can recall her statement about observing how Samantha interacted with new, colleagues: "very friendly, very warm, approachable and just really supportive." Marie said of her observation "that lay in my mind—okay this is the sort of thing I want in my mentor" (MS1, p. 1). Marie interpreted Samantha's support as care, using the expression "mother hen" to describe Samantha's mentoring affectionately.

This strong beginning was followed by a developing closeness as they interacted around daily and contextual events, and planned shared activities. What characterized their shared experiences was increasing depth, intensifying relationship, and expanding reciprocity. These elements were intentionally fostered by Samantha and willingly

responded to by Marie. Both showed an eagerness to engage with the other and with the process of mentoring. As the year progressed, it was often Marie who initiated and Samantha who responded.

They used these experiences as the foci of collaborative conversations in which they shared knowledge and constructed justifications for their knowing. They developed an "M.O." founded in their common background in science and eventually all life experiences were open for discussion. We have heard Samantha's conceptualize her mentor role, "I think my role as a mentor is to support her, to ponder with her when she is pondering and to give her some space to learn and to be there" (S1, p. 4). Samantha deliberately transformed the mentorship into a more reciprocal collegueship by bringing her own questions to their collaborative conversations, by seeking Marie's input and, apparently, truly desiring it. There appeared to be no boundaries on what the conversations could be about, as the following quote from Marie demonstrates:

We talk about our students often. Sometimes I drop in during her C block, because that's my spare block. And we consult about our Donny and Melanie (their shared students) and their progress or lack of progress and how we need to coordinate our efforts to talk to their parents, make sure we can support the students' learning. Coming closer to Christmas I guess we talked about Larry (Marie's fiancé) coming, you know—you can plan something special. (MS2, p. 1)

In Chapter 3, I suggested that a feminist pedagogy for mentoring is based on several elements and practices, including attention to the development of trust and care within the relationship, a central practice of talk in which the mentor listens care/fully and the beginning teacher develops her voice and a central focus on questioning, inquiry and thoughtful critique. These elements are all evident in this case:

- Samantha's initial care for Marie during the dilemma about the ESL Science course,

- Samantha's attention to their relationship as they participated in casual and structured events,
- the ongoing talk between them during craft clubs and non-teaching blocks that facilitated Marie's development of her own voice and her own way of interacting purposefully with other colleagues; and
- the development of their "M.O.", with its central focus on questioning and knowledge construction.

While the plagiarism incident seems to be a missed opportunity to directly name and assail racism, the central concern Marie and Samantha shared throughout the experience was to create more just circumstances for students and teachers and this is surely a central focus of thoughtful critique.

Conclusion

Finally, what can be said about this mentorship is that it was experienced as successful by both participants, as well as successful in terms of a feminist practice for mentoring. I have explicated the specific conditions and qualities that led to this success. The participants were co-creators of the mentorship; they interacted with care and trust; both benefited from the reciprocity from the relationship; both flourished within and beyond it.

Samantha: She's become a meaningful part of my circle of friends, whether it's the mentor/beginning teacher relationship or just a collegial thing. I think the mentorship relationship gave us the opportunities because of our closeness and our needs just to be clear and open with our professional activities. And that has helped us with our personal relationship. (S2, p. 9-10)

Marie: I find Samantha to be a strong role model for me. She's a woman, and she's very successful, and she's a science teacher, and she went through a lot of different avenues to get to where she is. And in terms of role modeling, I mean, she shared with me that she wants to become an administrator someday. . . . Samantha's sort of unusual in the sense she went to many different areas. And she

wants to become an administrator. And listening to why she wants to do that, I think she said something like—being an administrator, you have more voice. You can be more of an active role for creating a positive change in the school. It's very hard to do it at the teacher level. Like, very hard. . . . So, you know, listening to Samantha talk about it, I go—hmm, interesting. (M2, p. 18)

CHAPTER SIX: SUE ANN, EMILY, AND TIE

Introduction

Journal entry

September 10, 1998

In the story, Chester's Way (Henkes, 1988), Chester and Wilson were best friends. They did a lot of things together, as friends do. This changed with the arrival of Lilly.

Chester and Wilson, Wilson and Chester.

That's the way it was.

And then Lilly moved into the neighborhood.

Lilly had her own way of doing things.

(p. 10-11)

Over time, Chester and Wilson came to appreciate Lilly's way of doing things and they developed a strong caring relationship where differences were valued. The story of Sue Ann, Emily and Tie unfolded differently.

If Samantha and Marie's relationship could be characterized by its shared experiences and emerging reciprocity, the relationship among Emily, Tie, and Sue Ann would have to be characterized by its misunderstandings and emerging problems. This was a unique relationship in that there were two mentors involved with Sue Ann. Emily and Tie had worked together successfully as colleagues the previous year. And, like Lilly in Henkes' story, Sue Ann had her own way of doing things.

With the mentors, what's been causing the stress is that, well, they are feeling that I should be, sort of, they should be everything to me. And I don't work like that. I don't know, so that's been kind of a stressful situation. I don't know, like I say—when I have a question, when I really need to share something with you I will. But I just do things differently. And understanding that's been kind of difficult for them. (SA1, p. 5)

The Characters and The Setting

Sue Ann, Emily, and Tie taught at Pinewood Elementary School, a large, older school in the centre of an older community. Around the school were large houses and a number of apartment complexes. Pinewood was a busy school, since an alternate program also operated from the building. This made it easy for me to come and go unnoticed by the rest of the staff. Initially, I had contacted Sue Ann to see if she was interested in participating in the research project. She discussed it with her mentors and called to ask me if the district would be providing substitute teachers so the interviews could take place during the teaching day. Apparently, the mentor teachers quite reasonably confused my roles as researcher and project coordinator. I explained that this research was part of my university studies and that, while the findings of my study might influence the district program, the two were formally unconnected. Ultimately this did not appear to be a major issue with the two teachers.

Both Emily and Tie had taught at the school the previous year and had enjoyed teaching across the hall from each other. Sue Ann's classroom was in another wing of the school, some distance from Emily and Tie. Sue Ann had spent some time in the school during the previous year as a substitute teacher. She also had a social relationship with Tie outside school.

Emily taught a grade two class at Pinewood. She had been teaching for five years, coming to teaching as a second professional career. She enjoyed teaching at the primary level and talked about not wanting to teach any grade higher than grade three, saying that she really enjoyed young children. Emily described herself as an academic, both in terms of her expectations of her children, but also in terms of her own personal orientation. She also taught a course at a university. In the early interviews, she conducted herself in a very efficient manner, refusing cookies and juice, responding with short to-the-point answers and resisting being drawn into general conversation. Her answers were immediate; she didn't take any time to think about the questions. Our first interview was much shorter than any other interview, lasting only about 30 minutes.

Emily began teaching as a kindergarten teacher, although she had no specific preparation for teaching kindergarten. According to Emily,

That was not too bad, it was kind of a game. . . . It's kind of different, because when I started teaching I was already over 30. And I'd had another profession. So I wasn't in any way insecure or unable to stick up for myself or ask the questions that needed to be asked. And so I quite easily sort of went in and gathered information from a variety of people. (E1, p. 5-6)

In Emily's previous profession, she had worked with student colleagues. Emily felt comfortable with the role of mentor as it began to emerge in this relationship: "Thinking back on to my experiences, on the supervisory side and on the new teacher side, and knowing Sue Ann who's somewhat like me, kind of private and likes to slug it out, I offered her couple of things" (E1, p. 2). Based on her diagnosis, what Emily initially offered to Sue Ann were opportunities to make connections. Emily visited Sue Ann's classroom during her own preparation period, she made extra copies of worksheets that she shared with Sue Ann, and she encouraged Sue Ann to vent her frustrations.

Emily described herself as an intuitive teacher. She believed it was important to diagnose learning needs and to respond to them,

Emily: I think that intuition and empathy are the two big things you have to have. You have to be able to empathize with the position the learner is in, whether they don't know anything or they know something. And then you have to be able to be creative or intuitive enough to find a way to get it across to them in some kind of a—I say sequential, but it isn't even always sequential, sometimes it's just, in some kind of way that makes sense to them.

Merrilee: So being really attuned to the learners?

Emily: Ya, in your group. Now that's to me the key. I mean you can sequence anything to death but if you miss something before the first step, they're not going to get it and if you can't break things down to the basic things then you can't teach it. . . . Empathy is the big thing. You have to know what you're doing.

You know, what they're all about, really. If you know what they're all about you can move them forward. . . . I love grade two just because of that. They come in useless and they go out reading and writing.⁶ (E1, p. 10-11)

Tie was Sue Ann's other mentor. Tie taught a grade three class across the hall from Emily. This was her second year teaching grade three; prior to that she had been a Learning Assistance Teacher for three years. Typically, Learning Assistance Teachers are experienced teachers who have special qualifications to support struggling students. Because of a shortage of qualified Learning Assistance Teachers, Tie had been hired to the position with neither qualifications nor experience. She described how her mentor had been an essential support in this challenging teaching position:

It was outstanding and the reason was because the lady at Riverside who was my mentor had 24 years of experience. She was like wildfire, just energetic, into everything. We had similar interests, so we ended up teaching choir together and track. I just thought to myself—well this is someone who is my mentor so I am going to try to do as much with them as I can. So when I asked the questions, it's not hard. And I didn't even know her going into it. . . . At the beginning I was really intimidated by her. I was just really scared and that was just because she was extremely outgoing, knew all the other staff, was really super verbal and I was just petrified to be in the school. I just graduated in December and I got this job in January. So I didn't know one disorder, one problem, how to fix it and she was just super experienced. (T 1, p.15-16)

Tie described her teaching as being based on "fairness and honesty." She had high expectations for her students and felt she communicated these clearly:

At the beginning of the year there is no rules in the class. The only rule is that I only ever speak once. So we all get our hearing checked. Thereafter you chose to

⁶ Throughout this series of interviews, both Emily and Tie made comments such as this one, which I found jarring and troubling. They professed to care for children, yet they sometimes spoke of them in seemingly negative ways.

not listen, that is why we are all sitting in groupings, figure it out. So they are really good about listening immediately, because I am not a parrot. I just don't have the patience to do that. (T1, p. 18)

As previously described, Sue Ann and Tie had a social relationship outside of school. Separately, each told me that they had been in the other's wedding party. This appeared to be a significant experience that seemed to imply to both an obligation of closeness and connection,

Sue is also a close friend. . . . The staff has seen my wedding pictures, she is in them. I was in her wedding party so they have seen this. Their expectations were—you guys will be hanging out. Isn't it amazing, your buddy is working at the school. . . . They perceived it as fun. (T1, p. 4)

Sue Ann, a quiet thoughtful Chinese-Canadian woman, had completed her teacher education program the previous December and had worked as a substitute teacher for several months. Due to her relationship with Tie, she had worked quite a bit at Pinewood and was known to some of the staff. Initially she had been brought in as a substitute to teach an intermediate class for a week, until a teacher could be hired from the seniority list. When a teacher was hired, she was moved into a combined grade 2 and 3 class, which had also had a substitute teacher for the first week of school. Sue Ann described how this complicated beginning impacted her:

I got this position September 13 and it was kind of a harried week just getting in because the day I got the position it was parent-teacher night, meet the teacher night. . . . So I just finished teaching the [other class] and then soon as the bell rang we rushed everything up here to try to get a setup for the parents to come in. The children have been through another teacher, the [substitute] that was here before. And it was difficult getting settled in because I was teaching them the very next day, so I tried keeping things in the classroom that would help them be in some sort of a routine. But I was doing things that weren't mine. . . . And I kept thinking I had to prove something because, here I was now, a full time teacher,

you're getting the big bucks, and the whole thing. I spent six years in university—I'm supposed to know it. I'm supposed to be able to come in and do this, that's why they hired me; I'm qualified. (SA1, p. 1-2)

Sue Ann's desire to prove herself may have been a reflection of pervasive norms of individualism in teaching (Biklen, 1995; Lortie, 1975). Despite effort towards collaboration, this norm is maintained by conditions in schools and reinforced by images in popular culture of the solitary, valiant teacher struggling against the institution to rescue students (Biklen, 1995). In striving to be heroic individuals, teachers like Sue Ann cut themselves off from the support and assistance of other teachers, believing "bootstrap" messages (Briskin, 1990), that hard work will result in success. Novice teachers like Sue Ann are very susceptible to this norm. The result is being cut off from an awareness of their experience as shared. Later in the year, Sue Ann confided her relief in hearing about another beginning teacher's challenges. She appeared to think she alone struggled to prove herself.

Sue Ann worried about her teaching, she worried that she might not be providing what the children needed to move on to the next year:

I just hope that when they leave this classroom in June, they won't be lacking in something that will be detrimental to them the next year. That's my fear: to have them leave this classroom and say—shoot, I'm not ready for grade 4. . . . So, that's the only disadvantage to me being a new teacher in this classroom, is that I won't be able to give them, I guess, my optimal best that maybe a class in 5 years might be able to have from me. (SA1, p. 10)

Sometimes, she felt she was putting too much pressure on the children in attempting to get them ready for the next year:

Often times I see myself getting all stressed out and I'd look at their faces and they weren't enjoying what they were doing. And then I'd ask myself—Sue, you have to remember, how old are they? Right? (SA1, p. 7)

In addition, Sue Ann suffered from comparisons to Tie. They shared several pairs of twins and the children in Sue Ann's class seemed to continually tell her about wonderful activities their siblings were undertaking. Although Sue Ann did not mention the twins to me, Tie did, saying:

It just makes her feel bad because we have similar grades, we share four sets of twins. So what she would see is, her twins would be coming home, oh yeah, her sets of twins going—oh Mrs. L, why don't we publish any class books? (T1, p. 5-6)

Choosing her Mentors

In the Portal mentoring program, it was unusual for an elementary teacher to have two mentors. This more frequently happened at the secondary level, where a beginning teacher might be teaching several subjects and thus have mentors in more than one department. In elementary, it was much more common for the mentor to be someone at the same or similar grade level, based on an assumption that the issues will be similar. For example, in my mentorship with Kyra, I was teaching grade four, while she had a grade three class. I was surprised to learn that Sue Ann had two mentors and that this choice was hers. She chose Tie because of their pre-existing relationship and because Tie taught grade three, and she chose Emily so she had a mentor for each of the grades in her "split class." Clearly, the fact that Emily and Tie were friends supported her choice in creating a triadic mentorship.

The element of the "split class" was prominent in the minds of all three teachers. Emily described how the choice was made:

At the beginning of this year, a new class had to be made up. And it was a two/three split. Last year and the year before, I taught a grade two. Tie, across the hall, taught a grade three. Neither of us wanted to take a two/three if we didn't have to And that's all well and good except that Sue stepped into a really tough class with a split grade. She and Tie were very good friends, but Tie was much more grade three oriented than grade two oriented, and Sue wanted a little help on both so she asked each of us if we would help her. (E1, p. 1)

The opinion that a "split class" was to be avoided also came through in Tie's interview:

I asked my kids at report card time, we are talking about grades and what about this year? Your only options this year would be a straight 3 or 2/3, what class would you like to be? Unbelievable! All of them—I don't want to be listening to grade 2 work. All the same concerns we as teachers have in teaching a split class.
(S1, p. 25)

Journal entry

December 3, 1996

Tie made a number of interesting comments about split classes, for example, how being in a 2/3 would hold the 3's back and that even her kids had that impression. It seems that all three teachers share the idea that teaching a "split" is very different from teaching a straight grade and that split class is a bad thing. I think this is a key factor in Sue Ann choosing two mentors. Just as the tape ended I said that I really prefer to teach a combined class. She was very curious about that, so I talked about why I like to teach a combined class.

The assumption in setting up the triadic relationship seemed to be that Sue Ann would approach each mentor with issues and concerns specific to the grade she was teaching. It also presumes that there are significant differences in what teachers at different grades will know. This may be a result of Tie and Emily's short term of experience as teachers. They seemed to define themselves as teachers by the grades they taught. While the triadic mentorship may have seemed like a good idea at the time, it was one of the causes for what followed immediately, that is, relational problems within the triad.

Emerging Problems

Journal entry

November 7, 1996

This was a really disturbing interview. In talking about the first questions about the beginning of her teaching, Sue Ann described some ups and

downs in that experience, partially due to feelings of insecurity, but also a result of moving into a classroom where there had already been a teacher for two weeks and feeling some need to follow with those routines to keep the children comfortable. Finally, she had reached a point where she felt she needed to insert her own personality, style, beliefs and philosophy as a teacher. As Sue Ann described her experiences, she made several hints that things were not completely sound in the mentoring relationship. I didn't pick up on her hints at that point, because I knew I would be going into this in more depth later and I wanted to build more rapport and have her talk about her successes as a teacher as well.

When we came to the question about the mentoring partnership, and as Sue Ann began to talk directly about the relationship, she began to cry. I decided to turn off the tape recorder. I'm not sure this was the best thing to do, but it seemed right at the time. Having a beginning teacher cry in an interview was not something totally unexpected, because they are dealing with so much stress and physical exhaustion. The mentorship is supposed to alleviate some of this stress. However, in this case, it has caused her more stress and more work, it has been more of a burden than she already has.

With the recorder off, I have to admit that I went into mentoring mode. I listened to her and validated her feelings. I asked if she could talk to her mentors or to her principals about the problems. She seemed to think (or hope) it would work out. On the way out after the interview she said to me—this must be very hard for you, when people are upset and emotional about things—so she was trying to take care of me too. This is a huge issue and I don't know what's going to happen with it.

I asked at the end of the interview if she felt the upcoming four-way interview might be difficult or further compound the problem, because we are going to address some of these issues of how the relationship is working.

She said she did not think so. I said if at some point she decided it might be problematic at this particular time because of the tension in the relationship, she could call me and I'd assume responsibility to postpone it until the situation might be calmer. So at this point it's in her hands. I hope she can figure out how she needs to deal with it, both short and long term.

We did carry on to finish the interview, partly because I wanted her to have a chance to move out of that space of having been upset and emotional in front of me and have a way to re-establish herself as a competent, capable human being and teacher. I didn't probe very much. I just went with her answers as they were.

Over the first cycle of interviews, I learned more about the problems among Sue Ann, Emily and Tie. What the problems created was a dysfunctional mentorship. There seemed to be four issues involved. These were: the negative impact of being friends and colleagues, concerns about getting a fair share of attention, differences in personality and learning style, and conflicting expectations. These issues centred in and on Tie and were permeated with issues of power and authority.

Friendship and Betrayal

As I previously noted, Tie and Sue Ann had a pre-existing social relationship outside school. They had expected their mentorship to flow smoothly from their friendship. However, an incident early in the year conveyed to Sue Ann a sense of betrayal and resulted in a loss of trust:

One of my mentors is a very good friend of mine and at the beginning of this teaching, I confided in her, not as like just a colleague, but as a friend. But what I found out is that she was sharing this information. . . . talking it out with other people and the administration. And that kind of hurt me. And then, after we had a long talk about it. . . . And she said—don't worry, whatever you say to me stays with me and it won't go out. But then I went downstairs to visit and we were with another mentor and a music teacher, and she was saying everything out again. . . .

So all of a sudden I was news for everybody and all of a sudden she was making me sound as if I was incompetent. As if I was like, drowning in water and didn't know what I was doing. And so I just sat there and nodded. I didn't say anything else. I was shocked. (SA1, p. 16)

Tie's account of this event was quite different,

At the beginning she would be able to express things and open up but then she had the idea that all her concerns, anything she would bring forth to me would be discussed with the staff and she got really scared. And she finally talked to me about this; I had no clue this is the case. Nothing she had ever told me was being discussed. But what she is hearing is their concerns. I think she is so worried about showing people that she is doing a good job. And I can totally relate, like you just want to prove yourself, you know it is tough on your first year. So I think that is why it broke down at the beginning because she was hearing the staff and thinking, or they would be talking about—how come if they are such good friends, why aren't they doing noon hour games together? . . . So I guess her own fear of people feeling for her not succeeding already happened by her not opening up to me. (T1, p. 5)

What really happened in this instance remains a mystery, but Sue Ann experienced the event as betrayal and it led to her being less open and less trusting with Tie.

The emergence of this issue of betrayal in women's mentoring relationships is not surprising. In Chapter 2 I referred to Heinrich's (1995) exploration of women's advisement relationships in doctoral programs, in which she described the phenomenon of "silent betrayal." While advisement relationships are not accurately mentoring relationships as I defined these in Chapter 1, the silent betrayals that characterized many of the relationships in Heinrich's study provide insights into the betrayals within Sue Ann and Tie's relationship. Heinrich found that many women felt betrayed when their advisors failed to actively mentor. The failures in her study were mainly implicit, including failure to support the student advisees or stand up for them. In this sense, Tie's betrayal was not

silent, it was vocal and explicit, as it allegedly involved her informing others contrary to Sue Ann's desires and interests. Heinrich also described the deep disappointment student advisees felt when betrayed. Clearly Sue Ann's feelings were deep as well. Further, Heinrich's suggestion that advisees participate in their own betrayal by keeping silent corresponds with Sue Ann's lack of open response to Tie. Her desire to maintain the relationship meant that, to some extent, she colluded in her own betrayal. In this, she responded like the women in Heinrich's study, who were:

so intent on maintaining harmony that they never gave voice to feelings of frustration, disappointment, or anger with nonmentoring women advisors. Rather, they protected advisory relationships with their silence and assumed inauthentic roles that ultimately constricted their personal and professional growth (p. 458).

Different Expectations of What Mentoring Should Be

As the problems unfolded among Sue Ann, Emily and Tie, it was unclear as to cause and effect; however, central to the dysfunction were differing expectations of what a mentoring relationship should be and how a beginning teacher should use her mentor.

In the first cycle of interviews, an anomaly occurred. Typically, I tried to interview each participant individually before undertaking the joint interview. In this instance, however, Tie cancelled her initial interview twice and so we first met at the joint interview. This was unfortunate, because it meant that I had at least some relationship with the others, but not with her. The interview was extremely uncomfortable. Emily was not feeling well and it was the end of report card week. It became apparent as they began to talk that this was not a three-way mentorship, as I had assumed, but instead three two-way relationships. This was almost the first time they had sat down together as a triad.

Tie sat quietly in the beginning and, when she finally spoke it was to express her discontent with the relationship, she stated it was not like her mentoring experience and that she felt unneeded. She was fidgety as she spoke, playing with her hair and moving restlessly on the chair. Her face was tight and her voice was dry. Tie described her own

experience of being mentored as positive and it seemed that her expectations that Sue Ann's mentorship would mirror Tie's own, led in part to her current dissatisfaction:

I think I went into it with different expectations, I was thinking that mentoring would be more of a, I thought it would be more communication, maybe not more communication, but more questioning. And I've realized that that's coming from who I am and seeing that everyone communicates differently. So that's been, not a struggle, but something for me to work through. I think that's the whole essence of mentoring. I had an outstanding mentor, who was just, like, the same as me. And because there was one person, I was directed to go to her. I knew I could go to other people, but that was her role. She was in my area; I was doing Learning Assistance. I had no clue, like all these disorders and the whole nine yards, from kindergarten to Grade 7. But she was outstanding, like for reporting. I really built with her, during that time. I guess I had anticipated that that would happen because we already had a prior relationship. And it just didn't really seem to come out that way. So that was a challenge. I guess I just felt less needed. (SAET1, p. 7)

The feeling of not being needed was powerful for Tie and it seemed to lead to Tie's pressing Sue Ann to have and ask more questions. She believed that all or most of these questions should be directed to the mentors and that they should be evenly distributed between the two.

Sue Ann, on the other hand, was sometimes not even sure of what questions to ask and when she was sure, she preferred to direct them to a variety of people, depending on the circumstances:

I went to them when I had questions, but then also, part of the time I don't think I knew what to ask. I didn't know what to ask. And also I think my learning style is different too. [Tie and I] were talking about how some children learn, about how Asian children learn with their parents and how their parents push them to try. Well in my family, my parents couldn't help me learn. So you can either do it by yourself or you don't do it at all. And with my parents, it was—why can't you do it by yourself. So with me, I was trying to do it by myself. You just need to try to do

it by yourself. And as far as question asking goes, I would ask other people, but because I'm new on staff, I would use the question-asking as a way to break the ice with people, kind of start a conversation because I wanted to get to know the other staff. (SAET, p. 9-10)

From this comment, it appeared that Sue Ann's acceptance of norms of individualism was founded not only in professional images, but also in her cultural or familial background. Proving herself capable required that she learn on her own and not rely on others. It was clear from Sue Ann's comments that she viewed mentoring differently, she expected to interact with a lot of other teachers and when possible, to solve problems herself. This leads into the third issue, differences in personality or learning style. However, before proceeding to that issue, there was one more event that exemplifies the conflicting expectations within mentoring.

In her first interview, Sue Ann recounted that her mentors wanted her to come into the staffroom during teaching breaks. She explained why she did not like to do so:

I don't usually eat lunch, but I've been told I need to get into the staff room, I need to chat and all that. And I did that in the beginning, but I was chatting with the same people all the time. . . . One mentor said—oh, you know, just get in to have lunch, just to take care of yourself, give yourself a few minutes of sanity. And the other mentor said—oh you don't understand the value of meeting friends in the staff room and you should, you don't: basically saying to me that I didn't care whether I met anybody in the staff room. And that's not true. People go to the staff room to vent out their frustrations. . . . When I'm in there, sometimes it just makes me feel even lower. It's not an uplifting place to be. So I'd rather be up here or I'd rather go outside. So now I feel like I have to go like they have everybody checking on me now to go down to the staff room. My [Classroom Assistant] says you better get down there and they send a student teacher up here to get me and the whole bit. So now I go down there. But, I end up sitting there and just being

quiet. So I don't know what I'm down there for. But this was a problem during my practicum too. Like, I didn't want to go to the staffroom. It just wasn't an uplifting place to be. (SA1, p. 14-15)

The images of Sue Ann being summoned by a student teacher and then sitting silently in the staffroom, complying with her mentors' demands, are disturbing. They capture the essence of Sue Ann's response to the differing expectations of her mentors: she complied with their demands and expectations, even when doing so further complicated her life.

Earlier, I suggested that Sue Ann was complicit in her own betrayal. It is important to consider what might have led her to be so compliant, instead of simply blame her for being so. As described in Chapter 2, mentoring relationships do maintain a hierarchical structure despite ostensibly being collegial relationships. Heinrich (1995) addressed the issue of power in her study, suggesting that two kinds of power are evident in advising relationships, "personal power" and "legitimate power" (p. 451). She described personal power as "power from within" and suggested that all of us have personal power "by virtue of being human." Legitimate power is the power vested by the institution in advisors (and mentors, to some extent). Tie frequently and Emily occasionally overextended their legitimate power, as in the instance of insisting Sue Ann come into the staffroom. As future events would show, they appeared to hold more traditional, hierarchical views of mentoring.

Although beginning teachers are not in the same subordinate position as the student advisees Heinrich (1995) described, there are many institutional conditions that depreciate them. Beginning teachers are usually hired to temporary contracts, they are at the bottom of seniority lists, and they have few rights in choosing teaching assignments. They lack a record of successful teaching. In addition to their limited experience as teachers, they are often the youngest members of school staffs. Sue Ann was hired late to teach grades she had never taught before. Her mentors were both respected within the school. In addition, her background had led her to be deferential to authority figures. Her compliance needs to be viewed as situational and institutional as well as individual. In

attempting to comply, she developed a complex method of apportioning her questions between her mentors. However, this failed to satisfy Tie's desire to be needed, as this three-way conversation indicates:

Sue Ann If it's one [mentor], I think all the questions would have been directed to them. Because I'm splitting it up now, I think—oh who should I ask for this one, oh I'll ask Emily. Who should I ask for this one—oh, I'll ask Tie. So instead of getting all of the questions, it's been split in half. I don't know if you guys have noticed that.

Tie: No, I don't feel I do anything. Really, there's no real—

Emily: I know you feel like that, but you see, that's because of what you expect because of what you had. Do you see? . . . You had a mentor who was totally involved with you.

Tie: Well she didn't at all ever say—what else can I do for you, which I say to Sue. I would approach—

Emily: But you went to her so you ended up having a very tight relationship, whereas anybody I've had as a mentor, number one, I've never wanted that but I've also never had anybody that provided that kind of thing for me. So what's going on here to me looks like mentoring, from what I've seen everywhere else. In my experience, even watching other people. And I know it doesn't to you and I know that bothers you. But it does to me so I don't worry about it.

Sue Ann: I think you [Tie] had a really tough time at the beginning of last year and so you needed to find some people to lean on. And because I was coming in as a friend you wanted to make sure that I didn't experience any of those things. You wanted to make sure that everything was okay.

Emily: She's [Tie] good. I'm just—oh, you'll have to struggle your way through that one.

Sue Ann: But on the other hand, I think I'm coming into this situation a little differently because I have some history here, I had my [substitute teaching] here. So there were other people that I knew, so I think my entering this situation was a lot different from yours. Plus, I wanted to try to do it on my own.

Emily: Because of your previous history.

Sue Ann: Ya and I'm learning how to ask. I realize I have to. I just really wanted to prove myself. I wanted people to understand that I deserve it. I was good candidate and they made a good choice.

Emily: But you see I'm concerned about what you just said about now you know that you can't do it on your own, you have to ask. I don't think you do. You don't always have to ask for help. . . . Sometime you just have to slog through on you own because that's a good way to learn if that's part of your learning style. . . . I think if you give that up completely and start asking everybody and getting easy answers you don't learn it the same way. So if that's the way you learn, then you really have to value that too. Because well, I say that because it's what I do.

(SAET, p. 19-22)

Emily frequently took on the role of moderator and counselor, as she did in this example, trying to affirm what each of the others was feeling.

Different Ways of Coming to Know about Teaching

In the preceding interview excerpt, the notion of *style* comes through strongly. Sue described herself as preferring to learn things on her own. She traced this to her family and cultural background; one was expected to be able to learn independently. I have suggested that an element of her individualism may have been influenced by prevailing professional norms. Sue Ann wanted to prove herself in her new role as a teacher; she was getting "the big bucks" now and wanted to show she deserved them. Emily felt Sue Ann's style was like her own. Emily was confident of her abilities, but she liked to learn for herself. She had never had a mentor, but did not miss having one. While she had developed a friendly and collegial relationship with Tie, contacts were usually initiated by Tie, as in the following excerpt:

Tie: There has to be conversation. Communication is the thing that solves problems. That's the way I see--

Emily: You want lots of it because you like it! No, [as Tie begins to interrupt] think about it. You do. And I do too with you. We spent a lot of time

together last year blabbing and it was a really useful experience. And what we haven't had, either of us. And the problem is finding enough time. The one thing is probably not finding enough time to satisfy *your* basic need for conversation within a relationship like that. Because I think you probably need more, well you said that you need more than maybe Sue does and probably me. Because you're a very verbal person.

Tie: Um.

Emily: And that's a valuable thing to know.

Tie: Ya. But I find that the only way we got so much going on last year was because I'd actually fly into your room after school and go—this was the shittiest spelling lesson I have ever taught. In frustration. . . . She (Emily) has no clue how to do spelling in grade 3. Do you think it matters? She was amazing. Right away, sits down—what are you doing, you're doing too much, they can't do that stuff. And I'm going—they can't? And I had no idea. Only when she sat me down and said that, it taught me a lot. And she couldn't have taught me anything if I didn't verbalize. . . .

Emily: It depends. I didn't do that as much as you, because that's not my style. But when you came in to talk, we talked, I learned a lot of stuff from that.

Tie: Ya, exactly. And I agree, everyone's got different learning styles but it's amazing. Even the shyest kids in this classroom, it's incredible once they have someone that pulls all that out of them. Kids are blabbers by nature. Only it's been stomped on and shut up for so long at home that once you open the door they have so much to say. (SAET, p. 31-32)

It's clear from this conversation that Tie's style was verbal, she believed talking was essential for learning. While she implied that she understood that different styles were possible, she also suggested that talking was better and that not talking had a pathological element. Perhaps you had been "stomped on" and required drawing out. It is also interesting to note that in her collegial relationship with Emily, the issue of teaching different grades was not an impediment to helpful professional dialogue.

Tie's concern about an individual style of learning became more apparent when Sue Ann attempted to describe how she thought things through:

Sue Ann: [During the practicum], we had to keep a reflection log and I used that quite a bit. It was so much easier for me to write things down than to explain to somebody. I actually go through things quite quickly and I'm able to understand why things worked a certain way. . . . When I was going through my difficulties a month ago, I picked up a book again and it helped me. That was a really good outlet. That was a way for me to communicate or express how I was feeling at that time, even though it wasn't verbal, it was actually written. And for my learning style, that was really good for me. Can you see that?

Tie: Whatever works for you is totally the key. But as long as you know that in doing it that, you're not getting any feedback. It may be more clear for you in hindsight, having reflected that way because you're comfortable with it. And it may give you clarity, but nobody's giving you feedback on it.

