CREATING A HETEROTOPIC SPACE: REFLECTIONS ON PRE-SERVICE ART EDUCATORS’ NARRATIVES


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My autobiographical research focuses on creating digital heterotopias through social media platforms, providing safe spaces which allow art teacher candidates the opportunity to reflect upon their practicum experiences and question the status quo of institutional myths and inherited discourses in teacher fieldwork. Functions of heterotopic space link together and reflect other pedagogical sites, including institutional spaces. Heterotopias are often designed to be temporal and hidden from public view but are necessary enclaves for exploring non-hierarchical paradigms. Such temporary communal spaces can lead one to a personal praxis in uncovering what sometimes is never fully explored, our own autobiographical narrative of teaching. By creating a digital space utilized by art education student teachers in the midst of their practicum, I recalled my forgotten autobiography of student teaching, where memories of inequities and suppression of difference emerged.

Through the lenses of critical theory and resistance theory, this study examines possibilities of crafting digital spaces as forms of artistic resistance and identity reconstruction zones. As such, the goal of examining the student teaching practicum concerning; power inequities, evaluation methods, standardization of teaching, evolving teacher identities, and the social environment of teaching, is to illustrate hegemonic processes and visualize spaces of possibility to deconstruct self and (re) imagine alternative ways of being teachers. Weaving in multiple stories of fieldwork experience allowed for a collocation in visualizing a space of unfolding inquiry, recognizing multiple genres of knowing through the qualitative and emergent methodologies of narrative inquiry and arts-based research.
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Finally, I am grateful to my family for all of your unwavering support throughout this process. To my loving husband, you believed in me, giving me a reason to dream and to hope for the best from the world, and from myself.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTE TO READER</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE TO CHAPTER 1: THE FRAGMENTED JOURNEY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Chapter</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background to the Problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Placement – An Uncertain Venture</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where are the Decentralized Spaces in Teacher Fieldwork?</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But I am part of the problem! Situating Myself in this Self-Study</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Metaphoric Anchor of Place/Space</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose Statement</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and Professional Motivation for the Research Question</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of My Study</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology: Who Speaks?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Inquiry</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing Oneself for Disclosure in Self-Study Research</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualizing My Inquiry</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE TO CHAPTER 2: BORDERLANDS</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Practicum</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critiquing the Social Systems in Student Teaching</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Inequalities—Hidden Curriculum in the Practicum</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluations ........................................................................................................................ 41
Standardizing Evaluations ........................................................................................... 43
Evaluations and Confidential “Closed” Files ...................................................................... 44
Teacher Identity .............................................................................................................. 46
  Vulnerability and Evolving Teacher Identity .............................................................. 49
  Negotiated Meanings in Teacher Identity ................................................................. 51
The Isolation of Student Teaching ................................................................................. 53
Theoretical Framework – Critical Theory ....................................................................... 55
  Critical Theory – Postmodern Perspectives .............................................................. 55
  Critical Theory – Examining Myths in Teacher Education ........................................ 57
The Social is Political: Power Structures and Hegemony in Teacher Education ............ 58
  Social Capital and the Teaching Practicum ............................................................... 59
  Ideological State Apparatuses ................................................................................... 60
  Alternatives to the Institutional Narratives of Teaching .............................................. 63
Theoretical Framework – Resistance Theory ................................................................. 63
  The Intersection of Place and Space: Postmodern Human Geographies .................... 64
  Resistive Strategies — Surviving Educational Indoctrination .................................... 66
Expanding the Boundaries of Social Systems – Communities of Practice ....................... 68
  Skills of Discourse, Negotiation, Arbitration, and Creative Resistance .................... 69
  Micropolitical Actions, Strategies, and Tactics ............................................................ 71
  Resistance in Decentralized Networks .................................................................... 73
The Dangers of Social Media ......................................................................................... 76
  Safe Spaces – Spaces of Difference ....................................................................... 79
  Anonymity and Agents of Change ......................................................................... 81
Mapping Autobiographical Experience .......................................................................... 82
Critical Pedagogy ............................................................................................................ 84
Creating Spaces for Critical Pedagogy ........................................................................... 85
Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 86

PREFACE TO CHAPTER 3: REMNANTS ........................................................................... 88

CHAPTER 3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES ............................................................... 90
  Introduction ................................................................................................................. 90
  Research Design ........................................................................................................ 91
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Inquiry</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Inquiry: Critical Events in My Educational Experiences</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Study Research Framework</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts-Based Research</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts-Based Inquiry</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ScholARTistry</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning Self-Study Research with Arts-Based Inquiry</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher as Participant</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-service Art Teacher Narratives</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher’s Position and Bias</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Art and Writing as Inquiry, Data Collection, and Data Analysis</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journal</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher’s Visual Art Responses</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-service Art Education Teachers’ Narratives and Images</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Analysis</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualizing Collocation</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Event Analysis</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing as Analysis</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflecting in Writing – The Vignette</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autobiography and Memory Work</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of Resonance</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is Here? Mapping the Transient Spaces of the Student Teaching</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Data Analysis: Mapping, Indexing, and Modeling</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Strategies of Mapping</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Strategies of Indexing</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Strategies of Modeling</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity in Narrative Inquiry and Autobiographical Studies</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts-Based Practices: Validity and Ethical Considerations</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymity – Ethical Considerations</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREFACE TO CHAPTER 4: *DECONSTRUCTING THE MYTHS OF TEACHING* .............. 151

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS................................................................. 153

Introduction to Findings.................................................................................. 153
The Five Visual Metaphors................................................................................ 154

Researcher’s Inquiry into the First Visual Metaphor, The Fragmented Journey 155
Researcher’s Inquiry into the Second Visual Metaphor, Borderlands............. 157
Researcher’s Inquiry into the Third Visual Metaphor, Remnants ................. 158
Researcher’s Inquiry into the Fourth Visual Metaphor, Deconstructing the Myths of Teaching ................................................................. 160
Researcher’s Inquiry into the Fifth Visual Metaphor, Tilling the Field .......... 161

Myths and Inherited Discourses in Teacher Training ........................................ 162
The Reproduction of Myth and Suppressing Difference ............................... 162

Practice Makes Perfect.................................................................................... 163
Social Control .................................................................................................. 164
Looking the Part: Image as Social Control .................................................... 170
Teacher-as-Saint/Teacher-as-Temptress.......................................................... 172

Conflicting Paradigms – Mentor Teacher Roles............................................. 174
Isolation and Fragmentation of Experience .................................................... 177
Feelings of Failure ............................................................................................ 181
Defensive Teaching: Masking the Vulnerability of Being Uncertain ............. 183

Part 2: Resistive and Reflective Strategies ...................................................... 184

Resistive Spaces – Heterotopia Spaces............................................................. 185
Decentering and Fracturing............................................................................. 187
Finding Voice................................................................................................... 193
Decentralized Spaces – A Place of Confluence .............................................. 196
Social Practices of Self in Digital Space and Localized Place ...................... 199
Creating Autobiographical Narratives and Art as Reflective Practice .......... 201

Summary of Findings....................................................................................... 204

PREFACE TO CHAPTER 5: *TILLING THE FIELD*........................................... 208

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS .......................................... 213

Introduction..................................................................................................... 213

(Re)Framing the Research Question............................................................... 213
Evolving Self-Study: Coming to Know Thyself through Narrative and Arts-Based Inquiry............................................................................................................................. 215
Self-Study: More than the Self ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 216
Interpretations and Findings: Researcher’s Inquiry ............................................................................................................................................... 218
Summarizing the Results ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 219
Reflexive and Resistive Strategies ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 221
Disembodied Resistance: Embodying Our Pedagogy ......................................................................................................................................... 223
Anonymity – Protecting Identities ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 223
Crafting Safe Spaces ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 224
Vignettes as Reflective Resistance ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 226
Challenges and Epiphanies ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 227
Future Research: The Potential for Digital Communities ......................................................................................................................................... 229
Broader Implications to the Field of Art Education ........................................................................................................................................ 232
Concluding Thoughts ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 234
APPENDIX A. INSTRUCTIONS FOR NARRATIVES ON THE WIKI SITE:
POSTARTTEAACHINGSTORIES ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 237
APPENDIX B. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THREE OF THE WIKI PARTICIPANTS ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 240
REFERENCES ........................................................................................................................................................................................................ 244
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1 Student Teacher Narratives – PostArtTeachingStories Wiki Site (n = 11) ............... 112

Figure 1. Mind-mapping concepts that could be shared in digital networks to assist pre-service art education student teachers. Mapping by Joana Hyatt................................................................. 139

Figure 2. Visual strategies of indexing can help researchers document the hierarchical structures, such as routines and rituals, found in the student teaching practicum. Photographed by Joana Hyatt........................................................................................................ 141

Figure 3. Visual strategies of modeling occurred when the researcher began to weave the stories of the student teachers with my own, creating a multi-layered, polyvocal narrative. Created by Joana Hyatt. ............................................................................................................. 142

Figure 4. Side by side comparison of The Fragmented Journey and mind-mapping experiences. ............................................................................................................................................ 155

Figure 5. Borderlands. .............................................................................................................. 157

Figure 6. Remnants. ................................................................................................................ 158

Figure 7. Deconstructing the Myths of Teaching..................................................................... 159

Figure 8. Tilling the Field, photograph by Joana Hyatt.......................................................... 161

Figure 9. Narrative: The Incremental Approach, by Student Teacher 1, ArtIsAHammer...... 163

Figure 10. Narrative: My Story, by Student Teacher 2, Drgnfly007...................................... 167

Figure 11. Narrative: Maybe Not All Teachers are Cut Out to be Mentors, by Student Teacher 3, Godwilling. ............................................................................................................. 169

Figure 12. Venus of Dickies by Participant 5, Venus of Willendorf......................................... 173

Figure 13. Narrative: Patchwork Road Map, by Participant 7, MyArtEd. ............................... 188

Figure 14. Reflections of a Student Teacher by Participant 9, Dr. Seuss ............................... 195

Figure 15. Reflecting by Participant 11, TpaPow ................................................................. 204
NOTE TO READER

In the beginning of each chapter, I have created artwork and narratives as a way of remembering, resisting, and recreating my story of becoming an art teacher. Creating and analyzing my own research processes allowed me to visually produce and analyze data as a form of ongoing inquiry. As I deconstructed and reconstructed my autobiographical narrative of becoming an art educator, I employed the visual methodology of arts-based inquiry to visualize fragmentation, hegemonic roles, and forms of resistance that occurred during my student teaching fieldwork from 25 years ago. Employing narrative and arts-based inquiry allowed me to envision alternative pathways in assessing my experiences from the student teaching practicum.
PREFACE TO CHAPTER 1: THE FRAGMENTED JOURNEY

The Fragmented Journey, mixed media by Joana Hyatt

Filling my canteen with the participants’ experiential stories, I trekked across the desert to find the fragmented pools of student teaching experiences within the practicum. Creating dialogue with a few of the pre-service art teachers as we sat by the digital campfire, replenishing my soul and remembering my own journey, since I can no longer find my tracks in the sand.

Where being still is no longer a viable option, forced to move on, the student teachers and I must adapt to the shifting sands and political sandstorms in the current educational landscape. Packing lightly, I realize that the stories we share, and the memories we make, do not take up much room and therefore they are not considered baggage, as long as the identity from which I construct those memories and conversations does not stick. Long ago, I made the conscientious decision to place myself on the outside perimeter, masterless, a deviant. Straddled between the classroom and the university and not belonging fully to either is not an easy place to be in, especially if the institution in which you have created an identity admonishes or does not recognize or understand someone becoming something outside the accepted cultural norms.

Journal, 2012
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Attempting to map one's educational journey within the framework of student teaching by searching for documentation and communications from past fieldwork experience is a test in endurance and wrought with frustration. The shifting sands of political storms often influence our roles as educators and obscure the lines of current and previous communications. I have discovered through my own investigations that institutional maps that are based on previous documentation cannot do these communications justice, for as soon as we try to map our educational experiences through institutional documentations, the educational landscape shifts. What was there is no longer. My student teaching documents were kept on file in the teacher placement office for seven years; many institutions store them for a shorter period. In time, they are disposed of, deleted, and abandoned. For all the attention given to these documents, they eventually disappear but my experiences of the teacher fieldwork linger.

Memories of student teaching experiences can be positive. I have found that the ones, which are negative, which contradict the master narratives of teaching, are usually covered up because they do not fit neatly within the cultural myths of the educational institutions. As Britzman (2003) explains, “The vulnerable condition of being a social subject becomes taboo discourse when learning to teach is viewed as a private dilemma of acquiring predetermined dispositions and skills, and of taking up preexisting identities” (p. 31). These taboo discourses, (Britzman, 2003) along with memories of feeling coerced, bullied, and silenced, are like residual muck, which resist my attempts to smooth them through time.

As a teacher and an educator of teachers, I have learned that we must remember and document our journeys into education, not from institutional documents, hierarchical forms of
evaluation, or stereotypes of what a good teacher is supposed to be, but from our own autobiographical narratives. Britzman (2003) describes these personal narratives and the methods, which assist us in uncovering them as, ‘backdoor discourses’. This process involves confronting our past experiences within education that are never discussed fully in teacher education programs. My autobiographical recollections from within the body of education remained buried until this study; especially the unpleasant ones, reminding me of what it felt like to be uncertain, vulnerable, and at times, oppressed.

Overview of Chapter

In this chapter, I address the background to the problem, my motivation and purpose for pursuing this study, along with the research question, limitations, and significance of why the social structures of pre-service fieldwork needs further research. I outline the restrictions found in the social structures of student teaching, and illustrate the hierarchical barriers that are present in the practicum. Examining why such restrictions prevent pre-service educators from confronting the myths and disingenuous roles of teaching during the practicum illuminates the lack of negotiable spaces in which to reflect upon alternative teaching practices and identities. As such, the benefits of using decentralized spaces for self-reflection and empowerment that mirror the real world are addressed.

Background to the Problem

The futility of mapping one’s journey into teaching through documentation begins by following the path suggested by academies and educational administrators, which is lined with rigid standards, archaic forms of evaluation, and cultural myths that largely remained unchallenged
within public institutions (Britzman, 2003; Giroux, 2010). Contrary to the myth of a linear road that takes one to their final destination of a successful educator, there are multiple paths to effective teaching. From my experience, there is a temporal path that literally disappears underfoot as you are walking through the maze of education. When you go back to search for your footprints in the sand, they are not there. The documentation trail that the educational institutions insisted you have in your student teaching file exists for a limited time, along with the looming cooperating teacher evaluation.

There are many definitions available concerning the meaning of myth and the construction of cultural myths (Barthes, 1957; Campbell, 2008; Levi-Strauss, 1978). The primary definition of cultural myths used for this study is aligned with Britzman’s (1999) definition since her research was pivotal in what I examined in my own study and how I analyzed the data. Britzman (1999) defines and examines the purposes of cultural myths in teaching stating:

Cultural myths provide a set of ideal images, definitions, justifications, and measure of thought, feelings and agency that work to render as unitary and certain the reality it seeks to produce. Myths provide a semblance of order, control, and certainty in the face of uncertainty and vulnerability of the teacher’s world. (Britzman, 1999, p. 222)

Examining the structures that are imposed during the student teaching practicum include the transitioning from college to professional life. A focus on the daily procedures and social practices in teaching fieldwork highlight practices and procedures in the practicum that have been characterized as fragmented, conducted in isolation, and hegemonic (Britzman, 2003; Giroux, 1986; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998; Zeichner, 2010). Such restrictions foster the acceptance of myths and inherited discourses and are perpetuated within educational institutions (Britzman, 2003 & 2007). The instruments that promote pre-determined teacher roles and practices
include inequitable evaluation formats (Anderson, 2007; Conle, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Feiman-Nemser, 1996; Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009; McNay, 2003), restricted access to materials in student teaching placement files (Babbush & Scidmore, 1972), and at times, the mentor teacher (Britzman, 2003; McNay, 2003).

Many student teaching programs use the same types of evaluation that colleges and universities employed 25 years ago, with the evaluations being completed only by those with the predominant power in the relationship—the cooperating teacher and supervisor (Anderson, 2007). “Though cooperating teachers are often considered to be mentors to student teachers, a fundamental flaw exists. Mentors should not be involved in the assessment or evaluation since novices are less likely to share problems and ask for help if they are going to be evaluated by their mentors” (Feiman-Nemser, 1985, p. 59). McNay (2003) further notes that such evaluations “can make or break a career” (p. 25). The persistence of this evaluation system over decades has contributed greatly to weaknesses and inequities in the practicum.

Drawing on such reflections illuminates the role of institutions of higher education, along with public schools, in perpetuating the sink or swim attitude that separates student teachers from trusted peers, mentors, and instructors, casting them into the unknown (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Maynard, 2001). In particular, highlighting the isolation of student teachers, who may be ill prepared for what they will encounter (Feldman, 2003), as they attempt to cope with the direction of university-appointed supervisors and cooperating teachers, whom they may have just met. In some cases, such supervisors even lack art education experience. Beginning their educational journeys in this way, art education students are deprived of the trusting relationships with true peers and mentors necessary to a successful practicum (Samaras & Gismondi, 1998; Tom, 1997;
Winitzky, Stoddart, & O’Keefe, 1992) and a space to deeply reflect upon and resist the myths and inherited discourses of teaching (Britzman, 2003).

One of the most dangerous myths of all in teaching is the archaic idea that everything has to be homogenized, mainstreamed, and equal in a way that prevents difference. Therefore, difference becomes an abnormal thing that is frowned upon in many classrooms (Britzman, 2003). Difference is seen as a threat to the systems of the educational institutions, something that must be neutralized (Achinstein & Athanases, 2005; Appleman & Thompson, 2002; hooks, 1994). Rozelle and Wilson (2012) recognized that pre-service educators will most likely model what they learned in their practicum and in their own teaching practices, creating a climate of subordination as they become mentor teachers (Bartolome, 1994 & 2004).

Teacher Placement – An Uncertain Venture

The practicum is often referred to as field experience. Pre-service educators enroll in the fieldwork experience after they complete the required coursework at their respective universities. Practicum fieldwork is usually arranged by the college of education at the student teacher’s educational institution where they are enrolled. Teachers in the same field of study who have experience-teaching students within educational institutions usually mentor pre-service educators. The practicum is considered an opportunity to explore practical applications of methods and theories in teaching, a time for experimentation and examination of teacher identities. Even in the best teaching environments with supportive mentor teachers, student teaching can be an uncomfortable space to inhabit. The student teacher embodies a transient space that exists in-between the university system and public teaching in someone else’s classroom.
University art educators prepare pre-service teachers to instruct students about the social responsibilities of art, including such themes as the conflict between citizenship and consumerism (Darts, 2004; Jagodzinski, 2008), the confrontations between global civil societies and Westernized hegemony (Chung, 2007; Delacruz, 2010), the relationships among popular and visual cultures and canonical works of art (Barrett, 2003; Duncan, 2010; Freedman, 2003, Tavin, 2003), and the meaning of social justice (Duncum, 2011; Gude, 2009). Pre-service art education students create lessons addressing social justice and democracy (Gude, 2007; Darts, 2008; Delacruz, 2009), but we often fail to realize the restrictions pre-service art educators encounter when entering in hierarchical schools and classrooms, which may prevent them from teaching such lessons or finding ways to value the concepts that animate them (Anderson, 2007; Beattie, 1995; Hartley, 1992; McNay, 2003).

Art education allows for spaces of resistance and creativity (Darts, 2004, 2008; Garoian, 2002; Gude, 2010; Jagodzinski, 2006, Sweeny, 2009), but it is a daily battle. Many art educators will tell you about their successful endeavors in establishing a thriving art education program that reflects democratic practices and explores issues of social equity. These successes sometimes required fighting administration and/or faculty, but we rarely hear about the losses in which some art educators ultimately gave up public advocacy, conforming to the hegemonic roles and normalization in educational institutions. As such, many teachers begin to see their primary job as custodial, herding the novice educators into accepting pre-existing roles that abide by the institutional rules (Britzman, 2003). In this way, the mentor teachers feel as if they are representing the institution and pedagogy, protecting the institution from outsiders while at the same time legitimizing and perpetuating predetermined discourses and myths about what is good teaching (Britzman, 2003). Shaughnessy (1987) refers to these types of actions by cooperating teachers as,
“guarding the tower” (p. 69). What occurs then is the precarious placement of our pre-service art educators, as we place them with cooperating teachers who will either back their efforts through reflexive mentorship and critical dialogue, or someone who will expect them to conform to pre-existing roles as teachers.

Where are the Decentralized Spaces in Teacher Fieldwork?

The practicum normally stands in opposition to the characteristics of a decentralized network, which enables flows of information (Castells, 1996), in ways similar to networked societies found on the Internet. Indeed, the practicum features fragmented segments of experiential knowledge. There is no cohesion, except through sporadic documentation trails, but because many universities are not required to keep digital documentation for long periods of time, whatever paper or digital trail may exist may no longer be accessible in the future to prior students. The pre-service journey is filled with uncertainty as students are caught in the continually shifting educational mandates imposed by school and state, the differing theoretical positions of higher education professors, and the demands of mimicking the cooperating teachers and pleasing the college supervisors (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; McNay, 2003). Pre-service educators live a transient existence during the practicum, teaching in a classroom that is not their own, while being a college student transitioning from university life to professional career.

Exploring cyberspace as colonization of digital space, Sweeny (2004) illustrates how digital technologies help us visualize everyday existence. Equally as exciting is thinking about how colonization of cyberspace helps us visualize what is not yet, but can be. Sweeny (2004) asks an important question: “If art educational spaces were organized according to the decentralized structure of the Internet, then could such a model allow for a socially relevant, critically oriented
approach to art education?” (p. 76). This query resonated with me as I thought about the teaching practicum today, along with my own oppressive experiences in student teaching during 1988 which were characterized by non-dialogic forms of communication. What would these decentralized spaces in pre-service art education look like, and what would happen in these spaces to make them decentralized? Could these spaces allow us to question our beliefs, and reflectively reconstruct our teaching identities and practices? And could these spaces become places for personal inquiry to unfold? Along with reflecting on these questions, Barabási’s (2002) topology of a decentralized network assisted me in considering Sweeny’s question as visual metaphors of centralized educational institutions and decentralized spaces of community. At the same time, I imagined practices that question the status quo of oppressive conditions in the student teaching practicum.

But I am part of the problem! Situating Myself in this Self-Study

My narrative of becoming a teacher does not fit neatly within the institutional narratives of student teaching fieldwork. I become part of the background to the problem, an anomaly. As I intentionally place myself on the outside parameter of the educational institution in order to critique it, and reconstruct my own autobiography of becoming an art educator. To remind myself what it felt like to be transient and a student teacher without cultural capital, on the outside of an institution, I situated myself within a group of pre-service art education student teachers by creating an online wiki site, Postartteachingstories1. This wiki site functioned as a stopping point for 17 pre-service art education student teachers who were in the midst of their practicum experiences. As I designed Postartteachingstories, I thought about the potential such digital spaces

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1 https://postartteachingstories.wikispaces.com/Welcome+to+Post+Art+Stories
served; a narrative space of communiqué, intervals to reflect, safe spaces to question the status quo, and a potential site for collaboration. In thinking about how to create a digital space for pre-service art educators, I saw the need such spaces must fulfill, becoming weigh stations of sorts, communal checkpoints, and places to reflect and push against the hegemonic processes in education institutions. As I contemplated such safe spaces for reflection and resistance, I wanted to reconnect with my own practicum experience but I could not find any documentation substantiating the event other than a line on my transcript indicating an “I” for incomplete and then in the following semester a “P” for passing.

Drawing on such complex formulations of civil resistance in decentralized community spaces, we may imagine new conditions that allow students to explore discursive formations that engender multiple interpretations, make available tools of negotiation, and enable the articulation of individualized learning experiences. Barabási (2002) notes, “the Internet provides the opportunity for individuals to shift [such] power structures” (p. 77). Building on Barabási’s (2002) insight, this research utilized technology to provide a safe space for me to explore my past experiences in student teaching fieldwork. As I read the stories contributed to the wiki site by 17 pre-service art education student teachers, I envisioned the digital community as existing outside the restrictive framework in educational institutions, seeing it as a safe space for exploring emergent teacher identities.

Britzman (2003) explains this process of becoming as wrought with uncertainty as student teachers’ identities become a site for struggle. She suggests that as educators of teachers we must problematize the practice by being aware of predetermined educational outcomes and ‘inherited discourse’ (p. 26). Developing what she refers to as a “double consciousness of persons and places, relating those involved in the practice of teaching to history, mythology, and discourses of the
institutions framing their work” (p. 26). These kinds of investigations of examining one’s educational past can and should be explored through resistive spaces that highlight opportunities for discursive practices, autobiographical stories, and visual images that contradict the master narratives of teaching.

The Metaphoric Anchor of Place/Space

One of the primary ways this study tells a story of discovering one’s own autobiography as well as recognizing the stories of other pre-service educators, is through the metaphor of place, both remembered and imagined. I use place as a metaphoric anchor and space as a temporary form of resistance to reflect and push against the modernist discourses and teacher myths in my own educational experiences. Amid the postmodern shifts of negotiated and often-fragmented communications of pre-service education, along with the constraints and restrictions in teacher placement and the practicum, I discovered we must go back and uncover our own cultural knowledge and examine the pedagogical resources from our own history. Thus, the maps we create of our journeys simultaneously show where we have been and, most importantly, help us arrive at different destinations that connect to our individual learning journeys.

Embodying the journey of a graduate student and remembering what it felt like to be a student teacher, I am reminded of Gloria Anzaldúa’s (1987) borderlands. In this era of the journey, one is somewhere, not quite in the university and not quite in the schools. She remains in the borderlands of no (wo) man’s land, a nomadic, tension-filled experience of not belonging anywhere. This is a disorienting time and place, but it also provides spaces of possibility. Such possibilities are often foreclosed, however, by the student teaching practicum, which university
programs and schools have based upon evaluation systems that on the surface appear systematic, but in actuality are fragmented (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this self-study research is to examine the hierarchical structures and procedures that cause fragmentation in student teachers’ learning journeys, typified by archaic evaluation formats, closed teacher folders, and practicum experiences conducted in isolation from trusted mentors and peers. Such practices reinforce inherited discourses and myths in teacher education reproduced through rituals, routines, and institutional documentations (Britzman, 2003). At this stage in the research, recognizing that such restrictions and hegemonic practices exist within hierarchical educational institutions, I search for a safe space, which allow for localized narratives (Lyotard, 1979) of student teaching and multiple stories of experience that contradict the metanarratives of teaching. Such narratives allow student teachers to examine fluctuating identities, question the status quo of institutional knowledge, and role-play, as they construct their own narratives of becoming art educators.