Sue Ann: Exactly and you see I don't see myself as the kind of person to dig myself into a hole and not be able to get out. If I need to, I'll go ask for help, I'll find a way. I always know that the two of you are there for me. It's not that I don't know it, I do know it. I might not use you as I should.

Tie: But there's no *should*. There's no prescription on how you should use us, right. What we perceive as *should* are totally individual and I've said to Sue over and over that it doesn't matter how I feel. I'll get over my own feelings.
(SAET1, p. 33-35)

Despite Tie's comments that "there's no shoulds," she referred many times to correct ways to do things. She said, "there has to be conversation" for learning to occur and she described how her mentor had helped her learn how to "fix" learning disorders in children. She continued to express concern that Sue Ann was not using her mentors appropriately. Further, as Tie talked about letting go of some of her expectations, there was a strong sense of her sadness about losing the close relationship she had desired.

In Chapter 2 I cited Cole's (1992) concern about "appropriating" relationships in the quest to support beginning teachers. Specifically, she expressed the worry that institutionalized relationships, such as mentorships, interrupt naturally occurring relationships beginning teachers might otherwise form. Clearly, Tie's demands of Sue Ann did interrupt her forming relationships with others. However, it was Tie's own positive experience in an institutionalized mentorship that to some extent precipitated her expectations and demands. Further, Sue Ann was reluctant to openly resist these expectations, in part due to the personal relationship they experienced outside school. Both Tie and Sue Ann were involved in misappropriating this relationship.

Getting an Equal Share of Attention

Part of Tie's unhappiness with the mentorship seemed to relate to the classical problem of three way relationships; she felt left out. Perhaps because Emily and Sue Ann were more similar in personality or learning style, perhaps because Sue Ann initially had more questions about her grade two children, Tie felt she was not included in Sue Ann's early experience:

I just have completely ditched everything that I thought it would be and it has been negative in a way that I don't really feel that I am giving to anyone and instead I always feel that I am in competition with the third person. Since there are two people and Emily and I are so busy, Emily doesn't fill me on everything she does and she doesn't need to. But I will give you an example. When Sue got the job I wrote her a little note saying congratulations and gave her a card. After about six or seven or more of these times, Emily came in and gave her all 13 Franklin books in a ribbon. So I felt like I wished I would have given more or I wish I would have even think of giving something like that to her. (T1, p. 11)

In addition to losing what she had hoped for with Sue Ann, Tie also experienced a loss of relationship with Emily, now that Sue Ann was a part of the group:

About a month ago, it was horrible. Emily would have a little show, a little drama thing, five minutes and would invite a couple of classes. Last year, when Sue wasn't here, we did everything together. Now whose class goes to it—Sue's. So I

feel like it has totally changed the dynamics since she has been here. Not only is it different for us, and she knows all this, since we talked about it. But it has also changed. So I have been like on the outs, like Emily doesn't come to see anything. She doesn't ask anything. She doesn't hang out. We really don't do a lot of stuff together. So I just figure and I said to her—I just go along and do my teaching every day and that is fine. (T1, p. 13)

While Tie frequently talked about her disappointment as her own problem to deal with and even asked Sue if she would prefer not to have her as a mentor, Sue Ann clearly felt pressure to include Tie and to use her appropriately. As described earlier, Emily attempted to explain the situation to Tie and to soothe her feelings. Thus, instead of Sue Ann being the focus of the mentorship, the focus shifted to Tie and she became the one whose needs were being attended to. Cole (1992) suggested this kind of loss of focus is inevitable in appropriated relationships:

Once relationships become appropriated, however, once collegiality becomes "contrived," they cannot help but lose richness in purpose and meaning both for the individuals intended to derive or for the larger institutional community. For a true community, built on meaningful and beneficial relationships, requires that the person, the builder, be "the living active center" (Buber, 1970). In such a community, diversity is intrinsically valued. (p. 377)

Moving On

A final conversation during the first joint interview focussed on the need each was feeling to re-negotiate the parameters of their mentorship. Although much of their discussion centred on how the program should have clarified these parameters more thoroughly, there appeared to be an intent within the triad to meet together to try to consider explicitly how they would work together. Returning for the second interviews in February, I found that although the planned deliberation had not occurred, they had to some extent, moved on. The mentorship continued to rumble forward, through two singular shared experiences, one involving Emily and Sue Ann, and one involving Tie and Sue Ann.

Shared Experiences

Sue Ann and Emily met together one day after school in January to discuss the grade two math program. Sue Ann requested the meeting because she was feeling that she might be pushing her children too quickly through the program:

I've met with Emily once, which was really good, when I was kind of having some difficulty with the math program for the grade twos, so we met after school and that was good. What I was finding was, I think I was pushing my grade twos too quickly. . . . And then Emily was saying—why are you only doing two weeks, you should be doing six weeks, with it. I kept thinking—but they're going to get bored—but they don't, they just love it. And so you just think of different ways to introduce it again. . . . She told me what were the most important components of the math program, and things that I could leave to last, or put them into centers. She actually, like, wrote it all out for me as we were discussing it, so it was more of a verbal thing for me, and she did all the written stuff. And I really enjoyed that. I was getting lost and I felt like, it just didn't feel comfortable with the grade twos. (S2, p. 4-5)

It is interesting that Sue Ann initiated this experience, moving out of her earlier mode of simply complying with her mentor's wishes. However, her description of the experience suggests that Emily told her what to put in and leave out, and how long to spend on various topics, rather than a more reciprocal conversation about the curriculum.

In addition to the conversation with Emily, Sue Ann and Tie planned and then spent an afternoon together on general planning.

Merrilee: When you talk about third term are you hoping to talk about all the subjects?

Tie: Integrated.

Sue Ann: I gave her the topic, I'd like to do—"change." So then in Science and in writing and things like that. And Tie said that she'd check and see what she's got and I could present some ideas and then we could brainstorm.

Tie: Because there's other areas that haven't been covered, so we'll just cover it, like there's still rocks that you should cover in the science curriculum.

Sue Ann: I could do erosion, for change, and plants. It's going to be all science in the third term because I haven't had a chance to do much. (SAET2, p. 3-4)

These conversations seemed typical of Sue Ann's interactions with her mentors. They took on the role of experts and provided her with information. This model reflects knowledge-in-practice paradigm (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press). In both shared experiences, there was no sense of reciprocity in the activity. Both meetings were intended to tell Sue Ann how to do things in the classroom. The deep reciprocity evident in Samantha and Marie's shared experiences was absent here. These were the only two shared experiences reported, however, during the second joint interview, one of my interview questions led to the planning of a hypothetical shared experience that would have included all three. I asked how they would choose to spend an afternoon together, if there were professional development funding to do so.

Emily: You know what we could do that would be valuable for each one of us. . . . We could sit down and go from K to 5 or whatever and make some plans on how we would change the classroom, so whatever we get next year, we have some idea of what to do. Because with 3 of us together and with her [Sue Ann] having intermediate training, we could—

Tie: What do you mean—changes?

Emily: Well what if you end up in a 4/5 next year?

Tie: Rock on. [raises both thumbs]

Emily: Ya, right, but if I ended up with a 3/4, I'd be hooped. If we sat down for an afternoon and said—okay let's look at the K/1 curriculum, what are the really important things we'd have to cover in Language Arts and in Math. Let's sequence them. What about in a 2/3. Let's do that. What about a 3/4, a 4/5?

Tie: That would be a raucous idea.

Emily: That would be a good idea. Then—

Sue Ann: It would have been really good for me at the beginning of the year.

Emily: It would be really good for you because you've only had one (level) and I've had K to 2. But then we'd have a basic outline for every year of things that have to be done. That's what I would do. (SAET 2, p. 11)

At this point, I reminded them that they did, in fact have the funding to undertake this project. However, they did not undertake it.

Problems: Simmering Below the Surface

Although Sue Ann, Emily and Tie often discussed the need to restructure their relationship, they seemed unable to move into more reciprocal ways of interacting. The issue that most obviously demonstrates the transmissive mode of interacting that characterized this mentorship was classroom management. In her second interview, Tie expressed her concern about Sue Ann's management and organization, particularly at the end of the day. Apparently Sue Ann did not have the children ready to dismiss at the end of the day. Instead, she was regularly keeping them for up to 15 minutes to complete the end of the day routine:

There's this element of routines that she's struggling with and then, well—how do I want them to do it? Now, they're all running around, and they're all out of their desks. And it's just so hard. I just can't even fathom it... Then Emily said—if I was a parent I'd be furious. So then it comes down to—all right, we all agree, we are agreeing with the parents. You have a problem. You have to deal with this properly.

Well, then she says—anything I give them, they don't finish. I can understand her point to a certain extent, at the end of the day when she says—look, I have given you forty minutes, sit down and finish it. But it's all of them. For me, if it was two kids left, they'd be in here anyway, finishing it. But when it's the mass, then there's a mass problem. (T2, p 8-10)

Tie found Sue Ann's lack of organization troubling, saying:

I don't know any other teachers that have that difficulty. I guess that freaks me

out. Like, I went through university, and there's at least twelve people that I'm still in touch with, management was never an issue. I thought that should be second nature. (T2, p.12)

Emily was less disturbed by Sue Ann's apparent lack of organization. Having taught some of the same children the previous year, she felt it was a challenging group. In her third interview, Emily reflected on the situation:

I'm not convinced I could have handled that class any better than she does. I'm really not. Maybe I could've because some of the kids were in my class the year before. I could have gone in and set up routines that they already knew, which would have been helpful. But given the kids in there, she has been incredibly patient with them. . . . It would have been a struggle all year for anybody. It's those kids. They're wild. And I know some of the wild ones, because I had them last year. So I know what they're like. (E3, p. 13)

Tie's concern about organization and management erupted during the second joint interview. This was a troubling interview from the start, as I described in my research journal.

Journal entry

February 17, 1997

This was probably the second worst experience I've had in doing this research, just a totally uncomfortable interview. From Tie, mostly I got a sense of non-cooperation, resistance, not wanting to deal with the questions. She initiated several long discussions with Sue Ann and Emily where she turned away from me physically, excluding me. These conversations were not really related to the questions. There was a lot of difficulty for the three of them in saying what they had learned from each other. I had to really press to keep them on this. Tie in particular both resisted hearing anything positive about her, saying she just was that way

and she also declined to say anything about the others. I found some of the language she uses jarring—talking about kids "dicking around" and "blowing things off."

As the interview progressed, I posed a question asking each what they had learned from working with the others. This question usually brought praise for each person. Tie began her response by saying she had learned how far she herself had "come from being a beginning teacher" (SAET2, p. 21). To illustrate how far she had come, Tie went on to describe the end of the day situation that Sue Ann was struggling with. From there began a long, largely two-way dialogue between Tie and Emily, with only occasional comments from Sue Ann. The dialogue had the tone of a rebuke, with Sue Ann sporadically agreeing with her mentors or defending her practices to them. In the following I include excerpts from that conversation:

Tie: No matter what kid, I firmly believe, everyone needs to have a scope and sequence to see, because little kids are trying to get a grip on what you're talking about in their mind. Sometimes I think that's one of the things I gained the most and transferred from my first to my second year. They really need you to say, like at the end of the day—well that should be set up in September—what do we do, we're doing it all year. Because by October there should be no discussion of what you're doing at the end of the day. You know?

Sue Ann: Ya, I'm still confused about it.

Tie: And they are a mess. It's not like they're going to be scarred for life from it. But you're always suffering because you're going—oh, they're so loud at the end of the day. And you just have to have a system, but you haven't created one.

Sue Ann: No, I tried two, it didn't work. I'm on the third one.

Emily: What do you mean by the end of the day?

Sue Ann: Well they don't seem to know what their jobs are at the end of the day. All I ask them to do is get their planner done and then before it was—relax or read or draw at your desk, but they need to get up and walk around for some

reason. Then I dismissed them and they could get their jackets and go. So that didn't work and so it was—

Tie: You have to say to yourself—why didn't it work? You have to check out why it didn't work. When you want them to do something, I don't care what class it is—

Sue Ann: Some kids get it all done fast. They get their book bag, they're done. But other kids, they're chatting, they're all over. Also they can't find their book bag.

Emily: Well what's your goal here? To get rid of them.

Sue Ann: To have a nice quiet end of the day. To know that they have everything. To make sure that they're prepared to go home with what they have, which is their planner, their book bag, right. Those two things. (SAET2, p. 21-23)

In this excerpt, Sue Ann has declared herself to be concerned with the end of the day problem, and also to have a clear vision of what she would like to happen. Emily and Tie also expressed their concerns, but didactically offered solutions that have little to do with Sue Ann's goals. Further, in this instance, Sue Ann did not initiate the conversation; instead she was placed in the position of defending her purposes and practices.

Emily: Whose job is it to get their book bag at the end of the day?

Sue Ann: They are.

Emily: Well okay, you're taking responsibility for that! Why?

Sue Ann: I know, but I have kids that leave their planners on their desks, on the floor. Somebody takes it from here to the cloakroom and loses it there.

Emily: But you can't do anything about that! You say—fill out your planner and sit at your desk, then run around and check it and then say—fine, put your chair up and go.

Sue Ann: Then from here to there it's gone.

Tie: Who cares!

Emily: Who cares! It's not your problem. I checked it; it's at their desk.

Sue Ann: Ya, maybe, I guess—

Tie: But, Emily, more than that, more than the responsibility, every system that she uses, she tries for a while and then she changes it. . . . Once you've got it set up, and that's a lot of work, you've got to do it.

Sue Ann: Ya.

Tie: You can't do it for a week and stop, because it's hard.

Sue Ann: Ya. (SAET2, p. 23-25)

Although Sue Ann appeared to be agreeing with her mentors, there is also a sense of resignation here; she had given up defending herself in the face of their criticism and admonitions. The dialogue continued in this vein for several minutes, with both Emily and Tie telling Sue Ann how they organized their end of day routines, until in the following exchange, Emily proposed a dramatic solution.

Emily: Do you like what you're doing now?

Sue Ann: Well—

Tie: It's a scene, Sue!

Emily: It's way too complicated!

Sue Ann: Mmm.

Emily: It's not your job. Your job is—is your planner done? Now, I'm going to inform everyone, are your eyes on me, it's your responsibility to take this home. Whose responsibility is this? It's your responsibility. Okay, chairs up and go. If it doesn't get home, you tell the parents—it's their responsibility, I check it at their desks, they take it home, if they don't take it home, you talk to them. It's not your job! It is, but it isn't. You've got to teach them. My class can do that. Mind you, I don't use planners. But they know what to do at the end of the day. Why don't you have a revolution for third term? Get them to come in here for third term. Throw all the desks against the wall. Make them sit on the floor for a while and have a discussion about what the class is going to look like. Make it September.

Sue Ann: Ya. (SAET2, p. 27-28)

One of the major complications in Sue Ann's end of the day routines was the planners that children were expected to fill in and carry to and from school each day. Partly as a

way to interrupt the ongoing harangue, and also to find out more about why Sue Ann was so committed to their use, I interjected a question about the planners. In doing so, I hoped to alter the tone of the conversation, which had become didactic and judgmental. From the following, it is clear I did not succeed.

Merrilee: Tell me about the planners.

Sue Ann: I liked it because I used it in grade 4/5 because it was a way to communicate with the parents.

Merrilee: Is it used throughout the school? Or some people?

Emily: Some do, some don't.

Merrilee: Do you (Sue) like it?

Sue Ann: Well I like the idea behind it.

Emily: Does it work?

Tie: It doesn't matter if you like it, is it effective?

Emily: Is it conveying anything for you?

Tie: Are you getting anything from it?

Sue Ann: Yes. [laughs weakly] I like the philosophy behind it. The grade twos might be a little young. I use it as a book club journal. I use it to put their title and author in it. I also use it for temperature and weather in the morning. I used to have two separate books, but now I just use the planner, which is nice. Actually I would try it again next year. It's so if the parents want to communicate with me, it's there. For children, I figure they need to learn a system for how to remember things.

Emily: But is that what they're using it for?

Sue Ann: Some of them. And some of them like writing things down. Nathan, last week I said to Nathan—forget it, it's not working, the planner is never here. He likes it on his hand. Write it on your hand, that's your planner.

Tie: That's me. I say to my class—you lose everything in your entire life. What do you have to remember for tomorrow? Book orders. And what are you going to do about it? On the hand. (SET2, p. 28-30)

Throughout this lengthy discussion, Both Tie and Emily pushed Sue Ann to be more assertive with her class, to set expectations and to follow through. They kept reminding her that she was in charge in her classroom. Yet the tone of their advice was transmissive rather than reciprocal. They initiated the discussion, they defined the problem and they proffered their solutions to the problem. They did not show any awareness of the incongruity of directing her to be more commanding. They both assumed an authoritarian stance in mentoring Sue Ann.

The issue of mentor teacher authority is an important one to address. Mentors, with their larger body of experience, may be cast in the role of authorities. They have spent more time in the classroom, they know the rules of the school and the system. The tendency, as demonstrated in this excerpt, may be for mentors simply to tell the rules to novices or for novices to seek from mentors clear solutions to complex and endemic challenges of teaching. In this instance, both Tie and Emily attempted to transmit knowledge to Sue Ann, who appeared to resist politely, through silence and through quietly justifying her practices.

Despite Sue 's frequent compliance, she did resist the direction of her mentors. Her resistance was not overt or aggressive, instead it was persistent and subtle. She continued to ask questions of other teachers, she continued to write in her journal, and she persisted in the use of planners, which she believed to be beneficial to the children. Ozga and Lawn (as cited in S. Acker, 1995) theorized that women teachers do resist but use "quiet and subtle strategies" that may be overlooked by researchers "looking for something more dramatic and confrontational" (p. 110). Sue Ann's response to her mentors was complex; she attempted to comply enough to be able to construct her own experience of beginning to teach.

Ending the year

Despite the scolding tone of the joint interview management discussion, Sue Ann, Emily and Tie did continue to work together to some extent. In her final interview Sue Ann summarized how she viewed the mentorship, saying " If I can't get the information

somewhere else, I can go to them. . . . I am a person that likes to spread myself around, I don't like to be going to one person all the time" (SA3, p. 16). She acknowledged that each of her mentors had something to offer, but also admitted that she had had to compromise in how she preferred to work:

Tie needs somebody who needs to be open with her, so she understands what that person means, and how she can help. So I've learned to do that better. I'm supposed to go to her and talk to her about how I'm feeling, and things that I need, and she's more patient now with me. (SA3, p. 17)

Whether this was a positive learning is difficult to say. Teachers do need to interact with colleagues about many issues in teaching. We cannot choose all of our collegial relationships. Is one style of interacting and knowing more appropriate and should that style be imposed on all teachers? Hargreaves' (as cited in Cole, 1992) passionate expressed fear of "a system that cannot tolerate interesting and enthusiastic eccentrics; that cannot accommodate strong and imaginative teachers who work better alone than together" (p. 378). Sue Ann strongly felt her style was denigrated:

I really wanted a mentor who would honour me. I don't know, it's very egocentric, but I think I deserved it for my beginning year. You know, just to feel that it's okay. Like, all the mistakes, everything you do, it's all okay. And I mean, because you're so self-conscious, this first year, and I don't know if it gets better. (SA2, p. 25)

The desire to be respected as a learner and to be allowed to learn in one's own way seems at least, reasonable and at best, fundamental. Sue Ann's plea is reminiscent of the women studied by Belenky et al. (1986) who "yearned" for a teacher "who would help them articulate and expand their latent knowledge" (p. 217). The model they suggested, the midwife-teacher, may be only one of many that strive to honour the learner's process of becoming.

Sue Ann was not completely powerless in her mentoring relationship. Through the year, she both complied with and resisted her mentors' expectations. But her disappointment

was evident. She did not feel her process of becoming had been honoured or her ways of being and knowing respected. Ironically, Tie saw Sue Ann's compliance as growth and felt proud of her own role in the process.

You really relish in their successes. Because you say to yourself—I realize now how hard that is for you to talk. So that's why you coming into the staffroom could have been nothing to anyone else, but to me, I was overjoyed, because that's hard for you. Like, that is a success. (T3, p. 10)

For Emily, who had tried to act as moderator and counselor throughout, the experience was unpleasant and frustrating. She was not able to offer all she felt she could, but was unwilling to confront what she perceived as the problem.

It's been very, very tricky from a political point of view, more than anything.

Three people involved. When Tie and Sue Ann were very good friends to begin with, and in fact I think that overall my style of talking and stuff is probably more suited to Sue Ann than Tie's. But when Sue Ann comes to see me, Tie gets put out and upset. So I've backed off a bit. . . . I think it's too bad that that's the way it worked out, because Sue Ann probably lost out in the deal. And you hate to lay blame, but the person in here who's causing the fuss, in my mind, is Tie, who's feeling put out and left out and so she was very demanding in what she would expect from her. I mean, I felt bad because I don't think I've been that much help to Sue Ann over the year. I give stuff to her, or talk to her about stuff, and I've been up in her classroom a few times, hanging out and helping out and stuff. But it's really hard to know what to do because she never asks for anything.

A lot of this is she's still feeling like people are really evaluating her. So I don't know whether that's just Sue Ann. I suspect, maybe, from her upbringing, what she's told me, that she's been criticized a lot, and that she's very unsure of herself, or thinks that something she's doing wrong. But every time I've ever been in there, she's very competent and she's very kind and nice to them, much nicer than I am. I keep going up and thinking—man, you know, I could try that. That's a lot nicer

way of doing it than what I do. But I think it's been really hard for her. So, I've found it more frustrating than anything has. Not because of Sue Ann, just because of the whole situation. Yeah. (E3, p. 1-3)

So, for a variety of complex reasons—personal, relational and contextual—this mentorship did not succeed in satisfying the participants. No one felt fulfilled or understood. The support that could have been offered was withheld, and requests for support had to be meticulously distributed between the two mentors. Advice, often unsought, did not really fit the situation. It appeared that the complicating factors of differing expectations and different ways of coming to know prevented this relationship from functioning. That seemed to be clear to all.

Never Again

In the final interview, I asked Sue Ann about her choice of two mentors:

Merrilee: Knowing what you know now, would you pick two mentors?

Sue Ann: No, I'd just go with one. . . . If I could do it all over again, I don't think I would have picked a friend. Only because I understand what my working ethic is now or I guess my personality. . . . If I had a mentor I was not familiar with, it would be easier to come to an understanding of what expectations there would be, because there's nothing coming into the relationship.

Merrilee: So you wanted a relationship that was more collegial, than friendship?

Sue Ann: Yeah, yeah. (SA2, p. 18)

In a paradoxical twist, this was one of the few strong agreements of the triad. In the following excerpt, Tie commented on both the friendship aspect as well as the triadic nature of the relationship:

Tie: This is my highest recommendation. I would never, ever recommend, I would never allow [friends to be mentors], even if they said—we're really good friends, we've gone back for years, I would said—well, then you know

what? You already will mentor them. You'll help them anyway. But I would never allow that, or never force that situation. Even if it was a choice, I'd say–no, you're not allowed. . . . **I would never, ever, recommend a threesome.** Put that in bold. (T3, p. 26-27)

Emily agreed:

I should have known better, knowing myself. Part of the problem was Tie and I were very good friends last year. But we never really worked together on anything, because I had a straight two, she had a straight three. So it never came down to the nitty gritty of–what are you going to do for this?. . . Now, we get put in a situation where we're trying to advise Sue Ann, and we were trying to do it at one point in a group. And it was at that point, September, I thought–just shut up. Because in some ways, I was being quite attacked by somebody who really thinks they know everything and that everything they think is absolutely right. Which I mean, I always say to people–look, this is the way I do it, and this is what works for me. But it might not work for you. And there are lots of other ways of doing it. That is not an attitude that you would hear very often from Tie. She might say it, but she won't mean it. And I mean, don't get me wrong, I really like Tie, and she's a fabulous teacher. I have learned a lot from her in the last couple years. And I put kids in her class; I'd want my kid in that class. But it's not the way I would teach. And I think it put Sue Ann in a tough position right from the start. So I backed off a lot. When she came and asked me, I told her what I thought. Separately. (E3, p. 15-16)

Merrilee: Would you be a mentor again?

Emily: Yeah, sure. Absolutely. I like doing that kind of thing. I'd want to know the person. I'd want to talk to them about the kinds of things they wanted to do, and what they were looking for in the way of support. I'd want to know that. And I wouldn't do it with three people. (E3, p. 17)

Summary: A Failure to Connect

Throughout their mentorship, Tie, Emily and Sue Ann failed to make the kind of strong, trusting connection that might have enabled a more reciprocal relationship. Their failure may have had many causes, including the triadic nature of the relationship, the pre-existing friendship between Tie and Sue Ann, and issues of power and authority. Certainly, a significant feature of their dysfunction was their differing expectations and different styles. They had contrasting ways of coming to know about teaching. Tie loved to talk to others; for her, conversation provided the best route to knowing. However, both Sue Ann and Emily preferred to puzzle things out on their own: they were more individual, contemplative learners. Emily admitted that she did learn from talking with Tie, but that she rarely initiated the discussions. From her interactions, it appears that she had been more of a sounding board for Tie, posing alternative ideas and views. Even that was lost when the triad formed. The interjection of a third person interrupted the collegiality between Tie and Emily.

Sue Ann was also a more introspective learner. She liked to think things through, and going a step further than Emily, she liked to reflect through writing in a diary every night. Receiving information through conversation appeared to confuse and overload her. It seemed incomprehensible to Tie that this way of knowing could be effective. And so Tie's mode of knowing was imposed, but it was a mode that Sue Ann both complied with and resisted, one that Emily resented.

Each member of the mentorship conceptualized their work together differently. In fact they talked about their lack of a shared conception:

Emily: I think that maybe we should have sat down and discussed what our vision of mentoring was, because obviously everybody's was different.

Tie: It's really confusing because it's so open ended. . .

Sue Ann: We did that [before the practicum], as student teachers, the sponsor teachers came and we had to come up with expectations and they came up with expectations and then we got together to discuss them.

Emily: Ya, ya. Well it's different though because there's so much more of a structured format. . . .

Sue Ann: I mean in the relationship, what you want out of it. We could have done that. (SAET1, p. 27-28)

Tie, who had experienced a successful and intense relationship with her own mentor, thought her relationship with Sue Ann would mirror her own. She wanted to be the traditional, patriarchal mentor, a "wise guide" (Bona, Reinhart & Volbrecht, 1994) to Sue Ann. Tie wanted to tell Sue Ann the answers, based on her self-perception of expertise and her own experience of this style of mentoring. We have seen how her view of teaching was definitive. The fact that Sue Ann and Tie had a pre-existing social relationship increased Tie's expectations for closeness and intensity. This appeared to make her disappointment more acute and strengthened her resolve to push for this deliberately hierarchical model.

Emily, who had never had a mentor, was more comfortable with Sue Ann's less intense ways of connecting, since it matched her own way of learning. She said, "The way I look at it is she's an adult and she's a teacher and she's qualified, and if she needs some help she'll come and ask me. If she doesn't, that's okay too" (E3, p. 18). She valued coming to know on one's own over being told. However she was frustrated by the equal treatment approach Sue Ann took on. This was most evident on one occasion when Sue Ann "self-destructed," bursting into tears in the principal's office and subsequently taking several days off school to recover from stress:

Sue Ann had one little episode a few months ago, where she finally took a couple days off to just recuperate, because the kids were being so terrible and she couldn't get her stuff together. And she never came to either one of us, because she didn't want to offend the other one. She ended up going to the principal and just saying—look, I need some help. So she did just take a couple days off. And I went up to her after that, I said—you know, you self-destructed and you never even told us about this. And she said to me that she didn't want to offend Tie by coming to me. (E3, p. 2)

Sue Ann conceptualized the mentorship as only one of many sources of support, as did Marie in the previous case. Sue Ann used her questions as ways to get to know other teachers on staff and preferred to ask for and receive small bits of information at one time. Then she reflected on her own experiences as a way of coming to know. Unlike Marie, who was encouraged by her mentor to develop a wide circle of support, Sue Ann was admonished for doing so. However, she continued because she valued individual learning and wanted to prove herself competent.

The mentorship was never truly constructed because there were no agreed-upon underlying structures. Tie alternated between pressing Sue Ann for involvement and trying to accept Sue's style. Sue Ann complied by going into the staffroom, asking more questions and expressing feelings more (although one wonders what kind of openness forced disclosure can create), and attempting to distribute equally her attention to her two mentors. None of these strategies really met her needs. She resisted by continuing to learn in her own ways and by seeking support from other colleagues. Emily was willing to offer support but withdrew from initiating it. She watched what she felt was an inappropriate set of demands placed upon Sue Ann by Tie, but seemed unwilling to intervene. Although they tried to confront the issues repeatedly, these conversations had little effect in improving the mentorship.

In presenting the case of Sue Ann, Tie and Emily, I have focused on the problematic nature of their mentorship, looking at how differing ways of knowing and beliefs about the value of those differing ways impeded the development of reciprocity within the triad. Much of the interaction centred on justifying those differing ways of knowing and attempting to convince the others of the validity of the individual's way. We have seen examples of these conversations in the joint interviews, and according to the individuals, similar conversations occurred throughout the year. Sue Ann spoke of these conversations:

I've discussed with my mentors, I guess, what kind of relationship I wanted. I've been basically been kind of a, as-I-need basis, I guess. And they have been very

accommodating for that. I think they probably still believe I'm not asking enough, or not wanting enough from them, but I think I'm doing okay. I mean, for me, right now, it's how much I can handle in one portion, or one lump sum, how much I can take. And sometimes I find myself, if I ask them a question, they give so much information that it's too much to absorb all at once, and I end up just not being able to do anything with it. (SA2, p. 3-4)

Thus, despite repeated attempts to establish common expectations, the basic dissension continued throughout the year. Initially the triad was unable to establish trust and this lack of trust prevented the generation of true shared experiences that might have led to reciprocity among them. The result was fewer and more limited shared experiences and increasing dissatisfaction. Although a sort of truce was negotiated, the mentorship failed.

Conclusions

This case was certainly the most difficult to study. From the first interview, I wondered if the relationship would hold together for the year. That it did is not a sign of success. The level of dysfunction within the mentorship meant that it created more stress upon Sue Ann than it alleviated and the lessons it taught about the possibilities of collaboration were better not learned. This is a cautionary tale, it demonstrates that not everyone wants to be mentored in the same way and that not everyone comes to know about teaching in the same way. This case asks us to consider if everyone should have a mentor and if everyone can be a mentor.

Sue Ann's story seems to exemplify the worst possibilities of "appropriated" professional relationships (Cole, 1992): a lack of "appropriate recognition of and respect for the individuality of the teachers as developing persons and professionals" (p. 377). In this instance, however, the relationship was not institutionally appropriated. The direction of the Portal program on how to choose a mentor and how to develop that mentorship was not prescriptive, instead it was responsive and situational. The choice of mentor was Sue Ann's to make and she selected someone she considered to be a friend. All participants in this mentorship said they would have liked more direction, but, from their varying

perspectives, I think they would have each preferred a different kind of direction. The lack of "recognition of and respect" for Sue Ann's individuality (from Cole, 1992) within this mentorship had complex roots, based in strongly held beliefs about how one comes to know about teaching. At issue is how to address such individuality within a mentorship. This is an issue that I will explore in Chapter 10.

Before considering how teachers might be better supported in their work together as mentors and beginning teachers, I will present three additional cases that shed more light on the phenomenon of mentoring among women teachers. The two cases presented thus far highlight contrasts in mentoring relationships. The cases that follow in the next chapter interweave to reveal in more depth the varied textured nature of mentoring relationships among women teachers.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE THREE ADDITIONAL CASES

Introduction

The two cases presented in Chapters 5 and 6 begin to frame a range of possibilities of mentoring among women teachers. The relationship between Samantha and Marie was a highly successful mentorship constructed reciprocally by both participants with clear and strong benefits to each. The mentorship among Sue Ann, Emily and Tie was deeply unsuccessful; it was never truly realized because the participants held differing conceptions of mentoring and were unable to mediate them. Further, they had different ways of coming to know. Unlike the first case, where both Samantha and Marie could articulate their shared "M.O.", Tie had a different way of coming to know than Sue Ann and Emily. This discrepancy became a central focus of their interactions, and other shared experiences were never possible. Should Tie have taken on the role of mentor for Sue, given the deeply held conflicting vision she brought to the task? Should Sue Ann have excluded herself from the mentoring program, since she did not desire the level of intimacy that many mentoring partners share?

In this chapter, I present three additional cases that add further texture and detail to our understanding of mentoring. The mentorships described are less successful than Marie and Samantha's and more successful than Sue Ann, Tie and Emily's. They reveal many of the same elements, combined in different ways and yielding different results. Because they are presented here to add to the picture already developing, they are written in a more abbreviated form, although with a similar structure, than the previous two cases.