Research Question

How do I create a digital space for pre-service art educators’ narratives about their student teaching experiences that opens up possibilities for critical pedagogy reflecting democratic practices?

In order to fully research this question, I turned to critical theory. Deconstructing the terms of the question, I work to make visible hierarchical structures within educational institutions and the hegemonic processes that reside within me. At the same time, I diagrammed a map of meaning making to fully illustrate the ends of my research study. Each of the words in my research question
shaped the subject areas I researched in this self-study, underpinning my approaches to answering the question in ways that encompass broad currents in the field of art education.

• *How do I...* – “I” is the researcher looking through the narrative lens of hindsight at her own experiences through a reflexive autobiographical self-study using the methodology of narrative and arts-based inquiry to find personal meaning and identity in this question.

• *...create a digital space...* – digital spaces can represent networks, nodes, members, collectives, and communities. They can also can represent places of community civil resistance.

• *...for pre-service art educators’ narratives...* – these are the voices that are sometimes silenced in the student-teaching practicum, perhaps not intentionally, but because pre-service educators often lack the cultural capital or authority to question the status quo. Silence can also be a form of resistance, such as the disembodied and resistive silence that occurred during my own student teaching fieldwork. Narrative and arts-based inquiry help express creatively our resistance, differences, and uncertainty. Stories help us critically reflect upon our own experiences and those shared by others, so we can negotiate understandings and comprehend other points of view.

• *...about their student teaching experiences...* – for many pre-service art education students, the practicum is a time of tension and struggle, with the priority becoming securing good evaluations and assessments while completing the practicum to gain employment. Their voices are often voluntarily constrained as they confront institutional norms and restrictions present in educational institutions. The practicum for many of them is about pleasing gatekeepers, university supervisors, cooperating teachers, and school principals.

• *...that opens up possibilities...* – I consider possibilities avenues of civil resistance, unexplored channels of narrative and visual communications that allow for multiple interpretations and ways of meaning making. These possibilities can be expressed through anonymous digital
spaces that allow for discussion of alternative viewpoints about teaching, evaluations, and assessment methods. …for critical pedagogy… – a critical pedagogy works to question, create critical dialogue, plan collaboratively, act, empower, to recognize vulnerability, and understand diverse viewpoints. It promotes analyzing and questioning myths, stereotypes, and the constraints of the status quo, as well as encouraging difference within communities. It ultimately encourages pre-service art educators to find their unique voices and contribute their own sources of knowledge to their communities.

- ...reflecting... – we reflect by bringing self-scrutiny to our positions; remembering the vulnerability of student teachers in the education hierarchy; coming to understand the self in the reflection process; confronting the myths in education and teaching practices; and self-disclosing our constraints, prejudices, biases and misunderstandings. Reflecting these through our narrative assemblages in words, images, and sound, we share our reflections with others in our communities in order to create difference, which pushes against hegemony.

- ...democratic practice. – practicing democracy, we help students attain equity, access, and support as they struggle to find and claim their voices within hegemonic institutions. At the same time, we empower ourselves with self-knowing in rediscovering our own rich sources of pedagogical knowledge, and teachings about our differences.

Personal and Professional Motivation for the Research Question

My motivation to pursue this research question arose from personal and professional relationships, along with experiences and conversations I had with pre-service art students. A journal entry recorded during my pilot study reflects the professional concerns motivating my research:
During my pilot study, I decided to connect with former pre-service art education students who friend requested me on Facebook. At first, I struggled with opening up my Facebook page to my former students. Coming to the realization that being a life-long advocate and educator for the humanities and the arts was a conscientious choice that I made some time ago, I decided to open up and connect to my former students through social media. Not to mimic my mentor, but to find my own path.

To my surprise, my former students were very responsive and welcoming and easily accepted me into their digital world. I think there are complex differences that go beyond what Prensky (2005) coined as ‘digital immigrants and digital natives’ but there is something to be said for those labels. It seems to be easier for the digital natives to imagine others inside their cyber worlds, not as intruders but visitors and guides that come and go.

Now they are a part of my life, through social media. I can read about and see their struggles and accomplishments. How their current job hunting is going, if they’re substitute teaching, and sharing important networks and art information with them. In this way, I see we are all connected.

Through digital communications we are able to discuss controversial and important issues that are affecting their student teaching practices. Funny, I was busy looking somewhere else for my dissertation study, for a community to belong to, and it was right here in front of me, it was basically my life and what I cared most about in education, supporting pre-service art education students creative and academic journeys. (Journal, January 29, 2012)

My former students began contacting me during their student teaching practicum. Not because they were required to, but because they were searching for answers, support, and reassurance about their experiences. Many reported feeling at odds with their schools’ restrictive environments or cooperating teachers’ ideologies. Some students reported success in teaching and wished to share their exhilaration, but others felt that their ideas about the student teaching practicum were not supported by their cooperating teachers and supervisors.

My own experiences in student teaching were confusing and frustrating, and they were made worse by having no one to talk to besides my close friends. Even then, I was guarded with what I said, afraid of being kicked out of the program and branded a troublemaker for questioning
the institutional power structures of the university and the school. Drawing on those personal
interests helped me define my research question around social media and the creation of
democratic spaces for pre-service art educators. In many ways, this is a cathartic venture for me.

I wish that I had had a safe place to share my student-teaching experiences and a mentor
outside the practicum to whom I could talk about the uncomfortable situations I experienced in the
practicum with someone who was not evaluating me as a supervisor or cooperating teacher. When
you are being evaluated, the last thing you want to do is stand out or speak up because you need a
good evaluation in order to receive recommendations as a new teacher so that you may acquire a
teaching position.

**Significance of My Study**

The value of this self-study lies in the way it addresses such problems and constraints in
the student teaching practicum (Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Nielson, 2010; Nyberg, 1981; Zembylas
& Barker, 2002), many of which existed for me in 1988. The central issues in my research concern
inequities in evaluation of student teachers (Anderson, 2007; Feiman-Nemser, 1996; McNay,
2003), restricted access to student teacher placement files, restrictive teaching practices within
practicum field experience (Anderson, 2007; Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Mays-Woods, 2003), and lack
of mentorship for student teachers whose needs for support are not met by cooperating teachers or
supervisors (Beattie, 1995; Hartley, 1992). The kinds of tensions that exist between student
teachers and cooperating teachers have not received much attention in scholarly literature (Berry
& Loughran, 2005).

Another important function of this study is to call into question the way university art
education departments sometimes disengage with pre-service art educators as they leave university
courses and enter the student teaching practicum. Such an experience was essential to my own journey. I found myself in a no (wo) man’s land that forced me to adapt to hegemonic teacher training processes and play disingenuous roles. When I finally dared to resist and question the status quo, I was branded as a troublemaker, which eventually drove me out of teaching.

Such disconnects emerge during the in-between time and space of the practicum (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009). Should not the educators of teachers provide mentorship facilitating safe places for the critique of hierarchical systems in student teaching? Who can pre-service art educators speak to besides their cooperating teachers and appointed supervisors? As pre-service art educators contemplate the goal of a teaching position, what should be their recourse if they come to realize the ideals of social justice and democracy they learned as university students do not fit within their teaching environments? What if they do not feel supported in their current student teaching practicum? What if we lose great art educators because they feel they do not fit within narrowly defined roles of good teaching (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009)? The field of art education will have itself to blame if a lack of creativity and ingenuity in public education fails to support pre-service teachers in their commitments to democratic teaching practices that address contemporary conditions. As such, art education must join such teachers in their critique of inequitable evaluations and unsupportive teacher training environments.

The gap between the university and classroom placements has been documented, but very little research assists pre-service teachers to negotiate the struggle amid the two worlds in a constructive and meaningful way (Smargorinsky, Cook, & Johnson, 2003). Art education needs a space for civil discourse that encourages narrative inquiry in self-study research. Such a model could explore multiple and complex understandings of pre-service art educators’ practical teaching
experiences in a conversational story format featuring student teachers’ voices, written words, and images. I envision a space for stories shared anonymously by pre-service art educators’ struggling with ill-defined, complex, messy, and ambiguous situations in the classroom. A space of deep reflection that allows one to replay situations, analyze and illustrate differences and (re) imagine their teaching identities and teaching environments that would allow for multiple pathways. In this way, the members of art communities can learn together to negotiate individual meanings within the practicum and address the complexity and messiness of what it means to become art educators.

Digital communications technology has proven effective in penetrating hierarchical institutions that can prevent individual voices and experiences from contributing to collective identities (Castells, 1996). At the same time, such technology has helped organize large groups of people to share information and experiences to build powerful collaborations that improving art education (Delacruz, 2004 & 2009; Roland, 2010). Castells (1996) refers to these powerful connections that occur digitally as, networked societies. In educational networks, we must be conscientious that we are indeed using these spaces with students to creatively express individual narratives and confront the constraints that exist within the teaching environment. We must make sure we are not suppressing their interpretations or asking them to conform their experiences to our beliefs in order to fit the cultural norms of what we think is good teacher is since student teachers identities are in transformation as they are in a process of building their own teacher identity.

Digital collaborative networks have shown that the art education communities are stronger when able to connect the thoughts, experiences, and individual voices of their members (Roland, 2010). Such networks, webs, and associations create mentoring possibilities, friendships, and collaborative art movements. Since the future careers of pre-service art educators become part of
the ongoing work of university programs, and their successes are essential to the health of art education communities’ at large, art education communities must think in broader terms about educating pre-service art students. One essential way of mentoring students throughout their practicum is digital communications technology, which can create a lifeline, a space for reflection and reflexivity during this period that can provide the stability they need and encourage a narrative of critical dialogue with mentors and peers. Such a space fosters the freedom to critique their teaching situations and teaching practices, voicing a healthy skepticism about power structures (Giroux, 2010).

Welcoming communities of discourse (Resnick, 1991; Zembylas & Barker, 2002), we can in this way brace each other’s positions amidst the sandstorms of shifting educational mandates. Nevertheless, Sweeny (2004) warns, we should not expect technology to solve problems in our pedagogical approaches without first inquiring how an imposed technology will affect students and the social systems of educational institutions. My work will examine such implications through a self-reflective study that employs critical theory and resistance theory to deconstruct the status quo within many practicum experiences. The images and stories generated from my personal reflections, along with those gathered from a community of pre-service art education student teachers through the PostArtTeachingStories wiki site, will form the basis of my study’s narrative and arts-based inquiry.

Methodology: Who Speaks?

_I speak. Not from a position of authority but from vulnerability. I wish someone had asked me what I needed during my student teaching practicum; I wish they had asked me how the practicum was going. Instead the student teaching process became something that happened to me, something that cannot be questioned, rather than something that happens with me in a collaborative journey._
sense of belonging and being a part of the process of student teaching would have been beneficial. 
(Journal, 2012)

Synthesizing the meanings of stories and images from PostArtTeachingStories informed my changing perceptions as I collected and analyzed the data. This analysis created a form of resonance (Conle, 1996) that assisted me in remembering my own student teaching practicum. Employing narrative inquiry, in which the researcher is also a participant who contributes to critical discourse and critical dialogue, facilitated integrating my own experience into the research process. Refusing the vision of the researcher as omniscient voice and purveyor of a single truth, I recalled my experiences in the practicum by reflecting on the stories that the student teachers shared on the wiki site (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In this way, narrative inquiry coincided in illuminating multiple ways with models of critical theory and resistance theory in the interpretation of research data. Our Stories, is a collection of both my experiences and the student teachers’ narratives, which can be found on the wiki site, PostArtTeachingStories.

Narrative Inquiry

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) describe narrative research as a way of understanding experience through the collaboration of participants and researcher. In this study, I chose narrative to gather individuals’ experiences who were in the midst of their practicum experiences and juxtapose them with my own reflections of teaching fieldwork, focusing on the points where they overlap, conflict, and foster mutual evolution of perspectives. In particular, narrative allows me to examine how pre-service art educators’ stories resonate with my own self-study research to identify commonalities and differences in our voices about a common event: student teaching.

Narrative research is more than the retelling of stories. It is also the way we recreate and
understand ourselves and our identities within particular social contexts, allowing us to identify constraints in the cultures in which we are immersed (Jonassen, 1997). Indeed, narrative inquiry is like the arts in its capacity to allow self-expression in performative and cathartic forms (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Indeed, narrative inquiry suits my research question in exploring safe spaces of personal inquiry about the difficulties and challenges encountered during the student teaching practicum.

Reframing the narrative of the practicum, I hope to uncover the spaces in-between resistance and acceptance of perpetuated myths and stereotypes in centralized institutions of education. By analyzing pre-service educators’ narratives, I work to uncover the hegemonic structures embedded in the student teaching practicum that silence individual voices and prevent the articulation of individual learning journeys.

Drawing on narrative inquiry to examine various forms of representation, including imagery from photography, painting, drawing, mixed-media collage, and reappropriated images used in videos, my research seeks to articulate authentic experiences through stories told and retold. Rather than generalizability, narrative inquiry looks for particularities, thus requiring its own forms of methodological validity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). “Under the auspices of the narrative turn,” such forms implicitly reject the proposition that research narratives “must be generalizable to a certain population. Some... do this by highlighting the particularity of the narratives they present and by placing them in a broader frame” (Clandinin, 2007, p. 78). Narrative does not work “to produce conclusions of certainty, but aims for its findings to be ‘well grounded’ and ‘supportable’, retaining an emphasis on the linguistic reality of human experience” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 4).
Despite the somewhat misleading term, self-study research in education is centrally concerned with placing the self in broader communities, examining local contexts in the field (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001). Self-study research and narrative inquiry both privilege human experience over quantifiable or generalizable experiment. While quantitative research is often conducted under controlled or even ideal situations, self-study unfolds in real learning environments, capturing the complexities of practical experience over time. Such an approach provides a realistic conception of what happens in actual classrooms, while recognizing that each learning situation is unique and may not be transferable (Mitchell, Weber and O’Reilly-Scanlon, 2005; Pithouse et al., 2009). Becoming a participant in my own self-study research required looking back reflectively and critically at my past transgressions (Mitchell, Weber and O’Reilly-Scanlon, 2005; Pithouse et al., 2009).

In the beginning, I was unable to move forward with the theme I had imagined for my dissertation project because I felt exposed and vulnerable. As an educator of pre-service art education students, I ask students to reflect critically, but I had failed to do so in my own work as a teacher-researcher-educator. Teacher educators who ask others to become vulnerable must be willing to do so themselves, engaging teacher candidates in critical dialogue in an equitable standpoint, not a position of authority (Berry & Loughran, 2005).

In this self-study research, therefore, I have struggled to find my voice and my place in art education. Throughout the course of my research, I have found my voice within the group of art educators who believe that creating democratic spaces within school systems is vitally important to the well being of our students and the professional field of education. I find my voice within a group of inexperienced pre-service art students eager to teach lessons about social justice and art education, fostering broader understanding of art practices. I validate my voice through lived
experience, sixteen years of teaching art to children under constraints that can be understood only by living the question (McKay, 2006). By living the question, I validate my voice through the multiple roles I have fulfilled in art education: pre-service teacher, student teacher, novice teacher, experienced teacher, a teacher of teachers, and researcher-teacher.

In search of a safe place for art educators to share narratives about their own backgrounds, beliefs, and struggles within the teaching practicum, I had to remember what it felt like to have no cultural or social capital and to feel vulnerable, placing myself in the shoes of the pre-service student teacher once more. This meant going back to the time period of 1989-90 in order to (re) visit my own pre-service experience.

Drawing on powerful processes of resonance (Clandinin, 2007; Conle, 1996), I remembered painful episodes of vulnerability, betrayal, and resistance to hegemonic processes, the struggle to find a place in art education where I could belong. I began with pre-service art education students’ writings about the student teaching practicum. Analyzing their stories through writing as analysis (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2007), I first came to see their struggles and triumphs as partial and fleeting reflections of my own journey. Employing narrative and arts-based inquiry (Knowles & Cole, 2008; Levy, 2009), my comprehension of the students’ stories and accompanying images brought on powerful and sometimes painful recollections of my own failures within student teaching, drawing me into a position of vulnerability. Acknowledging the limitations imposed on me through institutional norms, as well as constraints I placed upon myself, I identified one of the central themes of my self-study research, vulnerability.

Working through dissertation materials from a position of vulnerability, I conceived new approaches to inquiry, fresh ways of remembering, telling and understanding narratives. Placing myself in the position of a novice pre-service educator lacking authority or social capital enabled
me to engage pre-service art student teachers in dialogue. Vulnerability is the beginning of
reflexivity (Hargreaves, 1995; Kelchermans, 1996; Kelchermans, 2009), allowing us to become
more humane, cultivating critical pedagogies that reflect democratic practices.

Narrative methodology can challenge orthodox canons, scrutinize the hegemonic processes
within research institutions, and envision new possibilities for research standards that reach beyond
generalization and replication. It is unsettling that in the United States we reward those whose
research ensures specific results and penalize those who do not conform to such performance
standards. Such attitudes foreclose opportunities to explore unpredictable outcomes, which, in
turn, normalize conventional research methods and results. In opposition to such systems, narrative
inquiry can become a problematizing practice set against the normalization of research procedures
that fulfill a predetermined model (Clandinin, 2007).

Preparing Oneself for Disclosure in Self-Study Research

I don't like remembering what it felt like to have someone tell me I
wasn't good enough. I become angry and there is resistance within
myself to recall the things I would like to forget. My reflections,
doubts, and prejudices have taken a narrative turn as I have
transposed my own memories of the student teaching practicum
alongside the student teachers’ digital stories. The pre-service
educators’ stories take me back to places of insecurity and
oppression, a time that I did not want to remember. The incidents
they relate are like tripwires. There is nowhere else I can go except
through this space, finally resolving within myself to put the dark
places of prejudice, ignorance, and abuse back where they belong.
This is not an easy decision to make. I mentally and emotionally
prepare to write about the ugliness and pain of that time.

(Journal, 2012)

Self-study research is not for the faint of heart. It forces you to disclose things from the
past. As a self-study researcher, I have to go beyond tracings of what was, putting myself mentally
and emotionally in that vulnerable place again, embodying the space of uncertainty, insecurity,
and resistance. Once my memories and reflections surfaced, they had changed. As I realized, I am now better equipped mentally and emotionally to handle what transpired in my past. Britzman (2007) recognizes that these “repressed experiences of education” (p. 2) receive little attention by teacher education programs, which largely continue to think about teacher development in linear terms, rather than seeing it more accurately as an iterative process. Without spaces to critically reflect, student teaching can be disorienting and frustrating process (Britzman, 2003).

Visualizing My Inquiry

At the beginning of each chapter in my study, I visualized my research processes through an arts-based and narrative inquiry as I produced visual metaphors representing my self-study journey. Preface to Chapter 1: The Fragmented Journey illustrates my futile attempts at trying to map a decentralized space within the student teaching practicum. After I began to work on the background to the problem and the limitations in this chapter, I realized my interest in decentralized systems did not match with the fragmented journey of the practicum because of the restrictive structures present in student teaching field experience. In Preface to Chapter 2: Borderlands, I explore the literature concerning inequities and issues surrounding teacher fieldwork, remembering my own resistance in becoming what is considered a good teacher. I created a voyeuristic viewpoint that illustrates hierarchical systems and normalization (Foucault, 1977) within educational institutions and in my student teaching practicum. Accessing multiple processes of visualizing and creating the data of my research, I employed methodologies of memory work and resonance in Preface to Chapter 3: Remnants, as I recalled the feelings of uncertainty, struggle, and oppression, I created a pastel drawing of what it felt like to tear away from hegemonic beliefs and values in my own teaching practices.
As I began to weave the student teacher narratives into something new and much more complex, it assisted me in understanding the broader framework of student teaching field experiences, as part of the results in Preface to Chapter 4: *Deconstructing the Myths of Teaching*, I produced a mixed-media piece from clay and paper. In Chapter 5, I visualized and produced a cumulative process of remembering, resisting, and recreating my story and teacher identity, Preface to Chapter 5: *Tilling the Field*, which connects back to the beginning of my journey in conducting this study and aligns with future implications of art teacher candidates’ fieldwork experiences. The results and themes that emerged from these five visual metaphors are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

**Limitations**

Many times, the narrative inquirer can feel as if they are in the right place at the wrong time (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This is how I felt when I finally connected with pre-service art teacher candidates in April 2012 as they were finishing their practicum experiences. Time constraints interfered with gathering the student teachers narratives, and possibly the lack of interaction between participants on the wiki site. Originally, I set up the wiki for art student teachers to create narratives, respond to each other, and establish dialogue with any member of the wiki group. Because the IRB process took longer than anticipated, the wiki site was not operational until April 2012. This left little time to gain access to gatekeepers, coordinators, and supervisors of student teachers. Even though I immediately sent out an email to NAEA listservs, most instructors, coming to the end of the semester, emailed with positive feedback on the project but declined participation due to time constraints.
Gathering participants for PostArtTeachingStories proved challenging. I had neither access to a classroom of pre-service art students’ or a position of authority within an institution of higher learning. As such, making my way by gatekeepers such as art education professors and supervisors was difficult, limiting my ability to recruit diverse participants. Nevertheless, 17 art education student teachers chose to complete a digital narrative on the wiki site. Because I am not teaching at a university and did not have the authority to require pre-service educators to participate in PostArtTeachingStories, I had to rely on participants who would volunteer to submit a narrative and gatekeepers whom I knew personally to help me collect the data before the end of the semester. Ten out of the seventeen participants who contributed a narrative to the site were asked by their art education instructors to submit a narrative reflection about their recent student teaching practicum for extra credit. I had not met these students previously and relied solely on the instructors to deliver instructions about the purpose of the site. The other seven participants were pre-service art education students I knew personally from a previous university but all participants used pseudonyms on the wiki site. Therefore, I was not sure which narratives and images were from the group of pre-service educators I had previously instructed.

I did not originally intend for this group of pre-service art educators to be geographically limited to one state. The majority of the pre-service art education student teacher participants came from large universities within the southern United States. Therefore, the narratives may reflect regional and cultural factors distinct from other geographical regions. At the same time, many of the eventual participants became busy with finishing school, graduating, and moving during the course of the study. Even though 17 student teachers created and shared narratives, none of the students commented on others’ or replied to the responses I left. In other words, there was no
dialogue. Convinced I would be unable to implement the defining concept of critical pedagogy and democratic practice—dialogue—I became frustrated and disappointed.

According to Freire (1970), dialogue is necessary to critical pedagogy because through it we come to understand the world and know others’ realities, which helps us deconstruct our own partial realities. At this point in my study, I reflected upon the fact that my own student teaching experience was undialogic and isolating. Realizing, however, that there was still time to create personal dialogue with the participants, I emailed them invitations to respond to my comments regarding their personal narratives. Three participants, who had created controversial or deeply personal narratives, agreed to respond. The additional information they submitted can be found in the appendix section.

Many ethical concerns demanding careful scrutiny emerged in working with the student teachers’ stories from the wiki site, which often touched on the wiki participants’ well-being and moral dilemmas they faced (Josselson, 1996). As a researcher using narrative methodology, I retell and interpret the art teacher candidates’ stories, placing them in a broader narrative of my self-journey as I reflect upon my remembered experiences in student teaching. Josselson (1996) reminds us that re-storying can be powerful but it can also be helpful in assisting one in deconstructing their past educational experiences (Britzman, 2003).

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) warn researchers of a particular effect of this intersubjectivity in narration, a smoothing-out of the story, “a tendency to invoke a positive result regardless of the indications of the data” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p.96). The student teachers and I may, indeed, create what Clements (2001) refers to as a “fictive voice,” which can entail the retelling of an event, slightly altered or changed by the participant to generate a more desirable or meaningful narrative. Embracing the fictive voice, however, can also become a way for the
participant and researcher to collaborate, using hindsight to make sense of the story (Clandinin, 2007). Therefore, I do not claim that each narrative is absolute truth because there are no absolute truths, only multiple interpretations.

The narrative assemblages I chose to use in my research study were the ones I thought best represented pre-service teachers’ interpretations, perspectives, and voices from within the practicum. Therefore, I only analyzed 11 of the 17 student teacher narratives, as well as my own voice constructed from memory of my practicum experiences from 1988. Such factors clearly raise the issue of personal bias in the interpretation of research.

Throughout the study, I rely on interpretive analysis and reflexivity to make transparent my research biases and aims. Understanding that as the researcher, I have the final say in creating meaning from the stories, I take full responsibility for my research and work. My interpretations and perspectives will not necessarily coincide with those of the student teachers who participated on the wiki site, as I was limited to member checking only the participants that responded to my email. Therefore, I acknowledge my bias because of the negative experience I encountered during one of my practicum experiences. I also recognize that my journey is different from other art educators’, and the paths I chose differ from others, all of which ultimately shapes the data collection, analysis, and conclusions of this study. But as many researchers have documented during collaborative inquiry, “each particular inquiry may fall short in different ways depending on the unique situation; this is not necessarily a fault of the inquiry but rather a feature of the complicated reality of academics and school people trying to work together” (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007, p. 374).
Conclusion

Through my self-study research, I have come to understand that negative experiences happen in the student-teaching practicum, and what I experienced in 1988-89 is not atypical. Unfortunately, not many stories of struggles, misunderstandings, and abuse of power in the practicum have been written. Therefore, we perpetuate the myth that all student teaching practicum’s result in positive field experiences for teacher candidates (Zeichner, 1980). I am writing my story to help others understand how bad experiences in student teaching affect our learning communities and our own teaching practices (Rozelle & Wilson, 2012).

In the following section, Chapter 2 explores another important aspect in my study, comprehending that inequities and social control are always present in institutional systems and in practicum experiences. Therefore, it is necessary to outline these restrictive structures and archaic practices so that we may question whether they are appropriate or harmful to current pre-service teachers. To encourage pre-service art educators in the face of such challenges, digital spaces may allow student teachers to question the status quo, encourage skills of negotiation, and reflect upon their practices with supportive communities. In Chapter 3, I introduce the research design and the data analysis process used that include a bricolage of qualitative methodologies from arts-based and narrative inquiry. In Chapter 4, I address the results of the data analysis, and the data created by the researcher and 11 student teachers who participated on the wiki site. In Chapter 5, I defend why having safe spaces to narrate teaching experiences in the practicum is a necessity for reflexivity and empowerment purposes, allowing for vulnerability and uncertainty when confronting the myths and inherited discourses of one’s own teaching practices (Britzman, 2003).
PREFACE TO CHAPTER 2: BORDERLANDS

Borderlands, assemblage, created and photographed by Joana Hyatt

It is about indoctrination and subordination, between the players and the played, and those on the outside of the game. In education it’s about teaching someone to accept the rules of the game without questioning them, allowing the institution to place you in a ranking order, of an inferior or superior class.