Taylor and Alisa: From Function to Non-functional

The Characters and The Setting

Taylor and Alisa taught mathematics at Shoreline, a large secondary school. Alisa had been a teacher for many years and had experience in a number of school districts. She had come to Shoreline the previous year. Alisa had taught a variety of other subjects as well as mathematics and had worked with students with learning challenges. She was a

fairly political teacher, interested in the mathematics departmental decisions as well as school and district policy and contractual requirements. Alisa saw herself as someone who learned by talking things through and felt intuition was central to good teaching.

Taylor had undertaken her teacher education in another province and moved to BC to teach in Portal because she heard about the Portal's mentoring program:

I thought that's exactly what I need because I felt that I was capable of coming and teaching and having my own class. I didn't want to be a student teacher anymore. But I did feel that they were still things I wanted to learn and to talk about with more experienced teachers and I thought that's exactly where I am right now. (T1, p. 16)

Choosing a Mentor

As in the case of Marie and Samantha, Alisa became Taylor's mentor because she showed interest in supporting beginning teachers. The vice principal knew that Alisa had volunteered to be a mentor if anyone was hired in the mathematics department and he suggested to Taylor that she visit Alisa, talk with her, and decide if she would like to have Alisa as her mentor. Taylor met with Alisa:

We talked about it for a while and it just kind of happened. Alisa volunteered and she's the only other woman in the math department. That was kind of nice too. And I felt like I could get along with her well and so we just did it. Like Nike says. (T1, p. 15)

Alisa had been a mentor several times, including the previous year, when she had mentored Rick, a beginning science teacher. She had enjoyed the experience and told the vice principal she would be willing to mentor again. Alisa encouraged Taylor to make her own decision in choosing a mentor:

I said—I'm happy to be your mentor, but you could also choose anyone else. You might want to go talk to Rick and see how he felt that it worked between the two of us. (A1, p. 3)

This initial invitation and selection led to an emerging feeling of trust between the two. Taylor felt Alisa cared about her and Alisa felt respected and valued. Alisa trusted Taylor to come to her if she wanted help; she didn't feel she needed to check up on her. Taylor enjoyed being able to talk to Alisa and to ask questions. She liked Alisa's approach to mentoring:

It's a good thing for me to have a mentor, I think, because I like to get ideas from other people. I like to share and I like the way she does it.

Because she says--this is the way I would do it because of my philosophy, but you might not agree with that. So think about it. (T1, p. 12-14)

In Chapter 2, I discussed Hollingsworth's (1992) work with novice teachers and her contention that trust is a central component to the relational process of supporting novice teachers. I have argued that trust is central to successful mentoring. Trust is nurtured through specific actions of mentors and beginning teachers, such as Samantha's offering to support Marie in taking on the ESL course. Conversely, Sue Ann felt unable to trust Tie, and this was one of several factors that limited the possibilities of their mentorship. Taylor felt able to trust Alisa. She believed Alisa cared about her success as a beginning teacher. Alisa respected Taylor's right to make her own decisions about practice. Alisa demonstrated that she was trustworthy as a mentor and as a teacher.

Taylor admired Alisa's teaching style: "She's got a lot of different things that she does, she doesn't do the same thing she did twenty years ago" (TA1, p. 17). Alisa admired Taylor's enthusiasm for teaching:

She's got a sense of humor and she's always so full of life. She never seems to be depressed and down. She doesn't let things eat away at her. For a new teacher, she's got a really positive outlook, which is not always something that you see.

(TA1, p. 16)

While Alisa's comment might seem like minimal praise, throughout her interviews she expressed criticism of the attitudes and behaviors of many beginning teachers, based on

previous negative experiences with overconfident novice colleagues. So it was quite significant that she admired Taylor's positive attitude and energetic approach.

In the cases of both Marie and of Sue Ann, I have shown how mentors' previous experiences affect their interpretation of the mentoring role. Samantha, who had had many supportive mentors and had mentored informally, constructed her mentoring pedagogy based on these experiences. So did Tie, however Tie's experience with being mentored was more hierarchical, with the mentor taking on the role of expert. Alisa had seen beginning teachers acting "arrogant" and "disrespectful" (A1, p. 5). She retained that image, although she worked positively with Taylor.

Working Together

Taylor and Alisa's relationship was founded on both casual and more lengthy conversations about teaching. These ranged from "touching base" about professional days to attending a district sharing session for mathematics teachers. Like Marie and Samantha, they chatted in passing at noon and sat together in department and staff meetings. Taylor sought assistance on a range of issues including strategies to teach specific mathematics concepts and managing her Grade 9 class.

One of the earliest experiences that Alisa and Taylor described was the *brutal day*. I first heard about the brutal day from Taylor:

Yesterday I had a brutal day with my Grade 9s! It was our short day, so they were gone at 2:00, thank goodness! . . . I bumped into Alisa and so I said—they're driving me nuts, I don't want to teach them tomorrow. So what do I do? So I talked to her about it and she gave me a bunch of ideas that she thought I should do. Then today went really well, you know and she said—well come and tell me how it goes. And of course I didn't, because it went well. (T1, p. 11)

In this conversation Taylor revealed her manner of seeking assistance. She asked for support and accepted Alisa's suggestions. If she needed something, she went looking for

it. Alisa also described the brutal day and narrated how she had responded to Taylor's distress:

With Taylor, you're problem-solving a lot right at the beginning; things happen and they're almost like emergencies. And although you bounce around a few ideas you often do land up saying—try this. Because you know the next block they're going into, they actually need something that's got a chance of working because they're already at a point where they've had it. That happened with Taylor, the other day, with this particular class she's got. Her Grade 9s, she might have told you about them, she's got this bunch of yahoos. So, it was a case of—right, phone these parents tonight, number one, and when you've done that, if tomorrow it doesn't work, the first kid that breathes loud, *out* to the office. Tell the office ahead of time—you phoned the parents. . . . I said—keep executing them, you know, until somebody gets the message. She was at a situation, 32 kids, where she had to get the message across. This is an emergency... I went back to her at the end of the day and said—so how was it?

Merrilee: So you checked back with her.

Alisa: I checked back. . . . She was much happier because she was at a point where she said—I had such a good morning and then the afternoon, and I dreaded it because it wrecked the day. I felt that that was almost a *take charge*, because she's got nowhere with the administration. (A1, p. 7-8)

Here, Alisa revealed her approach to the mentoring role. She relied on her experience as a mentor and her growing understanding of Taylor to diagnose the situation: is this a time for brainstorming or for making definite suggestions? She applied her knowledge and beliefs about the school context (no support from the administration) and followed up to see if the situation has improved. She expressed concern both for Taylor as a person, but also for the learning environment of the classroom. It is in these intentional actions that the pedagogy within the relationship can be seen. Alisa thoughtfully chose to act in deliberate ways to support Taylor. She focused on the relational aspect of Taylor's learning and she applied an element of thoughtful critique as well as offering direct contextual support.

Alisa's diagnosis of Taylor's frame of mind and need for support was based on her previous experiences with beginning teachers as well as upon her growing knowledge of Taylor. In Chapter 2, I cited Code's (1993) description of this kind of relational knowing as "knowledge about people" and her contention that "knowing other people in relationships requires constant learning" (p. 34) within each unique relationship. Alisa used her general knowledge of beginning teachers as well as her relational knowledge of Taylor to offer specific and contextual kinds of support.

A later conversation between Taylor and Alisa about the brutal day (or the Grade 9s) connects it with one of the major themes for this dyad, teaching in a student-centred manner. Initially, Taylor described the Grade 9 class as challenging:

Taylor: They're at that age where they just don't understand. They'll say—we're just talking—

Alisa: There's a couple of words you have to ban from the classroom—*yes but* and *just*. I never allow anybody to start a sentence with *I was just*. They're not allowed to say—*I was just*—because that's not taking ownership of what you are doing. . . .

Taylor: Ya, that's true. . . . They're getting better. They are. They have more good days than bad days in a week now. But today I tried a game with them and I told them to sit down within 30 seconds. . . . I'll try again in a week, because it's too hard.

Alisa: Well, that's okay. Remember we talked about that—you telling them that you'd like to do these things and that you know they would like to do some fun things. But right now they're not ready for it. And if you show me that you are, then we'll try it. . . . I think you've made a lot of progress. Have you had to talk to any moms again?

Taylor: No, I haven't, but I do want to. There's a couple I want to because I need to, but not behavior-wise anyway. I haven't needed to.

Alisa: You might want to think about, out of the ones you phoned, is there anybody who has significantly improved since you phoned them? You might want to phone back and tell them.

Taylor: I know, I thought about that the other day. (TA 1, p. 7-12)

This excerpt exemplifies the complexity of Taylor and Alisa's relationship. This issue here was not simply managing the Grade 9s, it was establishing a climate in which Taylor could teach as she wanted to—in a student-centred manner. She wanted to include games, activities and discussions, but was not yet able to structure the classroom so that these experiences could unfold productively. Alisa supported her in several ways—she offered suggestions, she confirmed Taylor's successes, and she added the dimension of calling back to the parents Taylor had spoken to earlier. During this conversation they seemed to forget I was there. It was a real mentoring conversation, with all its complexities and topic jumps. There is a striking contrast between this conversation and the one Tie initiated about Sue Ann's classroom management. Taylor raised the topic herself, whereas Sue Ann had the topic imposed by Tie. Where Sue Ann was rebuked, Taylor was supported and confirmed. Her process of becoming was honoured. Again, the intentionality of Alisa's pedagogy is revealed.

Alisa's Binders

As noted above, Taylor and Alisa shared the goal of student-centred teaching. Taylor was able to clearly express this goal and the challenges of achieving it:

There's a lot of teacher-talk going on in my class and I wish it wasn't, but I don't know how to get around it. I don't have time to get around it. I'm not being as creative and making it as fun as I would like to make it. (T1, p. 1)

As the fall and winter terms progressed, Alisa supported Taylor in developing a student-centred approach in her classroom. In the first interview, Alisa had described a concern regarding beginning teachers who teach in very traditional ways:

It disappoints me how many new teachers are teaching like their own teachers taught. When they start teaching, because of all the things you have to cope with,

they don't have a lot of time to find a wonderful way to teach this topic. . . . I see them going immediately to where they ridicule kids, humiliate them in front of others. (A1, p. 19)

One of the main ways Alisa supported Taylor in her goal of student-centred teaching was to provide her with realistic alternatives to the textbook. Often these were shared "on the run:" in hallways or in quick between-class conversations. But they were also shared through the offering of Alisa's "binders," collections of resources for teaching in a student-centred manner. Alisa had assembled her binders over years:

I do things like have kids write letters, do journals, write stories, write a song on math topics and stuff and make up games. So I've got a lot of things that I've designed and I just xeroxed them and said—here's some ideas. You're welcome to use any of them, or none of them, but it gives you some ideas. I gave her a book of puzzles. . . . I'm not saying it's any good. Often it might just tide you over until you design your own stuff. Or you might want to get some ideas. I gave her a key to the cupboard that I put all my material in. (A1, p. 11-12)

This sharing of materials and strategies, combined with the explication of the philosophy that underlay their use clearly had an impact on Taylor. Although it seems a minor action, even the giving of the cupboard key implied that Alisa trusted Taylor. In turn, this trust inspired Taylor's trust and willingness to commit to the relationship. The depth of this commitment can be seen in the following excerpt, as Taylor described her emerging understanding of the importance of continuing to grow as a teacher:

[Laughs] I shouldn't probably admit this. When I was in university, we talked about teachers who use the same lesson plan for 20 years. . . . But I was thinking how easy, like I've only been teaching six months and I'm thinking how easy it would be to fall into that. I can see how easy it would be to open up your binder each morning and go—yup, okay, this is what we're doing—and how important it is not to do that. Because of how things change over time and how kids change. Alisa's talked a lot about when she first started teaching compared to what she's teaching now and the different kids. She's been a counselor and stuff too, so she's

seen the dynamics of society change and how that changes things. . . . I've realized how important it is not to fall into a rut, listening to her experiences and how things have changed and how things will continue to change. You have to be able to change and be flexible and look at who you're working with, not only at what you're teaching. . . . So it may be a brand new concept, but it's something that's become more of a realistic thing to me.

Merrilee: And you learned that by listening to Alisa talk about her experiences and watching what she has done?

Taylor: It's a culmination of listening to how Alisa's changed things from when she started teaching until now and how kids have changed and different things she's dealt with and watching myself not falling into that rut but seeing how easily it could happen. (TA2, p. 19-23)

Taylor, with very limited experience as a teacher, had internalized Alisa's description of her teaching experiences and *knew*, based on those experiences percolating into her knowing. Taylor's statement is reminiscent of some of the comments Marie made, in which she too had in some way internalized her mentor's experiences and made them her own. I described a similar experience with Kyra, the beginning teacher I mentored, in which she duplicated my gestures as she spoke about her classroom. This percolated knowing is also a phenomenon I described personally experiencing as I heard coming from my mouth my mentor's words. I believe this internalization of the mentor's experience and voice through a non-intentional process of percolation demonstrates some of the power of mentoring as a pedagogical relationship.

Taylor went on to describe how her own teaching had changed:

I leave more of the learning to the kids than I did at the beginning of the year. At the beginning of the year I would go through the homework assignments and make would sure I had done an example of every type of question. . . . Now I find that I'm teaching more so that, I am telling them about the concept, what it means, what the parts of it mean, giving them an example to demonstrate that. But I'm not directing it as much. (T2, p. 9)

In this example, Taylor appeared to see her mentor as a role model. The notion of teacher as role model is a contested one in feminist pedagogy. Role models create images for possibilities and thus, are can be seen as a "very powerful pedagogical device" (Houston, 1996, p. 146). Contrarily, role models can be seen as a "subtle form of domination" (p. 147), encouraging us to "*look up* to special women rather that *look around* for the women with whom we might act" (Fisher, as cited in Houston, 1996). The concern is that seeing others as role models impairs our autonomy. However, Houston points out that "a role model comes into existence only when we *choose* another as a role model. The point is that the process implies a degree of judgment and consent" (p. 154). Not all the beginning teachers in this study saw their mentors as role models and those who did, didn't see them as role models all of the time.

A significant factor in this case is that Shoreline was a semestered school. Alisa felt that the semester system had put a great deal of pressure on beginning teachers, since each course had to be taught daily and over a short, four-month semester. However, in February, Taylor began to reap the benefits of teaching at least one course for the second time and she had a fresh start in several new courses:

Taylor: I have Math 10A, which is the alternate course, and Alisa has taught it before. So, once again, yay for me! [laughs] We've talked about that a lot. What to do with the students, because the dynamics in the class are a lot different than anything I've ever worked with before. I have kids in that class that are completely math illiterate, not just slow or difficult, they just have no concept that multiplying makes things bigger and dividing makes it smaller. . . . So, talking with Alisa, it's a life-styles math course. . . .

Alisa: There isn't a textbook. I use the newspapers a lot. And a lot of stuff from the career counseling because the first half of the course we put a lot of the skills in. And at the same time we explore careers and they finally select a career. And the salary for their career they use for the whole of the second term to do all of these things, budgeting and how much a car costs and taking credit costs.

(TA2, p. 1-2)

The new semester found Taylor feeling more at home in the school and more at ease with herself as a teacher. She knew Alisa better and found support within her mentorship, although the relationship became more diffuse, partly because she had forged relationships with other colleagues, and partly because she had less immediate questions and was feeling more confident.

A Subject-Centred Relationship

One of the strongest threads in Taylor and Alisa's relationship was their shared subject, mathematics. Like Marie and Samantha, who shared a subject background, Taylor and Alisa agreed that they enjoyed this connection and found it central to their work together:

Taylor: If I was ever to talk to somebody and they were going to have a mentor not in their department, I would strongly advise against it. Because that's just such a huge benefit. . . .

Alisa: Ya, I'm not really interested in doing mentoring out of my subject area, which means science is fine along with math. Because I think it is such a huge area and as you work through the year, that is the bit that becomes more important, as Taylor is saying. It's not just surviving the class and teaching that concept and getting through it. Once you've done it once, she's now looking for a better way to do it. So it does become more of a subject relationship. (TA2, p. 8-9)

Seeing what a strong thread mathematics was in the weaving of their mentorship, I asked Taylor and Alisa if there were a mathematics concept that might stand as a metaphor for their relationship. They responded quickly:

Taylor: Mathematically. . . we're a function—I'm the dependent variable and you're the independent variable. For some things, I depend on you. I'm teaching functions to Grade 11 now so—

Alisa: The major concept throughout the Math program. We're probably union and intersection too. In some things we're the same and in some things we're different.

Taylor: Ya, that's true. We are a relation, a function. (TA1, p. 5)

Their shared subject led to the deep, specific conversations they had together, as they discussed particular teaching strategies, criteria for evaluation and underlying conceptions of mathematics:

Alisa: Did you have an easy time in school with math?

Taylor: I did struggle. When I worked at it I did fine. So I always figured that anybody can do math as long as they worked at it. . . . I struggled with math all through university. I kept asking myself—why did I choose to do a math major, because it was hard. But I liked it. I liked the fact that it has an answer. I don't like this—read this poem and eight different people say it means eight different things and they're all right. That drives me crazy. $2+2=4$, thank you very much.

Alisa: We aren't the same.

Taylor: I want the answer, I want to work to get it and I want out of here. I always liked Math and Socials and I hated English and Science. My teachers in school told me I was backwards. They always said—that's wrong. They'd talk about the left brain and the right brain and how this is for these people and these people like these subjects. I don't believe it and I'm living proof.

Alisa: That's why I teach math the way I do, because I'm not one of these absolutely left brained people and totally logical. That's why I don't teach math in the same way as a lot of people. I'm not a $1+1=2$ person like you say you are.

Taylor: I am. I like that. (TA 1 p. 21-23)

As Taylor and Alisa discovered that they held different underlying conceptions of mathematics, they also discovered that they were at different places in their pedagogical content knowledge about mathematics. Taylor still struggled every time she taught a new concept, both to remind herself of the concept and procedures, but also to plan how to communicate it to students. Perhaps because of the different understandings they held of mathematics or perhaps because of the differences in their stages of pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987), Taylor and Alisa found few opportunities to participate in shared experiences. They did not explore strategies or ideas that were new to both of

them. In most instances, it was Taylor who sought Alisa's help. Taylor took part in many professional development experiences, but Alisa accompanied her only once, as she found most professional development sessions "a total waste of my time." She added, "I'm not saying I know everything. But nothing has come up. . . . I don't want to spend the time away" (TA2, p. 14).

Alisa was always learning and trying new things in her classroom, but the lack of shared learning experiences was a limiting factor in the mentorship. It placed Taylor as the unenlightened one and Alisa as the wise guide. It circumscribed the reciprocity that could have developed between them. Perhaps this lack of shared experience and reciprocity foreshadowed the situation that developed during the last months of the school year.

Endings

When I met with Alisa for the final interview in May, she was obviously less excited about mentoring than when I had seen her earlier in the year. At first I assumed it was simply end-of-the-year letdown, but she informed me that the reason for her unenthusiastic demeanor was that she was feeling negative about the relationship because of some recent events. She began by saying Taylor was becoming the "kind of person I have a hard time working with: pretty aggressive and pushy, loud" (A3, p. 1-2).

Apparently another teacher had found out that Taylor was privately tutoring one of his students. He was concerned about this, since the practice of private tutoring within one's own school was at least tacitly discouraged in the district. He spoke to Alisa about it, knowing that Alisa was Taylor's mentor. Alisa agreed to speak to Taylor to make sure she was aware of the tacit rule. When Alisa spoke to Taylor, Taylor replied that she had checked with the union before beginning to tutor. Alisa told her she thought it was not a good idea anyway. Afterwards, Alisa went to check with the union representative in the school and then with the union office. All agreed that there was a regulation prohibiting tutoring within one's own school. However, Taylor insisted that she had checked with the union and had been told there was no concern.

After interviewing Alisa, I was curious to see how Taylor would describe these events. She did not refer to them until at the end of the interview I asked, "Is there anything else you think I should know?" Taylor described the same sequence of events from her perspective, expressing resentment of Alisa for involving herself in the situation. She argued that the teacher should have spoken to her and not to Alisa:

It didn't really involve her. . . . I spoke with him about it, and we came to a decision, and then two other times my mentor came to tell me that I should be doing something else. I basically ignored her, because I felt that if it wasn't agreeable, then he should come to see me again. And we should be talking about this between the two of us. (T3, p. 21-29)

The issue of teacher autonomy is one which differentiates the process of supervising student teachers from the process of mentoring beginning teachers. As described in Chapter 2, mentoring within the Canadian educational context is not typically a supervisory relationship. Instead, it is more collegial and less hierarchical, although issues of teacher autonomy are not always clear, as was seen in the case of Sue Ann. In Taylor and Alisa's situation, Alisa used her knowledge of the systemic rules regarding tutoring to censure Taylor, rather than support her. She challenged Taylor's autonomy and claim to know. Taylor asserted that she had consulted the union prior to beginning to tutor and that the concerned colleague was procedurally bound to talk to her, not to Alisa. Taylor's thoughtful critique of this situation collided with Alisa's.

The effect of this altercation was to fracture the mentorship. Taylor resented Alisa's involvement in a situation that did not concern her. Alisa felt all her worries about beginning teachers were again coming true:

I don't see that there's been a relationship since we last talked with you [in February]. I think it's disappeared. She acts aggressive and pushy. . . . That's something that concerns me about young teachers. I've particularly noticed it when they get to be a big group in a school. They totally take over and they have

no concern about anybody else's comfort level. She's one of them. . . . I don't want people to associate me with Taylor. I don't. I don't want to be associated as her mentor (A3, p. 3-6)

While Alisa completely dismissed their relationship, Taylor did not. Despite being angry about the situation, she felt the mentorship had been of value to her and that it remained in effect in some form. Throughout the year she had seen the relationship as professional rather than personal, and this distinction led her to say:

Personally, we haven't had a relationship at all. Because of the personality differences. It's been a very professional relationship. . . . So, in a sense, it hasn't really changed. I would still probably say to her, if I don't find out soon, what are we doing on Friday for the professional day? (T3, p. 29-30)

Discussion: Whose Transgression?

Taylor and Alisa's mentorship had many positive elements that contributed to a partially successful relationship. Taylor was able to choose her own mentor and they shared a subject focus. Alisa was available, she demonstrated interest and care that enabled Taylor initially to develop trust. Alisa acted thoughtfully, using her knowledge of Taylor to responsively diagnose Taylor's needs. She demonstrated thoughtful critique in many of her interactions, drawing attention to structural and systemic problems, such as the lack of direct administrative support to beginning teachers with challenging students and she shared some information about the teaching contract and how it might be invoked to improve the situation.

However, it seemed that Alisa's previous impression of beginning teachers as arrogant and disrespectful, as well as her interest in district and union politics led her to intervene and criticize Taylor's tutoring. In Taylor's perception, she crossed a boundary. Taylor's response to Alisa's intervention confirmed Alisa's worst fears about beginning teachers and she withdrew her commitment from the relationship. Ultimately both teachers felt betrayed, although Taylor continued to value the mentorship, but only as a source of

information. The relationship, which was preliminarily successful, disintegrated, through an overstepping of boundaries each perceived the other to have taken. Thus we see that trust has bounded limits and one of these is teacher autonomy.

While Taylor and Alisa's relationship had many of the initial elements that lead to successful mentoring, in the next case, Michelle and Jenny's relationship appeared to be ill fated from the beginning. Despite interest and care, the situational conditions impeded the development of a reciprocal working relationship between them.

Michelle and Jenny: Good Intentions

The Characters and The Setting

Michelle and Jenny taught at Westbay Elementary School, a newly renovated and expanded school in a growing community. Jenny taught kindergarten and shared her job with another teacher; each taught 50% of the time. Jenny taught three days one week and two the next. Her classroom was in a small annex located close to the main school building. Michelle had completed her teacher education the previous January and had worked as a substitute teacher for four months. Since her practicum had been at Westbay, she was frequently called there as a substitute. Her current assignment was a short-term contract (until the spring break) with a kindergarten-Grade 1 combined class while the regular teacher was on leave.

Jenny was married and a mother of two young children. She described herself as "very spread" (J1, p. 16). Jenny recalled several mentors in her early career and described mentoring Michelle as "payback for me because people have done this for me and I thank those people but it is not enough. I could do it for somebody else" (J1, p. 10). She frequently referred to her mentors as she described what she believed to be important in her teaching:

Do you know a teacher by the name of Joanna Bidwell? Joanna left me, God bless her, with such an impact and I carry that around. . . . I want to make sure every child comes to that door and receives my smile, I get their smile, they feel

good about this place, school is a fun place to be—my teacher cares for me—and they know that and then anything is possible in this room once that is in place.
(J1, p. 7)

Michelle said that she had not tried to get a classroom position the previous year because she felt she was not ready; she wanted more "practice" first as a substitute teacher. She credited the principal with getting her this job. Michelle had a few possibilities for jobs after the spring break, including job-sharing with the returning teacher.

Like Sue Ann, Michelle found the combined grade class challenging. Even though she had only eleven grade ones in the afternoon, managing them was difficult. Further she worried about meeting the needs of both groups. This worry was fueled by parental concerns:

In the very beginning I had some tough days dealing with the management because the Grade 1s in the afternoon were crazy. And I thought—why can't I handle eleven Grade 1s? This shouldn't be a problem. But. . .the expectations were way too high. I was so concerned that the parents are going to be—well, what are you doing with my Grade 1s? Because in the beginning there was that concern, kindergarten and Grade 1 together, from the parents. (Mi1, p. 3)

Classroom management is often listed as a major concern for beginning teachers (Gold, 1996). Of the five beginning teachers in this study, four (Sue Ann, Taylor, Michelle and Maggie) struggled with classroom discipline issues. Beyond discipline, what was meant by classroom management challenges seemed to be, according to Michelle:

Trying to balance the kids' individual personalities and what is my management style. . . . So, trying to find out what works with the individual characteristics of the children's personalities. . .

Merrilee: So beyond the traditional management notion as control of classroom, into meeting the needs of the diversity of kids that you find?

Michelle: I think it's connected. If you're meeting the needs of all the individual children, I don't think you're going to have the behaviour problems.

(Mi3, p 7)

Choosing a Mentor: Issues of Proximity and Availability

Unlike most of the other dyads, in which the beginning teacher either chose her mentor or had input in the choice, Michelle's mentor was chosen by her vice principal. The reason he usurped her right to choose was never clear, to me, or to Jenny and Michelle. Jenny described what had happened:

My vice principal came up to me and said—how would you like to be Michelle's mentor—and he thought that I would fit into that role very well. I said—yes, definitely and then I looked at him and said—did you ask Michelle? Because I thought that Michelle should have some input and he said no. So then I went to Michelle and I said—do you want me to be your mentor? And she said—oh, sure. (J1, p. 1-2)

Although Michelle agreed to the selection, by November she knew it was not a good match:

Jenny's doing the best that she can. . . . We didn't set it up ourselves. The vice principal went and asked her. She wasn't quite sure why she was asked. And, to be fair to her, she's only here two days a week or sometimes three days a week. Because it's kindergarten, we don't even have lunch hours at the same time. She has two kids at home. She is busy. I don't really go to her that much for help. I go to other people and it's not that she doesn't offer it, it's just that she's not always around when I need to talk to somebody. (Mi1, p. 11)

In appropriating Michelle's choice, the vice principal was either ignorant or neglectful of the direction of the Portal program, which was that beginning teachers should be able to express their choice of mentor. This direction was based on both research (McPhie & Jackson, 1994) and the expressed wishes of previous beginning teachers in the Portal program. In her argument against such appropriation, Cole (1992) reasoned that:

Relationships are a natural part of our development. Those that are most meaningful and/or lasting are seldom those that have been arranged for us. We

tend to want to, and do, take a more active role in deciding the purpose, nature, and duration of the relationships we form in our personal lives. Why should it be any different in our professional domain? (p. 377)

While there are many instances in which teachers must interact and even collaborate within institutional constraints, it seems clear that mentoring should not be one of those contexts. Because the vice-principal imposed his choice, this relationship was "perched precariously on the margin of real work" (Little, 1990. p. 376).

Fortunately, Michelle was free to make such choices beyond her mentorship and sought a wider circle of support. This included her boyfriend, a girlfriend who lived across the hall from her, the principal, and several other primary teachers in her wing of the school. One of these was had been her sponsor teacher during her practicum. It seems obvious that one of these teachers would have been a better choice in terms of proximity and availability. In fact, at the end of the year, I asked Michelle who she would have chosen if she were allowed to do so. She responded unhesitatingly with the name of the teacher next door to her.

So although Jenny was keen to support Michelle, circumstances stymied their relationship and restricted their work together. However, when I asked Michelle if she would like to change her mentor, she responded, "I would feel very uncomfortable going about doing that. Because it's not like Jenny isn't trying" (Mi1, p. 13). Again, as in Sue Ann's case, we see concern for maintaining at least the form of a relationship, rather than risking rejecting another person. Whether this is due to a sense of care, or a fear of conflict, I cannot say.

Jenny was frustrated, but felt a sense of commitment to the relationship she had entered with Michelle:

I'm frustrated. Because in the past when I've been a mentor, not in an official sense, but helped new teachers, being next door at 7:30 in the morning is a great

time to talk with people about things. And I feel like I can't do that for you when I'm not there. It's too difficult. (MJ1, p. 5)

Working Together: Shared Experiences

Despite the situational challenges they faced, Jenny and Michelle did attempt to develop their relationship. The mentorship was casual and quite sporadic. They chatted whenever possible and Jenny shared many resources with Michelle. To some extent, this research project was probably an intervening factor for this dyad, perhaps more than any of the others. The interview process meant they did meet together twice and in both joint interviews they found out more about each other as they responded to the questions, for example, discovering they both like being in the outdoors in general and hiking in particular. I wondered in my research journal if the relationship would have naturally dissolved in the absence of the research.

Journal entry:

December 10, 1996

I'm beginning to realize that this research makes (or I make) some assumptions about the participants. First, I am assuming that they have a relationship. I'm assuming that they do things together or discuss things together. On the other hand, they are in a mentoring program and they have agreed to a mentoring relationship. Did they know what they were agreeing to? What did they agree to? In Jenny's case it seems she did know, since she had many mentors herself. But I wonder how she expected it would fit into her already busy life. I wonder if she felt free to say no to the vice principal. I suspect that Michelle would not have felt it was okay to say no to his directive.

As I suggested in Chapter 4, researcher influence is inevitable: "even at our most unobtrusive, we influence the very phenomenon we are studying. This is true in every research paradigm, quantitative and qualitative" (Ely et al, 1991, p. 47). Ely et al.

contended that qualitative researchers must be intensely aware of the "ripples caused by our participation [and] that we [must] attempt to counter those ripples" (p. 47). Further, they reminded researchers to account for those "ripples" in their reports.

Michelle and Jenny did engage in mentoring conversations and make plans to do things together. Some of the topics they discussed together were: the ESL children in Michelle's class, dealing with parents, teaching mathematics to young children, and the struggle to teach a combined class. These issues are strikingly similar to Sue Ann's issues, which is not surprising since both beginning teachers taught combined primary combined classes. In the first joint interview, for example, Michelle and Jenny talked about some the challenges of the kindergarten-Grade 1 combined class:

Michelle: Some are just clicking and just writing. It's wonderful.

Jenny: It's also the most stressful part of Grade 1, No matter how many years you teach Grade 1, you still hold your breath until Christmas, or from the middle of November until February. And then you go—yes, we've got it, everybody's got it.

Michelle: So what about the ones, if any, that don't have it by February?

Jenny: There will always be a couple.

Michelle: And then are those the ones that may need to go for Learning Assistance?

Jenny: Yes. It's probably best to think that the best opportunity to have learning assistance is in Grade 1. So if it feels like a person is trying to catch a running train and this little person is slowly falling behind, falling behind, ask the Learning Assistance people if they can make room for one more.

Michelle: I have a block already set where Ruth comes in and works with us during math, but it could be a time. It's set, it's my Learning Assistance time.

Jenny: Excellent. So now you probably have a feel for who has mastered recognizing all the letters, who has an idea of initial consonant sounds? There will always be in every class, one or two that it just isn't clicking at all. And those kids you can just send to Ruth for a little 40-minute boost in a small group. And you know, once they start, sometimes they just catch up and then they don't need to go anymore. Or they just need that small group attention or whatever. . . . Often it's little boys. They just aren't ready for all the structure and all the speed of learning

in Grade 1. I always watch them really carefully and make sure that their attitudes stay positive and encouraging and after Christmas I see where we need a little small group help. [whistles] I send them down right away to learning assistance. (MJ1, p. 10-12)

This discussion is a strong example of collaborative conversation (Hollingsworth, 1992). Like the examples included in Marie and Samantha's case, the topic emerged from Michelle's current classroom concern and was reframed as to take a broader view of the issues. Unlike the previous examples, in this instance the discussion stopped at the level of plans and did not move to a theoretical reframing of the issue, such as considering the possibility of redesigning the Grade 1 program to account for the diversity of learners represented in the class. Perhaps the limited nature of their relationship (or limited time) only allowed this level of consideration of issues.