At times, I defer, play along, or resist, choosing to be insubordinate. What exists for me on the outside parameters are struggle, uncertainty, vulnerability, and a perspective that allows me to critique the players inside the institutions, to watch the game, voyeuristically from a safe distance, much like a tourist.

Make no mistake; I have played the player, temporarily. I have stayed in the game long enough to receive a good grade, a good evaluation, and an opportunity to teach. I never cared about what order I was ranked, or winning the game. Being able to pass through to the gates, through the turnstile, to the next space, on to the next phase was all that I cared about. Once the
goal was accomplished, I intentionally looked for the escape hatch, climbed over or crawled under the fence into the borderlands.

Opting out, my voice becomes muted and inaudible to the players still in the process of playing the game. The game goes on whether I participate in it or not. The networks continue to flow. Hubs and nodes are created but I am in the desert. In the desert, there are no continuous rivers or flows; there are only fragmented pools and wind. You must search with a purpose in mind.

(Journal, 2012)
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

*Teacher education is a hated field; no teacher really loves her or his own teacher education. They may soften this rage without a thought by saying, “They didn’t prepare me for the uncertainty.”*

Britzman

This chapter addresses scholarship on problems and issues in the practicum, commonly known as student teaching fieldwork. Then, I employ the lens of critical theory to examine the structures and processes of the student teaching practicum in relation to power inequities, evaluation methods, national standardization, confidential files, vulnerabilities in evolving teacher identity, imposed teacher roles, lack of social capital, and the perpetuation of myths in teacher culture due in part to the isolation of student teachers during fieldwork (Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Nielson, 2010; Nyberg, 1981; Zembylas & Barker, 2002). Through the lens of critical theory influenced by postmodern perspectives, I outline institutional barriers that prevent student teachers from fully exploring alternative identities and pathways to teaching. This entails highlighting university education systems, public schools, and the federal educational agencies role in perpetuating myths and inherited discourses concerning social practices in teaching (Britzman, 2003; Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009).

In order to provide an alternative framework against systems of oppression and the legitimating of power, the second portion of this literature review examines resistance theories that explore such themes as strategies of internal discourse, spaces of reflection, decentralization, anonymity, and negotiation of meaning (Bauman, 1997; Darts, 2004; Foucault, 1977 & 1984; Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009; Giroux, 2010; Jagodzinski, 2006; Nielson, 2010; Sweeny, 2004; Wenger, 1998). My literature review ultimately seeks insight from communities of creative
resistance, that serve as safe spaces amongst peers to question the status quo of institutional knowledge, especially for those without power in such social systems of education (Apple, 1995; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Britzman, 2003; Coleman, 1988).

Most broadly, this literature review examines hegemonic social structures of centralized institutions of learning, criticizing governmental standardization policies shaping student teaching field experience, while envisioning alternative spaces of decentralized digital networks. In sum, exploring how self-study research is a form of critical pedagogy (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2000; Loughran, 2005) as I found my voice within a group of pre-service art educators in the midst of their practicum experience. The narratives that they shared concerning their practicum experiences, allowed me to recall my own oppressive memories of my student teaching fieldwork.

As I examined the narrative stories of 17 pre-service art teacher candidates on the wiki site, it allowed me to reflect upon my own student teaching experiences. As I situated myself in this digital community, I began to see how teacher identity and the social practices of teaching could be further explored and improved upon. Pivotal in problematizing my own understanding of the student teaching practicum was reading the narratives from the pre-service student teachers as they grappled with the challenges and restrictions in the practicum. Especially concerning the social practices of becoming a teacher, which are never questioned in student teaching fieldwork (Britzman, 2003). Therefore, those narratives and my own reflections of the student teaching practicum affected what I researched and outlined in this literature review, as I examine the hierarchical structures which impede student teachers from fully examining alternative teaching identities and practices outside of the existing structures of educational institutions. I recalled being told what to teach, how to teach it, what a teacher should look like and above all else, I was told to emulate the mentor teacher. Educational institutions tend to acclimate new teachers into
preexisting roles and predetermined practices of how to teach (Britzman, 2003; Ingersool & Kralik, 2004). Therefore, this literature review examines the context and social practices of the practicum experience including; power inequities, standardization in teaching methods and evaluation, confidential files, teacher identity, and the isolation of pre-service fieldwork.

The Practicum

The student teaching practicum follows the conclusion of the pre-service art educators’ methodology courses. It usually takes a semester to complete the training, and it is often arranged through the college of education at the student’s university (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). In this context, I explore the meanings of imposed roles versus identity formation (Rots, Kelchtermans, & Aelterman, 2012; Sims, 2011; Smagorinsky et al., 2004), perpetuated myths concerning pre-existing roles and practices in teaching (Britzman, 2003: Ingersool & Kralik, 2004; Moustakin, 2007), and the effects of situating the practicum away from trusted mentors and peers (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Kardos & Johnson, 2007; Lacey, 1977).

Focusing on social structures in teacher training which often generates inequities in power relationships and forecloses creative spaces for student teachers’ critiques of the system. Drawing at times on my own experiences as well as the art teacher candidates narrative experiences, I will examine the reasons the practicum can be an oppressive experience of domination and control that pushes many pre-service art students away from teaching art in the public school, experiences which leave little room for inclusion of difference or teaching practices that focus on issues of social justice and democratic practices.
Such difficulties stem in many ways from inequities in the evaluation of student teachers (Anderson, 2007; Feiman-Nemser, 1996; McNay, 2003), the inaccessibility and impermanence of student teacher placement files (Babbush & Scidmore, 1972), the sometimes-restrictive teaching practices within practicum field experience (Anderson, 2007; Mays-Woods, 2003), and the lack of support and mentorship by students’ university communities as they work with cooperating teachers or supervisors (Beattie, 1995; Hartley, 1992). In addition, this study examines the need for creative outlets in which student teachers can express their experiences and question the status quo of educational institutions (Giroux, 2010).

Critiquing the Social Systems in Student Teaching

Educators of teachers are well aware of the institutional standards expected of teachers, and much of their instruction and advocacy is dedicated to keeping pre-service students from harm (Sims, 2011). Such efforts can sometimes encourage students to normalize their outlooks in order to attain and keep jobs, and more importantly, to handle the unique situations they encounter in the classroom. Key to such processes in teacher training can be the promotion of unexamined stereotypes of a ‘good teacher’ (Sims, 2011) that pressure student teachers to employ disingenuous role playing, abide by archaic rules of the status quo, and perpetuate myths prevalent in teacher culture within educational systems (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009). As educators, we are all in a sense self-normalizing, and we influence others to adapt to institutional educational behaviors, whether we are aware of it or not (Althusser, 1977; Foucault, 1977). Such contradictions and conflicts are always present in educational structures (Giroux, 1988). In becoming self-aware, however, we must teach student teachers to recognize such behaviors, question the status quo, and challenge the myths and stereotypes within teacher culture (Moustakin, 2007). In this way, art educators and
administrators in higher education need to support pre-service art teachers’ journeys at the most pivotal point of their academic careers, the student teaching practicum.

Social inequities concerning power relations and restrictive policies in the daily practices of the teaching (Kincheloe & McLauren, 1998) can affect the practicum evaluation methods (Anderson, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2001), through the misuse of power in mentoring student teachers (Britzman, 2003; McNay, 2003; Portelli, Solomon, & Patrick, 2001) and the confidential evaluations in student teacher placement files that have the potential to harm candidates chances of being initially hired in the teaching profession (Babbush & Scidmore, 1972). With the attention and focus being placed on these documents, is the realization that after 7 years my student teaching file was discarded. Many student teaching files are kept on file for only a few years (Fullan, 1993). Along with this idea of hierarchical and transient documentation, is the fragmented experience of the student teaching practicum itself, which does not fully explore the practicum as a learning environment that is geared towards critical reflection and connects to a deeper understanding of pre-service art educators past history and ideas (myths, stereotypes, misconceptions) and experiences about teaching (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000).

Power Inequities—Hidden Curriculum in the Practicum

This model [transmission] depends on a mentor's level of skill and knowledge because a mentee is expected to essentially emulate the mentor, uncritically. A clear weakness in this model, from our perspective, is that if the culture of the school is one where considerations of equity, diversity, and social justice are absent from everyday pedagogical and curricular considerations, then regardless of board-and province-based equity policies (e.g., Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 93), these crucial areas of teacher responsibility will not be passed on from mentor to mentee. The result will be the reproduction of pre-existing attitudes towards these issues and, consequently, inequitable teaching practices. (Barrett, Solomon, Singer, Portelli, & Mujuwamariua, 2009, p. 679-680)

Prevailing approaches to the teaching practicum are often rooted in conceptions of
mentorship and the transfer of knowledge that reproduce inherent structures of inequality between the student teacher and his or her mentors, supervisors, and cooperating teachers (Ingersool & Kralick, 2004). Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995) examination of two models of teacher induction/mentorship—knowledge transmission and knowledge transformation—illuminates the effects of such structures on student teachers. Knowledge transmission focuses on the transfer of knowledge from expert to novice. Freire (1977) equated this idea in education as if filling an empty vessel (the student) with knowledge from the expert (the instructor) referred to as banking education. This model is typified by the cooperating teacher who successfully herds student teachers in the ‘right’ direction, assimilating them into a school’s culture (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Its dangers have been examined by Barrett, Soloman, Singer, Portelli, and Mujuwamariua (2009), who explore the process of choosing mentors, the vulnerability of new teachers in probationary status, and methods of evaluating student teachers’ competence. Their study generally shows that many new teacher induction programs are set up in a way that discourages new teachers from critiquing the system that employs them, making less likely a critical or resistive stance against institutional norms. Structuring teacher training in this way creates a hidden curriculum, built upon institutional norms and values that are rarely discussed or acknowledged by teachers or administrators (Barrett et al., 2009).

Overall, the majority of student teachers find their teaching practicum worthwhile and satisfactory, but there persists a minority of student teachers who report serious dissatisfaction with the practicum, citing “unreasonable demands, insufficient guidance, dashed hopes, and use and abuse by cooperating teachers” (McNay, 2003, p. 72). There is a myth that all teaching field experience is good (Zeichner, 1980), but in reality, many negative practicum experiences stunt student teachers’ abilities and limit their future career paths. I know this because it happened to
me. Such experiences, however, are rarely, if ever, documented (Liston & Zeichner, 1991; McNay, 2003). Nevertheless, negative experiences with cooperating teachers can tarnish student teachers’ reputations and employment opportunities; even if student teachers rigorously fulfill the practices they learned in their university training (Babbush & Scidmore, 1972; McNay, 2003).

Compounding the professional difficulties imposed on teachers who have negative practicum experiences, mentor teacher and supervisor evaluations are retained in student placement files only for a limited number of years before being discarded. For example, as a student teacher I never had the opportunity to examine my own files and I was encouraged by university faculty to specify I wanted to have a closed file. Such a lack of access to such materials creates a clear barrier to both professional success and reformation of the practicum.

With the influence of the evaluation process in the balance, great pressure falls upon pre-service teachers to establish positive relationships not only with cooperating teachers, but also students and university supervisors. “There are radical differences between these settings that are rooted in historical, social, political, educational, and structural circumstances... The explicit purpose of the modern university is to push out the boundaries of knowledge... In comparison, the modern school is most often seen as a place to maintain what is established, not to interrupt it” (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008, p. 187).

Many pre-service educators are naïve about establishing such relationships, trusting that any difficulties can be resolved through better communication and a common general commitment to the practicum (Sims, 2011). Since student teachers are considered novice and inexperienced in the ways of education (Britzman, 2003), they are also denied recognition and power within the teaching sphere (McNay, 2005). There is an urgent need, therefore, for greater representation of student teachers’ perspectives that will advance their interests during the practicum. “Given their
already demanding responsibilities, the added task of having to function as the interpretive bridge between the university and the school can be very troublesome” (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008, p. 188). Nevertheless, negotiation and arbitration skills, let alone power relationships, are rarely addressed in teacher education, and few studies examine issues of power within the practicum setting (McNay, 2003).

The following examination of several discursive strategies, which are specific applications to teacher education, will lay the groundwork for teaching such forms of communication to pre-service teachers in ways that bolster their positions amid the power inequities of the practicum. Central to such a formulation is the principle of dialogue. As Gadamer (1975) points out, such understanding is based on a hermeneutic framework that encourages processes of making connections through discourse, and Rorty (1989) notes the importance of sustaining such dialogue. Nevertheless, “our teacher-preparation programs do scant little to help teachers deal with conversation—to ask the sort of questions that elicit responses that can serve the recursive function,” (Doll, 1993, p. 151). Discourse is never approached as something constructed by cultural groups and communities, and that these discourses and the interests they serve may conflict (Duncan, 1992).

Poirier’s (1992) reflection on her practicum illustrates the dangers of such an approach. She notes that her “personal sense of power was undermined,” and “conflict... characterized my journey as a student teacher” (p. 82). She affirms that power and authority in the practicum favor cooperating teachers. Poirier’s experience illustrates the ways that power may be defined in positive and negative ways, but power relations remain inescapable (Foucault, 1979). Power is central to the meaning of every practicum. Why then do some student teachers report abuse of power while others are satisfied or surrender and accede to it? Studies that explore power
relationships in the practicum informed by a social constructionist perspective can illuminate such questions (Badali, 1994), specifying divergent interpretations of the abuse of power.

In fact, even cooperating teachers often dislike shouldering such forms of power, since as sole evaluators, they wonder if student teachers make authentic changes or simply conform to their suggestions to be agreeable and attain positive evaluations (Badali, 1994). Illustrating the corrosive effects of such forms of power, Mays-Woods (2003) shows that some cooperating teachers place student teachers in subordinate positions by, for example, interrupting them in mid-lesson to correct them in front of the class. For Anderson (2007), power is a sociopolitical configuration that socializes new teachers through ritual. Little-discussed in teacher education literature, differentials of power can lead to bias or “rules of the game” that operate at the institutional level to “benefit certain persons or groups at the expense of others” (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970, p. 43). Foucault (1980) reminds us that “power is ubiquitous and inescapable and cannot be separated from knowledge” (p. 309). By means of the evaluation process, cooperating teachers wield such power over those who need their knowledge and institutional approval.

Evaluations

Many forms of coercion and legitimizing power are present in the student teaching practicum; in that through coercive power the one who has power can reward or punish others so that they comply with the legitimizing power of hierarchical institutions (French & Raven, 1960). Several studies have demonstrated the ways that cooperating teachers exert power over student teachers through evaluations, the quantity and quality of knowledge they share, uses of vested authority, and personal investment in student teachers (Anderson, 2007; Barrows, 1979; Feiman-Nemser, 1996; McNay, 2003). Anderson (2007) affirms the importance of acknowledging
cooperating teachers’ power stemming from the evaluation, while other studies show cooperating/mentor teachers are not comfortable with publicly acknowledging their authority over teacher candidates, some even complaining about having to mentor, teach, model, and evaluate them (Badali, 1994). At the same time, “some teachers have power or authority over others and they use it in not necessarily constructive ways. They use it to get what they want” (Badali, 1994, p. 74). This differential of power presents inequities within the social system of the student teaching practicum since student teachers are pressured to do whatever the cooperating teacher wants in order to avoid confrontation (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Graham, 1999).

Indeed, Barrows (1979), in a case study of student teaching triads (cooperating teacher, student teacher, university supervisor), shows that in order to receive positive evaluations from cooperating teachers, student teachers “imitate, not experiment, conform and not challenge, and… accept and not question,” (p. 25). McNay (2003) further asserts that evaluations “can make or break a career,” urging other researchers to study power relationships in the triad, especially between cooperating teachers and student teachers, focusing on the everyday subtle messages student teachers experience. Presently, however, there exists very little research on ensuring fair evaluations by creating more equitable relationships between cooperating teachers and student teachers. Defining and implementing such practices can be difficult because power is hard to define and equally hard to measure (Lukes, 2005).

Current practices of student teaching evaluation in higher education further constrain the learning process for aspiring teachers. While cooperating teachers are considered mentors, their relationship to student teachers is fundamentally flawed; because mentors are not involved in assessment or evaluation because novices are less likely to share problems and ask for help if they expect to be evaluated by their mentors (Feiman-Nemser, 1996). Badali (1994) notes that while
not all cooperating teachers concede that power is inherent in the evaluation process, the evidence shows that the “person who has the power is the cooperating teacher... The ultimate power is that written evaluation at the end of the practicum. What you say there can make or break a career” (p. 75). Rots, Kelchtermans, and Aelterman (2012) note that teacher candidates admitted that pleasing cooperating teachers was important because of their power to evaluate. Indeed, an essential part of many student teachers’ workloads is learning how to manage and please mentors (Maynard, 2000).

Standardizing Evaluations

Evaluations are a necessity in education, but how, what, and why we evaluate—along with who wields this power—are important questions, especially since frameworks of evaluation and the objectives of public education generally have been transformed dramatically by government education policy over the past two decades (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Essential to questions of teacher training in this context is the influence of the federal agency the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which sets standards for teacher training, accreditation, and defines a vision of good teaching in elementary and secondary schools. As such, one of NCATE’s primary missions is promoting evidence-based accountability for standards of teacher performance according to its conception of effective educator practices. Many education scholars, however, are skeptical of NCATE initiatives, seeing them as an attempt to impose a conservative standardization of teacher education (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009) that threatens to “trivialize and bureaucratize our profession” (Johnson, Johnson, Farenga, & Ness, 2005, pg. 175). Such scholars especially note that NCATE standards ignore the complex formation of teacher identity. Moreover, considering the overwhelming failure of No Child Left Behind (Chapman, 2004) the Department of Education’s move toward increasing influence in higher education is
troubling. Will teaching education programs in higher education experience similar results to NCLB, with over two-thirds of U.S. universities failing to meet hegemonic and over-simplified performance-based standards?

In response to the standardization of education through NCLB, teacher education must be wary of the ways NCATE guidelines can actually lower standards of teacher training by displacing other forms of evaluation and enforcing disingenuous role playing by student teachers (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009; Pinar, 2006), instead of acknowledging the complex process of teacher identity formation. Indeed, practicum evaluations based on oversimplified standards overlook cultural knowledge, local contexts of schools, university partnerships, and working in diversified classrooms. Such an evaluation tool fails to draw upon teacher candidates’ past experiences, which are a crucial basis of teacher identity and beliefs (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009). If we accept these rigid standards without questioning the affective domains of teaching, we discount our own knowledge as scholars, researchers, and educators. In such a context, education can become “a matter of getting people to acquire prescribed traits, using whatever means that ‘research has shown’ to be most efficient, and then measuring... the trait” (Varenne, 2007, p. 22). Embracing standardized approaches to teacher training most certainly promotes hegemonic practices that lack intellectual rigor, neglect cultural values and knowledge, and ignore the affective domains of teacher development (Pinar, 2006).

Evaluations and Confidential “Closed” Files

In the spring of 1988 a woman in the teacher placement office told me, “you can have a ‘closed’ file or an ‘open’ file but no one ever wants an open file.”

This seemed odd to me at the time because I assumed open meant good, and closed meant bad.
“No, having an open file means you don’t trust your supervisor and cooperating teacher but a closed file makes you look confident in yourself and perspective employers, like principals who will want to know if you have an open or closed file” she assured me. (Journal, 2011)

For the student teacher, having a closed file, which was recommended by the teacher placement office at the educational institution I attended in 1988, means never knowing what kind of evaluations supervisors or cooperating teachers write. As a student, I thought this practice odd. Since the file represents the student’s experience and practicum, her career and future, should she not know what her own file says about her? In my case, since my first cooperating teacher did not discuss my evaluation with me, I had no idea what she wrote. This was not only inconvenient; it eventually placed me in a precarious situation. Being fearful that I would not be able to acquire employment because of her evaluation, I was left in limbo wondering whether I should address my negative practicum experience during job interviews or hope that her evaluation would be overlooked.

There exists no documentation of how many student placement offices still advocate this archaic form of control rather than an open student teacher file system, but many do. I hear about this practice through other professors and students. In cases where a student’s file is closed, even though he or she has received a passing grade, the student teacher may be passed over for a position if the cooperating teacher or supervisor evaluations are negative or unflattering. It is my firm belief that teacher training should be about reforming, tutoring, and assisting students to become their best, but how can students achieve such results they if they have no feedback on their errors or how to correct them? “In most school districts, business, industry, and government, and even in the non-academic and academic personnel areas of most colleges, confidential files have been replaced by evaluation forms that end secrecy and allow the individual to see his evaluations and
either agree or disagree with them. Why, then, has this archaic practice of the Victorian era been perpetuated in the education profession?” (Babbush & Scidmore, 1972, p. 222). Babbush and Scidmore (1972) argue that confidential files hurt student teachers especially because they provide no opportunity to contest evaluations, unnecessarily making it difficult to secure employment, which is an important factor in student teachers’ negative experiences in teacher education programs. Despite the publication of such research beginning in 1972, it appears that many universities still have not dismantled such damaging practices.

To practice democratic evaluation methods, student teachers should have a right to access evaluation files and register grievances about them. Only by creating safe and equitable practicum programs will universities truly advance their programs’ capacities to shepherd student teachers successfully through the process of becoming professionals in their fields. Reframing the evaluation process in more open ways has the potential to deepen the practicum’s capacity to educate teachers for their future careers. In such a context, all educators may affirm that “the purpose of observations is not judgment, but to provide a common text for discussion—to give us the opportunity to engage in a meaningful conversation about education that will further our thinking” (Kubler-LaBoskey, 2005, p. 138). Then the evaluation process could function as an essential, positive, formative experience for student teachers, rather than a punitive form of control. Accountability in education should ultimately be rooted in moral issues of caring, serving, empowering, and learning (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998).

Teacher Identity

Hargreaves (2001) expounds upon the idea of emotional contexts in teaching by examining teaching and educational leadership, which he finds embedded in affective domains of teacher
identity construction. Indeed, professional discourse in teacher education must address how pre-service teachers handle reconstructing professional identities under changing conditions. Instead of looking for quick and easy ways to assess teachers’ performance, evaluation methods must question linear ways of thinking about teacher identity development in order to address ambiguity, evolution, and internal processes (Berci, 2007; Britzman, 2007; Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009). Day and Gu (2007) note that in addition to mastering their subject areas, “to be effective, teachers need to be able to manage successfully the challenges embedded in the emotional contexts of teaching” (p. 429). At the same time, teacher identity formation is complex and messy, and addressing the affective domains of teaching is necessary for the teacher candidate to understand how his or her own experiences affect teaching practices (Berci, 2007; Britzman, 2007; Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009). In some occupations and professions, the craft of one’s profession can be detached from self-image, but this is not so for teachers. Teacher identity and self-image are crucial but often overlooked topics in teacher education (Bell, 1998; Kelchtermans, 2005; Nias, 1989). Moreover, if teacher education rigidly enforces standardized visions of good teaching, many student teachers may lose opportunities to examine their beliefs through critical discourse, missing essential stages of transformational learning (Cochran-Smith, 2010; Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Wideen, Mayersmith, & Moon, 1998). As an alternative, Zembylas and Barker (2002) suggest that we should provide opportunities for student teachers that “encourage critical examination of their prior beliefs in ways that can initiate powerful transformation in their thinking and teaching practices by focusing on their reflections, emotions, and attitudes” (p. 331).

Important to perceiving teacher identity in this way is Kelchtermans (2005) formulation of self-understanding, which avoids the term identity since it can imply “a static essence which ignores the fluid and dynamic biographical nature of a teachers’ understanding of self” (p. 999).
In contrast, self-understanding refers to “the understanding one has of one’s self at a certain moment in time, as well as to the fact that this results from an ongoing process of making sense of one’s experiences and their impact on the self” (p. 1000). Kelchtermans (2009) explains, “self-understanding involves both the product (the self in a certain moment in time) and the process (an ongoing mode of making sense of one’s experiences) and how the two impact the self” (p. 261). Self-understanding is important to pre-service educators as they become comfortable with their own cultural values and ideas that affect their teaching practices (Kelchtermans, 2009). Moreover, cooperating teachers, supervisors, and professors of education must be alert to student teachers’ needs to develop self-understanding in this crucial phase of development in which they possess only limited social and cultural capital (Mitchell & Weber, 2005). As both the ongoing process and the product of teachers’ self-understanding are always in flux, an individual with a deep sense of self-understanding can recognize readily the roles and identities that do not mesh with self-perception or personally held teaching values (Rots, Kelchtermans, & Aelterman, 2012; Sims, 2011).

There are diverse modes of thinking about teaching, encompassing profession and craft (Pratte & Rury, 2001), and discipline (Loughran & Russell, 2007). Kelchtermans (2009) stresses the importance of teachers’ self-understanding in defining the meaning of teaching, drawing upon Loughran’s (2006) formulation of essential aspects of teaching: “becoming public; becoming an object of critical review and evaluation of the members of that community; and, member of that community beginning to use, build upon and develop those acts of mind and creation” (Loughran, 2006, p. 81). In this context, a teacher develops self-understanding during the practicum to a great extent as a reflection of others’ perceptions of his or her job performance. Hence, essential to student teacher success is the development of self-esteem, a crucial emotional component to job
satisfaction and self-fulfillment, matching one’s personal understanding of the meaning of teaching for one’s self with normative standards (Rots, Kelchtermans, & Aelterman, 2012).

Although self-esteem and self-efficacy are both important to development and well-being to all individuals, there is a distinct difference. Self-esteem relates to a more permanent internal feeling about oneself whereas self-efficacy relates the desire and capacity to envision and complete a specific task or performance at hand (Bandura, 1993). Such factors as self-efficacy underpin the baseline job motivation that both drives student teachers to commit to the work of teaching or give up and seek another career. In this way, the student teaching practicum becomes both a personal interpretive framework and a critical event in student teachers’ relations with the socializing norms of the profession. Confronting tensions between individual approaches and the demands of such norms, many pre-service educators experience “praxis shock” (Rots, Kelchtermans, & Aelterman, 2012). In such a situation, student teachers who have already suffered from setbacks to self-esteem can give up the work of teaching in order to protect the integrity of self-image. When student teachers become objects of critical review and evaluation, they can feel bullied and mistreated amid harsh criticism. An effective approach to the practicum most account for such intersections among self-understanding, self-image, and professional commitment and development, creating spaces of discourse to understand the normalizing functions of the critical gaze inherent in the evaluation process. Such an approach can make the practicum a productive phase of self-study that identifies and works to remedy the frustrations inherent in becoming teachers (Zeichner, 2010).