One of the first shared experiences Michelle and Jenny described, like Taylor and Alisa, was a *bad day* Michelle experienced with her students. It was Jenny whom she sought out for support and fortunately, Jenny was there. Michelle described what happened:

Michelle: I was really upset, it was so near the beginning. Was it me? What am I doing wrong? All that kind of self beating-up, which was totally negative and doesn't work, but I was doing it anyway. And just not knowing what to do, not knowing what to do with the kids. And then coming and you just sitting there and listening to me kind of—blaaaah! get it all out and then helping me come up with some strategies. It just really helped a lot. . . . You helped me talk about things and you gave me ideas that would help me, but also helped me think about it to. Do you know what I mean? So that you weren't just offering all the solutions. You were also helping me come up with them too.

Jenny: It's sort of impossible for someone else to give you the solutions, because every class is so different, and your style is so different from everyone else's. It's really, it's like raising children—try this, it worked for me, it may not work for you. On the other hand, it didn't work for me, maybe this will work for you. (MJ, p. 4)

Despite the contextual limitations, Jenny had a clear vision of how she would like to mentor, based on her own experiences being mentored and her perception of beginning teacher needs. Not surprisingly, her approach to mentoring mirrored her approach to teaching. Jenny wanted the beginning teacher to feel valued:

The biggest need is—and the word I'm looking for is [pause] you know like, what Michelle said when she left here [after observing] on Wednesday, was it's good to know I'm doing the right thing. That—what's the word I'm looking for, Merrilee?

Merrilee: Confirmation?

Jenny: Confirmation of, of those beginning skills. That—yes, you are in the right place. Yeah, we need some polishing, but you're on the right track. I think that's what beginning teachers need first. And then I think that the curriculum is so overwhelming to a beginning teacher that has, that has no materials. I think help in that way, is really helpful. You know, materials, or relieve that person's sense of need, and say—look, you will have three units that you really develop well, and next year you'll have three more, year after, three. And the ones you can't develop, well, you can't. Just do what you can, with those skills—you know, with what you can. And just take the pressure off. (J3, p. 11-12)

The second shared experience that Jenny and Michelle described was planning a unit together. *Space* was a new topic for both of them, but Michelle had a collection of space resources from her practicum, so it presented an opportunity for working reciprocally. In addition Michelle and Jenny hoped to bring the kindergarten children from both of their classes together for some activities, which might have provided further opportunities for shared experiences. However, the shared experiences did not transpire. In February I asked how the unit had gone. Jenny reported:

We sat down with *space* and I brought in my box, she brought in the things she had. We tried to look for the flow of the unit. And I think we just spoke about objectives that we wanted to meet with our students in terms of knowledge and skills. We didn't really get down to the nitty-gritty activities. We really just planned the flow of the whole unit. . . . Then throughout the unit we passed each other whatever we had, booklets and so on. It worked out very well. (J2, p. 2)

A field trip to the planetarium that was a culminating event for their unit again had the potential to increase reciprocity. However, the opposite happened. Before describing the consequences of the trip, however, I will describe one other important shared experience Jenny and Michelle undertook.

It was Michelle who first told me about the workshop she and Jenny were planning to attend:

Jenny and I are going to a conference together. We're going to "improving your kindergarten program." It's on Saturday. The name of the conferencing group is PCT. She recommended it. She's been to some of the other ones by the same group and really liked them. So we're going to that together. (Mi2, p. 17)

They were both excited about attending the conference, with Jenny being most excited about a day away from home and work, and the chance to have lunch together and chat with Michelle. Oddly, despite their enthusiasm, neither one mentioned the conference at the final interviews when we reflected over the whole year. Like their other shared experiences, this one held a lot of potential for their relationship, but seemed to flounder.

Problems: Different Styles and Making Judgments

While Michelle and Jenny attempted to develop a successful mentoring relationship, there were many obstacles in their way. Some of these, namely the lack of proximity and availability, have already been discussed. Another problem developed during their trip to the planetarium and simmered in the background through much of the rest of the year, at least for Jenny. In her second interview, Jenny told me that her job-share partner was going on a leave-of-absence. This leave would coincide with the end of Michelle's job, when the teacher Michelle was replacing was returning. Jenny's principal suggested that she and Michelle could job-share. Reluctantly, in a whisper, Jenny told me she could not work with Michelle, as their teaching styles were too different. I questioned her about this and she told me that on the field trip to the planetarium, she had become distressed by Michelle's manner in dealing with the children.

I asked her to elaborate and she was visibly uncomfortable about doing so. After thinking for a minute, she said that she thought Michelle's style might be better for older children because she was very direct with her children, shouting across the room at them and making a lot of negative statements. Jenny described her own style as kneeling down beside the child and putting her hand on their shoulder as she talked with them, making a personal connection in that way.

Jenny was visibly uncomfortable making a "judgment" and said that her husband had cautioned her about judging, based on one field trip. She acknowledged that field trips were stressful for beginning teachers and reported that they had had a "cranky" bus driver, but that she had seen Michelle's directive management on the bus and felt uncomfortable with it. When I asked if she thought the issue was one she could raise with Michelle, Jenny said:

I would find it very difficult to speak with her about that. I wouldn't want to hurt her feelings or anything like that. And I look at what I see as a new teacher, trying to deal with a lot on her plate and personally perhaps feeling a little frustrated with what's going on or, I wondered if Michelle was really a well-suited person for a higher grade. . . . I think management style has a lot to do with how much you trust children to respond to the positives. And if you've never tried it and seen how well it works. When you establish a positive tone, then you can relax; you know that that strategy will most likely work. But a new teacher, unless you've seen that through modeling, you won't have experienced how well it works. . . I was thinking that if she came into my classroom and watched just how—I have monkeys, but how I deal with them. Then maybe I could come into her room and give her some suggestions about that, more easily. (J2, p. 6-8)

Jenny had strong concerns about Michelle's management style, however, unlike Tie, she felt it would be inappropriate to express them. The issue of mentor concerns about beginning teacher practices is a challenging one. What is the mentor's responsibility for helping beginning teachers to improve their practice? What is the mentor's role in

critiquing the beginning teacher? Does mentorship preclude critique of the other? This issue emerged in at least three of the cases—Sue Ann's, Michelle's and Maggie's. In these cases, the mentors struggled with how to address their concerns about the beginning teacher's practice. Tie's concerns exploded in a tirade of direct criticism of Sue Ann. Jenny planned an experience in which Michelle might initiate a discussion of the issue or at least be open to Jenny's raising it obliquely. Elizabeth, another mentor, deals with similar concerns in the case that follows. This issue will be explored more thoroughly in Chapter 10.

Earlier in the year Michelle had spoken about challenges with classroom management, but the issue of the field trip did not arise in her later interviews. She did follow through with an observational visit to Jenny's classroom and described it as "really neat," adding "[Jenny] has a lot of songs, and there's a lot of up/down, and a lot more movement than I have. And so that would be interesting, to try that and establish that at the beginning of the year" (Mi3, p. 21-22). She did not appear to connect these practices with classroom management. In assessing her own efforts as a teacher she said:

The most challenging [aspect of teaching]—[long pause] probably classroom management. Kind of trying to balance, you know, the kids' individual personalities. And what is my management style. . . . So, trying to find out what works with the individual characteristics of the children's personalities. . . . The behaviours, as well as how to meet the individual needs, with, with the children too, because there's such a range. (Mi3, p. 7-8)

Discussion: Mentoring Mis-placed

Although Michelle and Jenny's mentorship had the potential for success, that potential remained unrealized. The situational issues of the lack of availability and proximity, later compounded by Jenny's concerns about Michelle's management and her own fear of being asked to job-share with Michelle, prevented this relationship from developing. Unlike Sue Ann who felt discouraged from seeking and receiving other support, Michelle felt well supported by other colleagues within the school. She sought out her own informal mentor and interacted closely with this individual. As stated previously, I

wondered throughout this study if the research process kept this dyad together when, perhaps, they might have separated naturally without my involvement.

Both reported some satisfaction with their mentorship as well as acknowledging its limitations. According to Michelle:

It's not Jenny, per se, because she's wonderful. I mean if circumstances allowed it, she'd be a great mentor. And I'd love to work with her because I learned a lot from her, and I love her style, and everything. But it's just, it hasn't worked in the way it's supposed to work, anyway. (Mi3, p. 21-22)

Jenny had appreciated the opportunity to work with Michelle. Being located outside the main school building, she found that Michelle helped her feel more connected with the other teachers. Michelle became the colleague she chatted with at school events and social occasions. She felt frustrated because she had not done as much as she wanted to for Michelle, saying "But I know I have a lot to offer! . . . And I think, gee, I could help somebody else out. Like other teachers that helped me" (p. 16-17).

This mentorship highlights the importance of beginning teachers having some choice in their mentors and the need for administrators to be aware and thoughtful about supporting, rather than determining relationships. Cole, Squire and Cathers (1995) suggested that it is the role of the administrator to "initiate work towards the establishment of a climate in which teacher support is valued as an integral part of teaching and professional development" (p. 12). In this way, they become background supporters of mentors and beginning teachers. In the Portal program, beginning teachers frequently stated that they valued the support of the administrator for their mentoring dyads, but they wanted choice in who their mentor would be.

This case also points out the significance of the personal context in establishing relationships. While Jenny was very disposed to be a mentor and to engage in the work of mentoring, her life circumstances limited her ability to mentor successfully. She simply did not have the time to give to Michelle. Studies of mentoring in schools, and studies of

teaching in general tend to take, according to Lightfoot (as cited in S. Acker, 1995) a "presentist portrait" in which teachers are "seen as having neither past nor future and are seen as without life beyond the classroom" (p. 130). Acker contended that we need studies that show how "lives and careers interconnect" (p. 130) and this case study supports that view. Jenny was a mother of two young children working part time with a colleague who, part way through the year, went on a maternity leave. For much of the year, Jenny and her husband waited to see if he would be laid off from his job. Jenny described her situation: "Every second I'm here, I'm thinking, I'm rushing. It [mentoring] takes time, to sit and talk, and you know, I even have to make it a priority in my mind to get to the staffroom" (J3, p. 15). Even with her strong desire to be a good mentor Jenny could not truly fit mentoring into her busy professional and personal life.

However, Michelle reminds us that beginning teachers are resourceful and, when permitted to do so, as Cole (1992) suggested, in sympathetic school contexts, they will seek the support they desire and need. In the following case, Maggie and Elizabeth struggled with some of the same contextual challenges as Michelle and Jenny as they attempted to accommodate mentoring in their busy lives as women teachers.

Maggie and Elizabeth: Too Close for Comfort?

The Characters and The Setting

Maggie and Elizabeth taught at Northland, a small, relatively new elementary school. Maggie had completed her teacher education the previous January and had worked as a substitute teacher for several months before being hired to a half time kindergarten position at Northland. Elizabeth was a very experienced teacher who was new to the school as well. Like Samantha, she was a Resource teacher and worked with children in integrated classroom settings as well as in a "pull-out" program.

Maggie was a single mother of four who had struggled to become a teacher and was very excited to be, at last a *real* teacher with her own students and her own classroom:

It's a neat feeling to know that I'm going to have [these children] all year. I don't have to go away; I'm not here for just a day and I don't have to give them back to somebody in 6 or 8 weeks, or whatever. They're all mine for the whole year and I'm really excited about that. I really am, you know, I said to someone the other day—I'm just so thrilled to have finished school and to get this job and to love what I'm doing and to be excited about that everyday. (Ma1, p. 7)

Maggie felt supported by her own children, her extended family, her friends and her colleagues. This is not to say that she found beginning teaching to be an easy task:

It reminded me of parenting the very first two days, when the nurses and everyone goes away and you're left alone with this baby and they cry, and you start to cry because it feels like you're lost. (Ma1, p. 2-3)

Maggie frequently used parenting and mothering metaphors to describe how she was experiencing her beginning teaching. S. Acker (1995) contended that women teachers tend not see the experiences of teaching and parenting as separate and this was certainly so for Maggie. Her children regularly visited her classroom and Maggie valued and utilized her "parent knowledge" as she worked with her students:

On the one hand I feel at least I have children and I was always really involved with school with them, so I really know. . . There's a lot of things that I've watched my own children do over and over again and I really see that it works. So, I do believe in that. And for me that makes it easier because a lot of the parents, if they want to ask about that, I feel like I have somewhere to come from. I feel like I have, maybe it's not my teaching experience, it's my parenting.

Merrilee: You have expertise to rely on.

Maggie: I do. I do. It's just unofficial. Well, it's official mommy experience as opposed to teacher experience. (Ma1, p. 10)

Elizabeth was an experienced primary teacher and she had worked in a variety of roles with many student teachers. She saw the opportunity to mentor as a continuation of her own work in teacher education. Although Elizabeth was not at the time a classroom

teacher, she had spent many years in a primary classroom and could clearly articulate her beliefs about teaching:

I think children should be really happy at school. That they come, it's safe, it's enjoyable. They have a lot of happy relationships with the people who are there—with the other kids, with the teacher, with the people that are in the classroom. And it's important to me that there's a purpose for them being there, that the teacher is clear on what she is doing and why she is doing it, for kids of the age that she has. (E1, p. 10)

As a Resource teacher in the school, Elizabeth worked alongside teachers in their classrooms supporting children with learning difficulties. It was partly because she would be working in Maggie's classroom as a support teacher that she became Maggie's mentor.

Choosing a Mentor

Elizabeth had shown an early interest in Maggie, greeting her one day in August when Maggie came in to prepare her room and helping her locate resources and materials she wanted. The principal suggested that Elizabeth become Maggie's mentor because of both her experiences with student teachers and her experience as a kindergarten teacher. This administrative suggestion was at least more appropriate than in Michelle's case: Elizabeth had a lot of experience with student teachers and with kindergarten, she was going to be in Maggie's classroom anyway and she had shown interest in Maggie from the first day.

Maggie expressed delight at the suggestion:

The very first day I walked into the school, I remember Elizabeth was there. I was applying for the job and she was really a friendly person. And sometimes you just meet somebody and you feel like you're going to be a good friend with this person and that's the way I feel with Elizabeth. So it was really nice for me when Neil said—well, we'd like to pair you up with Elizabeth. And I said—oh! Because we had already developed a rapport. (Ma1, p. 13)

As a Resource teacher, Elizabeth spent at least an hour every day in Maggie's classroom, working with Maggie with her kindergarten class. This provided many opportunities to build upon their initial trust with shared experiences and collaborative conversations (Hollingsworth, 1992). Maggie described their early work together:

She's always in my classroom, everyday she's in my classroom. So we're almost always touching base. . . . Everyday we check out how things are going, especially with the kids in my class that we're working with. We're always talking about how that went and how they did today and what worked and what didn't work and that kind of thing. (Ma1, p. 14)

In addition, Elizabeth was sometimes able, informally and contextually, to model teaching practices for Maggie. Maggie found this helpful: "A couple of times Elizabeth's come in and read a story to the class and it's useful to watch somebody else reading to them. And then I can stop and I can step back and I can watch them" (ME1, p. 14). Elizabeth responded, "If I'm teaching, you get an opportunity to focus on how the kids are experiencing stuff which, from what I'm hearing, you'd like to be able to do more" (ME1, p. 15). This co-teaching is reminiscent of Marie and Samantha's work with the study club.

Working Together: Shared Experiences

Although being in the classroom together every day contributed to their mentorship, the duality of the relationship added complexity to their work. One aspect of it was the mentorship and the other aspect was the co-teaching relationship resulting from Elizabeth's Resource role. Taking on these two roles was effortful for Elizabeth. Initially, one of the reasons she was in Maggie's classroom so much was to assist with a very challenging group of young children, who Maggie described as "squirrely" (Ma1, p. 1), adding, "They're only four and five years old. I mean they're really, really little. And you just can't expect as much from them" (Ma1, p. 3).

While Elizabeth agreed that the class was challenging, she felt Maggie was not moving in to teach the children in her classroom. Like Jenny, Elizabeth felt guilty for being "judgmental" as a mentor but she was troubled to see a classroom in such disorder: "I

don't think that the kids are happy all the day because it's not safe all the time. I don't really feel that it's thoughtfully planned. Or that the preparation's put into it" (E1, p. 10-11).

She attempted to explain the dilemma she was experiencing:

I feel as a mentor I should be able to effect some change and I don't necessarily feel that as the Resource teacher. So I guess I feel more responsible as a mentor that things aren't changing. . . . I do feel, as the mentor, that we've had conversations and so I would hope that I would see some things happening for the kids. (E1, p. 22- 23)

Mentors and beginning teachers typically engage in conversations about teaching, but with each teaching their own groups of children. This difference in gaze may support the beginning teacher's developing autonomy. Most of the beginning teachers in the study spoke of the importance to them of having their own class and being the one "in charge." When Samantha and Marie created the study club, it was a shared responsibility; neither was primarily accountable for the students. In Maggie and Elizabeth's mentorship, Elizabeth not only engaged in mentoring conversations with Maggie, but also witnessed and participated in the events and experiences that Maggie wanted to talk about. Yet it was not truly collaborative teaching, since it was Maggie's classroom. Maggie *was* accountable, Elizabeth *felt* accountable. Yet she felt unable to critique Maggie's teaching directly. It may be that shared teaching experiences are more successful when responsibility for the students is also shared.

Despite her feeling of judging, Elizabeth was able to work together with Maggie reasonably well. Perhaps because of Elizabeth's extensive experience with novice teachers she also saw Maggie as a learner needing support. Not being able to separate in her own mind the binary roles she took on with Maggie, she began to integrate them operationally:

I'm basically there, in conversation with her, to make the situation better for the

kids. It's first, before her. But certainly I know I'm in conversation with her and, a beginning teacher's in a really struggling place in most situations and is very vulnerable. (E1, p. 20)

However, Elizabeth did guiltily describe one instance in Maggie's classroom when she could have stepped in to help, but chose not to:

A word to describe my mentoring the other day would have been abandonment, intentional. I just thought—I am not going to rescue you from this one and I think she might have thought I wasn't being very supportive or helpful in this situation. But I thought—I want to see how you—. No, I don't want to see it. I just want to see if me not stepping in to rescue all the time, helps you in some way. We didn't talk about it. I wish that we had the opportunity to talk about it actually. It was one of those times when it slipped by and it's gone too far now. . . .

I think a little bit of me I was a bit mad at her too, just things were not changing at all and I just felt like—you look after it! This is my Resource role. There have been days that I had wanted to just go screaming out of that room. I realized I have to, even if is hard for me to do as a mentor, to just say that to her. But I want to be this wonderful supportive mentor who just says all these wonderful positive things, right? I talked with a friend about mutual conversations and being really connected and honesty. And if you don't have mutual conversations and you have those kind of frustrations, you either get depressed or they go somewhere else, which is very unprofessional. So, next time I get that feeling in there, I am going to have to say something about it. (E2, p. 20)

Despite Elizabeth's desire to be more honest and direct, her feelings of judgment were not communicated to Maggie, who remained delighted with the support she received:

I admire the way that Elizabeth is able to come in and nicely, it's like dealing with a difficult child and coming along side without beating them over the head with—this is what you have to do right now. It's that coming alongside and being with you. (ME1, p. 22)

Further, while the dual relationship created complexities, it also created some sense of shared challenge and collaboration. According to Elizabeth:

There's some situations in this class where you do feel like colleagues together trying to solve some thing because there's some problems there that I haven't seen before. . . . We're questioning together and trying to problem solve together. (ME1, p. 4)

Elizabeth worked hard to withhold her judgments and to offer ongoing and systematic support to Maggie. One example of this was in planning, which Maggie found *hard*: "It's always been the worst thing for me. If I could just get through without planning I think I'd be a happy person. [laughs] Of course I wouldn't know what I was doing. [sighs] But I hate planning!" (Ma2, p. 9). Maggie and Elizabeth spent a lot of time planning together. Sometimes they went to the school library for resources, other times they physically set up centres in the kindergarten classroom. When Maggie expressed concern that she was not teaching enough, they looked over her day plan to see how she could find more time to work with small groups.

Early in January, they spent an afternoon looking over the term ahead. Elizabeth described their activity:

We mapped out the weeks and what she is going to be teaching from now until spring break and how does it all fit together. . . . I think actually it helped for me to go through—okay, if this is going to be your theme, say it's the Post Office and these are the sorts of things you want to do, what are you going to teach the kids to be able to do or what are you going to be doing? You know that little part of your kindergarten day where it is kind of like a group lesson. I mapped those out, almost for her. We were side by side but I was giving her some of that and then she was starting to, I think, get the idea how you have to teach these things before the kids can have success with them. (E2, p. 7-8)

Changes in the Mentorship

In late January, Maggie applied for an afternoon teaching job at another school. As a single mother, the half time kindergarten job was not sufficient for her to support her family, so she took a job working side by side with another primary teacher whose class was so difficult that the district agreed to this extra level of support. The additional job had drawbacks and benefits. It meant that Maggie and Elizabeth had little time to talk together, because Maggie had to rush off at noon to the other school. Elizabeth commented:

I feel really distant right now from my whole mentoring thing. Maggie is off to the other school so much. I see her first thing in the morning as I walk in her door, I hear about yesterday and well, it's just not connecting. It is like losing a relationship in a way, which is interesting. (E2, p. 1)

However, for Maggie, the benefits outweighed the losses. She acknowledged missing her time with Elizabeth but added,

The most positive benefit is that Charlene [her new partner teacher] is fabulous. And I'm team teaching with her. I'm in there with her, I'm getting some ideas about her techniques and other classroom management strategies that I can see and some great planning ideas. (Ma2, p. 1)

Elizabeth agreed with this assessment, based on seeing Maggie implement many new and effective practices in her own classroom:

Now the good thing that I see happening with her going into this other classroom, because she is working right in the classroom, is that a lot of the things we have been talking about that I was hoping for, she has seen this teacher do and then she is coming back and doing them. (E2, p. 1)

Again, the value of shared teaching experiences is evident, although in this case, Maggie was the helper-teacher, so it was not truly collaborative. The new job interrupted the development of Maggie and Elizabeth's mentorship and a second interruption fragmented

it even further. In February, a child in Elizabeth's extended family was tragically killed. Elizabeth took a leave of several months to support her family member through the experience and to deal with the loss herself.

Elizabeth's absence created a gap in Maggie's life that no one in the school seemed aware of:

She was away. And I basically had to say—well I guess I can't do that anymore. It was hard. . . . It was a real wrench when she wasn't here. I mean, I really did feel like—where is Elizabeth? Ohhhh! I don't really know that anyone in the school really was aware of that relationship that we have. I don't know that anyone has really picked up on, you know, how much I depend on Elizabeth. (Ma3, p.10)

Although no one in the school seemed aware specifically of the loss Maggie experienced when Elizabeth was gone, there were other teachers who had been peripherally supportive throughout the year. Maggie was able now to reach out and seek assistance from other colleagues, widening her circle of support. In time, she began to feel that she was not only taking from but also giving to these relationships:

I do need to be able to stand on my own two feet and not depend on one person in the school to help me. I know that there are a lot of people that I can talk to now, and I feel really comfortable. I feel a little bit more like I'm part of the group, instead of the new teacher. Whew! I feel like I can have ideas, it's okay. And I can contribute, and it doesn't feel one sided. I feel a little bit more able to jump in on other teachers' conversations. (Ma3, p. 11)

The early establishment of a somewhat contrived mentorship with Elizabeth, in effect created a bridge for Maggie into an expanding web of other collegial relationships. Teaching side by side in her own classroom with Elizabeth led Maggie to feel comfortable in applying for a job in which she provided a similar kind of support to another teacher. Like Michelle, Maggie took the initiative to fill the gap in her support system created by Elizabeth's absence and she soon came to feel like a contributor, not merely a taker of support.

Cole and Watson (1993) contended that:

Attention to school contexts—the relationships, attitudes, conditions that influence teachers' daily work—is, in the long run, more important than setting up programs Beginning teachers are more likely to get a good start when schools value inquiry about teaching and welcome newcomers into powerful networks of supportive interaction. (p. 378)

I argue that, since the ideal settings described by Cole and Watson are rare, novices like Maggie are better supported within programs that encourage webs of support rather than single strands. Maggie showed herself both to enjoy and benefit from the mentorship and to be able to develop her own relationships.

Endings

The year-end presented a dreadful episode for Maggie. At a time when she should have been hearing about her upcoming teaching assignment, she received a layoff notice, as did a number of other beginning teachers. This was the first year in many that the Portal district had laid-off teachers and it came as a shock to everyone. Maggie described the events:

.It's just been a real roller coaster. And it really, really impacted, big time, on my ability to function. As a teacher and a parent and a person and everything else. . . . It was very difficult. It's a difficult, difficult thing for me to deal with. . . . The very first day, when I was told, I just spent the morning in here crying. Because I couldn't, I couldn't, I couldn't talk to anybody. I was in tears, it was just awful. . . . It it's very hard for me to let anybody close at that point. If I'm in that much pain, forget it. I mean, I just cannot do that. . . . And the next day I did talk about it, quite a bit. I don't think I talked about it at the level where all my pain was, but I did talk about it. I mean, I can do this thing, talking up here [points to head], but down here [points to heart], forget it. No. Won't do that. (Ma3, p. 21-25)

Maggie was lucky; within two weeks the layoff notice was rescinded, however, her words strongly described the pain and paralysis this experience inflicted upon her. Despite it all, she was able later to contemplate her year and her mentorship. Again, she used the metaphor of parenting to consider how mentoring had worked for her:

I think a relationship that it reminds me of is a parenting relationship. In the beginning, you're one on one, and you're really helping them, you're physically helping them get by and survive. And then as they grow, they grow apart from you, and it's less a dependency than it's a—I know that you're there, if I need you, I can go and talk to you—kind of thing. And I think that over this year, that's the way I've felt with Elizabeth. At the beginning I *really* needed her all the time. . . . And then now I just know that she's around, and I know that she's there. And I know I can go and talk to her if I need to. And she's a supportive person that is just someone I can depend on. (Ma3, p. 9-10)

For Elizabeth, the mentorship also had been a growing experience:

So what else have I learned about mentoring? That it's a very organic process, I think. This has been interesting for me to see this process. Sort of go in and out, and evolve, and change, and have its rhythm, and in the end, I feel like it's been a very successful year. And yet, at the beginning, I felt really, really frustrated at times, you know. So that, to me, connects with what I was saying about patience. That just to be really, really patient with the, patient with the process. Live the question. [laughs]. Have the patience. I think those two things are, I'm reminded of them through the mentoring process. (E3, p. 6-7)

Elizabeth's description of mentoring as being patient with the process and living the questions is reminiscent of Sue Ann's plea for someone to honour her process of becoming. If we hope to honour a beginning teacher's process, we must be prepared to be patient and live the questions with them.

In their final interview, which, because of Elizabeth's leave, had to be postponed until early June, I asked Maggie and Elizabeth to suggest a metaphor for their mentorship.

They chose a garden as their metaphor, despite some initial reservations:

Maggie: I like the growing one but it just seems like sometimes the growing one doesn't encompass all the wild activity that also happens.

Elizabeth: Well gardens can grow wild. Gardens can be very unplanned actually. That's what I've discovered with my planned perennial garden. I said to my neighbour the other day- it's become a mystery garden. You don't know what's coming up. You sometimes can't identify it.

Maggie: Actually that's true and you have to wait and see which ones are the weeds. But sometimes you have to wait, there's a lot of wondering and you're not sure about it. So perennial garden would be more on the spot. And you have to wait for it to happen.

Elizabeth: Yes, there's the patience.

Maggie: It's ever changing, ever growing and hopefully in 10 years, it's still full.

Elizabeth: And in perennial gardens things get moved. And they grow in the new place.

Maggie: They get divided! But you usually leave a piece of your original plant in the garden and little pieces go off in other places. A little piece of you and me will always be here. (ME3, p. 25-27)

Discussion: Growing Together Despite Challenging Circumstances

Maggie and Elizabeth's relationship was dual, with the duality presenting more of a challenge to Elizabeth than to Maggie. Like two other mentors, Tie and Jenny, Elizabeth had to struggle to construct her mentoring role. Perhaps because of her extensive experience with student teachers, Elizabeth was the most articulate of the three mentors in talking about her own struggles with the mentoring role and she was also the most successful in developing a mentoring pedagogy. In her frustration she utilized some unexpected approaches, such as abandonment, but she began to appreciate Maggie's gradual growth. This growth was according to Maggie's process as she interacted with her students, with her own children and with other teachers, and reflected through

conversation and in silence on her roles as teacher and parent. The fact that Elizabeth contained her critique seemed to support the development of their relationship, although it did not attain the depth and reciprocity of Marie and Samantha's mentorship.

The two separations caused by Maggie's taking on a second job and by Elizabeth's absence, were pivotal events in the life of this mentorship. The separation caused by Elizabeth's family tragedy at first left Maggie feeling alone and unsupported. But she used her relationship with Elizabeth as a centre from which to reach out to other colleagues, including her new teaching partner, and began to weave a web of support for herself. She learned through these relationships as well as through her mentorship.

Elizabeth's pedagogy, according to Maggie, was one of "coming alongside and being with you." We saw a similar coming alongside with Samantha and Marie. It is a very simple idea, but is an act that is very challenging to perform. It requires that mentors be willing to "live the questions" and "have the patience." In living the questions with beginning teachers and having patience with their learning processes, mentors successfully honour the beginning teacher's process of becoming.

Conclusions About These Three Cases

The three cases in this chapter begin to fill in some of the ground between the previous two. Marie and Samantha's relationship was successful; Sue Ann, Emily and Tie's was unsuccessful. The conditions that may have led to success or failure have been explored in Chapters 5 and 6. The three cases from this chapter, Taylor and Alisa, Michelle and Jenny, and Maggie and Elizabeth reveal more complexities of the mentoring landscape.

School and personal contexts, individual ways of knowing, interruptions, crises, and dilemmas all converge to make mentoring relationships impossible to formulate. Yet this statement is singularly unhelpful. Although I have already suggested that a problem of feminist pedagogy is that it cannot prescribe a single pedagogy, the alternative cannot be that mentors and beginning teachers must construct their relationship without any framework or guidance at all. To begin to consider such a framework, in Chapter 9, I examine the common themes and shared referents of these cases. In doing so, I return to the two research questions originally posed in Chapter 1 to connect the findings and provide some conclusions for this study. However, before moving to the analysis of the

five cases, in Chapter 8 I introduce findings from three structured research questions posed during the interviews. The questions or "tasks" asked participants to respond to specific sets of material and to think reflectively about the process of their mentorships, thus inviting participants to analyzing their own experiences. The findings from the tasks accompany and support the general findings already presented in the case studies and those to be presented in Chapter 9.

CHAPTER EIGHT: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TASKS

Introduction

The preceding three chapters tell stories about the mentoring relationships of eleven women teachers. Each story was rich and engaging as told to me, and I hope I have captured some of that richness in my re-telling. Because my purpose is also to tell a collective story, I made a deliberate attempt in the interviews to capture the similarities across the dyads. I did this in part by including three particularly structured or direct interview questions during the sequence of interviews with each dyad. These directed tasks were designed to be more comparative in nature and to focus more narrowly the responders' thinking on particular issues (Kvale, 1996). In the analysis included within the case studies and in the summative analysis provided in Chapter 9, I distill my interpretations of the relationships. Through the three tasks, the participants distilled their own meanings by reflecting on the nature of their mentorships, rather than reporting on specific events and experiences. In this way these three tasks contribute to the principal data and inform the findings of the study. The three tasks invited the participants to contribute as co-analysts of their own experiences and thus, represent a triangulation strategy. It was important to include such a triangulation strategy to test my analysis. Matheson (as cited in Ely et al, 1991) suggested that, "there are three outcomes that might result from a triangulation strategy. . . convergence, inconsistency, and contradiction." In this chapter I present the findings of the three tasks and highlight some emerging themes which will be further explored in Chapter 9. Because the three tasks were narrowly focussed and because the following chapter will explore the themes more deeply, this chapter is intended to foreshadow the imminent detailed analysis of Chapter 9.

The " Word" Task

The first task, posed during the second individual interviews involved asking each participant to look over a list of words that have been used to describe mentoring. These words were gathered from a variety of articles on mentoring (Cole, 1991, Cole, 1995; Huling-Austin, 1990a; Huling-Austin, et al, 1989; Rekrut et al., 1992; Watson & Cole, 1993).