Vulnerability and Evolving Teacher Identity

It is a fluid state of being that can be influenced by the way people perceive their present situation as it interacts with their identity, beliefs, values, and sense of competence. It is a fluctuating state of being, with critical incidents acting as triggers to intensify or in other ways change a person’s existing state of vulnerability. (Kelchtermans, 2005, p. 998)
As teacher training shapes teacher identity, the experience of vulnerability is inevitable. Not a mood or emotion, vulnerability is a structural condition inherent to teaching (Kelchtermans, 2005). For student teachers, the experience of vulnerability encompasses the cooperating teachers’ classrooms and its contexts. Because the pedagogical relationship between teacher and student can never be controlled, this dimension of educational relationships can bring about judgment and scrutiny from others. Being a teacher means accepting a vulnerable position: “To teach is to be vulnerable... to be vulnerable is to be capable of being hurt” (Bullough, 2005, p. 23). Coping with vulnerability becomes, then, a central feature of identity and self-understanding for teachers. For example, one study documents how novice teachers can feel powerless, threatened, or questioned by others without being able to properly defend themselves (Kelchtermans, 2005). Such teachers also feel vulnerable about not being in full control of their teaching responsibilities.

Blasé (1988) frames this form of vulnerability for teachers in a political context, examining how educators develop coping strategies to combat it that often result in “conservative micropolitical actions aimed at preserving the status quo” (p. 997). Vulnerability also shapes the ethical relationships between pupil and teacher. Many educators feel vulnerable opening up a space of communication where education can take place (Kelchtermans, 2009). In this context, making a difference in students’ lives means “vulnerability is not only a condition to be endured, but also to be acknowledged, cherished, and embraced” (Kelchtermans, 2005, p. 999).

At the same time, vulnerability in the context of student teaching is also an important issue for cooperating teachers. Once student teachers enter classrooms, cooperating teachers can feel threatened by loss of control (Sims, 2011). Such misgivings can lead to communications that undermines the effectiveness of the teaching practicum. For example, in one study, mentor teachers were frustrated by teacher candidates’ lack of commitment and initiative, but researchers
noted there were no indications that the cooperating teachers discussed their frustrations with teacher candidates or university supervisors, creating a damaging lack of “joint storylines” (Sims, 2011, pg. 147). Along with teacher candidates, cooperating teachers must make sense of their own feelings of vulnerability. Such a context would forge alternative spaces for communications and narrative inquiry encouraging cooperating teachers to be open to new possibilities and collaborative narratives (Sims, 2011, p. 148).

As pre-service art students encounter such restrictions in public school teaching (Smagorinsky, Cook & Johnson, 2003), they can feel particularly vulnerable (Kelchtermans, 2009), immersed in a hierarchal system in which they may not know anyone and their choices are limited to how one is supposed to teach and what they want to teach or what to do in the face of teaching in a restrictive environment. In this situation, such students are acutely in need of mentors (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985), but they typically lose such connections at this time, along with communities of art education peers, instructors and professors who might facilitate critical discourse and decentralized resistance. During the student-teaching practicum and the first year of teaching, pre-service art education students are vulnerable (Kelchtermans, 2009). Student teaching is a very precarious time for art education pre-service students. Many pre-service student teachers longer receive university mentoring and guidance on a daily or even weekly basis.

Negotiated Meanings in Teacher Identity

Neither cognition nor feeling can be separated from the social and cultural forces which help to form them and which are in turn shaped by them. The unique sense of self which every teacher has is socially grounded. (Nias, 1996, p. 294)

Expanding possibilities for collaborative understandings of the practicum, pre-service teachers’ formation of identity during this phase of their educations may be described in relation
to the negotiation of meanings within a social configuration. When such negotiations of meaning are left unaddressed through prevailing modes of discourse, myths, stereotypes, and imposed teacher identities can perpetuate restrictions on teachers (Sims, 2011). Gee (2000) notes that student teaching—and teaching in general—largely constructs teacher identity by recognizing and praising a certain kind of person within a social context. As a product of social interaction, the object of such recognition is in a state of continual redefinition. For Wenger (1998), this on-going process of construction and reconstruction of identity characterizes the negotiation of “values of meanings and ownership of meanings” (Wenger, 1998, p. 200). In this social context, meanings are either recognized or dismissed according to the influence of individuals who have varying degrees of control over the meanings that are produced in a situation” (Sims, 2011, p. 146).

In such a system of negotiated meaning, contradictions in cooperating teachers’ expectations of their student teachers in the practicum can arise due to the lack of collaboration and communication among the triad of cooperating teacher, student teacher, and university supervisor (Sims, 2011). Indeed, recent studies have shown that cooperating teachers often do not share with student teachers all of their expectations, some of which are unrealistic, such as projecting an indefinable ‘teacher presence,’ which ultimately amounts to gut feelings that student teachers “either have it or they don’t” (Sims, 2011, p. 146). One way to overcome myths of ‘good teachers’ and ‘teacher presence’ is to have a neutral space that allows discourse productive to negotiations. Professional discourse must take place in a context-neutral territory, and such spaces of possibility can allow the examination and negotiation of tensions in the creation of teacher identity (Grimmett et al., 2008). In this context, Zembylas and Barker (2002) have suggested establishing communities of discourse (Resnick, 1991) that foster reflection, inquiry, and emotional support as part of the pre-service teacher’s educational journey. Such communities are
based on providing individual spaces and community conversations that focus on the participants’ attitudes and emotions (Barker, 2001).

The Isolation of Student Teaching

Creating communities that bring negotiated meanings to the fore is essential in preparing pre-service teachers to overcome the isolating effects of the practicum. The fraught working conditions of the teaching practicum can greatly influence the pre-service student teacher’s interpretive framework and future motivation for an educational career. Relationships with the cooperating teacher, supervisor, and the school environment itself can determine the success of the student teacher. “Among the most demanding aspects of learning to be a teacher is the need to work across two different settings: the host school and the university” (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008, p. 187). Such constraints can affect pre-service teachers’ classroom practices and communication with the outside world, and this is especially true for novice art educators who may feel powerless because they lack social capital in the unfamiliar arena of the public school. Understandably, student teachers may be hesitant to critique the hierarchical structures embedded within the systems. Hence, many pre-service art educators and art teachers do not have the luxury of being completely open when discussing the student teaching practicum because they are not supported by their administration or school community.

The pre-service educator enters into a world of restrictive institutional standards and norms, and during this period of adjustment, many students feel as if their self-image and self-esteem are under attack (Rots, Kelchtermans & Aelterman, 2012). Many times, student teachers are ill-prepared for what they will encounter (Feldman, 2003) in the practicum. The all-too-common experience of having an appointed supervisor from the university, whom they may have just met
during the practicum, can undermine the support of the trusting relationships student teachers build over time with peers, mentors, and instructors from their home university departments (Samaras & Gismondi, 1998; Tom, 1997; Winitzky, Stoddart, & O’Keefe, 1992). Along with the newly appointed supervisor assigned to the student teachers from colleges of education, is the realization that many of these supervisors do not possess specific content knowledge or have experience in art education. This affects the kind of critical feedback the student teacher will receive when they need it in the field (Borko & Mayfield, 1995). Moreover, the absence of a supportive community in which to address such issues can have adverse effects on teaching experiences within the practicum. Anomie can envelop individuals amid dramatic shifts of societal norms, rapid change, and demands without clear rewards (McLuhan, 1964). Pre-service art students are particularly vulnerable to such pressures in the practicum, immersed in the hierarchal system of public education and detached from university methodology classes (Kelchtermans, 2009). In this situation, they not only lose the comfort of university mentorship but also their connections with classmates in an environment that supports democratic principles and the teaching of social justice. Missing from most teachers training is discourse on teacher education (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008; Simons & Kelchtermans, 2008) that pays “formal attention to the non-technical aspects of teaching, particularly the intense social and emotional challenges associated with learning to teach” (Rots, Kelchtermans, & Aelterman, 2012, p. 9). Identity and knowledge are socially situated; we come to know ourselves through our interactions with others (Lave & Wenger, 1998). Since the only person the student teacher interacts with on a daily basis is the cooperating teacher, it can become increasingly difficult throughout the practicum for the pre-service art educator to maintain a productive image of him or herself as an educator. In turn, this conflict can vitiate his or her overall vision of their learning journey to becoming a teacher.
Theoretical Framework – Critical Theory

The term, critical theory, first emerged from the Frankfurt School of Sociology by philosopher, Max Horkheimer in 1937 (Held, 1980). It is an intellectual inquiry often used broadly to define a theory built upon the critique of society and culture, confronting social, historical, and ideological forces which constrain and produce it (Horkheimer, 1972). Critical theory has two strains, the first being associated with the sociology (Aggers, 2006), the other with literary criticism (Habermas, 1968). Modernist versions of critical theory focused on authority and injustice which produced categories, distinctions, and boundaries (Best & Kellner, 1991). Critical theory is considered a social theory because it is broadly based on critiquing, challenging, and changing society holistically, understanding society historically, and interpreting and extending those understandings by integrating the social sciences (Horkheimer, 1972).

Critical Theory – Postmodern Perspectives

Critical theory from a postmodern perspective is a social theory that strives to broadly change society by critiquing political and social structures, which addresses the crisis of representation (Lindlof, & Taylor, 2002), as it illuminates the political in social systems through historical and cultural contexts that produce multiplicities of experience (Best & Kellner, 1991). Postmodern critical theory focuses on localized narratives versus unified broad generalizations, which are present in master narratives (Best & Kellner, 1991). As such, postmodern theorists (Foucault, 1980; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) reject modernist versions of a “unified, rational, and expressive subject” (Best & Kellner, 1991, p. 78). This rejection is due in part to allow for possibilities of difference to emerge, “decentered subjects liberated from what they see to be the terror of fixed and unified identities, and free to become dispersed and multiple,
reconstituted as new types of subjectivities and bodies” (Best & Kellner, 1991, p. 78).

Although postmodernism and critical theory have distinguishing differences, they also have similarities that align with my study; critiquing academic divisions of labor that create boundaries and restrict social realities, and criticisms against modernity concerning social domination and rationalization (Best & Kellner, 1991). One of the most mutual constructs between critical theory and postmodernism is the alignment of “social theory, philosophy, cultural critique and political concern” (p.215). Both theories also attempt to join theory to practice, and discourse to politics (Best & Kellner, 1991). It is through the lenses of critical theory informed by postmodern perspectives that inequities in the status quo of the student teaching practicum begin to surface as I reexamined my own fieldwork experiences (Anderson, 2007; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Hargreaves, 2001; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; McNay, 2003; Rots, Kelchtermans, & Aelterman, 2012; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Zeichner, 2010).

Hebdige (1989) was guarded about his comments towards postmodernism stating that postmodernism is “a site of conflicting ideological struggles- denounced by different factions on both the left and the right (p. 226). Giroux (1990) explains that postmodernism cannot be easily labeled under categories of left versus right. Hebdige (1986) does align with one particular concept in postmodernism, its ability to open up critical discourse to a collective with many line of inquiry in order to change the traditional triangular forms of power and knowledge, where the expert is positioned at the top and the masses at the base.

Giroux (1990) believes postmodernism challenges the modernist version of discourse which tends to construct borders that “reproduce domination, subordination, and inequality” (p.18). Postmodernism shifts boundaries. Hicks (1988) envisioned the possibility of
postmodernism as a form of border-crossing where identities are framed by experience and set apart by the exchange of multiple narratives. As such, experience and multiple narratives can include those whose history and voices have been marginalized by modernist institutions. Part of examining such narratives is to open up vocabulary to include political and cultural differences.

**Critical Theory – Examining Myths in Teacher Education**

More specifically, critical theory illuminated the in-between spaces—as a pre-service student who is not quite in the university or permanently within school systems—where resistance to change and the perpetuation of inequity and myth are most powerful (Aggers, 1991; Liston & Zeichner, 1991; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012) as this is a time of great uncertainty for many pre-service educators. A primary virtue of critical theory is its power to examine conflicts, contradictions, and myths at the heart of social, cultural, and political systems (Baudrillard, 1998; Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Nice, 2000; Freire, 1977; Giroux, 1988). At the same time, it allows researchers and participants to resolve problems through the performance of discourse, as well as through mediation and negotiation. A platform for “critical activity,” which Best and Kellner (1991) characterizes as oppositional work questioning the status quo, critical theory facilitates the critical analysis of others and oneself in social productions through media, discursive communications, and role-playing within teacher culture. Such investigations can lead us to discover that each of us can serve as a conduit of ideological indoctrination. At the same time, such critical perspectives make possible discourses that begin to dismantle myths and stereotypes of teacher roles in education (Britzman, 2003; Giroux, 2001; Loughran, 2004; Zeichner, 1980).

In my particular study I use critical theory to critique systems in pre-service art educators’ practicum experiences and within my own fieldwork experiences that address systems of inequities
that exist historically, culturally, politically, and socially. As well as look at the results from such repressive systems effects on pre-service educators. Building upon such a formulation, my study addresses the experiences of pre-service art education student teachers, particularly the way they are trained, mentored, and evaluated. I examine problems and issues unique to art education student teachers; exploring ways they may productively critique the practicum through narrative and visual inquiry. Critical theory allows one to uncover disingenuous role-playing and myths perpetuated in teacher culture and the practicum, including the “sink or swim” mentalities or the “praxis shock” that separates pre-service student teachers from trusted peers, mentors, and instructors (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Maynard, 2001).

The Social is Political: Power Structures and Hegemony in Teacher Education

The critical theorist in education strives to identify structures of oppression in everyday lived experience, tracing how meaning making occurs within social contexts and deconstructing meaning as a critical form of pedagogy. Critical theory focuses on issues of power and justice, especially in relation to the construction of social systems around discourses of race, class, gender, ideology, and education (Giroux, 1983; hooks, 1984). Within power structures, myths are indispensable to maintaining the status quo. The legitimizing powers within hierarchical institutions perpetuate myths (Freire, 1977; Levi-Strauss, 1955). According to Levi-Strauss (1955) myths are not just language; they also involve storytelling using relational structures, providing myths with a timeless quality. Along with myths, hegemony is often exerted as social control in order to maintain the status quo of institutional regimes. “The term hegemony refers to a situation in which a provisional alliance of certain social groups can exert total social authority over other subordinate groups, not simply by coercion or by the direct imposition of ruling ideas, but by
winning and shaping consent so that the power of the dominant class appears both legitimate and natural” (Hebdige, 1993, p. 358). Hebdige (1979) maintains that the dominant class is successful in maintaining and controlling consent within subordinate groups by framing all definitions that are recognizing and legitimized within that alliance of social.

The particular power structures I analyze in my research are institutions of learning, primarily public schools and public universities, digital networks, and the federal policies about teacher education and the hegemonic roles and constraints that they produce. By examining institutions of learning from a traditional poststructuralist viewpoint, I hope to uncover myths, inequities, and prevailing ideologies that limit pre-service students’ future learning journeys and their roles as art educators. At the same time, contemporary critical theories allow me to enact and imagine digital decentralized networks as relational spaces unfolding in real time and space. It is in these spaces—digital, imagined, and enacted—this study reveals that negotiated meanings can assist pre-service art students and universities in creating resistive spaces to navigate unfamiliar terrain in contemporary environments, which are anything but kind to educators (Brown, 2006; Giroux, 2012; Hill, 2006).

**Social Capital and the Teaching Practicum**

Critical theory can illustrate false assumptions about existing research and “expose ideological effects on teachers, schools, and the culture’s view of education” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 142). Such critical perspectives may especially be applied to foundational problems residing in the hierarchal foundations of school structures (Delacruz, 2010). Nevertheless, institutional pressures make it difficult to create platforms to share the critical perspectives of teachers. Many pre-service art educators would like to share their experiences
about the student teaching practicum, including the joy they found teaching art within excellent support systems. Others, like me, had negative experiences that left them confused, angry, frustrated, and searching for answers. In digital networks for teachers, such voices are generally missing, to a great extent because teachers fear retaliation from their current administration, loss of future employment opportunities (Darts, 2008 & 2011; Delacruz, 2009), or damage to their reputations with colleagues. Using contemporary critical theory as part of my research allows me to critique such social obstacles and make visible the hierarchical structures barring pre-service art education students to criticize or question myths and stereotypes within public education (Britzman, 2007).

In this context, Bourdieu’s (1977) conception of cultural capital—social codes, beliefs, morals, and tastes upheld by the ruling class—is enlightening. According to Bourdieu (1977), a crisis can occur when an individual’s expectations no longer matches his or her perception of the objective realities of a social field. In teaching, this can occur when pre-service teachers feel they have nowhere to express frustrations, concerns, or questions as they confront discrepancies between values they learned in university training and realities of K-12 public education. Such teachers often find themselves without the social capital to voice opinions or initiate discourse in a public forum. For example, many pre-service art educators create lessons surrounding social justice and democratic principles, expecting to receive praise within the public school setting, but they are instead told not to teach controversial subjects or are otherwise discouraged from addressing contemporary issues of social justice (Darts, 2011).

**Ideological State Apparatuses**

In order to envision a standpoint from which student teachers may securely mount critiques
of educational institutions and practice a commitment to social justice and democracy from the beginnings of their careers, we may apply Althusser’s (1971) concept of ideological state apparatuses (ISA) to teacher training in public schools. Althusser conceptualized schools as part of ideological state apparatuses, which also include ministries, vocational colleges, and universities. For Althusser, “men do not choose a system of representation consciously but unconsciously” (1971, p. 27), and ISAs underpin the acceptance of gross inequities as natural, along with the belief that the only one way to address inequality is through capitalism and competition (Althusser, 1971; Giroux, 2012; Hill, 2004b). Moreover, Althusser (1971) argues that ideologies are not static but continuously produced and reproduced in practices, rituals, and conventions of behavior (Hill, 2006). ISA practices and rituals become ingrained in the behaviors and formed beliefs of individuals within such systems, and normalization is unavoidable (Althusser, 1971).

Teachers, university professors, and student teachers can recognize and resist the normalization of inequities in education (Brown, 2006; Giroux, 1988; Hill, 2004b), but to do so educators must realize that hegemonic processes produced by ISAs suffuse networks of schooling, shaping normative conceptions of meaningful curriculum and worthwhile knowledge (Marshall, 2007). Such agendas do the most damage to at-risk public schools where the minimum amount of knowledge to do a job correctly and cheaply is often mandated, and questioning the status quo of power is forbidden (Giroux, 1998; Hill, 2006). At the same time, the continual renewal of ideological state apparatuses amid shifting economic and social forces creates openings for critique. Manias and Street (2000) recognize that critical social theory evolves continually to respond to the constant production and reproduction of oppressive practices. Indeed, Lather (1991)
notes, “we all do our work within a crisis of authority and legitimation, fragmentation of centers, and blurred genres” (p. 1).

In response to the quandaries of ideological state apparatuses in education, a number of theorists have pondered ways to introduce critical perspectives in teaching. For example, Hill (2006) notes that the hegemonic process of ISAs extends to teacher training in the UK, where the Thatcher-Major revolution in education mandates acceptance of the status quo, while in the United States, “edu-business” has become quite powerful based on a model of profit making and profit taking in education. In such contexts, “deep critique of the ‘teacher training’ curriculum is rare” (Hill, 2006, p. 13), especially if such critique suggests it will cost more to educate and prepare teachers well. Teacher training according to the neoliberalist and neoconservatist is about indoctrination done cheaply for the masses (Brown, 2006; Hill, 2006).

But there is resistance: there are spaces, disarticulations, and contradictions. There are people who want to realize a different vision of education. There are people who want a more human and more equal society, a society where students and citizens and works are not sacrificed on the altar of profit before all else. (Hill, 2006, p. 18)

Hartley (1993) believes that professional teacher education is stuck between modernism and postmodernism. Causing this divide is the epistemological basis of teacher education and political control of teacher education. The epistemological concerns are based around forsaking master narratives in favor of personal narrative of local professional educators. Political control overlaps with epistemology where there are still metanarratives in play, which based on proven theories (NCLB) coming from government control and the Department of Education. So we have a push toward empowering the individual reflective educator yet we have central government controls that want everything to be assessed according to the proven grand narratives and statistical numbers.
Alternatives to the Institutional Narratives of Teaching

Lyotard (1984) addresses the purposes of grand narratives and how cultural myths are produced and reproduced as part of a social system stating, “What is transmitted through these narratives is the set of pragmatic rules that constitutes the social bond” (Lyotard, 1984, p. 21). Grand narratives are also referred to as master narratives or metanarratives, which represents an abstract idea that comprehensively explains knowledge and historical experience (Lyotard, 1984). But what happens when the culture is in a state of crisis? What happens when members of that culture question the legitimizing control of their institutions, when they no longer believe in the metanarrative because they have discovered their own story, which runs counter to the hegemonic roles that are accepted within that culture? Postmodernism offers a critique to institutionalized and ideological master narratives. Lyotard (1984) suggests that we should not be searching for a unity in meaning or a unity in being. Instead, he recommends multiplicity of experience.

By listening and investigating different vocabularies, educators are capable of reconstructing alternatives to master narratives. Asking what if, instead of assuming what is. Decentralized networks have the capacity to sustain and provide multiple stories of experience enabling participants to question the status quo of institutional norms and the ability to create opposing narratives within a safe environment. Rorty (1989) believes humans are capable of changing and resisting master narratives of institutional practices by reading the philosophical works of others’ and having conversations in person or through digital media that can provide multiple interpretations.

Theoretical Framework – Resistance Theory

Resistance theory in education involves examining how students and teachers respond,
whether actively or passively, to norms and values in pervading dominant ideologies within a schools climate or educational culture (Best & Kellner, 1991). These actions serve to preserve students' or teachers' (as the case may be) sense of autonomy and identity or awareness of social injustice (Solorzano & Delgado-Bernal, 2001).

Freire (1987) argued that resistance is always present in oppression because oppressive structures breed various forms of resistance. The proliferation of resistance in response to oppression, then, is manifest in the multiple layers of relations among student teachers, cooperating teachers, and supervisors. For example, a number of studies have shown that in response to the contemporary emphasis on testing, student teachers experience pressure from cooperating teachers to teach to the test and avoid diverging from a pedagogical script (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012).

Many cooperating teachers are hostile to student teachers’ resistance to standardization and expect “teach as I teach” practices (Mays-Wood, 2003; McNay, 2003). Gaudelli and Ousley (2009), state that student teachers respond to such undialogic supervision pressures in various ways, offering various combinations of resistance and accommodation. The pressure on student teachers in this setting to conform is great because they may feel insecure challenging the status quo, often resulting in “deference to the cooperating teacher” (p.935).

*The Intersection of Place and Space: Postmodern Human Geographies*

We can no longer depend on a story-line unfolding sequentially, an ever-accumulating history marching straight forward in plot and denouement, for too much is happening against the grain of time, too much is continually traversing the story-line laterally. A contemporary portrait no longer directs our eye to an authoritative lineage, to evocations of heritage and tradition alone. Simultaneities intervene, extending our point of view outward in an infinite number of lines connecting the subject to a whole world of comparable instances, complicating the temporal flow of meaning, short-circuiting the fabulous stringing-out of ‘one damned thing after another.’ The new, the novel, now must
involve an explicitly geographical as well as a historical configuration and projection. (Soja, 1989, p. 23)

In order to envision pathways by which agents of change may meet within the fragmented terrain of the student teaching practicum, I draw upon postmodern geographies in an effort to envision spaces of digital resistance that create and foster critical discourse. Discussions of contemporary critical theory emphasize space (Foucault, 1982) alongside history. Scholars such as Edward Soja (1989) call for an “interpretive balance between space, time, and social being or what may now more explicitly be termed the creation of human geographies, the making of history, and the constitution of society” (p. 23). Shaped by both spatial and temporal contexts, “teaching is not only embedded in space, but also in time” (Kelchtermans, 2005, p. 1002). As such, Berger (1974) argues that restructuring narrative in relation to space and the uneven historical development of geography should make us aware of “our personal political responsibility for it as a product we have collectively created” (Soja, 1989, p. 23). Furthermore, Berger (1974) asserts that space, not time, hides consequences from us. Such insights may be applied to the student practicum, illustrating the ways that casting student teachers into territory unknown both to them and their university communities undermines teacher education. The question of how pre-service teachers fare in the practicum is never discussed in some art education departments, and the consequences of severing personal and professional connections between student teachers and their departments can be devastating for the future of art education programs.

In order to define the space of teacher education in ways that make it possible for student teachers to envision themselves as agents of change, I build upon theorizations of place offered by a number of scholars. Connelly and Clandinin (2006) describe place as “the specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries… where… inquiry and events take place” (p. 480). In my narrative inquiry into experiences of teacher preparation, the meaning of place in this sense is
especially important (Lynch, Leo, & Downing, 2006). Identification of place or “the specificity of location is crucial” (Clandinin, Pushor, & Murray-Orr, 2007, p. 23) to understanding pre-service educators’ professional success, which is built upon identity construction. “Place foregrounds a narrative of local and regional politics that is attuned to the particularities of where people actually live, and that is connected to global development trends that impact local place” (Gruenewald, 2003, p. 3). Additionally, Bowers (2001) argues that decolonization of space is an act of resistance that not only rejects or transforms dominant ideas, but also reinvigorates alternative traditions and cultural patterns, including mentoring and intergenerational relationships. The student teaching practicum can be a disorienting time and place for the art teacher candidate, but it also provides spaces of possibility ripe for local resistance to standardized educational models, a place for educators to cooperatively visualize alternatives to the status quo of institutional myths.

Resistive Strategies — Surviving Educational Indoctrination

Building on Soja’s (1989) supposition that space, time, and history converge in contemporary critical theory, pre-service educators enter back into the controlled environments of schools and witness students sitting neatly in rows, walking in lines, and organized by grades—bodies regulated by time, whose teachers have them “under control” (Foucault, 1977). Such standardized experiences underpin educational institutions’ inculcation of conformity in students (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994). Immersed in this atmosphere, student teachers witness the model of the ‘good teacher’ (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009), they can replicate in a superficial way by learning to look the part, dressing appropriately as a female teacher, and adapting the right demeanor in order to conform to the institutional gaze. Sometimes the student teacher plays the part temporarily, at least inwardly, in order to attain a good evaluation and a job. In this situation,
student teachers accept traditional teaching roles by displaying deference as a strategic survival strategy (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009), but even when consciously adopting such a strategy, the student teacher has immense pressure to normalize to the local culture.