Can you choose three words, either from the list or from your own thinking to describe your relationship? Why did you select those words?		
Friend	Professional	Collegial
Paternalistic	Maternalistic	Peer
Knowledgeable	Teaching	Counseling
Coaching	Sponsoring	Role modeling
Validating	Protecting	Facilitating
Leading	Directing	Demonstrating
Supervising	Authoritarian	Diligent
Rigorous	Cautious	Conscientious

Figure 1. The word task

Most participants explained their own definitions of terms, although a couple asked for clarification. They chose as many words as they wanted and added words of their own not on the list. While some found this to be a challenging task and spent several moments considering the list before responding, most participants chose words quickly and easily

<u>Marie and Samantha</u>		<u>Maggie and Elizabeth</u>	
Marie- Friend Role modeling Knowledgeable	Samantha- Friend Professional Collegial	Maggie- Friend Peer Facilitating Knowledgeable	Elizabeth- Friend Professional Coaching Directing Cautious ¹ Supporting
<u>Sue Ann, Tie and Emily</u>		<u>Sue Ann- (re Tie)</u>	
<u>Sue Ann-</u> (re Emily) Protecting Role model Counseling Professional Knowledgeable	<u>Emily-</u> Friend Collegial Role modeling Counseling	<u>Sue Ann-</u> (re Tie) Validating Role model Rigorous Maternalistic Friend Conscientious	<u>Tie-</u> Friend Supervising Counseling Organizing
<u>Taylor and Alisa</u>		<u>Michelle and Jenny</u>	
<u>Taylor-</u> Knowledgeable Protecting Professional	<u>Alisa-</u> Role modeling Facilitating	<u>Michelle-</u> Friend Coaching Validating Knowledgeable	<u>Jenny-</u> Friend Collegial Validating

Figure 2. Words chosen in the word task

¹ This word was not on the list.

The Word Task: Congruency in Choices

The word choices for most pairs connected closely with their more general interview comments on their relationships. For example, Taylor chose the word *professional* in this task. Later in the year, when her relationship with Alisa was damaged by the tutoring incident, Taylor said she thought they could continue to work together as colleagues since their mentorship always been a *professional* relationship and had never been a friendship. They could continue to interact about work-related issues. In this instance excluding the personal from mentoring, as advocated by Feiman-Nemser (1999), supported the continuation of a relationship, although it clearly lacked the trustfulness of other participants who described their mentors as *friends*.

In some instances, there was a close match between what the beginning teacher said and what the mentor said, suggesting some congruency in how they conceptualized their relationship. For example, there were close connections between Samantha and Marie's choices. Both agreed they were friends. Marie viewed Samantha as a *knowledgeable role model*; Samantha tried to display *professionalism* and *collegiality*. Their agreement is not surprising, considering the amount of time they spent in shared experiences and how involved their discussions were. However, Jenny and Michelle also agreed that they were *friends* and that central to their mentorship was Jenny's *validation* of Michelle's teaching capabilities. In this case there appeared to be more of a desire for the friendship than an actual blossoming friendship, based in part on the positive feedback Jenny provided for Michelle when they did interact. According to Michelle:

Jenny's somebody that I would like to get to know personally better. I could see us going hiking together, with her husband and my boyfriend and her family. She's just a very very nice person. I would like to get to know her better. (Mi2, p. 12)

In addition, the struggles existing within relationships are also evident. Elizabeth, who struggled with issues of judgement, chose the word *cautious*, but also acknowledged she was *directing*. In Tie's interview, her initial response was "all of them except maternal, all of them, all of them. I feel like I'm all of those things. It's brutal" (T2, p. 19).

Interestingly, Sue Ann chose the word *maternalistic* to describe her relationship with Tie, saying:

I find her a little maternalistic. She cares so much that she wants to protect you, and she wants to make sure you're doing okay, and she wants to help you, she wants to guide you. And that's not a bad thing, but it just happened to clash with me. (SA2, p. 15)

In Chapter 2, I cited Rekrut and Wilson's study (1992) in which beginning teachers were asked to describe their mentorships. The words most frequently chosen were "warm and friendly, collegial, professional, peer, and paternalistic." It is interesting to note that the participants in my study selected many of the same words, with the exception of *paternalistic*, although Sue Ann seemed to allude to a hierarchical, overseeing element in her use of *maternalistic*. Cunnison (as cited in S. Acker 1995) described a "second hierarchy" concerned with "pastoral concerns", and suggested that women have historically been directed into this second hierarchy rather than the first hierarchy of educational decision-making. If the first hierarchy can be described as patriarchal, then the second could be described as matriarchal. It seems that Sue Ann is characterizing Tie's mentoring as more traditionally hierarchical, almost custodial rather than caring.

Emerging Themes and Issues

While many participants chose certain words, the meaning of those words was somewhat contentious. As alluded to above, one interesting issue that emerged from this task is a contested image of mentor as mother: as "maternalistic", as "mother hen" and as "protecting." While most of the mentors expressed their care and concern for beginning teachers and most beginning teachers felt cared for, all resisted naming this care as maternal or matriarchal. Instead, many chose *friend* and *collegial* as descriptors for the caring aspect of their mentorship. In this study I have also resisted relying on maternal images of mentors, believing that to do so obscures many other possibilities for women's affiliation:

For mothers, daughters, sisters, friends, lovers and coworkers, women's ties to women are of fundamental importance in shaping and transmitting human culture

. . . . But this tradition of female affiliation and women-centered experience, like much else in women's lives, has been obscured, disputed, sometimes rendered invisible in main(male)stream academic discourse. (Frankfort-Nachmias & Musher, 1994, p. 85)

In examining the word choices and the explanations given, several other issues emerged that begin to reveal how the dyads co-constructed their mentorships. Many saw friendship and collegiality as interwoven within their relationships. For example, Marie said, "I consider Samantha as a friend, because we joke around and stuff and I find that she's very supportive and encouraging." (M2, p. 13-14). Not only was Samantha helpful to Marie, she was also an enjoyable companion. Marie and Samantha had fun together.

Most beginning teachers saw their mentors as role models and admired them for their capabilities as teachers, mentors and women. Even Sue Ann saw her mentors as role models, saying of Emily, "She is a good role model. I see her professionally developing herself." (SA2, p. 13), and of Tie, "She is a role model because she is an incredible teacher" (SA2, p. 15). Beginning teachers also viewed their mentors as sources of diverse knowledge about teaching and about creating successful lives as women who teach. In selecting *knowledgeable* to describe Elizabeth, Maggie said, "she's willing to help me explore an issue as far as I want to go with it" (Ma2, p. 16). Michelle described Jenny as "not just knowledgeable in that—does she know the IRPs², but also she knows what to do in certain situations. . . a variety of different areas of knowledge, not just intellectual, but covering the whole gamut" (Mi2, p. 10). Finally, Marie's comments about Samantha show that she saw Samantha as not only a role model because of her teaching, but also because of how she organized her life as a woman, "I find Samantha to be a very strong role model. She's a woman and she's successful and she's a science teacher. . . . I see the way she organizes her life" (M2, p. 14-16). The issue of the mentor as role model is an important one to explore because the notion of role models is both sanctioned and denounced within feminist literature (Houston, 1996).

² The BC curriculum guides were called "Instructional Resource Packages."

In selecting and defining words they would use to describe their mentorships, the beginning teachers and mentors themselves synthesized and interpreted their relationships. They told me what was important to attend to in my analysis. The first of their themes, friendship and collegiality, will be examined in depth in Chapter 9 as I address the research questions, while the other two themes will be addressed in Chapter 10 as I present the critical issues emerging from the study.

The " Bad Job" Task

For the second interview I developed a question about a " bad job" scenario. I wanted to probe into the notion of thoughtful critique, since there was little evidence of thoughtful critique from either mentors or beginning teachers in the first round of interviews. I knew from my own experience, as well as from the literature, that many beginning teachers are given challenging teaching assignments (Fullan with Stiegelbauer, 1991; Sullivan, 1988). I knew that most of these beginning teachers would, because of their temporary teaching contracts, be moving to new teaching situations within the Portal district the following year. As most of the second interviews took place in February or March, many of the beginning teachers were beginning to think about where they might be the next year and what their teaching assignments might be. I was curious to learn how beginning teacher and mentors might respond to an unfair systemic reality—being given a very inappropriate teaching assignment. Would they be accepting or would they resist in some way? Would mentors be seen, and would they see themselves, as advocates for beginning teachers in these circumstances? The actual comments of the participants are included in the following section to give a more accurate representation of their responses.

To beginning teachers: I'd like to ask you to respond to a scenario. If you were asked to take on a very inappropriate teaching assignment for the next term, how would you react? Who would you ask to help you decide?

To mentors: I'd like to ask you to respond to a scenario. If [name] were asked to take on a very inappropriate teaching assignment for the next term, how would you react? What advice would you give her? What would you do?

Figure 3. The bad job task

Marie and Samantha**Marie:**

The first thing I ask myself—will I be a good teacher for the kids? Will they benefit from having me as their teacher? Will I do them justice? If I answer yes to those questions then if it's a content issue, I can get materials from other people in the department, and get support that way. I'd be willing to move around if there's a better position around the district. (M2, p. 23)

Samantha:

If she were really overwhelmed, I might be a bit aggressive and stop and say—but, you know, can we just maybe. . . we want her to survive, the big picture is we want her in the profession. . . I don't want her to be lost in the shuffle—that would be unfair. We're talking about a human being here who has so much to give to all these students. Look at what she's done so far. So I think I would probably go to bat for her and cry my case for her. (S2, p. 18)

Sue Ann, Emily and Tie**Sue Ann:**

I guess I'd ask, is this possible, can this happen? Then I'd just take it. I'm just the kind of person who makes the best of it. I'd see what the job needed for me to do. (SA2, p. 16)

Emily:

If it truly looked like an unfair, stupid assignment where they were just dumping you, I would tell her to go and talk to the union. But then, I'd say if she was stuck with it—go do it for a year and post out. . . . So basically my answer is—deal with the system. Give them what they want. Get what you want out of it. (E2 p. 10)

Tie:

I'd say— I'll do it. . . .I've done all of them. I'd go— do you want to switch? (T2, p. 21)

Taylor and Alisa**Taylor:**

I'd freak, I'd panic, then I'd go home get ready. (T2, p. 23- 25)

Alisa:

I would do a lot of listening and maybe come up with some possibilities. . . . I'm more concerned about the students than I am the beginning teachers. I have a dilemma with people taking jobs if they're not qualified. I know they need the money and they want to get on, but on the other hand, professionally, you should say, I'm not qualified for this. (A2, p. 32)

Michelle and Jenny**Michelle:**

First of all I would be very upset. I don't want to leave this school. I don't feel like I've had my time. It's not time to leave yet. I'd also feel incredibly anxious because I'd feel like that I should take the job because it's a job and otherwise it's subbing. . . . But I would talk to a lot of people here, not just one person. (M2, p. 14)

Jenny:

I guess I would just help her work through the whole thought process that you need to look at before you take on a new assignment. . . . I might go to talk to the principal—well no I couldn't do that. That's not my—I couldn't do that. That would be up to Michelle to do. (J2, p. 13)

Maggie and Elizabeth**Maggie:**

I'd probably talk it over with the administrators at this school and if there was no way around it, then I'd have to go and find another school to work it. Which would just kill me. (Ma2, p. 17)

Elizabeth:

Well, I think I might try and sit down together and look at the pluses and minuses and that kind of thing. Just help her talk about it and talk about it. And then let her make the decision. (E2, p. 19)

Figure 4. Responses to the bad job

The Bad Job: Resistance and Compliance

All of the beginning teachers said they would take on very inappropriate teaching assignments, at grade levels and in subject areas for which they were not prepared. Even when the scenario I created involved teaching part time at two different schools, all agreed they would accept these jobs. They either saw "no way out" of the situation or they compared it with the possibility of returning to substitute teaching. There was a high level of compliance in their responses, to the extent that some did not even suggest they would talk to their mentors before agreeing. This compliance may link to the contention (Britzman et al., 1995) that for student teachers during the practicum experience, "what is centrally learned is compliance to existing routines" (p.10). Only Marie expressed a concern for the quality of her teaching in the inappropriate setting, all the others thought they could read the curriculum documents and then seek help in learning the new content. The responses were laden with emotion—sadness, anxiety, resignation and panic, but little resistance. The practice of placing teachers in inappropriate assignments seemed to be taken-for-granted.

The mentors' responses were troubling. I had expected they would take on an advocacy role on behalf of the beginning teachers. Most did suggest they would help the beginning teacher consider alternatives to taking on the bad job and would discuss with them the issues in taking the job. Their responses ranged from advice to *do it* to deliberately withholding advice and letting the beginning teacher decide in private. In the latter case, they seemed to feel it was not their place to offer counsel directly. This reluctance to advise combined with the hesitancy beginning teachers had to ask directly for advice suggest limits to the trust between mentoring partners. It may also point to the systemic expectation that teachers will comply³.

³ Later in the year, this expectation for systemic compliance became personally meaningful for me. Portal district eliminated my position as coordinator of the mentoring program and I used a union grievance process to challenge this decision. My administrators were shocked that I would do so and could not understand why I was upset and angry. I was apparently expected to comply with what I perceived as unjust treatment.

Four aspects of the mentors' responses to the bad job task were discrepant. Tie suggested she would trade and take the bad job herself. This was an interesting remedy, since when Sue Ann had been initially hired to the school she was given the combined class because neither Tie nor Emily would take it on. They had actually left the *bad job* for the beginning teacher, and in retrospect and having observed Sue Ann's struggles, Tie wished she had not left the bad job for a beginning teacher. In one way, this is a form of support, although perhaps a self-destructive one, since it victimizes the mentor instead of the beginning teacher. It doesn't challenge the systemic creation of bad jobs.

Alisa raised a poignant critical issue that mirrored Marie's concern about being able to teach effectively in diverse content areas; this is the issue of how well a beginning teacher will teach in an inappropriate assignment. While Alisa acknowledged that novices need jobs and thus will take on very challenging teaching assignments, she argued that to do so does a disservice to students. This is an unexpected element of thoughtful critique because, unlike the other mentors who focused only on the feelings of the beginning teacher, Alisa balanced concern for Taylor with concern for the students. Looking at the issue from the perspective of the others involved is an important way of being thoughtfully critical. Rather than dealing with my question at face value, she troubled the issue by considering not only Taylor's needs but also the interests of the children.

Several mentors were more willing to challenge the bad job. Emily's advice was for the beginning teacher to go to the union, perhaps to dispute the situation. Samantha went further and was (hesitantly) willing to advocate for the beginner; "I *might* be a *bit* aggressive and stop and say, but, you know, can we *just maybe*...[italics added]." ⁴ While her approach seems a somewhat gentle form of aggression, Jenny's was even more cautious; after thinking about it, she decided she it would not be appropriate for her to intercede in any way.

⁴ Throughout the study, I was aware of how these women teachers (myself included) used cautious language that ultimately devalued what they were saying— phrases such as *kind of*, *sort of*, *it's just*, and *I might*.

What might account for this high level of compliance among both beginning teachers and mentors? I address this issue in Chapters 9 and 10, as I consider the presence and absence of thoughtful critique within mentorships. I will argue that there is a lack of thoughtful critique within schools and that this deficiency combined with worry about overstepping boundaries supports compliance among and abuses of beginning teachers. This finding suggests much support more is needed to foster thoughtful critique within mentorships and perhaps, within collegial relationships in general.

Journal entry

February 19, 1997

As I listen to the beginning teachers respond to this question about jobs, I feel saddened by their lack of power to say no. It's not really surprising, but it is sad. As a member of the school system, I realize that they do have little choice but to accept such conditions, but I wish they didn't have to. I'm ashamed to see that as a system, we do so little for our newest members. We seem to offer them bad classes, bad classroom and bad jobs! Not much sense of care there. There's also a kind of perversion of the BCTFs "a teacher is a teacher is a teacher," meaning we should all get paid the same, treated the same, etc. The beginning teachers seem to feel they should all be able to teach anything, despite not knowing the subject content or the pedagogy for the content. This takes the idea of being a generalist too far.

As I listen to the mentors I'm struck by how powerless many of them feel: unable to advise and unable to advocate. In Samantha's "I might", "can we", "I would probably", I hear my own use of diminishing language: "kind of", "sort of" "it's a bit like"-all the ways as women we soften our talk and perhaps our challenge as well. And even in Tie's taking on the bad job herself I hear a sense of sacrifice rather than confrontation. What are we so scared of? Why don't we just say NO?

The Pie Graph Task

By the second joint interview, the mentorships had been in place for at least four months. From my work in the Portal mentoring program I knew these early months were the most intense for beginning teachers and thus often the most intense for mentoring as well. As beginning teachers set up their classrooms, begin to plan curriculum, establish classroom management systems, write first-term report cards, meet with parents, and deal with school politics and relationships, there is great potential for particularly the survival aspects of beginning teaching to be discussed. This is the time when beginning teachers may have and ask more questions. To gain more understanding of the content of the mentoring relationships, I posed the following question.

Using this circle, can you create a pie graph to show me the aspects of teaching that you talk about most:

students	planning	classroom management
curriculum	resources	staff relationships
parents	teaching strategies	life outside of teaching
union	assessment	extra curricular activities

Figure 5. The pie graph task

Many of these topics were drawn from Gordon's (1991) list of "high-priority needs" of beginning teachers, which included classroom management, obtaining information about the school system, curriculum planning, evaluating students, motivating learners, using "effective" teaching strategies, responding to individual needs of students, interacting with colleagues, communicating with parents, adapting to teaching roles, and receiving emotional support.

In addition to learning more about the topics of their conversations, through this question I was able to observe how each dyad approached this task—how the individuals decided what to do, who led and who followed. In the following section, I have included representations of the graphs created by each dyad plus excerpts from my fieldnotes about my observations of the process for each pair.

Marie and Samantha

Because of Samantha's back trouble and impending maternity leave, we had to squeeze this interview in during a noon hour. There was not time for the pie graph task, so I left it with them and also left a tape recorder so they could complete the task. There seemed to be a lot of give and take during the task. I could not see or know who did the writing, but I heard a lot of collaborative talk as they decided on the categories and percentages.

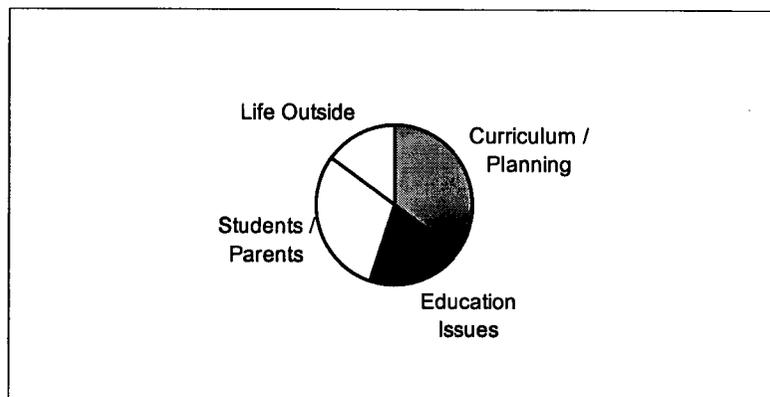


Figure 6. Marie and Samantha's graph

Sue Ann, Emily and Tie

Because there were really two mentorships within this dyad, I brought two papers and suggested they might fill in two separate graphs. Emily and Tie each seized a paper and began the task. Sue Ann appeared torn between the two, looking back and forth and adding her comments to each. It was Emily and Tie who completed the drawings.

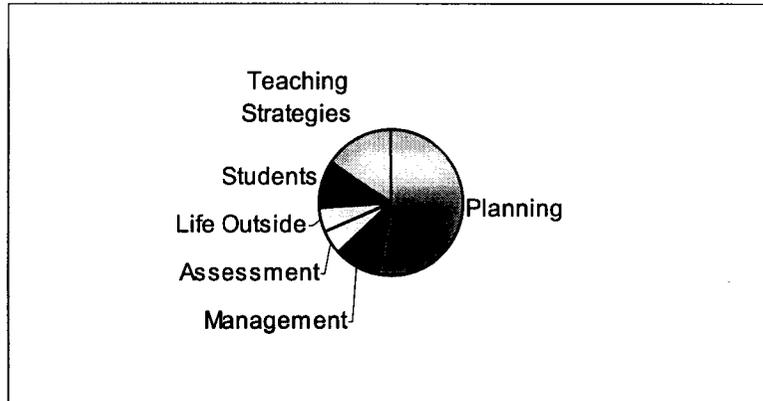


Figure 7. Sue Ann and Emily's graph

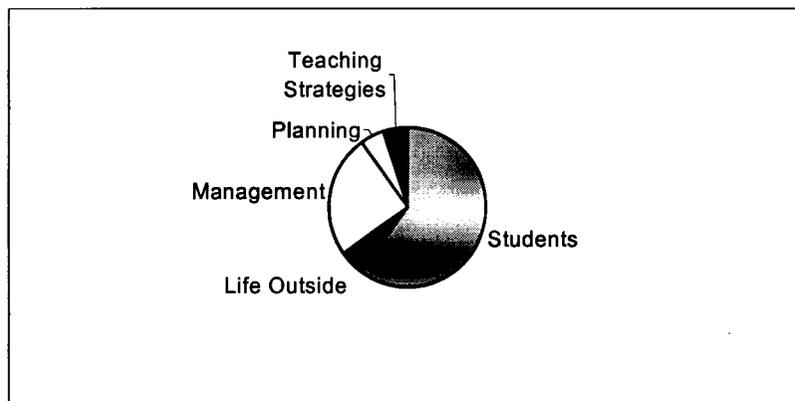


Figure 8. Sue Ann and Tie's graph

Taylor and Alisa

Taylor took the lead here, grabbing the pencil and paper and beginning immediately to place checkmarks by items she wanted to include on her graph. Alisa watched as Taylor described what she was doing and why. Alisa responded and they had a short discussion of each issue, with Alisa offering some advice but mainly validating how Taylor was handling each issue as she drew lines on the circle.

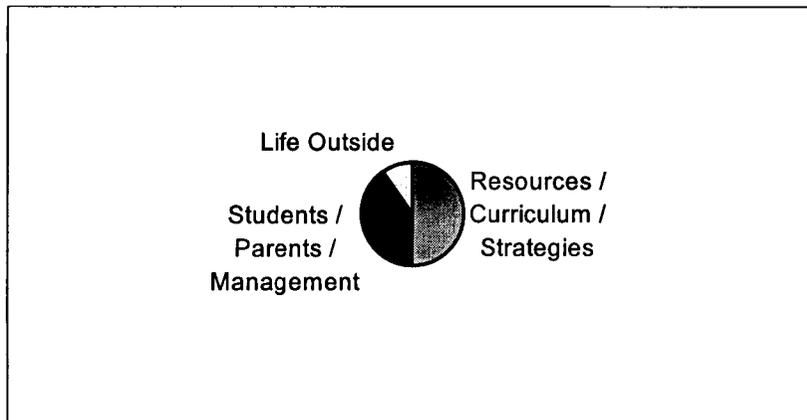


Figure 9. Taylor and Alisa's graph

Michelle and Jenny

Jenny participated in the activity, but left most of the decisions and the drawing to Michelle. She kept up a bit of a commentary on what Michelle was doing, making comments on being right or left brained. Michelle numbered the items according to their importance; she was very clear on what should be included and she completed the drawing and labeling. They added three categories, *fieldtrips*, *Classroom Assistants* and *personal*, apparently not seeing these as subsumed under other categories.

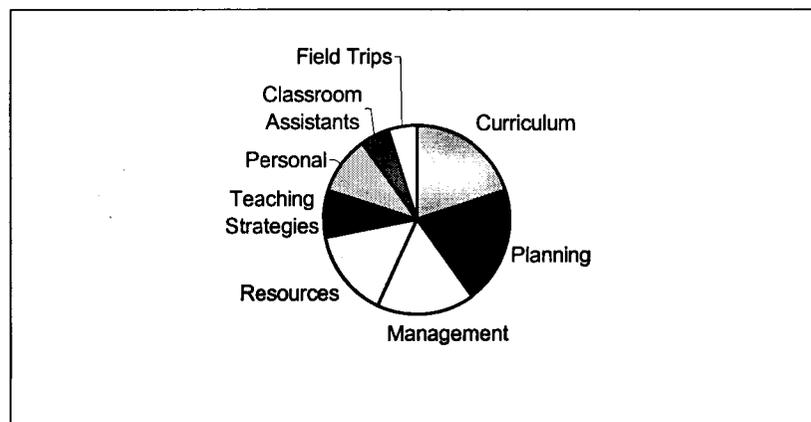


Figure 10. Michelle and Jenny's graph

Maggie and Elizabeth

Maggie and Elizabeth had difficulty organizing the task. Elizabeth finally took the leadership in the organization, pointing to items on the list and asking if they should be included. Then Maggie took the pencil and did the drawing. I noticed a similar pattern throughout the whole interview.

Maggie did most of the talking and Elizabeth seemed to be cautious about commenting and often deferred to her.

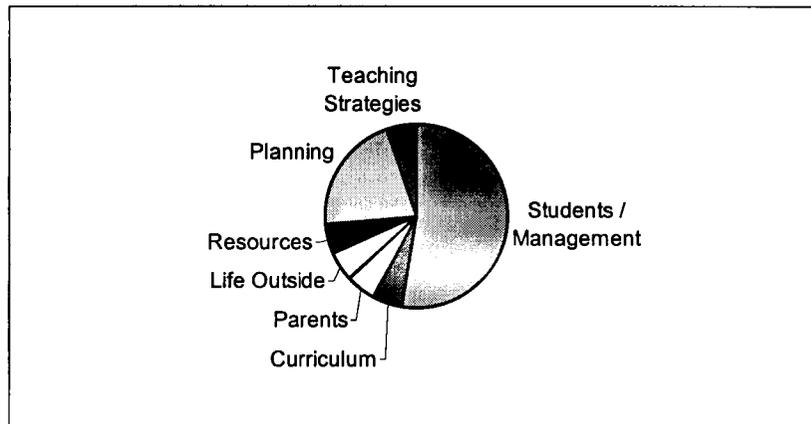


Figure 11. Maggie and Elizabeth's graph

Pie Graph Task: Content and Process

The specific topics of each dyad's discussions have been reported in the individual cases. This further representation through circle graphs is intended to facilitate the cross-case exploration. This task gives a composite picture of the topics of conversations within the dyads, at least for the first half of the school year. Some dyads added topics, while others clustered them, saying that they were integrated in discussions. Most of these topics from Gordon's (1991) list were included by the mentors and beginning teachers in this study, with the exceptions of *information about the school system* and *collegial interactions*. Several dyads did talk in the interviews about interactions with other colleagues but did not refer to them as they completed the pie graph task. Perhaps they did not see the conversations as important or perhaps they were uncomfortable in saying they had discussed other teachers. In considering why school system information was not included as a topic for the mentorships, it may be that beginning teachers sought such information

from principals or union representatives rather than mentors. Or they may not have considered this as a separate category. For example, when Alisa supported Taylor through the bad day with her Grade 9 class, Alisa commented on contractual limits on class size and class composition. This information was integrated with advice and may not have been heard by Taylor as *information about the school system*.

The dyads in this study included two topics not on Gordon's list. These were *resources* and *life outside school*. Sharing resources, whether binders, theme boxes, job cards, books, or worksheets, was a common activity for the mentoring dyads. It was a quick and simple way of assisting the beginning teachers and for some dyads, an introduction to deep talk (Himley, as cited in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press) about teaching strategies and planning curriculum. *Life outside school* was selected by most dyads. It referred to their talks about life, families, weekends, homes, children, personal backgrounds etc. This was the talk that grounded most dyads. As I have argued, personal talk allows relationships to bloom as it fosters trust and demonstrates care. Personal talk is as basic to feminist mentoring as is thoughtful critique.

It was interesting to observe the manner in which dyads completed the pie graph task. In most cases, the mentor deferred to the beginning teacher and it was the beginning teacher who held the pencil and drew, while the mentor provided input, usually validating or elaborating what the beginning teacher was saying. The exceptions were the two graphs completed by Sue Ann's mentors. Perhaps because these mentorships were generally problematic, or perhaps because there were two graphs, the mentors here took control. This was the same interview in which they later remonstrated Sue Ann for her lack of classroom management. The manner in which they completed the graphing task foreshadows their domination of the interactions later in the interview.

The graphing activity required the mentors and beginning teachers to reflect on their time together and to synthesize from their conversations, whether planned or spontaneous, lunch room chatter or the deep talk of mentoring, and to represent how much time they

had spent on those various topics. The manner in which they did so also provided a glimpse of how they interacted together.

Summarizing the Three Tasks

These three tasks were undertaken with a greater degree of standardization than the interviews in general. While the interviews were more conversational in structure and participants were encouraged to expand their talk, these tasks focused the conversation on particular ideas, words and representations. I asked all participants to respond to the same material, even giving them written material to which to respond for the word task and the pie graph task. When laid beside the principle data, these tasks provide a useful form of triangulation because they were more tightly structured than the rest of the interviews (Merriam, 1988) and because they allowed the participants to synthesize from their own experiences. In developing the cross-case analysis which follows, I will draw heavily on the general interview data, and will utilize the task data as an additional matter for the analysis. In Chapter 9, then I will continue interweaving the conceptualization of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring, as introduced in Chapter 3, with the lived experiences of mentoring described in the cases.

CHAPTER NINE: THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

Through this dissertation I have held three purposes. First, grounded on my experiences with mentoring and on a critical reading of mainstream and feminist literature, I have proposed an alternate conception of mentoring as a feminist pedagogical relationship intended to support beginning teachers in their early career experiences. This pedagogy, as I have described, is underpinned by a valuing of relationship, framed by talk that centres on questioning and thoughtful critique, and focussed on a conception of knowledge as constructed within communities. Second, I have examined authentic examples of mentoring among women teachers, initially, simply to learn more about what they do together. Finally, I looked my conception and the realities of mentoring, each through the lens of the other. I have presented five cases of mentoring among women teachers, focussing on singular and common themes. In this chapter, I readdress the two research questions, presenting the findings. In the light of this reconsideration of the research questions, I suggest an interwoven, more intricate depiction of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring. I reiterate that my purpose is not to distill and prescribe a pedagogy for mentoring, a one-size-fits-all approach, but to identify significant features of these mentorships that have broader applicability.

Before moving to the findings, it is important first to acknowledge the importance of context as a pivotal feature of all of these cases of mentoring. Contextual factors preclude a prescription for mentoring in today's pluralistic society; responding to these factors demands a more critical conception of mentoring. The nature of each mentorship will be in many ways determined by circumstances: district and school circumstances, grade and subject focus, location of classrooms, age, race (and of course gender) of the participants.

Recognizing Context

All of the teachers involved in this study taught within one suburban school district. They all dealt with issues such as increasing classroom diversity (including high ESL student

populations) and ongoing teacher evaluation. Some issues, such as adapting teaching methods for ESL learners, had a high profile since they affected both novice and experienced teachers in Portal. Other issues affected only beginning teachers and seemed to be more taken-for-granted. Perhaps the most significant of these was the lay-off process suffered by most of the beginning teachers in this study. The teacher collective agreement largely prescribed how beginning teachers were hired and placed in teaching assignments and how they were laid off and rehired. All but one of the beginning teachers in the study were laid off, not knowing if they would be rehired in September, and knowing that if they were rehired, they would not be in the same classroom or even the same school the following year. Because this shared referent was so taken for granted; we do not know how it affected the development of each mentorship. But perhaps if teachers knew they would be colleagues for a longer time, their relationships would have developed differently. In my own mentorship of Kyra, I expected that we would be able to continue to work together, and we did.

Other contextual factors were unique or shared by two or three dyads in the study. Michelle and Sue Ann both taught combined-grade classes and both worried how to meet the needs of what they perceived as two different groups within their classrooms. Sue Ann's response was to formally select two mentors, one for each grade. Michelle did the same thing, only informally. Her sanctioned mentor was a kindergarten teacher while the teacher next door, who seemed to be her genuine mentor, taught grade one. Thus she had a mentor for each grade. Sue Ann, Emily and Tie's relationship was unique, as it was the only triad in the study. Michelle and Jenny were the only dyad affected by physical distance, with Michelle teaching in the main school building and Jenny in the school annex.

Only two cases involved secondary school teachers. While I had at first worried that this would somehow skew the results, I came to see the inclusion of these cases as increasing the breadth of the study. Both dyads had strong subject backgrounds, yet they relied on these in different ways. For the two beginning teachers, Marie and Taylor, subject background was an important factor both in the choice of their mentors and also in the

kinds of interactions they had with Samantha and Alisa. Taylor in particular, sought assistance in knowing how to teach mathematical concepts; she was seeking pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987). Although Taylor began the year with a didactic conception of her subject, through her use of Alisa's binders and reliance on Alisa's less didactic suggestions, Taylor began to teach with more constructivist and student-centred approaches. It would be interesting to know how she now conceives the underlying structure of mathematics. In Marie's mentorship with Samantha, their shared subject was less a content focus than an underlying framework for coming to know about teaching—a *modus operandi*. These secondary cases also increased the depth of the study because they showed that some characteristics of mentoring, such as the importance of trust and shared experiences, span both elementary and secondary teaching. In addition both cases contained examples of thoughtful critique that furthered my understanding of that mentoring practice.