Anzaldua (1987) describes this practice as inhabiting borderlands, emotionally and psychologically not fully belonging to either place. Such ambiguities imbue the postmodern condition of the teaching profession as many pre-service educators place themselves in the political position as resistors, intentionally refusing to conform to institutional norms, are sometimes labeled as difficult, uncooperative, or in need of further mentoring (Anderson, 2007). These are the student teachers whom standardized teacher education practices corral, coerce, mold, and push through the system. Many of them finish the practicum but only after capitulating amid unresolved confrontation and conflict (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009). On the other hand, some such teacher candidates choose not to pursue careers in teaching because they believe they do not fit the ideal of a good teacher (Clarke & Bariteau, 2005; Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009). In many ways, these are the students for whom institutions of education have failed to provide adequate and responsible support.

Ensuring that pre-service student teachers have appropriate mentorships and practicum experiences is only possible if teacher education practices allow such students to deconstruct their own processes, introducing them as methods that dislocate master narratives and resist institutional norms within teaching curricula and programs (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996). In addition to the practices of deconstruction and writing our own autobiographies, I employ resistance theory to introduce spaces of creative resistance, exploring digital spaces that allow pre-service art education students to imagine and enact decentralized spaces of resistance. Furthermore, I explore decentralized networks as a way to negotiate meanings and micro-political strategies and tactics
through reflection and role-playing assisting student teachers in mediating stressful situations found in particular school environments and classrooms.

Expanding the Boundaries of Social Systems – Communities of Practice

Communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) can and do occur through collaboration between art education students and mentors such as, professors, advisors, and art administration. This support widely varies from university to university. Realizing that art teacher candidates do not always receive the necessary guidance or positive experience through student teaching field experiences, art education organizations and departments of art education need to create networks, digital and otherwise, that continue to support the pre-service educator throughout their university coursework and into the practicum (Delacruz, 2009).


Although my study addresses Wenger’s social learning systems comprehensively, my greatest emphasis is on boundaries, both real and imagined, that affect identity. As a pre-service teacher, I felt such boundaries the moment I stepped into my cooperating teacher’s classroom. I knew instantly that I was a stranger who did not belong there and was not welcome. It was a sentence, an exile that I felt I had to endure. As I write this self-study, I looked back trying to redeem what happened to me. I think about what could have made this experience more bearable,
such as having a community of peers experiencing the same process (Badali, 2008; Beck & Kosnik, 2001), being in contact with a trusted mentor (Bullough, 2005; Graves. 2010; Rowley, 1999) in whom I could confide, receiving a teacher placement that responded to my individual needs, or finding a forum to consider my grievances. Therefore, boundaries real or imagined can be both a negative and positive experience. Boundaries that are intentionally created can become safe havens which allow student teachers to reconsider, reimagine, and reframe the roles and practices of teaching.

Knowing is an individual experience and we all make meaning in unique ways: “Socially defined competence is always in interplay with our experience. It is in this interplay that learning takes place” (Wenger, 2000, p. 226). Nevertheless, because our experiences do not always fit within the preferred range defined by a particular group, they can be pushed to the marginal boundaries and considered anomalous. Hence, if we aspire to competence in our communities, we must begin to articulate and negotiate why our experiences matter and should be included within the defined parameters of our social groups (Wenger, 1998). Such political processes expand the boundaries of social systems to include experiences of difference. In such contexts, political skills of discourse, negotiation, arbitration, and creative resistance take root.

**Skills of Discourse, Negotiation, Arbitration, and Creative Resistance**

Arbitration, negotiation, deliberation, dialogue, and inclusion each contribute fundamentally to empowering pre-service teachers to question dominant myths and prevailing norms in the profession, along with the basis on which teachers and their mentors are trained and evaluated. House (1991, 2005) asserts that there is a distinct link between social justice and evaluation, and transformational narratives in the arts can foster socially just practices. “Social
theories, for critical theory, are thus forms of social practice which reproduce dominant forms of social activity” (Kellner, 2008, p. 9). Indeed, if dominant forms are never questioned, they reproduce myths, misconceptions, and disingenuous role-playing within the practicum experience. Failure to make theoretical connections between social theory and practice is to deny the fact of power and domination in the social processes of student teaching, taking such practices for granted and guaranteeing the persistence of archaic systems. Student teachers are especially powerless to question the status quo because they lack the social capital to object to prevailing methods of training, evaluation and mentorship. Thus, unreflective and undialogic practice promotes hegemonic role playing within the practicum. In response to such forces, those in charge of teacher education often expect to improve the training of pre-service art teachers through coursework in methodology but fail to realize that using customary instruments of evaluation will produce only well-established results.

In order to transform pedagogical practices, we must articulate theory and methods that underpin such actions. Examining the student teaching practicum through the lens of resistance theory enables opposition to hegemonic processes and the creation of self-awareness about normalization practices in educational institutions (Giroux, 1988). Resistance theory involves people responding to systems of power and processes of dominance through opposition, which can affect a person’s sense of autonomy and identity (Freire, 1985). Resistance can also be about undermining “the reproduction of oppressive social structures and social relations” (Walker, 1985, p. 65). Abowitz (2000) identifies resistance in education with resistance in communicative discourse that underlines a new way of constructing meanings around specific problems of exclusion or inequality. This compliments negotiation as a form of communicative resistance which allows students and educators to push against the inherited discourses embedded in teacher
education, envisioning alternatives to the grand narratives of teaching. Through the theory of resistance, this study examines possibilities of digital spaces and artistic resistance (Darts, 2004 & 2008; Jagodzinski, 2008; Sweeny, 2004 & 2009) that create political discourse allowing students and teachers to critique the status quo of institutions in which they learn and work (Freire, 1987; Giroux, 2010). An exploration of resistance theory complements the insights of human geographies (Foucault, 1987; Soja; 1989) of space and time, further illuminating negotiated meanings within decentralized networks.

Micro-political Actions, Strategies, and Tactics

Micro-political actions, strategies, and tactics are a part of teaching and student teaching (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). When teachers face imposed conditions they feel are not in the best interest of their students or their own professional goals, they are apt to “engage in micropolitical action (forms of resistance) to establish, safe-guard or restore them when they are absent, threatened, or destroyed” (Kelchterman, 2005, p. 1004). Micropolitical actions often affect novice educators and student teachers concerning the formation of teacher identity (Blasé, 1997). Learning how to negotiate these actions through strategies and tactics become an important issue in learning about various teaching contexts. Unfortunately, the messiness of teaching concerning the social and political contexts of teaching are often overlooked in pre-service methodology courses. Rarely, developments in micro-political literacy are explored in pre-service education (Blasé, 1997). Goodman (1988) identified five political strategies and tactics found in his study of pre-service educators during their practicum: over compliance, critical compliance, accommodative resistance, resistant alteration, and transformative action.
Many student teachers feel the effects of micro-political actions in their practicum classrooms that involve not only their self-interests such as looking for affirmation, coping with the vulnerability of being uncertain, but also access to materials in the practicum (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). Another important aspect of micropolitical actions in the practicum concern cultural-ideological interests such as the norms and values promoted within that teaching environment. Mounting such micropolitical actions against material, organizational, and emotional conditions that impede instruction (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002) teachers remain guided by their own standards of good teaching. Such efforts certainly encompass modifying operational or organizational procedures during the practicum. Indeed, teaching as a profession is always political and requires educators to make value choices, which leaves teachers in a condition of vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 2009).

In response to micropolitical actions, cooperating teachers can withhold materials and emotional support as a form of control (Gaudelli & Ousley, 2009). PostArtTeachingStories documents such forms of control in which participants note, for example, having to spend their own money for special projects. Cooperating teachers may become detached from student teachers who resist, affected by the responsibility of evaluating them according to normative standards (Feiman-Nemser, 1996; McNay, 2003). As such, pre-service educators avoid taking a stance or negotiating for what they may value, even though the mentor teacher’s practice may be at odds within their own beliefs. Pre-service educators within classrooms and schools avoid conflict and simply comply with the dominant ideology (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Lacey, 1977).

Zembylas (2005) recognizes that emotions are woven into micro-political contexts of education, as “issues of power, identity and resistance in teaching” (p. 1001) surface. Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) state that teachers learn about micro-political literacy in professional
development as they become a part of the schools culture in which they teach. The problem with this ideology is waiting until pre-service educators are immersed inside of a school’s cultural climate may prove to be too late.

Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) explain that new teachers learn to read certain political contexts in educational situations using knowledge aspects, operational aspects, and experiential aspects. Knowledge aspects are “the ability to recognize, interpret and understand the micropolitical character of a particular situation” (p. 1002). Using operations and experiential aspects, the teacher begins to understand how to implement micropolitical strategies and tactics that involve resistance or proactively changing the situation (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). Along with strategies and tactics of resistance or action come intense emotional responses from the novice educator. Kelchtermans and Ballet (2004) found that such emotional intensities in teaching can be impacted by local working conditions such as structures, resources, or people acting as buffers, which can modify and mediate such demands on the new teacher. I feel such buffers are also needed in pre-service training as students learn to deal with the micropolitical actions and their own emotions in making decisions whether to resist, take action, or comply to stressful situations in the mentor teacher’s classroom and public schools. Role-playing amongst peers becomes of great importance as the pre-service educators learns to negotiate the challenges of teaching, using local resources that help them mediate difficult situations in their practicum experiences.

Resistance in Decentralized Networks

Imagining and enacting decentralized spaces in the practicum must serve to allow art teacher candidates to discuss multiple interpretations and create their own understandings of individual learning journeys and teacher identities. In such a setting, each actor becomes a
negotiator, making student and teacher equal partners. Nielson (2010) demonstrates that an innovative approach to relations between cooperating teachers and pre-service teachers illustrates the potential of such processes.

When discussions of differing expectations between university training and teaching practices became an explicit part of the practicum process, cooperating and student teachers, along with supervisors, feel included and most satisfied with the outcome. Creating a decentralized network that privileges no particular locus of authority allows power to be distributed equitably among the agents in the practicum, allowing them to self-organize amidst interactive dialogue and negotiations. In such negotiations, the university supervisor can act as a diplomat who encourages students to create their own meanings from their educational journeys as they forge teacher identities. In this role the university supervisor’s most vital tasks are asking for clarity, providing feedback loops, and listening to multiple interpretations of each individual’s journey.

Mapping such settings in social media contexts, Sweeny (2004) notes the potential for “art educational spaces... organized according to the decentralized structure of the Internet” to engender a “socially relevant, critically oriented approach to art education” (p. 76). Indeed, “The Internet provides the opportunity for individuals to shift... power structures,” (Sweeny, 2004, p. 77), creating communication networks along rhizomatic structures (Cormier, 2008). Such a decentralized network allows the free flow of power and negotiated meanings among the university, school, and student teacher in productive, relevant connections. One important mode of sustaining such networks in digital environments is integrating visual narratives into teacher education practices.

Sweeny (2004) argues that encouraging art teacher candidates to document visually their classroom spaces and share such productions with peers and mentors in a protected space allows
educators to visualize hegemonic processes in school settings. As such, visualization of student teaching experience becomes the basis of communal narratives that students and mentors can investigate and deconstruct together.

Grunewald (2008) reminds us that Freire (1987) advocates “reading the world” (Freire & Macedo, 1987, p. 208) as a critical strategy. Such strategies can go beyond text to read situated experiences in contemporary learning environments through narrative assemblages of popular media and visual culture. Reading the world through visual images can allow teachers and students to engage in critical reflection in ways they know as political so that they may understand and act upon the world (Freedman, 2003; Freire, 1970/1995; Harper, 2008; Stockrocki, 1984).

Internet-based “network societies, which shift traditional frameworks of space and time as collaged images taken out of local context create new semiotic meanings represent not only a new form of communication, but also entirely new forms of visuality” (Sweeny, 2004, p.80). Amid the “transcoding” of visual, textual, and sound flows in online transactions, new forms of communication and semiotics of vision can emerge (Manovich, 2001).

Despite the power of such practices, Sweeny (2004 & 2009) warns us about the relative ease and seductive qualities of the Internet, which must not distract educators from critical inquiry and the formulation of creative responses to networked societies. Such technologies may be joyous in themselves, but educators must ask what is relevant to student learning and how such experience shapes digitally responsible students.

One way to avoid superficial digital communications that do not address critical dialogue is to allow pre-service educators to investigate hegemonic processes and critique the status quo. A decentralized network comprises nodes of equal power, but educational institutions do not fully recognize decentralized networks and, for the most part, are still hierarchical. Critiquing the
structures of the school environment, Delacruz finds the school structure itself, “standardized and restrictive” and explains that the technologies of new learning paradigms do not fit with the hierarchy of “top-down teacher-centered curriculum delivery systems and prescriptive educative content” (Delacruz, 2009, p. 14). A more equal distribution of knowledge and power among universities, schools, and communities can greatly benefit not only our future teachers but our society in general (Dewey, 1915).

Working against undialogic practices, which do not allow student teachers to question or have input on their own fieldwork experiences, Freire (1985) speaks of transformational learning that allows students to be a part of the process. In order to give student teachers additional support during the practicum that allows them to critically self-reflect in a group of peers and mentors, they should have access to a decentralized network of professional experience and communication in which no central authority exists, and power is equally distributed. Such networks can draw on “students’ perspectives on our shared experiences... with important pedagogic consequences” (Berry, 2005, p. 173). Creating shared experiences of pivotal events in our teaching careers with members of a supportive art education community can generate practices that foster the willingness to negotiate power and challenge inequities within educational systems.

The Dangers of Social Media

Social media is a promising arena for the creation of such decentralized networks. Many art educators use social media as megaphones, broadcasting arts information or advertising causes, organizations, or businesses. Others create dialogue and exchange lessons and web resources through digital media such as Twitter. Indeed, it is becoming a standard professional practice to connect with others through social media (Buffington, 2008).
Distinct from many online venues in which identity is pseudonymous, art educators’ digital identities in professional networks such as LinkedIn or Art Education 2.0 normally employ recognizable photographs or identifying images, along with information that details professional status. An important part of contemporary academic collaboration, online presences are central to professional reputation and are tied directly to various types of culture capital, which are reproduced in social systems (Bourdieu, 1984). As such, digital cultural capital flows from connections in online networks (Poster, 2004), shaped by one’s volume of connections and the quantity and quality of surrogate knowledge—the knowledge and experience shared through digital collaboration (Siemens, 2004). Surrogate knowledge emerges from online hubs through which participants construct nodes of information collaboratively, using data, images, and frameworks built on shared, virtual experience (Siemens, 2004).

While online networks provide an excellent forum for art educators to share their struggles with the student teaching practicum, such forms of communication may complicate pre-service art teachers’ professional pursuits since institutions they critique may one day employ them, and mentor teachers they discuss may one day become their colleagues (Anderson, 2007; Barrett, Soloman, Singer, Portelli, & Mujuwamariua, 2009; McNay; 2003; Poirier, 1992). Therefore, the student teacher’s lack of social capital must necessarily shape his or her participation in such networks. Students’ identities must be protected in order to use digital communications in ways that do not constrain dialogue, allowing art teacher candidates to dig deeply into the complexity, uncertainty, and struggle of teaching while, at the same time, encouraging them to question dominant myths, clichés, and misconceptions in teaching culture.

Social networks can be utilized to promote and collaborate with others in a global civil society (Delacruz, 2009) but there are many reasons to be wary of distortions inherent to social
digital media, including forces of globalization and consumerism, (Bauman, 1998; Darts, 2004; Duncum, 2000; Jagodzinzi, 2008; Said, 1985) anomie, (Giroux, 2001), cyber-bullying or mob-mentality (Briggs & Burke, 2010), fragmentation (Lovejoy, 2004; Sweeny, 2004; Turkle, 1996) and inequity (Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001; Freedman & Liu, 1996), each of which can shape communication in social media. As such, it is important to ask whose voices are silenced in the digital realm, and indeed, critics of digital communication networks note that while social media can be empowering it is equally uncontrollable, with social-network bullying that sometimes represents a mob mentality (Briggs & Burke, 2010; Lanier, 2006; Sweeny, 2009). Hence, educators have the responsibility to foster responsible citizenship in the education profession’s virtual environments to create cultures of caring, “a new paradigm for the 3rd millennium, that is, global civil society” (Delacruz, 2009, p. 15).

Delacruz (2009) gives us reasons why we should implement technology in the artroom by pointing to media literacy. Art, media, and technology blend together well because of their affinity with aesthetic inquiry and meaning making (Delacruz, 2009). This global civil society can be extended to include the voices of pre-service art educators, an environment where their voices of struggle are validated. However, along with this idea of openly sharing your knowledge and experiences comes a high price tag, exposing your identity. Critiquing the idea of a utopist vision of digital social networks, assists me in examining conceptual dilemmas within social media, the individuals rights versus the common good of society, globalization versus localization, copyrights versus public domain, transparency versus anonymity, censorship versus freedom of speech, and the actual classroom practices versus theory.
Safe Spaces – Spaces of Difference

While the power of social media to validate diverse voices is clear, it is important to note that many of the dilemmas that student teachers face are social as well as political; therefore broadcasting them on the World Wide Web is not recommended (Frankel & Slang, 1999; Jacobson, 1999). So how do we create societies/networks/lessons that are socially responsible and relevant to our world while protecting the identities of the participants? Failing to critically analyze such questions can reinforce hierarchal power structures, but contemporary educators who work to create socially responsible dialogue face a hostile climate of blame against teachers (Sweeney, 2004; Delacruz, 2011). Giroux (1983) states that the engaged educator must continually critique our current environments and teaching practices, and equally as important is the ability to imagine alternatives as we create safe spaces for art educators to question, role-play, and perform resistance. In this context, this study aims to examine safe space for narrative art practices specifically for pre-service art educators, uncovering ordinary people struggling to be human (Bauman, 1998, 2000; Freire, 1970). It is in the imagination that such spaces conjure up Foucault’s (1984) heterotopic spaces.

Foucault (1984) refers to heterotopia in his 1967 lecture, Different Spaces. These enclaves have been associated with timeless spaces such as museums and libraries, and transformational spaces that are represented as sacred and/or forbidden which are exclusive. As Foucault (1984) examined heterotopias, referring to spaces of otherness, he found physical spaces where persons who displayed deviant behavior against what was considered to be outside the norm, are placed. Places such as, psychiatric hospitals, rest homes, and prisons (1977). What Foucault (1984) suggests, heterotopias can be mental and physical places and spaces, existing simultaneously in several locations at once, and embodying multiple meanings (Powell & Lajevic, 2011).
Foucault realized in order for utopia to exist, heterotopias must also be present, as a place or space for anyone displaying difference to the cultural and institutional norms of that particular society. Wild (2011) refers to such heterotopias as safe spaces that can suspend routines and rituals, where alternative ways of teaching and being teachers can be explored. Such spaces can be facilitated for forms of resistance and reflection, sites of temporary spaces, which can exist in the body of education and on the perimeters of educational institutions.

Heterotopias as juxtaposed to utopias are real spaces, “a place that represents, contests, and reverses culture by allowing difference” (Wild, 2011, p. 424). Wild (2011) describes heterotopias in art education as spaces of transition that allow art educators to contradict the other positions that we occupy in our daily lives. As such, she sees art rooms serving as heterotopias. Therefore, practicums can also have the potential to be heterotopias, but many classrooms do not offer the student teacher possibilities to engage in democratic teaching or envision other ways of being teachers. Foucault (1984) recognized that heterotopias are also a mirror, a reflection of everyday practices that are sometimes hidden from public view.

Digital spaces of self-reflective inquiry can mirror the real world, not exactly as they are but a reflection of experience. In many ways, such heterotopic spaces are better than the real world because they allow us to audition for the roles we want to play in teaching and how we want to teach in our own classrooms, roles that are not necessarily available to student teachers or legitimized within certain educational institutions. As such, heterotopia spaces allowed me to imagine a new reality, the potential of something other than what was already there. It allowed me to reflect, reexamine, and rewrite who I wanted to become in my own life and teaching practices.
Anonymity and Agents of Change

The messenger is the pre-service art teacher who has the possibility to become an agent of change within hierarchical institutions of learning (Price & Valli, 2005). Nevertheless, the messenger cannot connect without pathways to meet other agents and negotiators willing to help them navigate the difficult terrain of the student teaching practicum. Little has been written about what happens to pre-service teachers as they begin to think about themselves and act as agents of change (Beyer, 1996; Bissex & Bullock, 1987; Goswami & Stillman, 1987; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). Because pre-service students feel powerless and hold no cultural capital within the schools where they do their practice teaching, they have difficulty imagining themselves as agents of change (Cochran-Smith, 1994; Poirier, 1992). Therefore, they must be educated in the ways of critical negotiation (Wenger, 1988) and civil resistance (Delacruz, 2009; Jagodzinski, 2006).

Student teachers can become agents of social change (Cochran-Smith, 1994; Kidd, 2012), but the student teaching process must create democratic spaces of resistance to overcome obstacles within bureaucratic systems of education (Giroux, 2010). Student teachers have stories of art teaching experiences to share, but they fear repercussions for critiquing educational systems.

Currently, there are educators who are using digital media to connect with their pre-service students, which is a good thing. However, the problem is the instructors’ failure to realize that if their student teachers dare to critique educational institutions that support and maintain the status quo on a public forum, it could damage the students and the schools reputations. In higher education we need to be cognizant of the fact that these same students cannot openly discuss these issues of power struggles, inequities in evaluations, or being placed in an unsupportive climate on the World Wide Web without protection of their identities because it could affect their future careers as educators since they lack the social capital to critique institutions that will one day
employ them or critique mentor teachers who might one day be their future colleagues (Bourdieu, 1977; McNay, 2003).

Sweeny (2004 & 2009) warns us about the relative ease and seductive qualities of the Internet, educators could be distracted from critical inquiry and formulating creative responses to networked societies. In other words, these technological capabilities are fun and we should continue to explore them but we need to ask what is relevant to the student’s learning, how do we create digitally responsible students, how do we create societies/networks/lessons that are socially responsible and allow for negotiated meanings. If we fail to critically analyze these questions we might be reinforcing current and past power structures that restrict connections rather than encourage and instruct (Sweeny, 2004).

Mapping Autobiographical Experience

Educational researchers and scholars have suggested mapping territories not only of teaching but those of social discourse (Britzman, 2003; Elbaz, 1991; Foucault, 1986). Since I could not find my tracks in the sand or any of my previous student teaching documents to map where I had been in the practicum, I began my inquiry by mapping a group of graduate student art educators’ discourses through a reflective activity that explored their personal learning journeys within educational institutions; I refer to this activity as mapping discourses. Foucault (1986) explains the difficulties of mapping multiplicities of experience,

We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein. One could perhaps say that certain ideological conflicts animating present-day polemics oppose the pious descendants of time and the determined inhabitants of space. (Foucault, 1986, p. 22)

Digital communications can illuminate discursive formations unfolding continually
through spaces of decentralized social strata. Moreover, those social spaces are continuously negotiated and renegotiated in self-regulated systems. When a system is decentralized, it does not limit the possibilities of the participants (Castells, 1996). It accepts feedback loops that question misinterpretations and differences, even as it fosters commonalities in the negotiated knowledge of experiential events (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008). At the same time, these spaces can also articulate the resistive connections among persons and institutions that refuse to compromise negotiated meanings, despite a lack of recognition. While such resistive connections may be pushed to the perimeter of the network, even isolated, they remain as part of the network. However, an institution or person that becomes inflexible risks becoming irrelevant to the network. Connections will be made elsewhere. The nodes and hubs regenerated along multiple connections in decentralized networks of social relation will emerge among other negotiable points. Such decentralized strata and forms of resistance proved to be pivotal in helping me understand civil resistance in digital networks.

Sweeny (2004) provides a critique of how the impulse of digital colonizing through virtual connections can also overpower and cause people and organizations to adapt or become immobile. Sweeny (2004) asks, “If pedagogy is based on aspects of digital networks, then are art educators offered the possibility for socially and culturally relevant forms of creation and critique?” (p. 6). For me, this is a yes and no question. I think some art educators are offered forms of creation and critique and many of these are offered through Web 2.0 networks found on the Internet. However, socially and culturally relevant creation and critique of educational institutions are not usually offered to pre-service art educators who are in the midst of their student teaching practicum and are asked to abide by the institutional rules which are already in place.
“Winning!” A word that perfectly represents the hedonistic, commercialized product-propaganda and American capitalist system run amok.

“Winning!” is also a word that embodies the age of competitive win-at-all-costs rationale of American consumers wedded to the desires of the market-driven, damned the ethics, corporatized systems.

“Winning!” Test scores, job readiness and the competitiveness that exists between schools, teachers, and students. The vision of students as workers, soldiers, and most importantly consumers, I tried to run away from this mentality when I taught in public schools. I left and went into higher education but it has followed me here as well.

“Winning!” Civility has all but died, withered on the vine. I am no Henry Giroux or Zygmunt Bauman, but I am angry. Angry at what has happened to our schools, communities, and now our universities.

“Winning!” The corporate neoliberalists are beginning to infiltrate all forms of American education and I have nowhere to run. Cornered, I must fight. But what can one person do?

(Journal, 2012)

Olesen (2000) warns us that “rage is not enough” which challenges us to move from anger to progressive political action and then to theory and methods that can affect politics and pedagogy through action. Critical pedagogy is seen a dangerous thing to many educational institutions because it asks students to become critical agents of change, to question the status quo and negotiate discourses in relation to theory, politics, and practice (Giroux, 2007, p. 1). Giroux (2010) believes that the current culture in higher education is reflective of a bare bones pedagogy (Agamben, 1998) that reflects market-driven economics, a ruthless win at all costs competitiveness that is absent of ethical or moral considerations. As such, spaces for critical reflection in higher education are rarely ever addressed with faculty or students. Colleges of Education become a “credentialing factory for students” (p. 191) as they continue to focus on job readiness above civic responsibility. As such, educational policies have come to reflect neoliberalism influences that
encourage privatization, standardization, and job training, equating “knowledge as a product…that makes no distinction between schools and restaurants” (Giroux, 2010, p. 186).

Creating Spaces for Critical Pedagogy

Freire (1977) associated critical pedagogy with critical consciousness. This involved enabling oneself through critical dialogue, reflection, and action to critique the social systems, institutions, and traditions that maintain conditions of the status quo in order to oppress others (Freire & Macedo, 1987). In order to maintain its power, critical pedagogy must continually evolve along with the teachers committed to it (Biesta, 1998). “Critical pedagogy is concerned with interrupting the status quo, deconstructing the structures of dominance, and interrogating how one might limit or be limited, disenfranchise or be disenfranchised” (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008, p. 184). Therefore, the ethics of such a pursuit demand that teachers who adhere to critical pedagogy remain attentive to classroom dynamics, what is said, and what remains unsaid. Important in this context is the deliberate creation of spaces for diverse opinions to be represented. “When such diversities are stifled or suppressed—whether accidentally or deliberately—the result can be an uncritical common sense that perpetuates and amplifies itself by excluding others’ points of view” (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008, p. 186). Through lenses of human geographies and digital decentralized communities, teacher education may encourage pre-service teachers to reflect on and understand other viewpoints as they negotiate their own learning journeys, constructing and deconstructing evolving teaching identities amid the social interactions of teaching culture.

What is equally important for me in this study is comprehending that educators of pre-service teachers need to be encouraged to reflect upon their own autobiography of teaching, linking
experience to resources of place (Gruenewald, 2003) and rediscovering their own source of pedagogical knowledge (Britzman, 2003). Critical pedagogy is praxis-oriented and the educator of students must explore what it means to be reflective, to take action, and to transform the self. As hooks (1994) notes, “Teachers must be aware of themselves as practitioners and as human beings if they wish to teach students in a non-threatening, anti-discriminatory way. Self-actualization should be the goal of the teacher as well as the students” (p. 15).

Conclusion

The goal of examining the student teaching practicum concerning; power inequities, evaluation methods, standardization of teaching, evolving teacher identities, and the social environment of teaching through the lenses of critical theory and resistance theory, is to find spaces of possibility that resist hegemonic processes that can create self awareness about normalization practices. Not losing sight about what is important to me and to other art educators, validating our own learning journeys. Through critical theory and resistance theory, this study examines possibilities of digital spaces of artistic resistance (Sweeny, 2004 & 2009; Darts, 2004 & 2008; Jagodzinski, 200). Such spaces can be carved out to create political discourse, allowing for both students and teachers to critique the status quo of the educational institutions in which they learn and work (Freire, 1987; Giroux, 2010).

Student teachers often feel disenfranchised because their interpretations of experience are not always legitimized within the social communities of teacher education. Should art education communities not support pre-service teachers struggling against indifference by creating more democratic spaces of resistance and providing support through national sponsorship? In order to do so, we must be cognizant of climates of caring (Delacruz, 2008), providing pre-service art
educators with support and safe spaces throughout their academic and educational journeys—into the practicum and beyond.

In Chapter 3, I outline the methodology used in my research study, which highlights practices from autobiographical memory work, narrative inquiry, and arts-based inquiry. The creation of data, data collection, and data analysis will also be explored along with researcher-as-participant and validity in narrative and arts-based research.
PREFACE TO CHAPTER 3: REMNANTS

Remnants, pastel drawing created and photographed, by Joana Hyatt

The pre-service stories take me back to those places that I don’t want to remember. The events in their stories are like a tripwire; there is no way I can get from here to there without going across that section of my life. For weeks I try writing about that time without recognizing those repressed and unpleasant memories but I run into the empty spaces that I so exquisitely and carefully removed, the poisonous parts.

There is nowhere to go except through this space. I finally reside within myself, to put the dark places of prejudice, ignorance, and abuse back where they belong. This is not an easy decision because I lay myself bare for others to judge me, and worse, I know have to judge myself. I mentally and emotionally prepare to write about the intimidation, oppression, and eventually the deep depression that I felt during that time. For weeks I walk around angry, snapping at my husband for no reason. Ignoring my beloved pets, who sense a change and voluntarily stay clear of me. Soon, my husband follows the animals’ instincts and watches me from a distance.
Bubbling up to the surface, I cannot control the remnants of the past. To my relief, once they reach the surface, those feelings, memories, and reflections have changed. I realized that I am better equipped mentally and emotionally to handle what transpired in my past. I carefully take those experiences and put them back in place knowing, that I have to traverse this emotionally-barbed terrain to tell our stories with authenticity.

During that time when I was a novice art teacher, what I was most fearful of was reflecting. For reflection means to look back, critique, and examine where you have been and the last thing I wanted to do was relive the pain and mistakes. But here I am twenty five years later doing exactly that, finally having the courage to admit my faults and forgive myself for those I inadvertently hurt and the others who have hurt me.

(Journal, 2012)
CHAPTER 3
METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

Remembering the feelings and insights of being in the vulnerable position of a pre-service art education student teacher twenty-five years ago enabled me to remember, write, and create my autobiographical narrative of becoming a teacher. The methods of narrative and arts-based research outlined in this chapter were used to explore the concept of “Re-Presentations” (Ely, 2007, p. 568) as a method to bring forth experiences through hindsight while composing our narratives. This concept allows the researcher to (re)plot fragmented stories and memories using collocation (Ely, 2007), a layering of stories and images concerning teacher fieldwork. As such, this study represents my voice as I situated myself within a community of pre-service art education student teachers who were finishing their practicum experiences. Weaving in the stories of fourteen art teacher candidates’ narratives with my own concerning student teaching practices, assisted me in visualizing a space of unfolding inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), one which encourages multiple genres of knowing through qualitative and emergent methodologies (Richardson, 1990; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2008; Siegesmund & Cahnmann- Taylor, 2008).

Outlined in this methodology chapter are the methods and tools I used as the researcher-participant to create, collect, and analyze data. Employing narrative inquiry and arts-based research in the creation and collection of data, as well as the analysis of the data, I addressed how emergent methodologies such as arts-based inquiry and narrative inquiry produced rich visual and textual data in my autobiographical study. To support the data collection, and data analysis, I employed imagery and vignettes through methods of resonance (Clandinin, 2007; Conle, 1999), a remembrance and making as inquiry (Leggo, 2008). Such methods answered the research question
and extended the parameters of this self-study research to include a broader viewpoint of pre-service student teachers in the field of art education. In this chapter I address the researcher as participant, as I explore the framework of self-study research which aligns with emergent methodologies of arts-based inquiry and narrative inquiry. In conclusion, I review concerns of validity when using emerging methodologies, along with ethical considerations.

Research Design

In my research design, I functioned as the primary instrument as a researcher-participant using a self-study framework (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001). Immersing myself in a digital community, I situated my voice within a group of art teacher candidates’ experiences, in order to create a cacophony of voices (Britzman, 2003) that contrast, and at times align, with one another as I recalled my own practicum experiences. Central to my conceptions of narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) and visual inquiry (Barone & Eisner, 1997) are the processes of reflexivity (Schon, 1983) and resonance (Conle, 1999). Resonance is a way of remembering one’s past through insights and reflections which can occur through storytelling, imagery, and reading narratives. As such, 11 student teachers’ narratives\(^2\) assisted me in connecting with my past experiences in the practicum.

Naturally, self-study research is about studying memories and interpretations (Mitchell & Weber, 2003). My process was informed by autobiographical memory work (Freeman, 2002, 2003, 2007; Gusdorf, 1980; Mitchell, Strong-Wilson, Pithouse & Allnut, 2011), which allowed me to create visual data such as diagrams, structures, and forms. The creative process of drawing,

\(^2\) Seventeen pre-service art education student teachers responded on the wiki site. Only 11 of the student teachers’ narratives were used for the purposes of my study. Details concerning the selection of narratives used for this study are explained later in this chapter under the section, Pre-service Art Teacher Narratives.
building, and making, helped me envision the complexity of my own experiential events, as I created visual data that recognized ambiguity, uncertainty, and struggle.

These practices of making, doing, and writing, further assisted me in visualizing narrative inquiry as a three-dimensional space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) which can encompass the social practices and the relational aspects of unfolding teacher identities. Such an approach entails an examination of contexts in place, space, and time, along with embodying the emotional experiences of becoming an art educator (Powell & Lajevic, 2011). Furthermore, I explore hybrid methodologies of emergent arts-based research practices that include arts-based educational inquiry (Barone & Eisner, 1997; Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). In addition, this chapter will further elaborate on the details of the project’s research design, including such elements as the researcher’s position and procedures, participant selection, data collection, data analysis, and issues of validity in autobiographical narratives and arts-based research.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry is a fluid form of research it is highly subject to change, mostly due to the intimate involvement of individual persons as holders, users, and creators of knowledge. Thus narrative inquiry cannot be predicted or defined in ways that stable forms of inquiry can.

Clandinin

Narrative inquiry draws on diverse forms of representation closely aligned with authentic experiences, articulated through stories told and retold. Instead of generalizability, narrative inquiry strives to identify particularities in settings, people, events, and relations (Clandinin, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), highlighting multiplicities of experience (Bruner, 1994). Narrative inquiry places human experience at the center of learning and teaching, cross-disciplinary research, and evaluation strategies (Webster & Mertova, 2007).
In sum, the following set of tenets for narrative research writing proposed by Ely et al. (1997, p. 60) represents a useful guide to employing narrative inquiry:

- There are many ways of coming to know something, and even then such knowing is partial.
- There are numerous ways for us to report.
- All our messages have agendas—personal, political, gendered, racial, ethnic.
- Our language creates reality.
- As researchers, we are deeply interrelated with what and who is being studied. Research is context and culture-bound. So is writing.
- Affect and cognition are inextricably united.
- What we understand and report as social reality is multifaceted, sometimes clashing, and often in flux.
- We cannot say that narrative reflects the reality. We can say that with the help of the reader, narrative creates a version of reality.

As an educational research methodology, “narrative inquiry is set in human stories of experience. It provides researchers with a rich framework through which they can investigate the ways humans experience the world depicted through their stories” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 1). Moreover, narrative methodology connects the experiences of art educators to the discipline’s field of collective knowledge (Rolling, 2010), “going beyond the use of narrative as rhetorical structure, to an analytic examination of the underlying insights and assumptions that the story illustrates” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p.4).

Such research narratives interweave multiple meanings and understandings that can allow us to assist in translating the past and transforming contexts to imagine alternative futures (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2008). Therefore, it is essential in narrative research to illustrate the ways the researcher brings his or her experiences and stories into play: “One of the starting points for narrative inquiry is the researcher’s own narrative of experience, the researcher’s autobiography. This task of composing our own narratives of experience is central to narrative inquiry” (Clandinin
& Connelly, 2000, p. 101). At the same time, researchers who use narrative inquiry need to be aware of the multiple layers of narratives at work (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Such researchers must see what is not visible, imagine places for stories to unfold, and create spaces where stories live to interact with others’ stories. Artists and art educators are perfect for such work because their everyday lives are suffused with imagining. Polkinghorne (2010) elaborates on the uses of imaginative thinking to solve problems and inform future practices:

Narrative thinking can analyze how past events and actions led to a past outcome, it can also be employed imaginatively for planning what actions to carry out to achieve desired future ends. It can construct imagined scenarios about what effect different actions might have in regard to a goal. From the scenarios, judgments can be made about what is the anticipated best action. Thus, narrative thinking is not simply descriptive of practice, but can inform practice. (Polkinghorne, 2010, p. 394)

It is imperative for humans to make sense of random experience through narrative, and narrative inquiry is not an objective reconstruction of life but rather an imaginative rendition of it (Bell, 2002). Thus, negotiated narratives encompass various forms of arts practice that examine and (re)write stories (Rolling, 2010). As such, narrative methodology can be especially significant for the experiences of art educators and our field of collective knowledge. For educators, narrative inquiry contains emancipatory qualities as the meanings we attach to stories extend to the world at large (Gough, 1997). As stories ask us to reflect critically and become more aware of taken-for-granted situations, narrative reconceptualizes the notion of practice in teacher education, addressing both theoretical and practical problems in the education of teachers (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Such an approach affirms Dewey’s conviction that narrative allows education researchers to tap into human consciousness, using information as a tool to understand multiple learning environments (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

When using methods of inquiry, we think narratively and analyze how past events unfolded. Narrative inquiry can also be used to envision alternative endings to past outcomes,
creating epiphanies of how we can improve our practices, “Thus, narrative thinking is not simply descriptive of practice, but can inform practice” (Polkinghorne, 2010, p. 395). “Experience happens narratively” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000 p. 19), therefore, it would only make sense that educational experiences from the student teaching practicum should be studied through narrative methodologies. As such, narrative inquiry encompasses many forms of text and discourse tied to particular contexts or modes of inquiry. Narrative inquiry is, then, the study of practice in order to develop a theory of practice.

**Narrative Inquiry: Critical Events in My Educational Experiences**

Delving deeper, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) ask us first to justify *why* we are doing research. My research explores crucial inequalities in teacher placement. My story of harassment, exploitation, and frustration in the field experience is not unique, as student teachers’ voices are typically marginalized within the educational system (Anderson, 2007; McNay, 2003). Furthermore, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note that what we study must coalesce with our research imperatives. In order to better include marginalized voices and expose myths and power inequities, I study the art teacher candidate field experience to improve the system of art teacher training and evaluation.

I chose narrative inquiry for my research because it represents a powerful way to examine past experiences, even repressed ones. As I use narrative inquiry as a way to bring out submerged memories by inviting others to share their experiences of the same critical event (Webster & Mertova, 2007), the student teaching practicum. Stories overlap and evolve together, exploring possibilities and limitations of teacher training. Narrative research is more than the (re)telling of
stories; it is also the way we (re)create ourselves and our identities within particular social contexts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2002).

Autobiographical narrative led me back to my past, a place of vulnerability, old ghosts, institutional norms, and resistance. Richardson (1990) relates the past to the present through the autobiographical narrative: “To make sense of events in their lives, people reconstruct biography. The experience of renarrativizing—like the experience of biographical time itself—is open ended and polysemous” (p. 234). Collective stories have transformative possibilities, and through the narratives of art teacher candidates in PostArtTeachingStories, I recalled repressed memories and transformed my own thinking. If “available narrative is limiting, destructive, or at odds with actual life,” (p. 270) we can feel disenfranchised, but collective stories can function at the socio-cultural level to support our transformations to agents of change:

By emotionally binding together people who have had the same experiences, whether in touch with each other or not, the collective story overcomes some of the isolation and alienation of contemporary life. It provides a sociological community, the linking of separate individuals into a shared consciousness. Once linked, the possibility for social action on behalf of the collective is present, and, therewith, the possibility of societal transformation. (Richardson, 1990, p. 272)

Self-Study Research Framework

Personal narratives can be emotionally difficult to produce as reliving horrific experiences releases anger and pain. I too felt a sense of dread at first when I thought of reliving repressed memories of being bullied and ostracized during my practicum. But as St. Pierre explains, many academics who read her account empathized with her because they too had experienced something similar in their educational journeys. It is in these untold stories, which remain on the outside margins of research, I find my story. A story that I feel, must be told.

(Journal, 2012)

Methods of self-study research include memory work, fictional practice, life-histories,
collaborative autobiography, and image-based approaches including performance, photography, art installation, and video documentary. Self-study research makes possible a holistic approach to research that acknowledges intersections between personal and professional, historical and political, self and other (Bulloughs & Pinnegar, 2001). Artists are especially equipped to visually explore identity through the arts. Recalling my own situated experiences within educational institutions, I remembered spaces of conformity. It was an intuitive process for me to explore and illustrate such restrictions and complexities involved in my own fluctuating identity and how constraints that were present in those educational institutions played a part in my identity construction. Both visual and narrative construction played an important part in my self-study framework. St. Pierre (2008) pays homage to the location of self within narratives, offering opportunities for critical reflexivity:

They evoke new questions about the self and the subject; remind us that our work is grounded, contextual, and rhizomatic; and demystify the research/writing process and helps others to do the same. They can evoke deeper parts of the self, heal wounds, enhance the sense of self—or even alter one’s sense of identity. (St. Pierre, 2008, pp. 481-482)

Self-study can be a necessary tool in developing an understanding of fluctuating teacher identities and visualizing hegemonic structures embedded within teaching environments. Self-study is about understanding the social processes of becoming a teacher and how it affects us, individually. This study follows the self-study guidelines recommended by Bulloughs and Pinnegar (2001), including 1) ensuring an authenticity of voice that promotes insight and interpretation, 2) engaging history in ways that require the author to take a stand, 3) examining issues in the broader field of education, 4) paying careful attention to context and setting, 5) offering a fresh perspective on established truths, and finally, 6) improving the situation for not only oneself, but also for others in the field of education. Indeed, for self-study research to be valuable to the community of teaching, it is crucial to see “beyond the self” (Loughran, 2004, p.
interacting with others through the research process in order to reframe and pursue alternative perspectives.

By critiquing our own knowledge and perspectives, we minimize the potential for self-
study to become a form of “justification or rationalization of existing practices and behaviors”
(Loughran, 2004, p. 16). Self-study research must transcend individual concerns, connecting to
larger contexts of time and place (Bulloughs & Pinnegar, 2001). Accordingly, the study of oneself
and our teaching practices inevitably leads to self-assessment and a deeper reflective critique of
the social structures that concern us, and call forth professional action to address inequities within
those systems (Pithouse, 2009).

Childs (2005) notes, that one of the most defining characteristics of self-study research is
its use of critical reflection as a way of seeking private insight to inform public discourse about
education institutions (Mills, 1959). In this context, Dinkelman (2003) defines two kinds of
knowledge in reflective, self-study research. First, researchers must better understand how to
conceptualize problems within their own teaching contexts. Second, they must generate
transferable knowledge available for other educators to adapt to their own settings.

As public discourse on critical pedagogy and educational practice passes through the filter
of deeply personal reflections on personal experience (Kelchtermans, 2009), the self-study
researcher must maintain a commitment to vulnerability and self-disclosure. “There is always
tension between those two elements, self and the arena of practice, between self in relation to
practice and the others who share the practice setting” (Bulloughs & Pinnegar, 2001, p. 16). For
the researcher, biography and history intersect as a balance of inner and outer worlds, I spaces-in-
between the self and institutional practices, filled with tension and uncertainty (Kelchtermans,
2009; McNay, 2003; Zembylas & Barker, 2002). “When biography and history are joined, when
the issue confronted by the self is shown to have relationship to and bearing on the context and ethos of a time, then self-study moves to research” (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001, p. 15).

Skepticism about self-study reflects the fact that the concepts of practitioner knowledge and teaching-as-research are generally undervalued in academia (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Lather, 1992). Despite a fifty-year tradition of such research including the works of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Maxine Greene, scholarship has been slow to accept that autobiographies and memoirs of educators have “influenced the broader practice of teaching” (Pithouse et al., 2009, pg. 44). Nevertheless, the power of self-study research and why it particularly was useful for my study, stems from its ability to account for “the processes, emotions, complexities, nuances, values, cultural templates, embodiment and the political and social contexts of teaching” (Pithouse et al., 2009, p. 44). For Zeichner (1999), self-study is “probably the single most significant development ever in the field of teacher education research” (p. 8). In my work, self-study research illuminates the political and social contexts of teaching that must be addressed to fully explore the meaning of pre-service art education training and evaluation, especially as pre-service educators enter into those contexts for the first time.

In retelling my story of the practicum, I visualized processes of remembering and experiencing and associated this intimate knowledge with being an art teacher candidate, mentoring art teacher candidates, and researching and instructing pre-service art educators, as an explicit basis for my self-study framework. Through visual inquiry focused on my experiences in the practicum, I reframed my own narrative by stitching together visual images of my past with the contemporary experiences of pre-service student teachers’ narratives. Using this method, I recalled the ways I lacked a voice in my practicum, being ranked in an inferior class, my opinions, comments, and ideas discounted and ignored. An exploration of this data illustrated how visual
inquiry can make transparent the social structures embedded in teacher education programs, as well as how such structures produce myths and inherited discourses through rituals, routines, documentation and the training of teachers in teacher programs (Britzman, 2003). As such, visual methodologies illustrated my story, giving me a voice and validating my experiences in teacher fieldwork.

Arts-Based Research

Arts-based research is defined as a systematic approach that facilitates the art making process using various forms of the arts to understand and examine experiences from the researcher, and the people they research, which involve a wider epistemological practice and analysis of research concerning the ways artists’ process inquiry (McNiff, 2007). Barone (2001) aligns arts-based inquiry with the ambiguity of epistemological ways of knowing. These are partial and incomplete, and often contradictory which are brought about by employing methods of arts-based research. As such, Barone (2001) defends that arts-based research can affectively influence changes in social and political landscape by using the capacity of the arts to resonant insightful inquiry within the minds of the general public (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). Leggo (2008) believes the greatest potential for arts-based research lies in its reflexive qualities that can lead to self-transformation. Eisner (1991) suggests that arts-based frameworks must pay close attention to the aesthetic qualities of the artwork itself. Therefore, trying to come to a consensus of exactly what is arts-based research is a struggle, if not an impossibility. Taylor, Wilder, and Helms (2007) state: “educational researchers are still trying to precisely define what we call arts-based educational research” (p. 8). Indeed, the methodological framework of arts-based research is a process in flux. Rolling (2013) defends that arts-based paradigms will continue to develop and
progress, disrupting both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. Siegesmund and Cahnmann-Taylor (2008) recognize that arts-based methodologies are capable of “reshaping, eroding, and shifting the foundations on either side of the qualitative-quantitative divide” (p. 3).

Taylor (2008) outlines the history of arts-based research in education, framing the various approaches of arts-based methods. Elliot Eisner (1991) defined a new arts-based methodology known as, *educational criticism*. Eisner and his students developed arts-based methodologies as a way to approach inquiry into the social sciences through art criticism (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). Eisner (1991) further expounds upon the need to keep aesthetic qualities within arts-based inquiry so the creation of the art can illustrate situations from multiple angles (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). Tom Barone (2001) took the new arts-based methods and educational criticism a step further to create the link between narrative and the arts with a methodology referred to as *narrative storytelling* (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). Barone and Eisner (1997) described the essential qualities existing in arts-based texts and the theoretical framework for arts-based research:

> The creation of virtual reality and a degree of textual ambiguity; the presence of expressive, contextualized, and vernacular forms of language; the promotion of empathetic participation in the lives of a study’s participants; and the presence of an aesthetic form through the unique, personal signature of the researcher. (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 8)

Researchers began to embrace the postmodern turn, rediscovering visual methodologies that recognized multiple meanings, ambiguity, and uncertainty. These visual research practices later became known as “blurred genres,” “arts-based inquiry,” “arts-informed inquiry,” “scholartistry,” and “a/r/tography” (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 6-11). Within this framework includes the approaches of hybridity as well as arts for scholarship’s sake that will be explored further in this chapter.
Blurred genres within the framework of arts-based research share many of the same goals: They facilitate tools from the fields of the social sciences and the arts to create new meanings using the data in insightful ways. From these insights, new questions emerge during the research process and become the main focus of the study. Arts-based researchers use processes of invention and discovery to create other questions instead of trying to answer research questions with positivist answers geared towards scientific ways of knowing that have only one right answer.

Another commonality shared by arts-based research methods is recognition of the subject/object within a continuum, “where the researcher is explicitly recognized as the primary instrument for documenting and interpreting knowledge from participants or from a specific context which ultimately informs the researcher about him or herself as well” (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 9). The researcher’s understanding evolves along with the research questions that emerge from the creation of data and data analysis process. This produces new and unique insights that only can be found while the artist-researcher is in the process of creating and analyzing the data. Finally, arts-based methodologies share the goal of reaching diverse audiences both within and outside academia (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008).

Cahnman-Taylor (2003) recognizes that arts-based educational inquiry is both descriptive and interpretive, enriching the quality of the data collection and analysis while representing the complexities found in educational settings. Finley (2003) states that arts-based research is about illustrating new understandings through text, artistic means, and through performances. With these and other arts-based researchers’ interpretations about what arts-based research is or is not, change is certainly inevitable. Instead of trying to precisely define what arts-based research is, I will outline the art-based inquiry methods I used and how it aligned with my study.
Arts-Based Inquiry

Finley (2008) describes arts-based inquiry as a methodology for the radically minded, as well as the ethically-minded researcher who is concerned with social issues. “Such work exposes oppression, targets sites of resistance, and outlines possibilities for transformative praxis” (Finley, 2008, p. 71). It is in these spaces of local productions of knowledge that Finley (2008) recognizes the potential of arts-based methodologies to influence and challenge dominant discourses and grand narratives entrenched in academic communities.

According to Finley (2008), arts-based inquiry relocates inquiry by, making use of affective domains of experiences through other ways of knowing such as, imagination, cognitive, and emotional abilities, as well as through a sensing through bodily knowledge that allows the arts-based researcher to explore the contingencies of space and place by investigating both internal and external sites of conflict and struggle. “Arts-based inquiry creates and inhabits contested, liminal spaces” (Finley, 2008, p. 72). Arts-based methods bring out the fragmented experiences and marginalized voices within these spaces and sites of contention. Garoian (1999) refers to these spaces as places of social reconstruction that form a “zone of contention” (Garoian, 1999, p. 43). Finley (2008) further defines these resistive spaces as public/private negotiations, which combine action, theory, and activism. Allowing the arts-based researcher to inquire and discover how to go about illustrating and sensing through the body, mind, and emotions, oppression felt and lived. As such, arts-based inquiry allowed me to visually recall and challenge the restrictions and rituals found within my own practicum experience.

Arts-based researchers employ artistic processes and practices as part of their inquiry, including how they present the final outcome of their research (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, and Grauer (2006) state, “By making art, researchers
generate sources of information and understandings for their inquiry, but art may be only one of several sources of information and ideas in arts-based dissertations” (p. 1247). Many times in arts-based research, the most common source of experiential information comes from the researcher rather than just participants (Sinner et al., 2006). It is through these visual means of inquiry that I unveil and create artwork and images that illustrated and transformed memories of my student teaching as monolithic and unmoving, towards an embracing of hybrid ways of understanding experience.

ScholARTistry

Nielsen (2005) identified blurred-genre work as a practice of hybridity, which combined educational research with the creative spirit of the arts. Promoting the tools of literary, visual and performing arts with research practices used by educators and social scientists’ alike to investigate human conditions. Nielsen (2005) first identified this blurred genre as “scholARTistry” (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 9). Nielson (2005) identifies three goals of scholARTistry: “to make academic writing an area where virtuosity and clarity are valued, to make educational research an area where the arts are legitimate inquiry, and to infuse scholarship with the spirit of creative connection” (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 9).

Scholartists create art for scholarship’s sake not art for art’s sake. They have years of training in their respective fields of the arts and sciences. They often use their experiences within educational domains to create artwork that is socially engaged with meaning in order to, “capture the essence of their findings in emotionally penetrating ways” (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, p.10). Scholartistry often involves the grounding of experience through context and it is further explored through the data collection and data analysis. This type of scholarship addresses both
socially engaged meanings and art that can provide inquiry, which can evoke both an emotional and visceral effect (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008).

Scholartists intentionally push educational and research boundaries by infusing hybrid methods allowing them to facilitate their extensive training in the arts with theory building. Although Siegesmund and Cahnmann-Taylor (2008) suggest that scholartists receive particular training in arts-based educational practices, they also suggest the all researchers can develop these artistic sensibilities. I would agree personally I felt it was an intuitive process for me, being both an artist and practicing educator for over 25 years, and now a researcher. Naturally, the methods of arts-based inquiry resonated with me as it encouraged me to explore research in a way that acknowledges the complexity of becoming (Irwin & Cosson, 2004).