Throughout the study, contextual features differentiated the various dyadic relationships, and they also began to reveal commonalties among the mentorships. It is these commonalties to which I now turn, in reconsidering the guiding questions of my study.

Responses to the Research Questions

There are many commonalties across these mentoring cases and there are some significant differences. In the following reconsideration of the two research questions, I will include both "telling" cases as well "typical" findings (Sanjek, 1990). As I have shown, mentoring is a complex phenomenon and has different meanings to different women. Tom (1992) suggested that, "two women working side by side in ostensibly identical jobs may find vastly different meanings in their work depending on other elements constituting the constellations of their lives" (p. 78). Recalling the warning of "the danger of throwing out useful information," (Ely et al., 1991) it is important not to simplify a depiction of mentoring, but rather to attempt to reveal its different textures and meanings. Thus, in addressing the research questions through the explication of inter-case themes, I also include themes that appear significant within individual dyads, the intra-case themes.

Co-constructing Mentoring Relationships

One of the major purposes of this study was to learn more about what actually happens in mentoring relationships among women teachers. Through the interview process, I found that teachers conceptualized their mentorships as supportive relationships with colleagues. Most agreed that both personal and professional issues should be open to discussion; some felt this blending of the personal and professional was essential to the development of strong relationships. This is not to say that there were no boundaries within the mentorships, as I will discuss later.

All teachers could clearly articulate what their mentorships "were about." The mentors thought carefully about most of their interactions and practices. They held personal theories of mentoring, which they were able to describe and which were evident in most of their actions. Most mentors based their practice of mentoring on their own experiences of being mentored, on their beliefs about teaching, and on personal images and metaphors. Samantha, who had many supportive mentors and a mother who stressed service to others, saw her role, "to ponder with [Marie] when she is pondering and to give her some space to learn and to be there" (S1, p. 4). Tie, who had herself had a supportive yet directive mentor, wanted to be the only person to answer Sue Ann's questions. Emily, who had not had a mentor and who preferred to "slog it out" alone, stated, "I try not to interfere as much as I can" (E1, p. 3). Emily waited and offered support only when it was requested. Alisa also saw her role in part as responding to Taylor's questions and issues, but also felt there were events and issues through which mentors should inform and support beginning teachers. Jenny based her practice on validating or confirming Michelle, noticing and naming her successes. Finally, Elizabeth based her mentoring of Sue on trying to be "patient with the process" of helping someone become a teacher (E3, p. 6-7).

Most teachers agreed that this was only one of the supportive relationships that should be available to beginning teachers, somewhat allaying the fear expressed by Cole (1992) that establishing mentorships appropriates beginning teachers' right to develop other

supportive relationships. All beginning teachers had other supporters within and beyond their schools. Most found their administrators encouraging and sympathetic. This is in keeping with Cole's (1993) suggestion that principals have a key role to play in supporting beginning teachers. All but one of the mentors encouraged the beginning teachers to seek support from other colleagues as circumstances allowed. All teachers *desired* positive functional relationships, but in some instances circumstances, events, and personal issues prevented them from achieving a high degree of satisfaction from their mentorships. However, all beginning teachers did state they had appreciated their mentorships to some extent and the mentors all stated they would mentor again. The following themes are drawn from the data and reveal how beginning teachers and mentors co-constructed their mentorships.

Mentorships as Caring Collegueships and Friendships

The teachers in this study did not see clear boundaries between the personal and the professional in mentoring. They believed that an emerging friendship was at the heart of their mentoring. Heinrich (1995) described a similar notion of "professional friendships" (p. 459) in her study of women's doctoral advisement relationships. Biklen (1995) also found the women teachers in her study wanted a "sense of community" as well as a sense of autonomy, a "mutually supportive network applied to pedagogical, organizational, ethical, and personal concerns. . . a sense of belonging, . . . supportiveness, . . . sharing, . . . and validation" (p. 150). This view was clearly expressed by Jenny:

I think any two people working together have to have a friendship before you can be honest and share and I feel as though we have that friendship. . . . I think there's a connection there that has to be there first for me before I could expect anyone to accept my help. (J2, p. 9)

This finding is contrary to Feiman-Nemser's (1999) contention that focussing on the *personal* within mentorships interferes with mentoring. I argue that conceptualizing mentoring only as *professional* practice perpetrates an uneasy dichotomy between life and work and perpetuates patriarchal thinking about these issues. Early feminists rallied

to the slogan, "the personal is the political" and I would add, "the personal is the professional." The women in my study did not limit their mentorships to school issues. They talked about their lives as women who teach.

While *becoming* friends was one of the promises of mentoring, already *being* friends posed challenges for one dyad, Sue Ann and Tie. According to Sue Ann, "Tie is a friend, and that had advantages and disadvantages" (SA2, p. 15). Their pre-existing friendship seemed for Tie to bring with it an overpowering set of expectations for closeness and disclosure. The desire for closeness and disclosure with other colleagues may have been what led her to divulge Sue Ann's secrets. Sue Ann became unwilling to risk confessing her insecurities or inadequacies in such a forum. For this dyad, the friendship circumscribed the possibilities of mentoring.

For another dyad, Taylor and Alisa, the mentorship was more traditionally and tightly connected solely to school issues. Although Taylor was new to the Portal community, she did not rely on Alisa for advice or support beyond school issues. When the relationship was ruptured for Alisa by the tutoring incident, Taylor remained confident that the mentorship was still in effect, saying, "It's been a very professional relationship. . . . So, in a sense, it hasn't really changed" (T3, p. 29-30). Both of these cases bring forth an impression of boundaries within mentoring, which I address in the following section.

Collegiality and professionalism were defined by these women teachers as an affinity for the other and a dawning reciprocity, which Jenny described most eloquently:

[Collegiality is] helping each other, we're all professionals. If I can professionally help you and you can professionally help me, we're all better off. *Collegial* I see as side by side, with no one on top. I've been exactly where Michelle is and if I taught a new grade next year, I'd be where Michelle is, most likely, in some ways.

So, really we're all on the same level as far as I see it. And what you have in your theme boxes⁵ does not make you up or down in teaching, because everything can fail no matter what you have in your theme box. (J2, p. 10)

For beginning teachers, being treated respectfully and collegially within mentorships validated their developing autonomy and self-awareness, as proclaimed by Maggie:

I feel more like a peer and less like a student teacher. I think that's really important for me at this point. . . . When I was a student teacher and you'd have somebody come in and they'd observe you and then you'd talk about how it all went, it was always that someone was teaching you how to be a teacher. I had really good people helping me but there was always this positioning here that I was the student. . . and with Elizabeth it's more of, I mean she has more knowledge than I do, but I'm the teacher, this is my class. It's my group, I do what I want to do, it's my group. So if she gives me a suggestion, it's my decision even if I want to take it or not take it. Then, [on practicum] you had to take them. If you don't, you're a bad person. There was always that feeling and I know they try not to have it that way. But it's just unavoidable in a student teaching situation. And you're never *the teacher*, you're always *the student teacher*. There is a real power differential when you're a student teacher. You're always aware of it. It's not your class. Whereas this is my class. And I get to make the decisions. I have the freedom to do that. And that's where that comes in. And I never feel like Elizabeth's trying to tell me what to do. . . . I'm learning and I'm exploring and I'm trying new things. I'm seeing what works for me and what doesn't work. And still exploring and figuring out who I am as a teacher. (Ma2, p. 14-15)

Maggie felt her "newborn thoughts" (Belenky et al., 1986) were respected by her mentor, who acted as a "midwife teacher" (p. 217). Like the other beginning teachers studied, she felt she mattered to her mentor. Most beginning teachers, with the exception of Sue Ann,

⁵ Jenny often referred to theme boxes, which are simply cardboard boxes in which teachers, (usually primary teachers) store items related to an integrated unit they often teach. For example a theme box for the unit *space* might contain picture books on space, worksheets to be photocopied, space puzzles, space posters etc.

felt their processes of becoming were honoured. The creation of collegueship altered the traditional path of mainstream education in which, according to Spender (1982):

Every day of our lives we are informed that women do not count, that we are wrong, that our different descriptions and explanations are ridiculous or unreal. . . . We learned that we are wrong; we become educated. (p. 34)

Thus for Maggie, as for most of the other beginning teachers, the offering of support combined with a sense that her mentor truly cared about her and respected her as an equal, led to the development of trust. With trust came the sense of being companions and colleagues, as women teachers. I will return to the issue of trust in response to the second research question. If mentors and beginning teachers thought about their relationships as collegial and friendly, how did they shape them to become collegial and friendly? One of the central processes of mentoring was conversation.

Mentoring as Conversation

Almost everyday or at least every other day for sure, I would go and talk to Samantha. Usually I would drop by after school or at lunchtime. (M1, p. 13)

In Chapter 3, I suggested that conversation is a central practice of mentoring. For the teachers studied, conversations between mentoring partners were both spontaneous and planned. The conversations included brief hallway encounters, longer focussed discussions after school and lengthy, meandering dialogues over dinners and walks in the park. In many instances, they emerged during the interviews, as detours in which the teacher-participants seemed to forget I was there and to talk to each other about an issue one had raised. These were always incredible moments and my job was simply to stay out to the way and let the conversation flow. One strong example of this was the discussion between Michelle and Jenny about Grade 1 children struggling with reading (MJ110-12), which was included in Chapter 6.

In conversations, beginning teachers usually sought information, advice or validation. Mentors usually attempted to accomplish three goals: to diagnose any concerns, to offer

advice, information or support, and to confirm or validate the beginning teacher. A fourth, less common goal was to engage in thoughtful critique together, to co-construct an extended or new understanding about a topic or issue. Perhaps this goal was less common because mentors worried that encouraging thoughtful critique would have an unsettling effect on beginning teachers. I come back to this idea of thoughtful critique as unsettling to beginning teachers later in this chapter.

The most challenging step for mentors was diagnosing the beginning teachers' immediate need or interest. All of the mentors were aware of the extent of the challenges faced by beginning teachers and of their potential fragility: as Elizabeth stated, "a beginning teacher's in a really struggling place in most situations and is very vulnerable" (E1, p. 20). The following lengthy quote from Alisa captures some of the challenges of diagnosing a beginning teacher's needs:

Mentoring is not like a cut and dry thing. It's different for each person that you work for. For Rick he needed this and Taylor's different. . . . Rick desperately needed materials and guidance in subjects that he didn't know. He never did get into a room. She now has a portable, he carried on the whole year in a different room for every block. And so I think from that point of view there isn't a blueprint for mentoring that you do this and this is what you do. So with feedback, you're not quite sure. Like I don't really get too much time to sit down with Taylor and say—is this what you need, is this working? (A1, p. 21)

The attempt to diagnose is an enactment of caring and relationship: Alisa, along with most of the other mentors, was willing to extend the time and energy to consider how best to support the beginning teacher. Successful requires knowing the other, which Code contended requires "constant learning" (1993, p. 3). Successful diagnosis, described by Maggie as "coming alongside and being with you" (ME1, p. 22), fostered the development of trust within the dyad. It also represents the capacity of mentoring to respond personally to individual beginning teachers: "individual support [such as mentoring] is of great importance to a new teacher when it includes the development of mutual trust, understanding, appreciation of one's own uniqueness and abilities, and

encouragement to work through problems and weaknesses" (Gold, 1996, p. 563). Successful diagnosis happened most often within mentorships that became "epistemological communities" (Nelson, 1993), as with Marie and Samantha.

One of the ways that mentors encouraged conversations was by allowing and encouraging questions. Many beginning teachers believed questioning was not only allowed, but that mentors had tacitly agreed to respond to questions by agreeing to mentor. Taylor stated:

Alisa's agreed to be there. So, even if she's busy, I know I can interrupt her. Somebody else, you don't want to always be bugging them all the time and have them think—oh, she's always up here asking questions. And I know that's not going to happen because this is an agreed thing. (T1, p. 12-14)

For Taylor, the formalization of the mentoring relationship confirmed to her that it was okay to ask; by agreeing to be a mentor, Alisa had agreed to *be there*. Questions often led to collaborative conversations (Hollingsworth, 1992) in which beginning teachers could consolidate or complexify their understandings. Mentors used questions of their own to support the beginning teachers in deeper thinking about topics and issues. Frequently, this happened as mentors and beginning teachers planned units together as when Elizabeth assisted Maggie in planning her unit on the post office:

I think actually it helped for us to go through and plan. If this is going to be your theme, say it's the Post Office and these are the sorts of things you want to do, what are you going to teach the kids to be able to do or what ideas are you going to be teaching. (E2, p. 7-8)

Questions could also create problems. Tie appeared to measure her worth as a mentor and friend by how many questions Sue Ann asked her and began to discourage Sue Ann from asking questions of other colleagues.

As stated in Chapter 2, many support programs for beginning teachers prescribe the content or the curriculum of the programs. For example, in the Portal program, the

optional workshop series for beginning teachers had pre-selected workshops topics. In my experience coordinating the program, there were many individuals and groups seeking access to the beginning teachers, claiming beginning teachers should know more about this or that. Some sought to correct perceived deficiencies in the novices' initial teacher education. In this study, I wanted to determine what beginning teachers and mentors actually talked about and wanted to talk about, based on an assumption that the beginning teachers would have some say in the topics discussed. The conversational topics of these mentoring relationship, as previously highlighted through the pie graph task, were the teaching context, the curriculum, students, life beyond teaching, and educational issues.

Talking about the Teaching Context

The first pro-d day came and I said—what is this. I'd heard that there's a Math workshop so I'm like—I'm going to the Math thing. Then I heard other people were staying here at the school and some people weren't going to anything. I had heard that everybody was supposed to go to something. So I went and asked Alisa—what are we supposed to do: are we going, are we staying? (Taylor, TA1, p. 4)

Throughout the interviews, beginning teachers and mentors talked about their working contexts; they discussed the school district, the school and/or their department. In some instances, contextual talk involved the mentor clarifying the situation, in other instances there was more of a critical edge to the conversation, moving toward thoughtful critique. Upcoming parent nights, reporting timelines, and school professional days were topics most beginning teachers and mentors discussed that can be classified as contextual. These conversations were initiated by a "need to know" (Carter & Richardson, 1989), which, in some instances mentors could extend to a critical level, but only after the immediate need to know was satisfied.

Planning Curriculum and Selecting Teaching Strategies

I learned [from planning with Jenny] a more efficient way to plan. We did a web and then we took that further and then—okay well what is the logical thing to do first, second, third, fourth. And how many days would you do that? And so I saw

how she would approach the subject and how many days she would spend on it and that really helped me. And it just made it when I filled in my day plan, it made it so much easier. Because I've never done it: [think about] what I'm going to do first and how many days I'm going to do it. (Michelle, MJ2, p. 22)

Learning more about the mandated curriculum, planning classroom curriculum, selecting teaching strategies, and evaluating learning were curricular topics of great importance to the beginning teachers in this study. The development of unit and lesson plans was a major focus for most pairs, linked to a need to learn about the prescribed curriculum for the grades and subjects the beginning teachers were teaching. In the example above, Michelle was telling me about the afternoon she spent with Jenny developing a *space* unit. All of the beginning teachers were teaching in new domains for which they had no formal preparation. For example, Marie was teaching an ESL course and had no background in teaching ESL students, and Sue Ann was teaching a primary combined class, despite her intermediate background. Thus it is not surprising that they would want assistance in program planning.

Gold (1996) suggested that instructional support is and should be a basic component of beginning teacher assistance. She argued that this support should focus on understanding subject matter, developing ability in presenting content to students, and developing a capacity to think "reflectively and critically about practice" (p. 562). In the individual cases I included many examples of this kind of instructional support. Alisa and Taylor often discussed the underlying structures of mathematics and how to translate their conceptions into appropriate classroom experiences in which students could construct their own understandings. Jenny and Michelle shared their concerns about young children learning to read and how they might best be supported. Emily encouraged Sue Ann to take more time teaching mathematics concepts to her primary students so they could develop better understandings. Elizabeth questioned Maggie as they planned a post office unit to help her consider what specific concepts she would be teaching. In all of these

examples mentors responded to beginning teacher concerns. They helped the beginning teachers plan and, through questioning them about their purposes and goals, also helped them to reflect upon that planning.

Mentors showed beginning teachers how they themselves planned. Moreover they shared resources, including theme boxes and binders. There were also many conversations about the prescribed curriculum. While the beginning teachers were somewhat familiar with the prescribed curriculum from their teacher education programs, they discovered that schools interpreted the guidelines differently or ignored them altogether. Tie told Sue Ann which grade three social studies topics were considered most important in their school; these were the topics next year's teacher would expect children to have covered. Taylor learned that her school had its own curriculum for many mathematics courses and that school examinations tested the school curriculum, while district examinations tested the provincial curriculum.

Curriculum was not uncontroversial. Alisa was very critical of the school-developed curriculum and accompanying examinations:

We've talked about the exams, the fact that we are now preparing the semester exams. . . . We don't teach the (provincial) curriculum. We have our own, which is supposed to be superior. . . . So the other day I was talking to Taylor and she said—I've taught the provincial curriculum, in grade 8, so I've taught algebra, that's the provincial curriculum. And I said—well that's fine. But that meant that she had taught something that the others haven't had. I felt caught a little bit in the middle.
(A2, p. 5)

It was in part the graded curricula that propelled Sue Ann to select two mentors and that thus sparked Tie's complaint that she was not being asked a fair share of questions. In the following excerpt, Emily tried to assuage this fear by saying to Tie:

But now Sue Ann is going to run into curricular issues, where [she's] actually going to start units that I know nothing about. I can't help with anything about

most of the math stuff in grade three, any of the social studies, pioneer type stuff.

All of that stuff now is in your ball court, because I know nothing. (SAET1, p. 24)

Talk about curriculum socialized the beginning teachers to real and imagined limits within the system, but also revealed possibilities for critique and change. Over the year most beginning teachers developed a richer and more interactional understanding of curriculum, and in some cases, came to understand curriculum as more problematic than they had originally thought.

Talking about Students and Classroom Management

Closely related to the issue of planning and designing classroom experiences was a concern for the students the beginning teachers were teaching. In the elementary cases, the beginning teachers were teaching children of unfamiliar age levels. They were surprised by some characteristics of their children. Maggie, a mother of older children, was learning about a group of young children as she taught kindergarten for the first time:

Now I understand that they're beginning kindergarten and I hope I remember that next year. They're only four and five years old. I mean they're really, really little. And you just can't expect as much from them. Scaling back on the expectations, changing my goals to become more—let's just get this class together as a class.

(Ma1, p. 3)

Mentors offered advice and validation. In Maggie's case, Elizabeth worked alongside her in the classroom. She was also able to model some of the practices she herself used in bringing young children together as a group. The issue of the mentor as a model is one I return to in Chapter 10.

In some cases it was the entire group of students that posed a challenge, as with Taylor's Grade 9 *yahoos* or Maggie's *squirrely* kindergarten children. Many of the conversations about children were related to classroom management, an apparently perpetual concern of beginning teachers (Gold, 1996; Huling-Austin, 1990b; Watson & Cole, 1993). Taylor struggled with her grade 9s, Maggie with her kindergartners, Sue Ann with the chaos her

children seemed to create at the end of the day, and even Michelle struggled with her 11 Grade 1s every afternoon. It seemed that all had pictures of how they wanted their classrooms to operate and that these were based on ideals about respecting children as independent learners. However, the most beginning teachers were unsure of how to organize 20 to 30 little bodies to achieve their goals.

While many researchers cite concerns about individual students and about managing groups of students as the major challenge for beginning teachers, Feiman-Nemser saw this issue related more to careful and appropriate curriculum planning (1992b). Perhaps it is that the two go hand in hand. Beginning teachers must be able to engage children's minds and hearts to create settings in which all can learn. As the mentors in this study offered advice and modeled ways of interacting with children, they more importantly also revealed, both tacitly and explicitly, their own ways of being with and understanding children. Jenny remarked:

I want to make sure every child comes to that door and receives my smile, I get their smile, they feel good about this place, school is a fun place to be, my teacher cares for me, and they know that and then anything is possible in this room once that is in place. (J1, p. 7)

Elizabeth too based her advice on how she conceptualized the classroom:

I think children should be really happy at school. They come, it's safe, it's enjoyable. They have a lot of happy relationships with the people who are there, with the others kids, with the teacher, with the people that are in the classroom. And it's important to me that there's a purpose for them being there, that the teacher is clear on what she is doing and why she is doing it. (E1, p. 10)

Some conversations were focussed less on management and more on individual learning, as with Marie and Samantha's ongoing discussion about Donny. The other dyad who focussed strongly on individuals was Maggie and Elizabeth. In both instances, the

mentors knew and worked with the children under discussion. Their conversations focussed on shared concerns; mentor and beginning teacher had a common gaze or point of convergence.

Mentoring conversations were not limited to school-based topics; teachers did not see their mentorships as merely professional. They saw their mentorships as emerging friendships as well, and so talked beyond the school, about their lives as women. It is extremely important to address this dimension of the mentoring relationship, yet there is little exploration in existing literature about the "ways in which the lives of today's teachers extend beyond their teaching role" (S. Acker, 1995, p. 111). This openness to all topics of discussion is a characteristic of feminist mentoring.

Talking about Life Beyond Teaching

Every dyad reported that they talked about life outside of teaching. They met for lunches outside of school time; they discussed partners, children and life plans. One beginning teacher was in the process of meeting her birth family for the first time and excitedly told her mentor and me about the meetings. Later in the year, she broke up with her partner and had to find a new apartment, restructure her life outside of school, and at the same time await her teaching contract for the following year. Most of the beginning teachers in the study were younger adults, establishing themselves in the adult world of budgeting, furnishing apartments and forming life partnerships as well as work relationships.

Maggie, a single mother, was dealing with new issues such as retirement planning. Most beginning teachers wanted to talk about their lives with their mentors. Some sought personal advice. Most mentors talked about their own personal lives with the beginning teachers, both as a way of establishing relationship and as a natural way of interacting with colleagues. I agree with S. Acker (1995) that this interconnecting of lives and teaching is an area requiring further study.

Talking about Educational Issues

One dyad, Marie and Samantha, added educational issues on their pie graph as a topic of ongoing conversation. One example of this kind of discussion was their continuing

conversation about the racialized plagiarism problems in their school. Samantha also encouraged Marie to consider the contexts in which decisions about the school were made and to involve herself in those committees and groups. Their conversations about educational issues distinguish this mentorship from the others. Conversations about issues usually taken for granted—such as student evaluation, curriculum, and school organization—reflect an essence of thoughtful critique because they lead to the examination and troubling of the interplay of these issues with concerns for gender, race, ability, ethnicity, social class, etc. Yet these are the professional issues and philosophical and sociological influences A. Reynolds (1995, p. 212) suggested beginning teachers need not be concerned with. I have taken the position that the importance of thoughtful critique for beginning teachers is that it does encourage them to examine the hegemony underlying professional issues and philosophical and sociological influences that impact their students, their teaching and their lives as women teachers. This is a move towards conceptualizing teaching knowledge as knowledge-of-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press). Later in this chapter I expand on the theme of thoughtful critique and its centrality to feminist mentoring.

To summarize, conversations were the first and most common practice of mentoring. All beginning teachers found the opportunities to converse and reflect about teaching beneficial. As Maggie said, "It's so nice to have somebody just to reflect with. Someone who is there to help me and I know she's there to help me and she offers me some feedback" (Ma1, p. 8). Through conversation, beginning teachers developed their voices as teachers. In Chapter 3 I posited that the rebalancing voices and silences within mentorships was a key feature of feminist pedagogy. Building on Hollingsworth's (1992) conception of collaborative conversations, I suggested that mentors need to listen more and speak less. All of the beginning teachers in this study, like Maggie, began to find their own voices as teachers, in part within their mentoring relationships.

Beginning teachers also considered that they learned about teaching in conversation with their mentors. One of the more interesting ways beginning teacher seemed to learn was through *percolated learning*. Just as water through calcium carbonate eventually forms

amazing stalactites and stalagmites, so beginning teachers in many of the cases, came to know and to adopt some of the language, gestures and ideas of their mentors through a process of percolation.

Percolated Knowing Within Mentorships

In Chapter 1, I described my own experiences of being mentored and of mentoring. One of the effects I described was coming to know through my mentor's experience. This is a situation of vicarious learning in which the beginning teacher comes to know something about teaching, based not on her own experience or on formal learning, but instead based on the mentor's experiences. Taylor provided the best explicit account of this kind of learning in this study, as she described knowing how schools and students had changed over the years and how teachers must also change to meet changing circumstances. She knew through hearing Alisa talk about her own career and the changes she had seen. There are other instances in which the mentor and beginning teacher described the same experience using essentially the same words or the same body language. In the cases of Marie and Samantha, and of Maggie and Elizabeth, having the added advantage of knowing Samantha and Elizabeth well, I could hear in the beginning teachers' words echoes of Samantha and Elizabeth.

This percolation is not due to a deliberate or intentional teaching practice. It may be an effect of role modeling (Houston, 1996), an issue I will address in further detail in Chapter 10. Percolated learning takes place when someone is in relationship, and the relationship and the other person become entwined with our knowing. The examples described above are instances in which something elusive has percolated through the beginning teacher's knowing. Davis and Sumara (1997) experienced a similar phenomenon in their work with teachers. They found that they were "mimicking each others' particular ways of standing, moving around the room, reading, addressing students, and modulating voices" (p. 113). Their analysis was that this "choreography of movement" was constituted within the community of practice they had begun to create with the teachers, as they moved towards a conception of "shared work" (p. 114). Davis and Sumara worried about the insidiousness of the phenomenon as they began to re-adopt

practices they had previously discarded. I did not encounter this phenomenon in my study, although I acknowledge the possibility.

Many of the beginning teachers in my study experienced percolated knowing. As mentors talked about their own experiences as teachers and their own learning, the underlying text was often their beliefs about being with and understanding children. In most instances what was said was their best intentions, what they hoped to achieve as teachers. These best intentions percolated over time to the beginning teachers. Although this was a tacit process, beginning teachers seemed, perhaps unknowingly, to reject what did not fit for them. Although Tie often spoke of her students in ways that seemed, at least to me, as disrespectful, I never heard Sue Ann do so.

Percolated knowing is embodied knowing. Along with new ideas, beginning teachers sometimes absorbed the body mannerisms that perhaps helped the mentor express her ideas. Just as I learned from Takako to look up to the corner when reflecting, so did Kyra learn to do so, from me.

Percolated knowing usually occurred through narratives told or as beginning teachers observing mentors in various settings. Marie learned of the importance of the school committee structure by observing Samantha's participation on committees. The knowledge shared through the percolation process could be described as knowledge-in-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press), "embedded in the artistry of practice, in teachers' reflections on practice, in teachers' practical inquiries, and/or in teachers' narrative accounts of practice" (p. 19). Although it begins through percolation, the process of knowing can become explicit. Taylor and Marie both reflected on their observations, bringing the knowing to an explicit thoughtful level.

Unlike the modus operandi described by Marie and Samantha, percolated knowing was not an intentional pedagogical practice. However, it complements and interweaves with more intentional ways of coming to know within epistemological relationships. Together these processes have the possibility to create the most profound results of mentoring,

combining a focus on relational knowing with the development of shared standards of justification.

Mentorships as Mutual and Reciprocal Learning Relationships

It was not only beginning teachers who learned through mentoring conversations. It seems obvious that beginning teachers reasonably anticipate learning as a central aspect of being mentored. Mentors also expected to learn. They saw their learning as a secondary result of the relationship. For example, for Elizabeth, the learning came from talking with Maggie and being with her in her classroom. Being able to observe Maggie and the children, she learned more about children, about beginning teachers and, perhaps, about all teachers:

I think I learned more about kids by being in her classroom. By observing the ones that she was asking me questions about. Asking me to help her problem solve around, etc. And getting more in touch with what those kids might be experiencing in that situation, to help her think of that. And for me to think of that also. And more awareness of perhaps all they bring with them, their whole story. So it was quite an opportunity for me, to think more of the kids we have in our classrooms and what their stories are. I never really got to a point with saying to Maggie—how do you suppose So-and-so's experiencing this? I just didn't quite think the time had come yet to have her be in some way undermined, maybe, by that kind of conversation. And another awareness, being in the classroom all the time, I'm pretty aware of her fragility or her strength, whichever it is at that moment. And therefore, do I raise things or do I not raise things? I guess that's another awareness I have as a mentor, is the fragility of that first year teacher. You know? Of all of us, probably. (E3, p. 12-13)

Several mentors described this kind of contingent learning: learning more about an aspect of teaching by seeing it side-by-side with the beginning teacher or seeing it through the beginning teacher's eyes. For some mentors viewing teaching side-by-side was a confirmation of what they now knew as experienced teachers and of how far they had come from their own beginnings. As Tie put it, "I've learned how far I've come from

being a beginning teacher" (SAET 2, p. 21). For others, like Elizabeth, their side-by-side gaze embraced the beginning teacher.

Mentoring also offers the opportunity for more reciprocal learning: learning more directly from or with the other. In my own experience as a mentor, Kyra had wanted to undertake student-led conferences. Knowing little about student-led conferencing myself, I encouraged her to take the lead. After she attended a workshop, she explained a process to me. Together we designed our own process, implemented it and then reflected upon its success. We learned from and with each other. This kind of collaborative learning was described as "co-mentoring" by Bona, Rinehart and Volbrecht (1994). Although the context they studied was a classroom group setting, the phenomenon is strikingly similar: "the activity of co-mentoring involves a context of companionship in which learners and teachers participate in a collaborative effort, that is, they labor together to produce something beautiful" (p. 117). Co-mentoring is based upon shared experiences.

Mentoring as Shared Experiences

We're going to a conference together on April 5th, it's a Saturday. And I'm looking forward to that. And I think there will be a lot of validating there as well as a lot of stimulation. (Jenny 2, p. 11)

While conversations were the central practice of mentoring, those conversations were richer, the diagnosis more accurate and the validation more focussed when the dyad undertook shared experiences. Shared experiences ranged from attending a conference together, to co-planning a unit to be taught separately, to co-teaching. Shared experiences facilitated collaborative conversations, percolated knowing, the development of shared standards of justification, and thoughtful critique.

Elizabeth's role as a Resource teacher in Maggie's classroom created a fortuitous opportunity for shared experiences. Spending at least an hour everyday together in Maggie's classroom, they were able to co-observe the same events, which supported

shared reflection and planning. As Elizabeth said, "In this class where we feel like colleagues together. . . . We're questioning together and trying to problem solve together" (ME1, p. 4).

In another instance, Maggie and Elizabeth described a time when Elizabeth had taught a Language Arts lesson to the kindergarten class. The experience allowed Maggie to observe her students with Elizabeth. Seeing another teacher working with her students helped Maggie feel less isolated. Elizabeth's embodied knowing-in-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle) was later brought to a level of discourse and reflection. In situations like this, the isolation and individualism of teaching can be mitigated and mentors' tacit and embodied knowing can be revealed and glimpsed for consideration. Both partners can learn.

Samantha was unique as a mentor because she consciously and successfully created shared experiences and fostered co-mentoring. She proposed to Marie that they set up the study skills club with their own reciprocal learning as a deliberate goal. Samantha also sought Marie's input as part of her own learning process. She repeatedly asked for feedback on her teaching and Marie believed she truly wanted this contribution. In shaping the shared experience, Samantha's own practice was re-shaped. The benefits to Samantha were clear:

It's been extremely rewarding and because I've been so intense with this one-on-one relationship with Marie, I've not bonded with any other educator as closely as I have with Marie. Other teachers on staff, we're colleagues and we talk about issues. But this sustained relationship with Marie only is so rich and so meaningful. There are other folks on staff that I'm friends with. But nothing as detailed or as in depth as this. It's been just exceptional. . . . She's a new teacher right from university so she's putting a practical application to her theory and I'm reviewing all my theories and re-looking at my practice. So it's just been a very positive experience. (S3, p. 10-11)

Shared experiences, such as setting up the study skills club, make possible the development of reciprocity, but they do not ensure it. Mentors do know more about many aspects of teaching, based on having more experiences in schools. Simply to pretend to be learning is not sufficient. The mentor must, like Samantha, genuinely seek to be a co-learner and must demonstrate authentic interest in learning. The only dyad in this study that truly established heartfelt continuing reciprocity was Marie and Samantha. Later in this chapter I explore the theme of reciprocity. Marie and Samantha's reciprocal relationship suggests that, although not automatic, it is possible to establish strong reciprocity within mentorships.

However, one must ask why it was not more common to find reciprocal learning among these dyads. In this study, when shared experiences failed to foster reciprocity, it was because of contextual challenges, as in the case of Michelle and Jenny; or because trust had not been established, as in the case of Sue Ann and Tie; or because the mentor was not desirous of this kind of reciprocal learning, as in the case of Taylor and Alisa.

Summary

How did these women teachers co-construct their mentoring relationships? They thought of mentoring as both collegial and friendly. They spent time together talking about teaching, planning units and lessons, and getting to know each other as women who teach. They asked and responded to questions. They listened to each other. As they engaged in these conversations, there was usually a development of trust between mentoring partners. Some dyads undertook shared experiences in which both partners learned about teaching. Coming to know was at times tacit and at times explicit. Relationships were both intentional and uncontrived, although challenges existed. These challenges were generally contextual in nature or were related to the imposition of a more hierarchical model of mentoring, which crossed boundaries of autonomy and broke trust. These issues are addressed in the section that follows.

Comparing These Mentorships to a Conception of Feminist Pedagogy for Mentoring

In Chapter 4, based upon feminist and mainstream literature about mentoring and beginning teaching, and upon my own experience with mentoring, I developed a conception of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring. The conception embodies a strong sense of relationship between the beginning teacher and the mentor, founded upon trust, and leading to both personal and professional support, as well as thoughtful critique that troubles and interrupts issues of power and powerlessness, privilege and exploitation. My plan was to re-examine the conception in light of real life experiences of women mentors and beginning teachers. To prove applicable in any sense, the conception must illuminate "the lived experiences" of these teachers but more importantly, it must "be illuminated by their struggles" (Lather, 1991, p. 55).

As I theorized in Chapter 1, a successful feminist mentoring relationship is one in which the beginning teacher and the mentor engage in a caring relationship, founded on a practice of shared experiences that facilitates a reciprocal process of constructing and critically examining knowledge about teaching. The mentoring dyads I studied developed many of these attributes and range of successful feminist mentoring was evident. A dialectic conception of feminist mentoring, interweaving aspects of my initial representation with the findings from the cases, can be described as consisting of the following elements:

- The beginning teacher has some voice in choosing her mentor;
- Trust develops within the dyad, based upon:
 - The mentor showing early interest in the beginning teacher,
 - The mentor being available to listen to and respond to questions, and to share resources, and
 - The mentor supporting the beginning teacher's planning process;
- The dyad undertakes shared experiences, such as co-teaching resulting in an emerging reciprocity as the participants become co-learners;
- A widening the circle of support is constructed around the beginning teacher; and
- A practice of thoughtful critique of practices and structures emerges within the dyad.

The Right to Choose

Jenny's doing the best that she can. To be honest I'm not quite sure, like, we didn't set it up ourselves. The vice principal went and asked her. She wasn't quite sure why she was asked. . . . She is busy. I don't really go to her that much for help. (Michelle 1, p. 11)

Of the five beginning teachers in this study, four were included in the selection of their mentors. There were some constraints on their choices. Taylor and Maggie responded to suggestions from their principals. Sue Ann may have felt obligated to choose her friend, Tie. The freest choice was experienced by Marie, whose mentorship is also the most successful, according to the criteria stated above. Of the other beginning teachers, Taylor and Maggie also had input into the selection of their mentors, and both professed satisfaction with their mentors. All of the teachers, both beginning teachers and mentors, agreed that beginning teachers should be encouraged to have some choice in their own mentor, although both Sue Ann and Tie contended it should not be a friend. Other researchers (Cole, 1992; Huling-Austin, 1990a; McPhie & Jackson, 1994) have noted the importance of beginning teachers having a voice in the selection of their mentors.

The importance of beginning teacher choice within a feminist pedagogy is linked to two factors. The first is that beginning teachers usually chose someone who had demonstrated interest in, and care for them as beginning teachers. In other words, they tended to make good choices for themselves. This was the case for Marie, who felt Samantha helped her in making a decision about the ESL teaching assignment and also for Maggie who said, "Sometimes you just meet somebody and you feel like you're going to be a good friend with this person and that's the way I feel with Elizabeth" (Ma1, p. 13). Since beginning teachers tended to choose someone who had shown real interest in them, self-choice with support may eliminate many contextual challenges such as those endured by Michelle and Jenny.

The second reason why choice is important is that the act of choosing reinforced beginning teachers' autonomy as capable colleagues. They felt respected and trusted to make good choices. This is in keeping with Cole's (1992) arguments for not appropriating relationships from beginning teachers. The right to choose usually led naturally into the development of trust within the mentorships, a necessary condition for successful mentoring.

Trust Scaffolding Relationship

Just emotionally I think it's been totally valuable just to feel like I'm not standing there all by myself and I'm not just getting tossed out there and I'm supposed to just survive somehow. It just feels so nice to know that I'm not alone. (Maggie 1, p. 13)

I have stated repeatedly that the development of trust is fundamental to successful feminist mentoring. Most beginning teachers were open to trusting their mentors, as shown by many seeking their mentors after bad days in the classroom. Trust germinated when mentors (even before they were official mentors) showed interest in and care for beginning teachers, welcoming them and offering early assistance, as in the case of Elizabeth welcoming Maggie to the school, and Samantha offering to support Marie in the ESL course. The growth of trust required time and availability, precious commodities for all teachers. In particular, Jenny, a mother of two young children, found it impossible to devote sufficient time to mentoring. Because of part time assignments, some beginning teachers, Taylor, Marie and Maggie, had extra time (albeit unpaid time) to spend with mentors. More successful mentors devoted much time to beginning teachers, as in the case of Samantha continuing to mentor during her maternity leave. Trust grew through direct actions from both participants—asking for advice, offering resources, and validating successes. Alisa's giving of the cupboard key seemed a small act, yet it implied she trusted Taylor with her materials. While some feminists argue that pedagogy cannot and should not focus on safety and trust (Henry, 1993), others (Belenky et al., 1986) agree that trust is basic to taking on a critical focus. I address the issue of safety as it relates to thoughtful critique later in this chapter. However, it is clear that, once established, trust is

still fragile and withers in the face of careless comments, inferred criticism, and perceived interference.

The two most striking examples of broken trust involved Sue Ann and Tie, and Taylor and Alisa. In both cases, the beginning teachers felt that the mentors had violated a boundary. For Sue Ann, it was the boundary of confidentiality: she expected her confidences to Tie to be held in private, not disseminated to other colleagues. Alisa's perceived interference with Taylor's autonomy to make her own professional decision to tutor a student broke their trust. Both beginning teachers felt betrayed by their mentors. In both instances, the mentors invoked a hierarchical dynamic, a "power over" relationship (Heinrich, 1995, p. 452) in which they decided they could act in a propriety manner without consulting the beginning teacher. Alisa invoked the union and its power-over in her censure of Taylor. Tie's rationale was social: other colleagues asked how Sue Ann was doing and she told them. She did not appear to see Sue Ann's disclosures as confidential.

For most beginning teachers and mentors, breaking trust within the mentorship was a strong concern. Most felt that any criticism of the other was to be avoided, even at the cost of their own needs and interests. There was a clearly felt boundary between trust and criticism. Michelle and Jenny maintained an ineffective mentorship rather than disengage, although there were good reasons to do so, given the challenges of distance and time that confounded their work together. Elizabeth, although troubled by some of what she observed in Maggie's classroom, worried about if and how to intervene. The issue of critique of the other within a mentorship is a puzzling one and is addressed in more depth in Chapter 10.

Shared Experiences and The Development of Reciprocity

We were able to share a common experience and the anxiety and uncertainty, which is very good again in learning, putting us both in the learner's role.

(Samantha 1, p. 5)

As I have shown, trust was established in consonance with the mentoring processes of conversations and shared experiences, and in particular, with shared experiences. It seems that the more the beginning teacher and the mentor did together, the more they trusted each other and the more they trusted each other, the more they did together, creating a spiral of success. Shared experiences created opportunities for "deep talk" (Himley, as cited in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999), for role modeling (Houston, 1996) and for knowledge construction through percolation and through thoughtful critique. Shared experiences created opportunities for the development of epistemological relationships. As described earlier in this chapter, shared experiences were not all the same. Tie assisted Sue Ann with unit planning. Jenny and Michelle co-planned a space unit, although they taught it separately. Taylor and Alisa attended a conference together. Elizabeth assisted Maggie in her classroom. Samantha and Marie co-sponsored and instructed a study skills club. Each of these shared experiences was an opportunity for learning together. Davis and Sumara considered that learning is "'occasioned' rather than 'caused,'" (p. 115) in other words it emerges within a context or experience. Within the experience they suggested that "the ongoing ever-evolving interaction was itself the form and the substance of the collective knowledge" (p. 115). The knowledge being constructed through shared experiences described above can become knowledge-of-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press) because knowers and knowledge are linked, and may also be connecting to "larger political and social agendas" (p. 38). The importance of shared experiences in forwarding epistemological relationships cannot be overstated.

Within my conception of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring, I suggest that through shared experiences, particularly reciprocal ones, mentoring dyads can become epistemological mentorships, with their central purpose focussing on the construction of knowledge, on "mak[ing] sense of and explain[ing] experience" (Nelson, 1993, p. 125) within the relationship. What does it mean for a beginning teacher and a mentor teacher to operate as an epistemological community or relationship? In Chapter 3 I cited Nelson's (1993) contention that "there are, of course, no litmus tests for identifying epistemological communities" (p 149). However, I am arguing that mentorships which

"construct and share knowledge and standards of evidence" (p. 124) or justifications are epistemological mentorships. According to Nelson, epistemological communities frame their standards of evidence in a contextual discourse. This means we could expect shared experiences to reveal examples of the communication and sharing of justifications. This is seen most clearly with Marie and Samantha's shared M.O.

Epistemological Mentorships and Standards of Evidence

The modus operandi that Marie and Samantha developed consisted of mutually addressing any issue that one of them brought forward. The issue immediately became communalized. Each was concerned with dealing with the issue. Each teacher offered ideas and suggestions; each asked questions of the other. In some instances the consequence was an action that was agreed upon, in others, each teacher went out to seek more ideas before deciding what to do. In these interactions Marie and Samantha acted as "connected knowers" (Belenky et al, 1986), interested in learning more about each other as well as about the issue. Thus, when Marie proposed an idea or action, the explanation or justification she offered was founded in a contextual knowing of the object of the conversation as well as her partner. In effect they would together consider: in our setting, what will *we* want to do? Each teacher asked herself and her partner, "Why do you think that?" (Clinchy, 1996, p. 206). Clinchy contended that when connected knowers ask this question, they "are not demanding logical or empirical justifications; they are asking, 'What in your experience has led you to that point of view?'" (p. 206). Together, as Elizabeth described the process of coming to know that she and Maggie used, they "lived the questions" (E3, p. 7). Through this kind of "deep talk" (Himley, as cited in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press), they:

engage in a process of collaboratively generated meaning that takes place over a relatively long period of time. . . this reflective or descriptive process enables participants to see and re-see that shared focus of interest in view of an ever-enlarging web of comments, tensions, connections, connotation, differences, oppositions. (p. 39-40)

The mentorship created a web of evidence as justification for their actions and they could provide a map of their process of knowledge building and decision-making.

Fenstermacher (1994) described the "good reasons approach" (1994, p. 44) as a form of justification for knowing. He cited the example of a teacher who made a change in the way he organized his classroom. The justification was:

He provides reasons that make it clear that it was his desire and intention to work with the class in the manner that I observed and that his procedures for doing so are the result of many trial-and-error efforts, readings, talking with other teachers, and talking with the students themselves about their perception of his teaching. (p. 45)

Fenstermacher continued: "the teacher is offering good reasons to explain his actions, reasons that, when taken together and arrayed in some coherent order, constitute a justification for the claim that this teacher knows" (p. 45). This teacher could provide a web of evidence as justification. He was moved to reorganize his class in response to a policy change: he complied with this new policy. He did so by reading and considering research or professional literature. In a contemporary professional manner, the teacher consulted with colleagues and with his students. He used a practical experiential process of trying different strategies to discover which would be most successful in his teaching context. This description is quite similar to Marie and Samantha's M.O., with the difference that they did this not respond as individuals who consulted colleagues but who might claim individual knowing. Instead, for Marie and Samantha the collegueship was the both the source and the site of knowing.

Through our interviews, Marie and Samantha spoke of Donny, a student who puzzled them, and of their efforts to understand and support him as a learner. Each teacher worked with Donny: Marie in her science class and Samantha in the Resource room. In addition Samantha was assigned to support Donny's integration in the science class. Marie and Samantha noticed separately that he had "his own thinking patterns" and was "not comprehending the written word or the verbal instructions" (MS1, p. 18-20). They talked together and compared observed instances of these patterns and the strategies they were using to try to help him. They compared him to other students they had worked with

and they talked to other teachers who had Donny in other courses. They continued to observe, strategize and talk. They read articles. Finally, together they made a case for Donny to have a Classroom Assistance, a personal para-professional who could work intensely with him under the direction of the teacher, on modified tasks toward modified learning goals. One of these discussions about Donny was cited in Chapter 5 as an example of collaborative conversation (Hollingsworth, 1992).

While the process of developing shared justifications was most powerfully seen in Marie and Samantha's ongoing discussions of the study club and their conversations about Donny, less striking examples are evident in the other cases, usually embedded in shared experiences that were reciprocal in nature. Through these shared experiences with their emerging standards of evidence, knowledge-of-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press) was nurtured: it emerged "from the conjoined understandings of teachers. . . committed to long-term highly systematic observation and documentation of learners and their sense-making" (p. 40). While the standards of justification developed within a mentorship may not be unique to those teachers (Marie and Samantha relied, in part, on a scientific process of investigation), such focussed inquiry is rare within schools (Meyer, 1996). Marie and Samantha tended to be more curious and more deliberate than other dyads and they used a variety of standards—experience, observation, consultation, and research—as evidence of their knowing. It was collaborative conversations (Hollingsworth 1992) and shared experiences that led to this level of intentional inquiry and to the growth of an epistemological relationship.

Shared experiences are a necessary feature of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring. By spending time together focussing upon a shared concern, dyads were able to learn about each other and about the context as well as the specific focal topic. These experiences reinforced the beginning teachers' sense of belonging as teachers and fostered the development of trust, creating a safe space for revealing one's self and asking deeper questions. Sometimes shared experiences as well as collaborative conversations, expanded to include others in the school, widening the beginning teacher's circle of support.

Widening the Circle of Support

As Marie is learning to know her department members and we're finding commonalities among other teachers. So Topanga is the other teacher that we relate to and there are several others that we've related in terms of the curriculum and also through social activities. (Samantha 2, p. 4)

Mentoring is generally characterized as a dyadic relationship with a potential for closeness and dyadic reciprocity. However, each beginning teacher is also a member of a school department and/or school staff, and as such, they relate to other colleagues for many purposes. Strengthening a web of collegial relationships is a significant component of a feminist pedagogy (Bona et al, 1994), in which the mentor is not seen as *the* authority, but as one knowing voice, albeit an important one. In most instances, the mentors I studied supported and encouraged beginning teachers to develop a web of relationships with colleagues. Only rarely was such linking strongly discouraged.

Samantha was the mentor who most actively and consistently encouraged the beginning teacher to weave strong connections with colleagues. As part of their M.O., Marie sought advice from many teachers, particularly those in her department, before acting. Alisa was another mentor who initially encouraged Taylor to relate to others. Later, however, she intervened in the problematic tutoring situation, instead of encouraging the other teacher to address his concerns directly to Taylor. While Alisa's motivation may have been to help, her actions were perceived as interference. In two other cases, Michelle and Jenny, and Maggie and Elizabeth, it was the unavailability of the mentor that impelled the beginning teachers to seek other colleagues' support.

In the case of Sue Ann, Tie strongly discouraged Sue Ann from forming other relationships. Based on her own experience with being mentored, Tie conceptualized mentoring as an exclusive dependence. None of the beginning teachers sought that kind of exclusivity. All saw themselves as members of larger communities and wanted to not only take from, but also give to those communities. Maggie stated:

I feel a little bit more like I'm part of the group, instead of the new teacher.
Whew! I feel like I can have ideas, it's okay. And I can contribute, and it doesn't feel one sided. (Ma3, p. 11)

Tie's demands for exclusivity were characteristic of a traditional patriarchal mentorship (Heinrich, 1995) and a conception of knowledge-for-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Tie believed she knew almost everything Sue Ann needed to know. If there were things she did not know herself, Tie wanted to act as intermediary and to find out and present that knowledge to Sue Ann. This is a strongly hierarchical view of mentoring and of knowledge, seeing learning as a very passive act. This view implies no need to justify or question knowledge. It binds the novice to the expert and the mentoring becomes an apprenticeship.

"Co-mentoring" (Bona et al., 1994) describes an expansion of the traditional mentoring dyad to a web of interconnections among peers. This webbing stabilizes the beginning teacher within the school and confirms her identity as a teacher. Expanding the circle of support for beginning teachers also encourages them to become more active within the school community:

I started sitting in on some of the ESL committee meetings. Like, I went this week. Just to see what it's about. . . . Now's the time for me to go around and sit in on these meetings, and then see what happens. And see where do I want to see myself, where do I want to be part of the school. (Marie 2, p. 17).

Marie's statement echoes Sarason's idea (cited in Britzman et al., 1995) that teachers need to think to themselves, "I have the responsibility to gain a voice in whatever decisions are made that effect the school as a social-educational organization" (p. 7). Britzman et al. go on to say:

To engage such questions requires a very different notion of teacher education, one that supports active and engaged learning about oneself and one's profession and one that respects the pedagogical power of persistent questioning. . . . These questions point to the very heart of professional ethics. . . the responsibility of

educators to transform conditions not of their own making but that nonetheless work to constrain creative possibilities and produce. . . the grounds of educational inequalities. (p. 8)

The desire to be part of the school may simply mean having colleagues to talk to in the staffroom or it may mean being part of a planning group; this is the *bringing in* mentoring traditionally fosters. For Marie, it had more to do with being involved in decision making, a practice she saw Samantha model ("I would rather let my actions speak") and one to which she aspired. This is the *bringing out* of feminist pedagogy. It involves moving to a stance of thoughtful critique.

Thoughtful Critique Within the Dyad of Practices and Structures

I know a lot of the teachers at the beginning of the year were frustrated because, all of sudden you walk into the staffroom and up on the white board it says—interim report cards go out on Wednesday, don't forget. I know a lot of people were getting frustrated with that. And I think that they wouldn't have been comfortable saying to the administrators—you're not letting us know what's going on. But why not? If the administrators don't know that they're doing something wrong, then they need to hear it. (Taylor 3, p. 13-14)

I have defined thoughtful critique as the examination and naming of underlying taken-for-granted issues of teaching and of being a teacher and I have included the notion of thoughtful critique as a central component of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring. In the first set of interviews, I worried that no one expressed any views I could classify as thoughtful critique. Retrospectively, this is not surprising as the mentorships were just beginning and the participants were just beginning to know each other and me. They were, as Elizabeth described, cautious. In addition, in my fear, I was falling into a trap of looking for "dramatic and confrontational" critique, rather than the more "quiet and subtle strategies and resistances" (Ozga & Lawn, cited in S. Acker, 1995, p. 110) women teachers might be more inclined to practice. As I looked more closely, I saw a few subtle

and embryonic instances of thoughtful critique, such as Marie and Samantha's responses to racism in their school, and Alisa's advice to Taylor regarding contractual limits on class composition⁶. I also saw many missed opportunities for thoughtful critique.

The thoughtful critique which dyads focussed upon, had less to do with the teachers' concern for their own situations, than with improving the quality of their students' experiences in school. As well, mentors were often more concerned with the beginning teacher's situations than with their own. This concern for others is seen as traditionally feminine:

Teachers' caring activities, then, have from one perspective been seen as derived from their teacher identities and the nature of their work; from another as a valued part of "women's ways;" from a third, as a means to improve children's futures; and from a fourth, as a consequence of the social expectations that women's caring work should blur the distinction between labor and love. The place of caring in teachers' work remains deeply contradictory, simultaneously the moral high ground of the teaching task and a prime site of women's oppression. (S. Acker, 1995, p. 123-124)

For the mentors in this study, in some ways, caring for students and beginning teachers meant not challenging oppressive structures and instead taking on individual and personal responsibility for systemic biases. Tie, in the bad job task, contended she would take on a poorly constructed teaching assignment rather than leaving it for Sue Ann and rather than challenging its appropriateness. In other instances, it was care that precipitated questioning and resistance. The two dyads that engaged in the most thoughtful critique were Marie and Samantha, and Taylor and Alisa. Interestingly, these were the secondary school dyads. In both instances, it was the mentor who modeled and initiated thoughtful

⁶ While Sue Ann and Taylor both expressed criticisms of their mentors' actions and while these criticisms were thoughtful, this critique does not fit within my conception of thoughtful critique as a component of feminist pedagogy for mentoring. It was not nurtured collaboratively within the mentorship, but an unfortunate result of unsupportive comments and practices. It does demonstrate that beginning teachers can be critical thinkers.

critique. The dyad for which thoughtful critique seemed a strong possibility, Maggie and Elizabeth, faced limitations of contextual interruptions and Elizabeth's unwillingness to unsettle Maggie's fragility.

Samantha's thoughtful critique seemed to be rooted in care for others, not surprisingly, given her background and beliefs about service to others. It was personal, individual and meditative; her agency was expressed in her own responses to situations. It had less to do with challenging others, although she did so in the occasion of flaring racism in the school. Nevertheless, she modeled being thoughtfully critical about existing prejudices and pressures to conform. Alisa's thoughtful critique was focused more on the conditions of teaching and was expressed as criticisms of violations of the teaching contract and comments on the failure of individuals to appropriately enact their institutionalized roles. Interestingly, she conjured up the union and its masculinized rigid codes to critique the school system, but never critiqued the union itself.

Elizabeth was unable to move into either modeling thoughtful critique or discussing issues with Maggie despite being a thoughtfully critical teacher herself. She was initially reluctant to do anything to unsettle Maggie, who she perceived as fragile. The worry about unsettling the beginning teacher was a common one, which I address in Chapter 10. Later in the year, Maggie's afternoon teaching job at another school and then Elizabeth's leave of absence stymied opportunities for the kind of deep talk that could have incorporated thoughtful critique.

Why was thoughtful critique so fleeting in these mentorships? There are probably many reasons, but it seems to me that three predominated: the general lack of any thoughtful critique within the system from anyone; the tendency of these women (and perhaps many others) to worry about offending others; and the overall challenges and precariousness of being a beginning teacher. These issues are explored in more depth in Chapter 10.

Summary

In conceptualizing a feminist pedagogy for mentoring, I suggested four primary considerations; the centrality of talk, a rebalancing of voice and silence between beginning teacher and mentor, the importance of a questioning framework, and a practice of emerging thoughtful critique about taken-for-granted issues and conditions of teaching. I suggested that successful feminist mentorships were caring relationships in which the partners undertook collaborative conversations and shared experiences that facilitated a reciprocal process of constructing and examining knowledge. Viewing the cases of mentoring together with my feminist conception of mentoring, I have noted varying degrees of successful feminist mentoring. Table 1 summarizes the elements I have described in this section and their emergence within each dyad. Most problematic was the notion of thoughtful critique, yet this remains a fundamental element of feminist pedagogy because it leads to the development of epistemological relationships and communities of critical knowers who may challenge and create change within the system of schooling. I have suggested several reasons why thoughtful critique was so restrained and I explore these further in the following chapter.

	Marie & Samantha	Sue Ann & Emily	Sue Ann & Tie	Taylor & Alisa	Michelle & Jenny	Maggie & Elizabeth
Mentor choice	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Emerging trust	yes	yes	no	yes	some	yes
Mentor early interest	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Questions & resources	yes	some	some	yes	yes	yes
Supporting planning	yes	some	some	yes	some	yes
Shared experiences	yes	no	no	no	some	yes
Circle of support	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes
Thoughtful critique	yes	no	no	some	no	no

Table 1. Elements of Successful Mentoring

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored themes emerging from the cases and I have compared these with the conception of feminist pedagogy for mentoring that I developed in Chapter 3. The mentorships I studied were intentional relationships in which the women became colleagues and often friends. In most mentorships, the focus was on the beginning teacher's learning, but mentors also learned, some more reciprocally than others. While most mentorships were sites where beginning teachers could speak freely of their needs, concerns and questions, there was only a little evidence of thoughtful critique within the dyads. This issue, along with several others, requires further consideration.

In Chapter 10, I draw this dissertation to a conclusion. First, I address troubling issues emerging from the study, including the scarcity of thoughtful critique, noting implications emerging specifically from these issues. I then suggest implications that emerge from the study in general for the practices of mentoring in school systems. Finally I propose needed areas for further research so that beginning teachers can be better understood and supported.

CHAPTER TEN: ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

In beginning the study described in this dissertation, I planned to investigate how women teachers co-constructed their mentoring relationships and how feminist theories might assist both in investigating and in reframing a pedagogy of mentoring. As I conclude the dissertation, having recounted and examined those stories, I am now left to say what all of this means. What is important about these stories? How does this feminist analysis extend an understanding of mentoring? What needs to be done next? Who might be interested in doing taking the next steps? In the final chapter I consider these questions, suggesting critical and provocative issues that emerge from the study. I propose implications for practice and directions for further study that emerge from these issues and from the study in general. Finally I address the question of who should be included in dealing with the implications.

What is Important about These Stories?

The case studies presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are important because they provide detailed pictures of what the participating teachers thought about and talked about in their mentoring relationships. The cases provide revealing texture that is missing from the research literature about mentoring. In interviewing the teachers over one school year, I was able to follow the development (and sometimes decay) of their relationships. I learned that while mentoring can bring meaningful benefits to beginning teachers, it can also bring stress and anxiety. Through the stories, mentoring is revealed as a complex phenomenon that needs to be entered into care-fully, supported rigourously, and enacted with care and thought. There is a potential for learning within mentoring that has not yet been realized. The cases show that simply assigning partnerships and offering minimal support or only technical training to mentors will not achieve the ends of relationship, reciprocity and thoughtful critique. Bringing to life a feminist pedagogy for mentoring, such as that emerging in the story about Marie and Samantha, requires sincere effort and

reaps convincing benefits for both partners and perhaps for the school system at large. These stories, freely shared by those who lived them, provide a starting place for new thinking and informed conversations about mentoring.

Critical Issues Emerging from the Study

Three provocative issues emerged strongly from the findings. They provide a starting place for conversation and reflection because they pose challenges for participants in mentoring relationships and for educators whose task is to support mentoring dyads. In addition, the three issues suggest areas for further research. The issues are:

- Respecting the diversity of beginning teachers and responding to that diversity;
- Valuing authority and autonomy within mentorships—honouring the beginning teacher's processes of becoming; and
- Considering the various tasks of the mentor;
 - as a source of knowledge about teaching,
 - as a role model, and
 - as a catalyst—living the questions and facilitating thoughtful critique.

Responding to Diversity in Beginning Teachers

[During the practicum], we had to keep a reflection log and I used that quite a bit. It was so much easier for me to write things down than to explain to somebody. I actually go through things quite quickly and I'm able to understand why things worked a certain way. (Sue Ann, SAET1, p. 34)

Many mentoring programs are prescriptive in design (Gold, 1996). Experts in the field and researchers are presumed to have determined the needs of beginning teachers, and program organizers seek to train mentors to direct attention to these needs. This is a very hierarchical and paternalistic conception of mentoring. Mentoring can become a means to an end that really has little to do with supporting beginning teachers. My own research may be viewed as implicated in this process if the goal of achieving a feminist pedagogy overrides the individual interests of the beginning teachers. However, my work also asserts that mentoring begins as a caring relationship with its focus on the beginning

teacher. Beginning teachers are able to determine many of their own needs and interests, and must be seen, truly seen, as individuals. Mentoring support must be based on watching and listening to the beginning teacher, then diagnosing how best to support her. Preconceived conceptions of mentoring, whether patriarchal or feminist, must develop dialectically with awareness of the kind of support sought by the individual beginning teacher. Program planners, administrators, and teacher educators must be cautious about appropriating relationships (Cole, 1992). Little, Galagan, and O'Neal (as cited in Gold, 1996) suggested that the purpose of induction and mentoring is "assisting proteges to fulfil their own potential as separate and unique individuals who are already professionals with contributions to make to teaching, rather than being viewed as young and needing an older, wiser person to train them, such as an apprentice" (p. 573). Beginning teachers should be supported in "giving birth" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 217) to their own teaching practice.

For some beginning teachers, dyadic mentorships may be the best kind of support. Dyadic mentoring offers immediacy and contextuality. For other beginning teachers, different kinds of supports, such as book groups, classroom research groups, internet conferences, and university courses may be more appropriate. Some beginning teachers, as Sue Ann suggested in the quote at the beginning of this section, want to use journal writing as a reflective practice. Others, like Maggie have come, through their initial teacher education, to see journal writing as mandated reflection and as a result, refuse to continue the process.

Should reflection and professional learning be mandated? Is it necessary that all beginning teachers be involved in some kind of professional learning experience? Tie's response to Sue Ann, who preferred to reflect in solitude, was intriguing:

In doing it that way, you're not getting any feedback. It may be clearer for you in hindsight, having reflected that way because you're comfortable with it. And it may give you clarity, but nobody's giving you feedback on it. (SAET 1, p. 35)

I agree that we can all benefit from opportunities to be with supportive colleagues, to ask questions, to address issues of concern and in turn to be questioned about our beliefs and practices. Palmer (1998) suggested:

We grow by private trial and error, to be sure—but our willingness to try, and fail, as individuals is severely limited when we are not supported by a community that encourages such risks. (p. 144)

While I agree the support of a community is vital, I also argue that to mandate reflection and interaction is to diminish their power. Offering invitations for opportunities to interact and creating a context where co-mentoring is an enjoyable and challenging opportunity to learn together seem to me to be better ways to foster the emergence of thoughtful critique. An important aspect of this paradigm is honouring the beginning teacher's process of becoming.

Valuing Authority and Autonomy within Mentorships

I felt that I was capable of coming and teaching and having my own class. I didn't want to be a student teacher anymore. But I did feel that there were still things I wanted to learn and to talk about with more experienced teachers. (Taylor 1, p. 16)

Closely related to valuing differences is valuing autonomy. It was very important to the beginning teachers I studied that they were treated as peers and colleagues. While they wanted to be free to seek advice, they also wanted the option not to act upon it. As Maggie stated and as Britzman et al. (1995) noted, this was frequently not a prerogative for student teachers on practicum.

Sue Ann spoke passionately about her desire to be honoured as a learner, to feel she was understood and supported as she learned about teaching. Like many of the women Belenky et al. (1986) studied, she wanted a teacher "who would help [her] articulate and expand [her] latent knowledge" (p. 217):

I really wanted a mentor who would honour me. I don't know, it's very egocentric, but I think I deserved it for my beginning year. You know, just to feel that it's okay. Like, all the mistakes, everything you do, it's all okay. (Sue Ann 2, p. 25)

Like Sue Ann, all the beginning teachers were engaged in an intense learning process. They wanted to feel that learning, with all its risks and errors, was accepted and understood by their mentors. However, mentors sometimes struggled with seeing beginning teachers' developing practice. They were troubled by what they perceived as beginning teachers' lack of understanding of children, of curriculum and of good teaching practice; and yet they were unsure about what, if anything, to do about it. Most mentors previously had supervised student teachers and so had been in more hierarchical relationships with novice teachers. In their current mentoring relationships, they saw problems they felt they could help solve and yet they felt constrained from doing so by the very collegiality they had fostered. In most instances mentors declined to act upon their concerns, although they worried about the children involved.

Jenny worried about Michelle's shouting at her young students. When Jenny did respond, she was extremely, and perhaps overly, subtle. She invited Michelle to observe in her classroom in the hope that Michelle would see how Jenny handled children. Jenny hoped that Michelle would then invite her to come for a reciprocal observation. After the visits Jenny thought she would offer some suggestions, but the dyad never got beyond the first observation. Elizabeth worried about Maggie not bringing her kindergarten class together. In the one instance where Elizabeth responded to her worry, the action was to abruptly withdraw her in-class support and watch Maggie struggle to regain the class's attention. In both cases, there was no evidence the beginning teacher was aware of the mentor's criticism. Conversely the mentors who expressed criticism more directly were perhaps too direct and authoritarian. Tie and Emily berated Sue Ann for her end of the day problems and Alisa persisted in pressing Taylor to stop tutoring.

Why was mentor criticism so problematic? The culture of teacher autonomy is powerful. Born of isolated classroom practice and bred in efforts to professionalize and unionize

teaching, teacher autonomy has become a mantra of many teachers. The British Columbia Teachers' Federation Code of Ethics for teachers states:

The teacher directs any criticism of the teaching performance and related work of a colleague to that colleague in private and only then, after informing the colleague in writing of the intent to do so, may direct in confidence the criticism to appropriate individuals who are able to offer advice and assistance. (1998, British Columbia Teachers' Federation)

Most teachers interpreted this rule as—you must not criticize another teacher. Beyond this unionized school culture norm, the women teachers I studied were reluctant to risk damaging relationships by being critical or even by offering unsolicited advice to beginning teachers. They did not want to unsettle beginning teachers who they perceived as fragile. The issue of mentor critique is an extremely important issue. If a beginning teacher is seen to be seriously struggling, how is she to be supported? There must be ways that mentors can support more directly without fearing a loss of relationship.