Embodying the practices of being an artist, educator, and researcher are primary foci of scholartistry. I believe the years I spent teaching, researching, and creating art prepared me for this type of inquiry and scholarly research by actually living it. Scholartistry approaches align with my own, goals in this research study, particularly where the researcher intentionally uses both artistic and educational strategies to create new forms and pedagogical practices through multiple methodologies, further advancing the field of scholarly knowledge in order to improve upon conditions within educational settings, thus aligning my research with art for scholarship’s sake (Nielson, 2005).

Aligning Self-Study Research with Arts-Based Inquiry

Leggo (2008) recognizes that arts-based inquiry explores the self in relation to others, which can promote ethical forms of research. Therefore, it is fundamentally important for arts-based researchers to unveil our agendas to illustrate our experiences and specific contexts within
oppressive educational frameworks. To do so, I believe, is an ethical and moral obligation that implicates us in order to make a political stance against the oppressive environments, hegemonic roles, and neoconservatism agenda within educational domains. Not taking a position allows social inequities to flourish and taken-for-granted assumptions to remain unchallenged (Lincoln & Canella, 2004).

As a form of personal praxis, I found multiple ways to interpret and (re)create my autobiographical narrative and hybrid ways to explore those interpretations. As I see myself situated in the world, I know what I want to disrupt and change the discursive structures within the teaching and practicum fieldwork which prevent dialogic understanding of one’s own history and biographical understanding of education. Along with this disruption is the need for deeper understanding of the boundaries that divide those who have experience in teaching versus those who are inexperienced and are therefore not allowed to question the status quo of accepted stereotypes and myths of what it means to be a teacher or have ideas of alternative teaching practices.

Throughout my research, the methodology of self-study situates my voice within the student teaching practicum, a story that extends across time and space, encompassing human geographies that become the basis for narrative inquiry as a three-dimensional space that unfolds from a situated place (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Using the framework of self-study research means an examination of one’s teaching practices and further development of the field of education in order to provide practical relevance to the scholarship of teacher education (Zeichner, 2007). I used methods from narrative and arts inquiry (Mitchell, O’Reilly-Scanlon, & Weber, 2005), explicating a form of research which legitimizes and illustrating my own student teaching experiences, supported by the voices of the pre-service art education candidates narrative
experiences. Especially effective for reviving the memories I had repressed, self-study research provides a critical perspective on vulnerability, pedagogy, and alternative forms of evaluation.

Embracing postmodern fragmentation and a paradigm of no experts, a strength of this approach is personal. Combined with the pre-service art education students’ stories from the wiki site of their experiences, making my research a way to relate journeys of self-discovery through student teaching. Carefully theorizing the meaning of personal experience in narrative research is essential. This is the only way to approach doing a study of self situated in the world, “we need to write personally because we live personally, and our personal living is always braided with our other ways of living – professional, academic administrative, social, and political” (Leggo, 2008, p. 91).

My self-study and analysis of PostArtTeachingStories draws upon such insights to make sense of vignettes, prose, paintings, collage, sculpture, movement, music, video, and digital memes. Especially important in digital communication, memes are units of information transmitted through the Internet presenting cultural information (Lasn, 1999). All forms of visual arts can be used as a form of resistance (Darts, 2004; 2008).

Self-study research tends to overlap between methodologies (Mitchell, Scanlon, & Weber, 2005). The resulting adaptations also include autobiographical inquiry and other forms of linguistic research, while self-study research also borrows methodology from other fields such as narrative inquiry and arts inquiry. As such, self-study research methods build on teaching practices involving the use of visuals, discourse, and texts (Tidwell, Heston & Fitzgerald, 2009).

Researcher as Participant

I am the subject of this self-study research, but others, such as the 11 art teacher candidates,
contributed and influenced this study. As with many forms of self-study research, I used correspondence with peers, mentors, and 11 pre-service art education students to help problematize my research questions and beliefs (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001). The following section provides background information about myself.

Being a middle-aged Caucasian woman and a product of public education, I remember being taught by educators who were not happy being teachers. Nor, did they care to be around students. As I became an educator, I began to understand how these negative feelings can manifest in and affect our teaching practices. Feelings of isolation, hierarchical systems, and local norms that perpetuate hegemonic roles in education leave little room for alternative ways of thinking or being. Coming from a background of German immigrants who settled land in an area of the United States that is usually included geographically within the southern regions, at other times the southwest, and again sometimes assigned as part of the Midwest, Oklahomans are accustomed to no one claiming us. I believe that is why I grew up with a certain mindset of independence. Realizing if no one claims you or recognizes you, it is recommended you show initiative and do it yourself, depending on no one. Along with this characteristic of rugged individualism, is the understanding that one must possess a good work ethic. In education, working hard is often not rewarded or recognized unless it legitimized through persons in positions of power. In this mindset, teachers are expected to follow restrictive rules of what a good teacher is suppose to be, look like, and how to teach.

For over 25 years, I have been teaching art to students ages 4 to 98. I have experience teaching in public schools, senior centers, universities, and with non-profit organizations. With these varied experiences and art practices, I have great interest in how we work and mentor art teacher candidates. I am also interested in how we interact with one another through the arts to
explore what it means to be a compassionate creative human being. Part of this interest stems from the contrasting ways I was introduced into teaching art through practicum fieldwork. The first practicum convinced me that I was not a good art teacher. The second practicum proved that there was indeed a place for me in art education. Which led me to ponder questions such as, what happens to student teachers who have two bad placements with cooperating teachers who do not support them in their future roles as educators? What can we do to improve their conditions and our own teaching practices in mentoring pre-service candidates?

As a researcher and artist, I am acutely aware of these hegemonic roles and the relational aspects of social and local politics. My father was an educator and football coach for several years. Moving up through the educational ranks, he became a high school principal and then went into local politics. I remember the stories he shared about the inequities in funding between the school districts. That the schools we attended in our small and racially diverse community were not being appropriately funded. The difficult part of learning early in my life that inequities exist, was watching how politics changed my father from someone who would fight for those who are underserved, to someone who accepted the status quo. When this occurred, I felt as if our community lost, our school lost, he lost, and I lost a kind of naïve innocence about what was possible. I began to sit back and not take action in the world, to witness racism and sexism and do nothing about it. To witness inequities and not take action, this for me, became a form of guilt by association.

Pre-service Art Teacher Narratives

As I continued my journey teaching art education, I had the opportunity to instruct at a large southern university during the spring semester of 2011. The course was elementary methods
in art education. While instructing 21 pre-service art education students, I bonded with many students in the class. In the subsequent semesters, I was no longer an instructor at the university since I had completed my doctoral coursework. Many of the students continued to seek advice from me the following year through email correspondence concerning their student teaching experiences. Due to this, it was clear to me that these students, and likely many others, would benefit from being in a community of learners in which I envisioned them helping/sharing experiences and suggestions with one another. This influenced me to create the PostArtTeachingStories website.

Since participation on the wiki site involved gathering art teacher candidates’ narratives and images of student teaching fieldwork, it was necessary to send out email invitations to those students who I knew were currently in their practicums from that university. Realizing that participation would be voluntary, I had no idea how many students would choose to participate. I wanted to be sure that the voices I heard were not specific to one program, ensuring that I had a broader “snapshot” of current student teacher practicum experiences. So, while I was fairly certain that some of my former student from the elementary art methods course at the university where I had instructed would be interested in participating, I wanted to ensure that the results were not just because I had a personal connection with some of the students. Therefore, I also invited art student teachers from two other southern universities to participate in my study as well, contacting their art education professors, whom I knew personally through both state and national art organizations.

As I sent invitations, I advised each of the wiki participants to choose pseudonyms to protect their identities. Realizing they might feel vulnerable about exposing their personal and professional lives through stories, the site allowed participants to create pseudonyms to protect their identities. In the email I also asked students to contribute constructive narratives that critique
the constraints found in their fieldwork experiences while being mindful of not attacking the character of persons involved. This also aligned with the rules on the wiki site concerning not listing names of persons or places. As a way of member checking and clarification, I used the private comment function on the site to connect with the participants. This allowed the participants to remain anonymous and also let me follow up with them using both guided and open-ended questions about their narratives. I analyzed eleven student teachers’ narratives of their student teaching practicum experiences using their words and images as a catalyst to reflect upon my own experiences as a pre-service art educator.

Therefore, the student teachers who contributed to my wiki site were recruited with purposeful sampling in mind and to some degree convenience sampling because of access to two of the gatekeepers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), representing naturalistic inquiry that “recognizes emergent rather than preordinate design” (Stake, 1975, p. 76). I pursued purposeful sampling by asking gatekeepers, two art education professors, and the students whom I knew where in the midst of their teaching practicum experiences. I asked the student teachers who I knew were encountering restrictions within school environments—many for the first time—to participate in PostArtTeachingStories. Such sampling methods serve to record unique variations within participants’ knowledge and experience and illustrate diverse adaptations to the constraints of hierarchical environments. By inviting a select group of novice art educators, I purposefully privileged their voices because they are often unheard in social-professional networks.

Since the site required anonymity, I did not know specifics about the student teachers other than they were personally invited by me or the other two gatekeepers to contribute a narrative and/or images to the wiki site. The only fact I knew certainly was that they were all experiencing, or had just experienced, the student teaching practicum and were recruited from three university
art education programs in the Southern United States. I required them to remain anonymous by creating pseudonyms and not mentioning specific names of people, institutions, or locations. Nevertheless, in some of the narratives, student teachers felt it was necessary to mention some schools and districts by name. Therefore, I could not share those narratives from the site although they did influence my thinking processes and assisted me in remembering my own arduous journey in the student teaching practicum. Although 17 student teachers contributed to the wiki site, for the purposes of my research, I have only documented 11 out of the 17 student teachers’ narratives.

Table 1

**Student Teacher Narratives – PostArtTeachingStories Wiki Site (n = 11)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Media/Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Joana Hyatt (no pseudonym used)</td>
<td>Images, artwork, assemblages, and narratives. Titles: Preface to Chapter 1: The Fragmented Borderlands, Preface to Chapter 3: Remnants, Preface to Chapter 4: Deconstructing the Myths of Teaching, and Preface to Chapter 5: Tilling the Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ArtIsAHammer</td>
<td>Figure 8 Vimeo digital movie, artwork and narrative. Title: The Incremental Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Drgnfly007</td>
<td>Figure 9 old signage- reappropriated image. Narrative: My Story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Godwilling</td>
<td>Figure 10 Jester – reappropriated image. Narrative: Maybe not all teachers are cut out to be mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>pjammy</td>
<td>Narrative and comments. Title: A Lost Cause?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Venus of Willendorf</td>
<td>Figure 11 imovie, music, and short narrative. Title: Venus of Dickies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>youliveyoulearn</td>
<td>Narrative and personal note to students Title: You’re Still Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MyArtEd</td>
<td>Figure 12 Artwork and narrative Title: Patchwork Road Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Pinkchix</td>
<td>Narrative Title: The Cliché</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dr. Suess</td>
<td>Figure 13 Title: Reflections of a Student Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Treenabean</td>
<td>Narrative Title: My Success Story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>TpaPow</td>
<td>Figure 14 Title: Reflecting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I discounted six student teacher responses because they contained either personal information that identified particular people and places or their stories connected broadly to teaching but not necessarily to the practicum experience.

The student teachers were free to express their narratives through written textual form, visual materials and personal artwork, and/or verbal recordings on the wiki site, PostArtTeachingStories. Below is the chart listing the student teachers from the wiki site, whose narratives influenced my own research journey of rewriting my autobiography of becoming art educator. My autobiographical writings can be located on the wiki site, https://postartteachingstories.wikispaces.com/Welcome+to+Post+Art+Stories

Researcher’s Position and Bias

Geographical and cultural norms influenced my interpretations and perspectives, as well as my advocacy for self-study research as both a narrative art form and educational evaluation process. Therefore, my past experiences, past relationships, and personal biases are an explicit part of my dissertation research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). When entering the field of stories, we must consider the history of lives in motion: “As researchers, we come to each new inquiry field living our stories. Our participants also enter the inquiry field in the midst of living their stories” (Clandinin, Murphy, Huber, & Murray, 2010, p. 84). For example, this rang true in my research as I began to consider short narratives and images on PostArtTeachingStories and realized that the 17 participants’ contributions did not encompass everything I wanted to know about their experiences.

Shortly after reading through the student teachers’ narratives, I realized that PostArtTeachingStories failed to generate the kind of dialogue I considered necessary to match
my original research question. I anticipated that the wiki site would enable interactions among participants and myself. Since I was forced to rely on intermediary gatekeepers (art education professors and art student teacher supervisors), I did not have the authority to require that the student teachers respond to one another’s stories or answer to my interactions with them. This left me very dissatisfied, since one of my underlying goals was to create and examine a community of discourse and dialogue amongst art teacher candidates.

Throughout my research, postmodern theoretical literature influenced the ways I perceived myself and the pre-service art teacher participants. For example, such frameworks helped me conceive visions of fragmented wanderers in the desert, PostArtTeachingStories as a way station, and our very bodies as the shifting sand, distinct from riparian flows of information. While flows of experiential experiences and knowledge join together, moving in one unified direction, sand is scattered, blowing haphazardly in all directions. The joining of our fragmented stories is a way that I connected experiential events in the student teaching practicum.

As I brought our stories together in Chapter 4, my goal was to make sense of fragmented time periods from my own life and to understand others’ perspectives on their own experiences of critical events. In this way, I am a narrator responsible for my own words and stories, and as Richardson (1999) suggests, the metanarrative I create is my own point of view, situated in a local context. Richardson asks, “How should I use my skill and privileges?” (p. 297). I use my experience and voice to illustrate the fragmentation of the practicum and inequities in the training, mentoring, and evaluation of art teacher candidates through my own experiences.

Making Art and Writing as Inquiry, Data Collection, and Data Analysis

Richardson and St. Pierre (2008) scrutinize writing as a part of narrative inquiry that allows researchers to learn about themselves, creating spaces for new understandings. My inclusion of
personal vignettes at the beginning of each chapter gives me a voice I felt I did not have during the practicum experience. Cultivating resonance in this way, I collect and analyze the structure of the data (my reflections and the art student teachers’ stories and images) as a method of creating and recreating data through narrative inquiry.

For St. Pierre (2008), such “nomadic inquiry,” in which writing becomes thinking, analysis, and discovery proved to be helpful in reconstructing my own memories about student teaching (p. 484). Through hindsight I reframed my student teaching experience. When I back away and see it as a whole, this study enabled me to create visual and textual maps of my student teaching experience.

In creating a safe space in which to survey and visually map my own experiences, allowed me to envision alternatives to instructing, mentoring, and evaluating future pre-service art education students. St. Pierre (2005) notes, “I wrote my way into particular spaces I could not have occupied by sorting data with a computer program or by analytic induction” (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 970), and such spaces are ones I formally occupied in my past as a novice art educator. Uncomfortable spaces, restrictive and oppressive experiences that my younger-self did not wish to remember but my researcher-self insisted must be extracted in order to become vulnerable. Embodying uncertainty and struggle, is a process that defines research data in unorthodox ways. “Comprised of the researcher’s sensual, emotional subjective responses and even dreams, memories, distractions that emerge within those interactions with research participants and their context—this kind of embodied data traditionally absent from field notes or interview transcripts” (Stout, 2013, p. 29). Such an approach became necessary in my research to write about the taboo discourses of teaching and the silent data emerged as visual imagery and
concrete forms as I recreated what I felt I could not speak of, allowing for an emotionally safe space where I could embody my narrative journey.

Such a reflective process can be like a field of play, allowing us to free ourselves from perceived meanings of what data collection and analysis should be which can limit our work and lives (Richardson, 1997; St. Pierre, 2008), opening other ways of seeing “to what extent the exercise of thinking one’s own history can free thought from what it thinks silently and to allow it to think otherwise” (Foucault, as cited in Recevskis, 1987, p. 22). It is in the juxtaposition of my stories and others’ stories of the same critical event that I perceive new interpretations of my experience that allow me to visualize normalization and hegemonic processes in my own teaching practices.

Data Collection

Self-study research is constructivist in its execution, but it relies on credibility and authenticity (Loughran, 2007), using multiple tools for gathering data and evoking memories. “Data-gathering techniques which inform the narrative sketches or critical events may include surveys, observations, interviews, documentation and conversations that can enhance the time, scene and plot structures of the critical events” (Mertova, 2009, p. 71).

The data that was primary to recalling my student teaching practicum, my student teaching documentation, was destroyed after seven years. I had to rely on my memory of the student teaching practicum. This was made possible by situating myself within a group of pre-service art teacher candidates, who graciously shared their narratives and images concerning teacher fieldwork.
The following section describes the data collection tools used for this study. Drawing on my personal written reflections in a research journal, I created both visual and textual data. Along with composing narratives and images, I sought to incorporate my experiences visually through art responses. Pivotal in my remembrances of student teaching were the digital entries created by 11 student teachers’ on the wiki site. Listed below are each of the data tools and what purposes they served in this study.

**Reflective Journal**

Through the methods of memory work and resonance (Clandinin, 2007; Conle, 1996), I began writing and constructing visual memories of feelings from my student teaching practicum. In this documentation process, I used both handwritten and electronic journals to record my recollections from my practicum experiences in 1988-89. I also used methods of arts-based inquiry as data creation and collection in which I explored feelings of oppression, ambiguity, and the complexity of my own evolving teacher identity.

Through this visual process, I created both two-dimensional and three-dimensional forms and works of art, photographing them as visual data. Mapping diagrams to visualize my the fragmented pathways into my own self-study research concerning the student teaching practicum, proved to be helpful in assisting me with visually identifying structures that impede and block the flow of identity exploration in pre-service fieldwork.

**Researcher’s Visual Art Responses**

Adapting my data collection, I employed methods of arts-based inquiry as a way to evoke both narrative and visual memory, working through past transgressions where I felt oppressed or
confused. I pursued in my research visual methods to work through, peel off, and discover safe spaces to visually deconstruct my previous experiences in student teaching. The visual inquiry I created in my study assisted me in uncovering hegemonic structures embedded within educational institutions and visualizes the myths that are perpetuated in teacher education, which are rarely questioned. Therefore, I use arts-based inquiry as part of my data collection and analysis in understanding and illustrating feelings of uncertainty and processes of identity construction. “Arts-based research reminds us that data is not found; it is constructed” (Siegesmund & Cahmann-Taylor, 2013, p. 101).

Weber (2008) states that there are multiple reasons that researchers may want to use visual images in research; art images are considered data and can be produced by the participants and/or researcher and collected and analyzed as an integral part of the research. These images can be used to evoke and/or elicit other data, serving as memory prompts. And finally, researchers can use the visual imagery as a form of self-critique and as a way to represent their findings and theories. All of these processes of collecting, creating, and analyzing visual imagery aligned with the research goals in this self-study.

Pre-service Art Education Teachers’ Narratives and Images

Giving the pre-service art education student teachers the option of creating imagery, seemed like a natural fit since they possess the skills to create art. Although a few of the student teachers did create art, some chose to use reappropriated images. There were three examples of student teachers’ narratives that could be considered forms of art, since their narratives also contained images within them.
Allowing pre-service art educators to express themselves through various mediums was important to my research because as multiple mediums are used, it presents multiple opportunities to visualize constraints and challenges within teaching fieldwork. I wanted the student teachers to use any type of media (textual, visual, performance-based) in which they felt most comfortable expressing their thoughts and experiences, not necessarily to create art, but to investigate their evolving identities in teaching culture and to question the status quo of their current environments. In addition, I believe that allowing student teachers to select the medium makes the prospect of contributing to the digital community less intimidating for them.

Because art education is primarily a visual field, I encouraged the student teachers to use visual images to begin their narratives. Nevertheless, I did not assume that would be the only way they would want to contribute, and some student teachers shared short textual narratives. Through the use of hypertext links, the site allowed participants to express stories verbally, embedding both written and verbal text within the visual medium, creating a narrative assemblage. The type of narrative data generated by the PostArtTeachingStories wiki site includes:

- **Visual media**: Various forms of visual culture materials, arts-informed inquiry through manipulations of different mediums.
- **Textual media**: Text used for written genres and communication.
- **Audio media**: Verbal communication. Audio format on the site allowed for five-minute audio play time.

I collected data from the wiki participants from April 2011 to June 2011, after receiving approval from the University of North Texas Institutional Review Board. Almost all of the short narratives and images were shared within a month after participants had completed their practicum experiences.

Due in large part to the students’ generosity of time and effort to help improve my understanding of their student teaching experiences, I became convinced that the dialogue that
emerged on the site could continue beyond the six month research period I had planned. Freire (1970) argued that in order to create problem-posing education, one must engage in dialogue with students not as an authority figure, but as an equal, one lifelong learner to another. Moreover, Kubler-LaBoskey (2005) argues for the transformative power that emerges when teachers and students write reflections on their shared experiences, analyzing data amid “reflection-in-action” and a “reflection-on-action” (Schon, 1983, p. 135).

Drawing on such frameworks, six months later, I asked three of the participants who responded to my personal emails on the wiki site to add to their narratives, examining their previous contributions, answering my queries, and adding perspectives they had gained since constructing their initial narratives. This allowed them to reflect in hindsight, a reflection-on-action that takes a backward look at what has transpired (Richardson, 1990).

I selected these three participants because they responded to my previous email, and were willing to clarify some questions I had concerning their narratives. They also agreed to answer additional questions as opposed to the other wiki participants who did not respond to my emails or queries. At the time, two of the participants taught art in public schools, and the other continued her education as a full-time graduate student. Their responses explored more deeply teacher myths and clichés, as well as misconceptions about the roles of mentor and student teachers. I asked three of the student teachers who participated on the wiki site to answer four additional questions concerning their narratives:

- Reflecting on your student teaching practicum and the narrative you created on PostArtTeachingStories, how would you change your narrative, or would you?

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3 The three participants’ answers to these questions can be located in the Appendices of this study.


• What do you believe needs to be addressed, changed, or added to pre-service art education programs in general?

• Do you believe participating in this kind of program would have been beneficial for you? Why or why not?

• Concerning anonymity, did you feel safer posting your narratives because you did not have to reveal who you were? Explain.

Data Analysis

My research analysis was guided by the conviction that placing ourselves in a position of vulnerability through our writing and artwork opens up avenues for democratic practices (Chase, 1996; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Garoian, 2013). By visiting and revisiting the student teachers’ narratives, I imagined communal journeys in becoming art teachers. This section of my methodology chapter examines the analysis of data through narrative analysis, writing as analysis using collocation and vignettes, and accessing memory work through processes of resonance. Visual methods of analysis include: mapping, indexing, and modeling, are outlined along with validity and ethical considerations.

Narrative Analysis

I used narrative analysis to begin uncovering themes and/or plots in the student teachers narratives and in my own reflections of the student teaching practicum. Narrative analysis is about the study of narrative texts, these can be written narratives, oral narratives, and visual narratives. In narrative analysis there is a link developed between language and power and meaning and interpretation in stories (Riessman, 1993).

Elbaz (1990) recognizes that stories are particularly fitting to illustrate the multiplicity and complexity of teaching. Using narrative analysis, I began to uncover themes and/or plots in the
narrative stories created from the pre-service art education teachers on the wiki site. When using hermeneutic techniques, such as noting underlying patterns across stories (Polkinghorne, 1988), I employed the reflective strategies provided by Yoder-Wise & Kowalski (as cited in Webster & Mertova, 2007). These are:

1. Looking for recurring themes – Themes emerged from the pre-service art educators narratives and were directly connected to processes of resonance, as their stories represented similar or opposing values, priorities, concerns, interests, and experiences to my own concerning the student teaching practicum.

2. Looking for consequences – As I read the student teachers’ stories and my own reflections, I examined them for cause and effect of the choices made or choices that were made for us, remembering that often student teachers choices are limited during the fieldwork. I also looked for how they handled the choices that they were given and/or the choices they made themselves.

3. Looking for lessons- What was learned from the practicum experiences that influenced their actions or behaviors and what did they gain from the experience. This helped me to look back at my experiences through a reflexive lens in a way that encompassed a holistic viewpoint. A joining of the narratives between their experiences and mine.

4. Looking for what worked – This is where I examined their stories of success whether it was personal or professional, which enabled me to recall and reflect on my own failures and successes within the fieldwork experience.

5. Looking for vulnerability – Reading the pre-service student teachers’ narratives, I identified what they termed as, mistakes, failures, or challenges within the fieldwork experience
including their work with mentor teachers and students. This enabled me to recall “me too” moments. Recalling my own feelings of uncertainty and struggle concerning vulnerability.

6. Building for future experiences – I searched their stories for scenarios they shared or ones that I proposed as a way of handling certain situations in the future. This was where I was able to build on dialogue between a three of the student teachers who were participating on the wiki site. Therefore, I could imagine that this type of dialogue and discussion of scenarios would be helpful in overcoming some of the isolation felt during fieldwork experiences.

7. Exploring other resources – This particular point for me was about examining their narratives and assisting them with possible helpful resources, such as other faculty mentors, advisors, and textbook and digital resources (Webser & Mertova, 2007).

Narrative analysis requires the discovery of plot, which I worked through by integrating my reading of the pre-service art educators’ stories with my own recollections of the practicum experience. This process generated journal writing and artmaking. The resulting synthesis allowed me to visualize patterns and themes that forged narrative unity (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990; Johnson, 1989). Bateson (2003) suggests that throughout such processes, we must show how narrative becomes interwoven and recursive.

Visualizing Collocation

In narrative analysis, I envisioned a layering of stories to imagine alternative pathways and to create spaces for these stories to unfold. Such three-dimensional inquiry spaces show how stories of experience can overlap, conflict, and allow others to view the complexities of the student teaching practicum. Polkinghorne (2010) recognizes that narratives do not always come together neatly, and that narrative inquirers do not work from a specific hypothesis to be tested in research.
Clandinin and Connelly (2000) explain that when working with narratives there is no way to predict the outcome of that inquiry. The stories shared on the wiki site unfolded but were never quite complete within the inquiry space. As I experienced the student teaching practicum as a fragmented experience, the art teacher candidates’ stories on the wiki site mirrored this separation. “If telling or the act of narrating includes the situation in which such acts take place, then learning comes to us both by telling and viewing stories as audiences” (Conle, 2003, p. 6).

In creating a whole from fragmented stories, I played with the idea of weaving our individual fragmented experiences into a story representing multiple viewpoints. Narrative researchers refer to this analytical method as collocation (Mello, 2002). Collocation in linguistics relates to the associations within subjects and fields of knowledge although they do not make explicit reference to one another, bodies of text can stand next to one another without being directly connected (Hoffman, 2010). Mello (2002) further explains that collocation can help narrative analysis by creating “textual and cognitive bridges between the original tale and the resulting theory” (p. 235).