Feminist pedagogy is helpful here, but only to a point. Wallace (1993) contended that:

When we start thinking about issues connected to feminist pedagogies, the concepts we work with are still without adequate definition. Exactly what is meant by "authority" and "egalitarianism" is unclear. . . . Even as broad concepts their meanings are hazy. As principles identified in context, they are interpreted so differently as to be unrecognizable. (p. 16)

Thus, while feminist pedagogy frequently advocates "authority-with" rather than "authority-over" (Gore, 1993), feminist teachers do retain and use power, through their sanctioned positions and authority of knowing. Mentor teachers are experienced teachers and, to some extent, this experience authorizes their knowing; "it is the unspoken law of the classroom not to trust those who cannot cite experience as the indisputable grounds of their knowledge" (Fuss, 1989, p. 116). They have been chosen and therefore sanctioned by the beginning teachers (or in a few instances, principals). Belenky et al (1986) suggested that although the teaching role "does not entail power over the students. . .

it does carry responsibility, an authority based not on subordination but on cooperation" (p. 227). Mentoring relationships, founded upon choice and trust should lead to the kind of cooperation and reciprocity where participants can offer feedback to their partners without damaging their mentorships. There must be ways mentors can use their knowledge and authority-with and authority-for beginning teachers, without invoking hierarchical structures and rules. I return to this issue in considering the facilitation of thoughtful critique as one the tasks of mentors.

Considering the Various Tasks of the Mentor

I think my role as a mentor is to support her, to ponder with her when she is pondering and to give her some space to learn and to be there. (Samantha 1, p. 4)

Considering the tasks mentors undertake is central to a deeper understanding of mentoring. What are feminist mentors supposed to do? What do they do? What do beginning teachers want them to do? A great deal is expected of mentors, by beginning teachers and by school systems. In some situations, mentors are freed from their classrooms to concentrate on mentoring and/or paid for their labours. This was the case for the mentor described by Feiman-Nemser (1992b), whose view coincided with Samantha's, as described above: "I want to be a co-thinker with them, so that I can help them see new perspectives, new ways to solve problems they have" (p. 5).

I have suggested that a feminist pedagogy for mentoring must not separate personal support from professional support, but what are the limits on any kind of support for busy mentors who are also classroom teachers? The mentor described in Feiman-Nemser's (1992b) study was not involved in classroom teaching; his job was to supervise student teachers and support beginning teachers. Would programs that free mentors from some or all of their classroom responsibilities be better models? Could such programs still include beginning teacher choice in selecting mentors? Would the level of trust be as high for mentors who work with many beginning teachers? Are dyadic mentorships more successful than group mentorships?

Hollingsworth (1992) facilitated a conversation group of beginning teachers, resulting in a co-mentoring experience similar to that described by Bona et al.(1994). Bona et al. developed "co-mentoring" as a feminist pedagogical practice. They cited The Color Purple (Walker, 1982) as an exemplar of co-mentoring among women:

Throughout The Color Purple, the women were engaged in artistic acts: quilting, letter writing, and blues singing. Each of these activities was fostered by more than one woman. Each of the women working in these areas needed help from other women to inspire creativity. They gave and received from each other the kind of assistance called "mentoring;" that is, individuals modeled desirable ways of acting and supported the capacity of others to engage in them. The kind of mentoring that goes on in the novel is not hierarchical and one-sided, but shared and mutual. No single character is locked into the role of mentee or mentor. (p. 117)

This is a different model of mentoring that attempts to eliminate locked-in hierarchy. However, I wonder if in fact it does so. Age, experience and force of personality may not be so easily removed as factors of authority. Further, group mentoring might lose immediacy and personalization. Having participated in women's groups, I know that it is not possible meet everyone's needs in one session. Some are more able to assert their interests than others. In group settings involving teachers with differing amounts of teaching experience, how can it be assured that the novices' interests will weigh as heavily as the experienced teachers'? What is lost and gained in a group mentoring experience? These are issues that require further study and analysis as researchers and educators attempt to learn more about issues of authority and autonomy in mentoring.

The mentors in this study engaged in a variety of pedagogical tasks to support beginning teachers. These tasks, which include the mentor functioning as a source of knowledge, as a role model and as a catalyst, need to be examined in further depth.

The Mentor as a Source of Knowledge.

I've seen from the beginning how much knowledge [Jenny] has in the area of teaching and she is more than willing to share all her knowledge with me. . . . And not just knowledgeable in that—does she know what's in the IRPs, but it's also she knows what to do in certain situations. A child is behaving this way—try this, try this, try that. A variety of different areas of knowledge, not just intellectual, but covering the whole gamut. (Michelle 2, p. 10)

All of the participating beginning teachers viewed their mentors as knowledgeable and found this a valuable quality. Being knowledgeable did not mean holding a prescribed knowledge base and dispensing it to beginning teachers. Instead, beginning teachers appreciated their mentors having experiential knowledge and being willing to offer both ideas and resources. To be seen as knowledgeable required the mentor to diagnose and respond, rather than simply inform. Being knowledgeable required the mentor to be willing to provide suggestions, ideas and resources but not to impose them, as Michelle continued:

Jenny treats me with the utmost of respect and doesn't seem to see her role as—here, you just sit and listen and I'm going to feed you information. She'll ask me questions just to help me pinpoint just exactly what I'm asking. She doesn't assume that I don't know it. She assumes that I know it, know a certain amount and she's going to find out what it is that I really need help in. (Mi, p. 11)

At what point does the mentor's knowledge become a barrier, moving beyond helpfulness and becoming intimidating? For most beginning teachers, again, the issue was how mentor knowledge was revealed and offered: as tentative and contextual, suggesting possible actions, or as determinable and prescriptive. While there are instances in which definitive answers are the best, in most situations beginning teachers, as Michelle described in the quote above, needed to see knowledge as possibilities for action. There must be space for beginning teachers to question their mentors' knowledge and to offer ideas of their own. Feminist mentoring moves the mentoring paradigm from an epistemological focus on knowledge-for-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press)

toward knowledge-of-practice. Mentors are less importantly authoritative holders of expert knowledge than capable facilitators of, and participants, in knowledge construction and examination. Teacher educators, researchers, and administrators need to pay more attention to learning more about how mentors and beginning teachers co-construct knowledge—what are their M.O.s, what are their standards of evidence for knowing? As we learn more, we can begin to encourage processes that support the development of trust, reciprocity, and thoughtful critique.

The Mentor as a Role Model

[Emily] is a good role model, I see her professionally developing herself. She has an incredible library of resource books, and she shares without even asking. She looks at herself seriously as the kind of model she wants to be for the children. . . how much she cares for them, and how much she wants them to be able to be a can-do person, rather than a can't-do. (Sue Ann 2, p. 13)

Several beginning teachers and mentors spoke of their mentors as people they wanted to emulate. In particular, Sue Ann focused on Emily's modeling of being a learner. Marie's description of Samantha as a role model went a step further. Marie saw Samantha not only as an outstanding teacher, but also as someone who exercised an authorship of her own life beyond teaching, saying, "I find Samantha to be a strong role model. She's a woman, and she's very successful, and she's a science teacher. . . . I see the way she organizes her life. . . . So I can model after her" (M2, p. 14-16).

Marie saw Samantha as someone who was a risk-taker and a change-maker:

I see herself putting herself in the space where school decisions are being made and she wants to be a part of all that. So that's sort of good modeling for me as well, because I go- well, you know, I should be joining all these things. . . . It's interesting to hear how she's gone from classroom teacher, and she was willing to branch out. And how she's changed, never stayed at one school, and how she's willing to pick up and go to another school because new opportunities arise. So, she is a risk taker, obviously. And she wants to become an administrator. And

listening to why she wants to do that, I think she said something like- being an administrator, you have more voice. You can be more of an active role for creating a positive change in the school. (M 2, p. 17-18)

The issue of mentors as role models is one that needs to be troubled. Is this a positive phenomenon? While a strong and thoughtful women mentor can be seen as a powerful pedagogical device (Houston, 1996), role modeling also, "masks its own subtle form of domination...it encourages us to *look up* to special women rather than *look around* for the women with whom *we might act*" (Fisher, as cited in Houston, 1996, p. 147). Circumventing this hazard is possible if the mentor is actively learning alongside the beginning teacher and the dyad is able to establish reciprocity through shared learning experiences. For some dyads in this study shared experiences created opportunities for acting together. However, a great deal more attention needs to be paid to the dynamics within mentorships to determine how role modeling can be a pedagogical device for empowerment to both mentoring partners.

The Mentor as a Catalyst of Thoughtful Critique

I had a really bad day. Things were just not happening and [Jenny] just started asking me some questions and things just started clicking. She wasn't telling me what to do, or giving me suggestions, she just asked me some questions and I started to realize certain things and then that just led me to start thinking about—aha! Like, aha! Okay! And she just led me to that. (Michelle 1, p. 9)

In Chapter 2 I cited Cain's (1994) question, "is it possible to re-imagine the mentor model in terms of women working together in reciprocity and trust?" (p. 117). Why would we stick with mentoring as a support structure for beginning teachers, knowing its patriarchal and hierarchical history? Having completed this study, I argue that, while mentoring should not be the only model of support, it is a powerful one. Its power is in relationship and contextuality, in phenomena such as role modeling, reciprocity, and percolated learning. Its power is due to the catalytic power of the mentor and her capacity to facilitate reflection and thoughtful critique.

There is very little literature describing such catalysis or facilitation (Grimmett & Dockendorf, 1999). In exploring the importance of facilitation in teacher inquiry groups, Grimmett and Dockendorf suggested that, while groups of teachers can come together in inquiry or to offer support to each other, there is the risk that "rigorous conversations and the rethinking of practice may be in jeopardy of being replaced by sessions in which teachers are emotionally and socially supported, but changes in practice are not viewed as vital" (p. 93). Mentors can offer support to beginning teachers through discussion, and shift the focus, when appropriate, to a theoretical reframing of concerns that is based in, but also broader than, the specific context. This is also the work Hollingsworth (1992) took on in her work with a beginning teacher group. Mentors can be the catalysts for the shift from the personal and the specific to the general and the theoretical. I'm reminded of a movie I saw in which the camera first slowly zoomed in from outer space to a city, to a city park, to a park pond, to a boy in a row boat, to a mosquito on his arm and into his body to end up inside a blood cell. Then the camera quickly zoomed back out. This zooming in and out is important in helping teachers see issues in rich contextual detail and to begin to be thoughtfully critical of what is seen and experienced. Mentors can catalyze thoughtful critique within the mentoring dyad. The possibility also exists in reciprocal mentorships, for beginning teachers to deliberately catalyze thoughtful critique with their mentors. Based on my own experience as a mentor, I know that they often do so unintentionally.

The practice of thoughtful critique is not an easy practice to facilitate. Troubling the structures we have taken for granted is unsettling for everyone. Beginning teachers have not even settled into schools yet. However, being thoughtfully critical cannot be postponed until teachers feel settled, as suggested by A. Reynolds (1995). By then, the hegemony may have already overtaken them. Grimmett and Dockendorf (1999) described some elements of facilitation they viewed as central in furthering teacher inquiry. These actions included "framing conditions of inquiry, accepting tension and dealing with conflict, modeling collegiality and experimentation, focusing teacher talk on

action, enabling teachers to frame their inquiry, and connecting action with student learning" (p. 103). Further, they suggested that:

This conceptualization of leadership as the facilitation of teacher research suggests that *it is not a role* involving hierarchical position with its accompanying agendas of power and control *but a series of interrelated* tasks designed to transform the experience into one that sustains a rich conversation about pedagogical possibilities by engaging teachers in classroom action research and observation. (p. 107)

Framing facilitation as a set of tasks a leader takes on to support a group's desire to inquire into practice furthers an understanding of the tasks mentors take on in facilitating thoughtful critique. However, it does not help mentors who see troubling practices that they want to help beginning teachers reconceptualize.

Earlier, I suggested that these mentors' concerns for maintaining relationship, combined with cultural norms of non-critique of colleagues, often hampered their capacity to offer critical feedback. Many feminist educators also have asserted that learning is dependent on the teacher developing a safe environment and maintaining a nurturing stance (Belenky et al, 1986; Robertson, 1994). Contrarily, Henry (1994) argued that feminist educators should be less concerned with issues of emotional safety in learning and come to see pedagogy as "powerful and dangerous" (p. 1). Safety, she suggested, is a concept of privileged liberal feminism. Instead, Henry contended that educators must not allow "critical moments to evaporate" (p. 3), regardless of the discomfort they might create for the learner.

While I agree with Henry's focus on seizing critical moments, I cannot agree that a level of emotional safety is unimportant. It seems to me that pushing learners into painful discomfort may simply freeze their capacity to be thoughtfully critical. Mentoring relationships with their capacity for immediacy and contextual responses may bridge

comfort and critique as states of being and knowing. Further, mentors can model being self-reflective and self-critical and this modeling may be more effective in catalyzing growth than directly criticizing the beginning teacher.

As beginning teachers begin to look at their own practices as well at systematic structures from various points of view, they can begin to question their own and others' assumptions. Hollingsworth found that the women she studied and worked with raised issues from their own "everyday experiences" and expressed concern for "care, compassion, and critical questioning" (p. 377). Through collaborative conversation they began to see possibilities for action that they were not ready to try, but that they held as goals. Hollingsworth suggested that developing a critical perspective actually helped beginning teachers feel more, rather than less, settled:

Adopting a critical perspective about the social norms of [the school] climate—and receiving the support to move through the emotional stress that accompanies such a perspective—was crucial to claiming their own professional voices within their schools and attaining the personal and political freedom to reconstruct classrooms that supported diverse values and ways of being instead of restricting them. (p. 393)

Mentors' willingness to listen, their capability to question, their openness in sharing their own stories of successes and failures, and their tact in offering suggestions are the practices that catalyze a process of thoughtful critique. But we need to know more about how mentors can do this well. In the following section, I discuss a number of implications for research and for practice that emerge from these issues and from the study in general.

How does this Feminist Analysis Deepen our Understanding of Mentoring?

The issues described in the preceding section—valuing differences, considering autonomy and authority, and exploring the various tasks of mentoring—require ongoing study. These issues need to be further problematized as educators continue how best to support beginning teachers in becoming thoughtfully critical teachers. What my feminist analysis

provides is a viable reconceptualization of mentoring as a personal and professional relationship that supports and challenges both participants. However, a feminist pedagogy of mentoring is itself not unproblematic. Mentorships are sites of struggle. Beginning teachers are struggling with becoming teachers. They are learning to apply knowledge and skills previously acquired in specific classroom settings and they are meeting and coming to know others—colleagues, students and their parents. Many beginning teachers are establishing themselves as adults with new personal relationships and in new homes, perhaps even a new city. In temporary jobs, and new settings, pressures to comply with existing norms are powerful (Britzman et al., 1995). Feminist mentoring relationships ask beginning teachers to struggle against many of these norms, and perhaps challenge some of the people they are meeting.

Mentors, also with complex lives and classrooms, are asked to offer generously their time and energy to support beginning teachers through this process of becoming. But feminist mentoring also asks mentors to disrupt their own lives as teachers to question, challenge and trouble cultural norms and biases and to open their own teaching for critique and growth. Given these complexities, I believe that mentoring dyads need more than one year to reach a level of trust and reciprocity to begin to engage in thoughtful critique.

The power of thoughtful critique is to expand the agency of the teachers involved and of the people with whom those teachers interact. Once inequities and privileges are named they can be challenged, through "dramatic and confrontational" critique and through "quiet and subtle strategies and resistances" (Ozga & Lawn, as cited in S. Acker, 1995). In my study, I saw only glimmers of this kind of critique in the cases. There is little enough thoughtful critique in schools in general (Meyer, 1996) but a feminist pedagogy of mentoring can support its expansion. I argue that efforts to increase teachers' agency are essential in the shifting reality of today's schools and society. The feminist analysis proposed in this dissertation suggests a place of beginning, in relationship, reciprocity and thoughtful critique.

What Needs to Be Done Next and Who Should Do It?

Researchers and teacher educators need to know more about mentoring among all teachers, but we cannot wait to know more before we act. Every year new beginning teachers move into the school system and each individual is deserving of support. In my own work with beginning teachers, I have seen most succeed at a great personal cost and in the face of systemic disinterest. In British Columbia, as I have shown, there has been little real or sustained activity from school districts, universities, local unions, or the Ministry of Education to develop and maintain beginning teacher support programs, despite at least three strong recommendations that programs be developed (Bowman, 1991; "Report to the Deputy Minister," 1982; Sullivan, 1988). We may have stated intentions to provide support to beginning teachers but we are, in fact, not doing so.

We Need to Act Now

I've got this job in Portal and it's just like heaven. I feel so—it's nice. This is such a nice thing. They've got this mentor program and they hook you up with somebody and you talk, and it's just like an extension of teacher education and I liked that part. So I'm thinking—God you guys, this is the best thing ever. . . . I think this is the best way to experience a first year of teaching. It's not just dumping you out there and saying—here, see what you can do with these guys and see you in June. (Maggie, 1, p. 19)

It is imperative that school districts, unions, universities and governmental agencies engage in immediate and ongoing efforts to support beginning teachers. In the past, institutions have fallen into a pattern of *been there, done that* thinking: having provided some kind of support to beginning teachers for a few years, interest shifts to another focus (Cole & Watson, 1993). This was the case in Portal as in many other systems. But beginning teachers have not *been here, done this* before. Support for beginning teachers is essential, because, as the cases have shown, to begin a teaching career is to face a host of new challenges. Beginning teachers deserve the support of their colleagues and of the agencies and stakeholders most concerned with teacher development. Further, beginning teachers need opportunities to reflect and to become thoughtfully critical of the taken-for-

granted structures and practices they see around them. Pressures to be compliant and unquestioning are strong, but silence serves neither teachers nor their students. Nor ultimately does compliance serve the system. In a diverse and changing society, teachers *must* trouble biases in curriculum, instructional methods, collegial interactions, and institutional norms.

We Need to Create Programs that Prioritize Support and Critique

I went to a department get-together and a staff member made a comment that Asian people are very cooperative, more sly, a very negative way of saying it. I couldn't say anything at the staff meeting but at that small close kind of thing, I tried to address that. . . . Think about the school, there's 80% of the school population is Asian. Of course 4 out of 5 kids you catch [cheating] are Asian. The statistics doesn't justify you saying—oh it's mainly Asian people who cheat. (MS2, p. 3)

Marie's comment, cited above, came after many hours of conversation with her mentor about cheating and racism within the school. Beginning teachers and their mentors need time to be together to converse and to create shared experiences so that reciprocity and thoughtful critique can develop. Beginning teachers are learning what it means to be autonomous professionals. Being encouraged to select their own mentors is an important part of this development. Beginning teachers need help to understand that being autonomous does not mean being isolationist and that all teachers benefit from being surrounded by webs of collegial supporters. In describing the role of community in feminist pedagogy, Shrewsbury (1993) wrote:

For too long community has been seen as either the polar opposite of autonomy or as the rather weak conception of an aggregate of individuals together because of some shared formality like geographic boundaries. Feminist pedagogy [is] based on a reconceptualization of community with a richness that includes the autonomy and individuality of members who share a sense of relationship and connections with each other. (p. 13)

Beginning teachers should be free to choose the kinds of support that are best for them, while being encouraged to continue to learn about being a teacher. We need to offer many learning opportunities. Support programs, including mentorships, should last beyond the first year to allow the development of trust, reciprocity and thoughtful critique.

We Need to Support Mentors

My question would be—what is mentoring—like I don't even know what that definition is. Is it helping? What is mentoring defined as? I don't know. (Tie 1, p. 14)

Mentors, as initial collegial supporters, need help to construct their roles. As stated in Chapter 2, there is no provincial policy encouraging mentoring and few school districts in British Columbia support mentoring at all. Programs that do exist offer little support to mentors (McPhie & Jackson, 1994). Given these conditions, mentoring becomes one more burden in teachers' already busy lives. Women teachers, like Samantha, may feel more commitment to mentor, because of socialized expectations for caring and they may feel more guilty, like Jenny, when they are not successful, even when the source of the deficiency is beyond their control. Like the facilitators of teacher inquiry groups described by Grimmett and Dockendorf (1999) mentors are attempting to create supportive and facilitative catalytic (and reciprocal) processes without much support or many suggestions of how to do so. Much of the mentoring literature simply describes "training" mentors. Mentors need to be able to consider issues related to their work with other mentors and with their own facilitators or mentors. This is not skill training, it is simply another kind of mentoring, in which knowledge-of-practice about mentoring (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press) is developed.

We Need to Direct Resources to Mentoring

We should have sat down and discussed what our vision of mentoring was. . . . There was no forum at the beginning. And I don't know who would offer this

forum, maybe the administration in each school or something, because there wasn't an opportunity. . . . So you each go into with your own expectations. (Emily, SAET 2, p. 27)

Mentoring programs for beginning teachers need to be thoughtfully constructed and critically evaluated. Programs should be founded on choice, respect, relationship, reciprocity and opportunity. Program development will require the ongoing direction of resources, both financial and human. It is critical that beginning teacher support programs be themselves supported and staffed by those who have the time, energy and pedagogical knowledge to develop sustainable programs that are centred on beginning teachers and mentors (McPhie & Jackson, 1994). Program developers must be thoughtfully critical themselves.

In the past I wrote that mentoring programs should be institutionalized (Thompson, 1997), that is, become part of the life of an institution. However, the danger of attempting to *institutionalize* a program is it can become *bureaucratized*, by which I mean there may be only mandates, contracts, brochures, formal welcoming meetings, and other accouterments of support. Without *pedagogical* leadership, programs die or become bureaucratized. They lose their focus on support and thoughtful critique. Perhaps it would be better to seek to make mentoring part of the life of a teaching community—to bring it into the culture of teaching.

We Need to Keep Learning about Mentoring

This is really my first mentoring relationship that I feel like I've taken something through the whole year really closely. . . . So I've definitely learned a lot in this one to apply to another mentoring relationship... maybe now I have ways to raise the conversation about how are kids experiencing it, a lot earlier on. That's just so tricky, depending on how the beginning teacher is doing, I think. (Elizabeth 3, p. 15-16)

Throughout this section I have used the pronoun *we* because I believe anyone interested enough to read this far has a responsibility to support beginning teachers. *We* are (at least) teachers, administrators, school district staff, union representatives, professional association personnel, ministry staff and university faculty: *we* are those with the most to gain by supporting beginning teachers and the most to lose when we do not. Like Elizabeth, we learn more every time we engage in mentoring, talk about mentoring, and research mentoring. We need to extend and expand those experiences, conversations and studies.

My study focussed solely on women teachers. It will be important to examine the applicability of a feminist pedagogy for mentoring to both genders and in other professions, where beginning colleagues are mentored. Professions such as Law, Nursing and Medicine include mentoring as a pedagogical practice. Talking with other professional workers who mentor can only add to our own understanding of mentoring in teaching.

Directions for Further Research

I believe we need to direct our attention to learning more about mentoring. We cannot allow the potential of mentoring to be lost because those involved in teacher development lose interest. Beginning teachers continue to move from teacher education programs into the teaching profession and we do not know enough about how to support them well during this transition. Throughout this chapter, I have suggested directions and questions for further study and these are restated here to emphasize their importance:

1. Would dyadic or group configurations of mentoring be more supportive of beginning teachers' need to know, while facilitating thoughtful critique?
2. How can all beginning teachers be supported in selecting mentors who will facilitate their developing voices as teachers?
3. How can mentors respect beginning teachers' autonomy and also volunteer some form of critical feedback?
4. How does role modeling operate as a pedagogical device within mentoring?

5. How can thoughtful critique of practices and structures become more pervasive within mentoring?
6. How can structural support from ministries of education, school district staffs, teachers; associations and universities enhance mentoring as a teacher development pedagogy?
7. How does the concept of epistemological communities connect with the theory of knowledge-of-practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, in press)?
8. How does the feminist model of mentoring presented in this study apply to other populations of beginning teachers, both female and male, and perhaps in other professional mentoring contexts, such as law clerks and judges?

Final words

This is something I've wanted to do since I was a child. I saw my teacher reading to me when I was in grade 3 and I said—that's exactly what I want to do when I get older. I didn't think it was possible because of my own academic struggle. But it was something that I stuck to. And coming out of it and realizing all of it, it's been wonderful. This is the kind of job you really need to love. It's really not a job, it really is a career. It's something you really need to love. (Sue Ann 2, p.24)

Most teachers, like Sue Ann, begin their careers with hope, enthusiasm and energy. Most seek to make a difference in the lives of the children they teach. In a bureaucratized, patriarchal school system, these hopes can fade quickly. What we lose when we do not support beginning teachers is their early growth beyond mere survival. An imperative aspect of this growth is becoming thoughtfully critical about the system within which they teach. Without support, some beginning teachers opt out for less isolating and demanding work. Without support, some beginning teachers achieve minimal competency in classroom practice and learn to comply with and unthinkingly perpetrate biases based on gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation and ability. Without support, beginning teachers may not come to see their roles as thoughtful critical collegial agents with power to together effect change for themselves and their students. The

challenge now is to develop, support and sustain universal, ongoing, thoughtful, caring, pedagogical mentoring programs that cherish the knowledge and experiences each beginning teacher brings, that support them as they begin to construct their lives as teachers and that welcome them into a community of agency and transformation.

Journal entry

October 10, 1999

In the story, I wish I were a butterfly (Howe, 1987), a young cricket is overwhelmed with despair as he compares himself to the beautiful butterfly he sees overhead. As he tells others of his despair at his own ugliness and seeks support, the various inhabitants of the swamp, including a ladybug, a frog and a dragon fly, tell him to get over it, get used to it and not to complain.

Finally, he seeks out the Old One, a spider with whom he has a caring friendship. Instead of offering advice, she listens to him and asks him a question. She helps him see his own worth as a cricket and as a friend. She suggests he does not need to accept the advice he hears around him because it is biased and ill considered. She asks him for support- to sing for her as she spins her web. As he does so, a passing butterfly hears him and thinks, " I wish I were a cricket."

Successful feminist mentoring is based on trust. It develops through talk, in which the mentor listens care-fully, and through shared experiences, in which both participants learn reciprocally. Finally, it moves to a level of thoughtful critique, in which biases are troubled and challenged. Successful mentoring is helping all crickets learn to sing in their own voices and to be more critical of the voices they hear around them.

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Appendix A- Interview Protocols

Timeline for Interviews

Sep.	Initial communication seeking participants
Oct./Nov.	Identification of participants based on further information about the study Interview with beginning teacher Interview with mentor teacher Interview with dyad
Dec.	
Feb./Mar.	Interview with beginning teacher Interview with mentor teacher
Apr.	Interview with dyad
May	Interview with beginning teacher Interview with mentor teacher
Jun.	Ending survey sent

Request to Tape Record a Mentoring Conversation

Re tape recording:

My request is that you use this cassette to record conversations between yourselves that you are willing to share with me. These might be very short conversations (in which case, I hope you'll share a few) or longer conversations. Obviously, I will appreciate as many conversations you will allow me to hear.

Some possible examples are:

- a short conversation about scheduling parent conferences
- a discussion about a discipline concern
- a planning session
- a discussion of time management
- a social interlude

In recording the conversations, please begin by stating the date- then try to forget the recorder is on. Feel free to erase any discussion you don't want me to hear. As with all the data, you can later also ask that it not be used.

All your conversations will be anonymous; names of students and schools will be changed as I type the transcripts.

Thanks!

October/November Interview Protocols**Beginning Teachers**

1. How has your first month of teaching been? What is a highlight of September? What is a low light?
2. What have you learned about teaching over the last few weeks? How did you learn that?
3. Is your mentoring partnership supporting you? How? What other supports do you have?
4. What do you hope to get out of this research project?
5. What else would you like me to know about you as a person and as a teacher?

Mentor Teachers

1. How did you become a mentor? What do you see as your role?
2. Did you have any mentors as a beginning teacher? What was the experience of beginning teaching like for you?
3. What is the most important thing you know about teaching? How might you share that with your beginning teacher?
4. What do you hope to get out of this research project?
5. What else would you like me to know about you as a person and as a teacher?

Dyad

1. How did your relationship begin? How would you describe your relationship? What would be a metaphor for your relationship?
2. What kinds of things have you done together and talked about together? Can you tell me about one experience or one conversation you have had together? What do you plan to do together?
3. What do you admire about each other?
4. What does your partner not know about you yet?

January/February Interview Protocols

Beginning Teachers

1. Take me through a typical day in your life.
2. Do you think your teaching has changed since the Fall? How? Why?
3. What has been happening for you and ____ since we last talked in Oct/Nov?
4. What do you see as the benefits of having a mentor? Of having _____ as a mentor?
What do you see as drawbacks in your mentorship?
5. Can you choose three words, either from the list or from your own thinking to describe your relationship? Why did you select those words?

Friend	Professional	Collegial	Paternalistic	Maternalistic
Coaching	Sponsoring	Validating	Role modeling	Peer
Protecting	Facilitating	Leading	Directing	Demonstrating
Rigorous	Cautious	Supervising	Conscientious	Counseling
Teaching	Diligent	Authoritarian	Knowledgeable	
6. I'd like to ask you to respond to a scenario. If you were asked to take on a very inappropriate teaching assignment for the next term, how would you react? Who would you expect to help you decide?

Mentor teachers

1. What has been happening for you and ____ since we last talked in Oct, Nov, Dec?
2. What kinds of issues have the two of you been talking about? What have you done together?
3. Do you think your relationship has changed since we last talked? How? Why?
4. Can you choose three words, either from the list or from your own thinking to describe your relationship? Why did you select those words?

Friend	Professional	Collegial	Paternalistic	Maternalistic
Coaching	Sponsoring	Validating	Role modeling	Peer
Protecting	Facilitating	Leading	Directing	Demonstrating
Rigorous	Cautious	Supervising	Conscientious	Counseling
Teaching	Diligent	Authoritarian	Knowledgeable	
5. I'd like to ask you to respond to a scenario. If _____ were asked to take on a very inappropriate teaching assignment for the next term, how would you react? What advice would you give her? What would you do?

Dyad

1. What have you done together and talked about together since we last met?
2. If you had an afternoon to spend together on a professional activity, what would you do? Why would that be important for you to do?
3. Has your relationship changed over time? How? Why?
4. From the following list and from your own experiences, please tell me the aspects of teaching that you talk about most. Can you fill in the pie graph to show how much of your time together you spend on each one?

students	planning	union
teaching strategies	curriculum	resources
assessment	parents	staff relationships
classroom management	life outside of teaching	
extra curricular activities		
5. Students, parents, planning, management, curriculum, resources, assessment, teaching strategies, extra curricular activities, union, staff relationships, life outside of teaching
6. What is one important thing you have learned from each other? How did you learn that?

May Interview Protocols**Beginning Teachers**

1. Over the year, what have you found to be the most challenging aspect(s) of teaching?
2. What goals do you have for yourself as a teacher?
3. What has been the central focus of your relationship with your mentor over the year?
4. If you were designing a program for beginning teachers, what would you focus on?
5. How have the recent events in Portal related to the budget deficit impacted you? What are your feelings about the situation? How have you discussed it with your mentor?

Mentor Teachers

1. How would you describe the central focus of your mentoring relationship over the year?
2. Based on your experience as a mentor, what do you see as the most important need of beginning teachers?
3. What have you learned from the experience of being a mentor about mentoring? About your own teaching? About anything else?
4. Would you be a mentor again? Why or why not?
5. How have the recent events in Portal related to the budget deficit impacted your beginning teacher? What are your feelings about the situation? How have you discussed it with her?

Appendix B- The concluding survey

June 20, 1997

Dear *,

I want to thank you for giving so generously of your time over the school year to assist me in my research study. I hope now, that as the end of the year draws close, you are looking ahead to a relaxing, well deserved summer holiday. I wish you all the best for September. I will be thinking of you.

I will be in touch with you in the Fall, as I begin to sort through all of the interview material. I won't take much of your time, but I do want to let you have transcripts of all the interviews.

I am asking you to take a few minutes before the end of June to respond to the attached **concluding survey**. This is intended to give me some feedback about the interview process.

Again, thank you so much and good luck in your future plans. I have really appreciated this opportunity to get to know you and I hope we will work together again.

Merrilee

Concluding Survey

Please comment on the following.

1. How were the individual interviews useful for you?
2. How were they problematic?
3. How were the three way interviews beneficial?
4. How were they problematic?
5. What suggestions do you have to help me be a better interviewer?