In order to complete our partial and fragmented experiences in student teaching, I envisioned them as a whole using collocation as my method. I employ collocation throughout my narrative analysis to interpret stories in multiple ways (Mello, 2002). Such an approach allows the researcher to weave the participant’s stories throughout the narrative framework, creating a more complex and holistic version of the narrative: “Collocation... answers the question of how to preserve narrative integrity in situating narrative research more holistically in order to focus our work deeply within the realm of meaning making” (Mello, 2002, p. 236). Collocation serves as a central framework organizing the narrative data generated by the student teachers on the wiki site and from my autobiographical writing.
Critical Event Analysis

Recognizing early in the study that the student teaching practicum is a critical event (Webster & Mertova, 2007) what happens during the actual practices of teaching is not predictable. Webster and Mertova (p. 83) outline the characteristics of those critical events:

- Exist in a particular context, such as formal organizational structures or communities of practice
- Impact on the people involved
- Have life-changing consequences
- Are unplanned
- May reveal patterns of well defined stages
- Are only identified after the event
- Are intensely personal with strong emotional involvement

As such, I followed the critical event questions recommended by Webster and Mertova (2007, p. 85-86) for unraveling my own autobiographical memories about my student teaching experience. These questions are:

1. Think of one memory you have of (context of investigation). Tell me about it.
2. Thinking back to (context of investigation), what do you remember or recall?
3. If there was one main memory of (context of investigation) it would be…
4. Within the (context of the investigation), do you remember a particularly stressful period?
5. How would you say has it influenced you?
6. What role did others play in this event (critical others)?
7. If there was one thing you would say about that event it would be…
8. How would you describe or tell of the changing influence and long-lasting effects?
Narrating a critical event of this kind necessarily challenges storytellers understandings and worldviews. Teaching is a communal activity, but its shared culture can be fragmented, unwelcoming, or isolating (Bruner, 1986; Strauss, 1959), and “critical events may sometimes have devastating consequences for the future development of individuals’ professional careers” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 79). In order to explore the possibilities of building communities of caring from the often-precarious experiences of the student teaching practicum, my research focuses on human-centered approaches to such critical events (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Viewing the practicum through the eyes of the researcher and participants in collaboration, a layered perspective reflects the ambiguous structures and conflicting emotions involved in becoming a teacher. As Webster and Mertova (2007) argue, “merely listening, recording and fostering participant stories, while ignoring the researcher’s stories, is both impossible and unsatisfying” (p.88).

Because of similar concerns, I chose not to use specific coding methods, since such an approach made an ill fit with writing as a method of data analysis. Instead, relying on narrative analyses promotes emerging themes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Webser & Mertova, 2007). St. Pierre (2008) notes that data collection and data analysis cannot be separated when the researcher uses writing as a method of inquiry:

I wrote my way into particular spaces I could not have occupied by sorting data with a computer program or by analytic induction. This was rhizomatic work in which I made accidental and fortuitous connections I could not foresee or control. My point here is that I did not limit data analysis to conventional practices of coding data and then sorting it into categories that I then grouped into themes that become section headings in an outline that organized and governed my writing in advance of writing. Thought happened in the writing. (St. Pierre, 2008, p. 488)

St. Pierre (2008) asks an important question, “What has postmodernism done to qualitative
inquiry?” (p. 490). She answers by using a quote from Richardson (1994), “I do not know, but I do know that we cannot go back to where we were” (p. 524). Believing that writing as inquiry cannot be predetermined, allows us to go towards the unknown, create our own maps, and carve out spaces of discovery and spaces of resistance in which we can retell our stories (St. Pierre, 2008). Elbaz-Luwisch (2007) argues, “The task for narrative researchers is to find ways of telling open-ended narratives in a manner that is compelling and illuminating” (p. 375).

Analyzing a critical event, such as those found within the student teaching practicum, certain words, feelings of uncertainty, and struggling become evident and often trigger flashbacks that reminds us of our own vulnerability (Webster & Mertova, 2007) of becoming teachers. Events are staggered and built upon using the method of resonance within that critical event framework. Relational aspects that connect one narrative to the next evolve organically and intuitively as one story reminds us of another experiential event from our own lives (Conle, 1997).

At the same time, cognizant of postmodern conceptions of narrative research, I realize that “narrating is an objectification of experience that extends beyond time and authorial intent, the meanings of the text are overdetermined, subject to alternative readings and alternative telling, each more than the author supposes” (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2003, p. 3). Therefore, my presentation of data, the sequencing and juxtaposition of my story and the participants’ stories, stems directly from my particular processes of resonance and will not match other readers interpretations. In such a postmodern narrative analysis, endless multipliers transform stories and the meaning of experience but also breathe new life into narratives: “all knowledge is partial and situated; it does not mean that there is no knowledge or that situated knowledge is bad” (Richardson, 1990, p. 297). Therefore, understanding that my knowledge is socially constructed, partial (Geertz, 1983), and situated (Clifford, 1988; Haraway, 1998).
Reflecting in Writing – The Vignette

Journaling can capture fleeting thoughts, which is a practical tool for reflexive responses and analysis (Kirk, 2005), but I believe that sharing the fugitive thoughts that emerge during such work can produce multiple understandings of experience. In communion, a supportive community of people experiencing the same critical event can come to know themselves reflected in the perceptions of others while, in turn, seeing other points of view: “Reflexivity is a crucial tool for connecting self-study with study of the other, and with which the ineluctable embeddedness of the researcher and researched within a larger context can be probed and problematized” (Kirk, 2005, p. 239).

Vignettes allow many researchers to embody their research (Kirk, 2005). My vignettes gave me a space in which to embody vulnerability, angst, and frustration, allowing me to address the emotional aspects of the student teaching practicum. Kirk (2005) examines how her personal vignettes of her student teaching experiences afforded her “powerful multi-faceted and multi-sensory representations of research data, analysis and interpretations” (p. 234). She addresses political dimensions of practices, structures, and systems within teaching field experiences, along with using writing-as-analysis to create the space to interrogate teacher identity. Personal vignettes foster reflexivity, the starting point for self-study research. Kirk (2005) argues for narrative as a way for art teacher candidates to explore their beliefs about teaching. I draw on such insights in my research, placing my own vignettes alongside teacher candidates’ narratives, seeing words on the page as events that trigger my memory. As I used such techniques, the candidates stories and my story began to merge, which became a way for me to visualize experiences exchanged through the information flow of digital media (Castells, 2010).
As a researcher using methods of writing as analysis, I appreciate the politicized spaces that vignettes create, allowing the reader to understand “the tension-filled midst” (Clandinin, Murphy, & Huber, 2009) as student teachers question the status quo and evolving teacher identities. “Vignettes are both method and product of the writing of research” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 213), which allow us to draw the reader into stories conveyed through reliving experience (Kirk, 2005).

Autobiography and Memory Work

Memories spill into, subsume, and trigger one another in complex and unpredictable ways, and this can be considered either a curse or a blessing. On the one hand, it means that memory can be volatile and unreliable; on the other; it opens the door to interesting and innovative associations. (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008, p. 61)

Autobiographical memory work requires researchers to regress, actively revisiting the past and sometimes resurrecting disturbing memories. Integrating memory and autobiography into narrative inquiry research in disciplined ways requires the application of currere, defined by William Pinar (1975) as an ongoing project of self-understanding mobilized to engage in pedagogical action serving the social reconstruction of the public sphere. A form of autobiographical reflection that can be undertaken by educators and learners, currere has four steps: the regressive, the progressive, the analytical, and the synthetical. The regressive phase is the revisiting and retelling of one’s educational experiences and the progressive involves imagining future possibilities for self-understanding and educational practice, analyzing the relationship between past, present, and future life and practice, synthesizing new ways of thinking about education (Pinar, 1975). Indeed, “the truest rendition of experience comes not from the immediate reality of the moment, flesh-and-bone solid though it maybe, but from reflection, memory, narrative” (Freeman, 2002a; 2003a, p. 132). In other words, we are living in the moment
and often cannot see the implications of our actions until much later when, in a state of reflection, we feel comfortable to play back complex and emotional interactions.

The biographical perspective made possible by memory work highlights temporality, illustrating how personal history, decisions, and actions are shaped by previous experience (Goodson, 1984, 1992; Kelchterman, 2009; Kruger & Marotzki, 1996). Weber and Mitchell (2005) advocate for the self-reflective methods of narrative and autobiographical forms of inquiry as a way to better understand ourselves and the world. Indeed, Freeman (2007) recognizes autobiography as a fundamental form of narrative inquiry connecting science and art, humanizing the study of experience. Essential to such an insight is the conviction that the personal view is always present in autobiographical writing and inquiry (Goethe, 1994). “In autobiographical understanding there is no object, no text, outside the self” (Freeman, 2007, p. 129). Embracing the impossibility of objectivity in autobiography opens new possibilities for interpretation, imagination, poetry, and art practices that allow the constant (re)invention of the self and the evolution of identity (Freeman, 2007).

In this light, autobiographical understanding becomes a second reading of experience, truer than the original because it includes greater awareness (Gusdorf, 1980). As such, Freeman (2007) suggests that autobiographers might credibly aim to write as interestingly and artfully as possible, consciously creating new selves through inquiry. We may take charge of our stories and rewrite the past through “creative redescriptions” (Freeman, 2007; Hacking, 1995; Kearney, 2002) that focus on meaning rather than accurate reproduction. Coming to terms with the powers of hindsight allows researchers to investigate their pasts from different perspectives, allowing for multiplicity in meaning making and stories.
Ricoeur (1991) conceives such writing as a process of double poiesis in which opposing objects are drawn together, synthesized, and remade through narrative imagination. In addition, such narratives gain a moral dimension as the autobiographical agent enters multiple discursive interactions and settings (Brockmeier, 1997). Reaching beyond the “monological I,” such writing encompasses the influence of others experiences on one’s own. Hampl (1999) associates such discursive experiences with an awareness of relationships, which inflects autobiography with a poetic quality.

In the meeting of autobiography, memory, and the creative act of writing, we may comprehend how our past educational experiences shape our commitments (Leggo, 2008). This holds especially true when we are impelled to undo wrongs or slights in order to improve the prospects for future students. As I applied such principles to my study, the visual images and narratives from the student teachers’, I fell into a creative frenzy of writing, mapping, painting, photographing, and rebuilding my own memory. “Arts-based visual research reminds us that data is not found; it is constructed” (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 101). Although it had been twenty-five years since I experienced many of the incidents discussed in my research, I did not initially feel completely comfortable recalling them. Making memory work an explicit thread in my research sparked forms of poetic communications that unbound my recollections and began to construct a safe space for the memories that allowed my narrative to unfold.

As I analyzed the art teacher candidates’ narratives, I recalled events that I wanted to forget. When “me too” moments occurred, I wrote pages of words and drew images in my journal, or thought about metaphors that might capture those fleeting feelings, however painful they might be to recall. In the pursuit of such ends, Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) outline four turns within
narrative inquiry: “the attention to relationships among participants, the move to words for data, the focus on the particular, and the recognition of blurred genres of knowing” (p. 3).

Narrative inquirers make themselves aware of the multiple layers of the narratives at work within their inquiries, wherein they can imagine intersections of experience through place, time, and relational practices. They anticipate possible narrative threads emerging and negotiate the merging temporal flows within the narrative space, “narrative threads coalesce out of the past and emerge in specific three-dimensional space we call our inquiry field” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p.70).

Methods of Resonance

Resonance is normally unintentional; a part of everyday life wherein sharing cultural knowledge is a central practice to becoming a member of a culture (Conle, 1996). At the same time, methods such as observation and journaling can cultivate resonance, “much tacit knowledge implicit in... experiential stories’ contents [is] carried forward and put next to other stories in new contexts” (Conle, 1996, p. 300). Resonance building describes the structure of placing these stories next to one another, not as a mirrored image with an exact reflection but as stories of juxtaposition, “When a story reverberates within us and calls forth another in an echo-like fashion, we pull that remembered story out of a previous context and place it into a new one” (Conle, 1996, p. 301). Therefore, resonance can become an important principle in negotiating understandings of the student teaching practicum in which each person experiences feelings, images, and stories differently, leading to multiple interpretations of shared narratives (Conle, 1996 & 2002). Cultural knowledge is often passed on through experiential stories and events and the “content-based abstraction” of analogies and metaphors.
The generation of a narrative spark of meaning amid the invocation of memory is intertwined in my research process with methods of resonance. Memories can be reclaimed in reflective modes that contextualize narrative, and autobiographical research fosters critical perspectives on educational experiences that could otherwise go unnoticed (Grumet, 1976, 1981). Conle (1996) defines this type of memory experience as resonance, a process of inquiry evoking more stories and memories and inviting metaphorical analysis. As such, Conle (2006) conceptualizes resonance is remembering our experiences by recognizing similarities in others experiences. At the same time, it is a spontaneous phenomenon that is usually spurred on by my narrative details (Conle et al., 2006).

In Conle’s (1996) work with pre-service educators, stories of resonance remained crucial to their first-year teaching. Through such sharing of stories, pre-service students became aware of their own unique characteristics as teachers and later consciously incorporated those traits into their teaching practices. Throughout her research, Conle (1996, 2002, & 2006) found that the emotional qualities of resonance were crucial to creating the metaphorical correspondences that support such insights. The “personal significance of... having put two stories next to one another makes a difference to either or both of these stories” (Conle, 1996, pg. 305). For pre-service students moving from the university to institutionalized teaching culture, shifting cultural norms heighten their emotional vulnerability, which creates a greater likelihood of resonance (Conle, 1996). In order to build on resonance in productive ways, pre-service educators must have access to spaces that encourage participant observation, storytelling, and narrative discussions. Cultivating such spaces can begin from the beginning of pre-service educators’ field work “in an atmosphere of trust and spontaneity” (Conle, 1996, p. 319).
Reading art teacher candidates’ narratives and viewing the images on wiki site PostArtTeachingStories, I encountered recollections of my past that evoked repressed memories of my student teaching experience. As soon as memories surfaced, I wrote about them in what I refer to as flashbacks and/or created artwork including mind-maps. This frenzied creative process lasted for weeks as I read the student teacher’s narratives and reflected upon my own past experiences, writing about my memories in student teaching.

In autobiographical studies, resonance and the writing that comes from it serve as a “nexus of self and culture,” which creates the “self as a springboard, as a witness” (Pelias, 2004, p.11). In my flashbacks, like St. Pierre, I “used writing as a method of data analysis by using writing to think; that is, I wrote my way into particular spaces I could not have occupied by sorting data with a computer program or by analytic induction” (St. Pierre, 2008, p. 488). These flashbacks to my own student teaching practicum from 1988 follow the student teachers’ narratives and images of their fieldwork from 2012, creating a form of metaphorical thinking that illuminates the “process[s] we are involved in and which [make] us” (Conle, 1996, p. 311). Such metaphorical thinking fosters the creation of connections through similar personal experience.

Resonance serves this process of inquiry well. Reading the student teachers’ stories, I created my flashbacks in order to remember how it felt to be vulnerable and uncertain. I also used resonance as a way to deconstruct the institutional structures within our narratives and responses. Being aware of repeated behaviors and emotions in our experiential stories can help us connect the dots to important but often undiscovered themes in our experiences, especially how they continue to affect us in the present. Student teachers cannot offer a “true” account of what happens in their student teaching practicum, but they can offer a narration about experiences (Conle, Sin, & Tan, 2002). Being drawn into another’s narrative experiences can be deeply satisfying and open
possibilities for contemplating other ideas, customs, and forms of practical knowledge. Consequently, I gather data on self through vicarious experience, conducted by reading others’ autobiographies and narrative accounts, then constructing my own experiential response through processes of resonance (Conle, Sin, & Tan, 2002).

Where is Here? Mapping the Transient Spaces of the Student Teaching

This self-study is about my struggle to find my voice during my student teaching practicum in 1988, but aims to assist other pre-service art education students by creating spaces where they can reflect upon their individual learning journeys through the process of narrative inquiry and resonance. Affording an alternative way of seeing one’s experience, resonance is described as an echoing process which is produced from another’s shared experience about an event (Conle, 1996). When listening, reading, or viewing another’s narrative, a memory is sometimes recalled in our interactions with others (Clandinin, 2007; Conle, 1996) who may be experiencing the same event, not as a way to copy someone else’s experience but to remind us of past experiences we have forgotten in the everyday practices of life (Clandinin, 2007). These practices allow us to uncover through backdoor discourses, our previous experiences within the body of education that influence our current teaching practices (Britzman, 2003).

Since I was unable to find documentation of my teaching field experience, I created a digital community with pre-service art educators as they were in the midst of their practicum experience. As I situated myself within this digital community, I employed the processes of resonance as autobiographical memory work which allows one to reflect on past experiences by using images, narratives, and metaphor. When narrative assemblages are shared on a social platform, processes of resonance and remembering our own narratives within education can forge
collective support during the practicum journey. In particular, such a space will provide resources to bridge the gap between the practicum and university methodology courses. Many art educators discover the kinds of teachers they want to be in methodology courses, supported by art education peers and mentors, but find their commitments difficult to fulfill in student teaching. In light of this common difficulty, I have mapped some of the trails of my journey, the ones that have led me through my own self-study maze (Loughran, 2010) to others’ visions of decentralized networks (Barabasi, 2002), but also into windy deserts, a metaphor that Bauman (1997) uses to describes postmodern strategies constructed to help us survive in a time of continual crisis, evolving identities, and constraints that exist within the practicum.

My formulation of desert space draws upon Zygmunt Bauman’s postmodern paradigm of strategies adopted to survive episodic emergencies in fragmented worlds (1997). Thinking about my own undialogic student teaching experience in this framework, desert metaphors help me connect my student practicum of 1988 to the contemporary experience of the student teaching participants in my study. Where there is no place, only space, there can be no continuous flow of information with others (Bauman, 2000), and attempting to create a map is futile when the ground keeps shifting (Bauman, 1997). The practicum is characterized by sand-strewn roads (if you are lucky enough to find them), scattered paper trails, and imposing hierarchical structures, whose distant forms serve as the only guides amid the sandstorms that obscure one’s path.

The difficulty of creating a map of decentralized resistance in the windy desert of the student teaching practicum resides in the fact that trails of communication continually shift or become buried in sand. Then the teacher candidate can be cut off from flows of information in the outside world (Bauman, 1998; Castells, 1996). To embody the flow means to shift *with* the sand and pre-service art educators must bend to the educational mandates of their schools. Schools,
however are notoriously standardized and restrictive (Delacruz, 2009), modernist structures of centralized institutional power (Lee, 2005).

Visual Data Analysis: Mapping, Indexing, and Modeling

Art educators have a particular advantage in using methods of visual inquiry because this is an area where we are specifically trained in knowing how to interpret, critique, and create art (Barrett, 2003). Therefore, the challenge becomes how to link these talents to our own thinking processes in order to understand internally how to critically reflect upon relational and social practices within our teaching environments (Bulloughs & Knowles, 1991; Zeichner, 1987). This sometimes meant going against what I was trained to do as an artist, placing feelings and sensations first and foremost before any aesthetic measurement. In this process I had to learn to let go of my preconceived notions of what art is and allow myself to explore vulnerability through the intuitive and the unknown (Marshall, 2010). This meant I had to go beyond what I understood as art in a classical sense, and pursue visual inquiry through scholarly research lens (Knowles & Cole, 2008).

In understanding how to go about visualizing large amounts of data, I employed visualizing strategies proposed by Sullivan (2010). This involved analytical processes of examining structures, and viewing them conceptually as parts and as wholes. The visual strategies outlined by Sullivan (2010) are mapping, indexing, and modeling. In visual methodologies of mapping, indexing, and modeling, it becomes possible to visualize strategies that represent features within a large body of information.

Using the visual strategies of mapping, indexing, and modeling (Sullivan & Miller, 2013), allowed me to map the connections (and disconnections) in the student teaching practicum, index the restrictive structures of the field experience, and model the reconstructive processes of...
visualizing data. As I reconstructed my memories, I produced two-dimensional and three-dimensional forms representative of my experiences in student teaching. Therefore, my writing and art are my maps, showing me where I have been and the resistive spaces I created to question pre-existing roles and identities within educational institutions. I am mapping my educational experiences, drawing diagrams, indexing the social structures, and modeling my own educational biography through arts-based inquiry and narrative inquiry.

Visual Strategies of Mapping

Mapping is a visual, performative, and narrative strategy, “Mapping is a process of locating theories and ideas within existing conceptual frameworks so as to reveal underlying structures and systems” (Sullivan & Miller, 2013, p. 11). As I created a mind-map of decentralized knowledge that is often shared through digital networks, I compared them to the indexed hierarchical systems in education. I soon realized that hierarchical institutions often block the free-flow of knowledge in the teaching practicum. The processes of indexing and mapping allowed me to analyze and illustrate restrictions in practicum fieldwork.

Mapping allows the researcher the ability to visualize complexities in teaching, and negotiate new understandings. Visually mapping the fragmented terrain of student teaching became a challenge in this particular study. Since the institution where I received my teacher training and subsequent practicum experience no longer had my documentation in their possession. I had to rely on methods of autobiographical memory work and my inquiry with others who have experienced student teaching fieldwork to recall many of the rituals and routines of student teaching. The outcome for me became another way of viewing the research process (Sullivan, 2006), of coming to know the fragmented self, coming to terms with the past, creating a stance of
inquiry which asks, can these images, stories, and recollections open up a space for critical dialogue about what it means to become a teacher.

I had to build the boundaries and parameters, illustrate the inequities in its three-dimensional form in order to begin deconstructing them. Britzman (2003) explains that when researchers and educators share a commitment to making visual the power and knowledge constructs of curriculum through textual analysis illustrates how social structures such as, “social wealth, social inequalities, and institutional forms of oppression” enables teachers and students to visualize the problematic and the taken for granted views of knowledge and power operating within the curriculum. The visual analysis of mapping, aids in this visualization of power and inequities, linking to how it affects the curriculum and the students within educational institutions (Diamond & van Halen-Faber, 2005).

Figure 1 is an example of how I used mapping as part of my analysis. The Fragmented Journey is a map I created and it was the first step for me in my journey to discover my educational biography.

Figure 1. Mind-mapping concepts that could be shared in digital networks to assist pre-service art education student teachers. Mapping by Joana Hyatt.
It was in this mapping process shown in Figure 1 that I realized the fragmentation present in many student teaching practices. Such practices will be explored further in Chapter Four. The images of the mind-map were constructed after viewing the pre-service art educators’ narratives at PostArtTeachingStories and remembering my experiences in student teaching. Mapping as a method allowed me to see themes emerge from the narratives and the literature review from my research. The flow of information led to each topic as the narratives connected to my biographical experiences in teacher fieldwork.

After researching the fragmented experiences in educational institutions, I realized the failures I personally felt from my practicum experiences grew from institutional teacher training practices that blocked the exploration of one’s own educational background and autobiography. Indexing such structures as rituals, routines, and documentation that prevent student teachers from critically reflecting upon their own teaching practices and identities, I covered the pathways on the mind-map with sand, in Preface to Chapter 1: The Fragmented Journey to represent the structures of fragmentation in student teaching that block connections which link ideas, theories, and practices together.

*Visual Strategies of Indexing*

Employing indexing as a visual tool allows researchers to, “collate objects as taxonomies, or tree structures, situated around certain hierarchical criteria” (Sullivan & Miller, 2013, p. 11). When examining hierarchical social structures in teacher education—as they are produced and reproduced in local teacher cultures—I used indexing to visualize the fragmentation of communications, archaic forms of documentation, rituals and routines (Britzman, 2003) that are present in traditional teaching training.
In my analysis of the student teachers’ narratives and my own reflective narratives, I used indexing to further organize data generated by mapping the hierarchical barriers that prevent the flow of decentralized knowledge in the practicum. In this context, I used indexing to examine the social structures and restrictions impeding student teachers from recognizing their own creative powers to negotiate learning journeys during the practicum. Specifically, indexing techniques illuminate archaic forms of evaluation that no longer match the complexity of teaching, myths that suppress collaboration and peer mentoring, and power structures that prevent student teachers from questioning social relations and administrative procedures.

*Visual Strategies of Modeling*

Miller and Sullivan (2013) reveal that modeling is process oriented, “where information about the relationships among features within a structure is sought” (p.11). Modeling became an important process in reconstructing my own teaching identity and revealed how shared stories of the teaching practicum can create spaces of unfolding inquiry. Such spaces of inquiry help student teachers recognize the complexity in teacher fieldwork and can assist educators in envisioning alternatives to hegemonic roles perpetuated in teacher education. Modeling as a visual methodology is used to deconstruct the structures and inherited discourses embedded within
educational institutions. Modeling as a means of visualizing data is... process-oriented, where information about the relationship among features within a structure is sought... [M]odeling, therefore, is a multidimensional reconstructive process and requires the capacity to strip complex phenomena into their constituent parts and to visualize the links. (Miller & Sullivan, 2013, p. 11)

Figure 3. Visual strategies of modeling occurred when the researcher began to weave the stories of the student teachers with my own, creating a multi-layered, polyvocal narrative. Created by Joana Hyatt.

When memories and reflections about the practicum are woven together, modeling our stories become forms of bricolage, opening up new spaces for alternative identities and pathways into teaching. Applying modeling to institutional experience in this way, I explored ways to reconstruct my own teaching identity using narrative and arts-based inquiry. I used modeling as a way to reconstruct my own teaching identity through emergent methodologies that reveal how stories shared of the teaching practicum can help us recall our own narratives. Illustrating how such visual analysis can bring narratives together in order to create a space of unfolding inquiry. Because of the process of visualizing data to understand complex situations and feelings, I was able to see the 11 student teachers’ stories and my story as a whole form.

Validity in Narrative Inquiry and Autobiographical Studies

The work of narrative inquiry, as well as self-study research, move away from traditional
forms of validation or generalizability of results, striving instead for a “true to life” quality that provides new insights (Eisner, 1996). Indeed, the validity of narrative research may be interpreted by the same criteria as art: “[D]oes a narrative analysis move us?” (Riessman, 1993, p. 65). Reaching beyond traditional boundaries of social science, narrative research becomes a literary craft (Riessman, 1993). Narrative inquiry encourages the researcher to understand human complexity and experience: “Narrative research... does not strive to produce any conclusions of certainty, but aims for its findings to be ‘well grounded’ and ‘supportable,’ retaining an emphasis on the linguistic reality of human experience” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 4). Thus, narratives are holistic. Drawn from “authentically scientific” methods (Freeman, 2007), they nonetheless remain ambiguous, complex, and messy, documents of life (Freeman, 2007; Gusdorf, 1980). Nevertheless, there are powerful methods of ensuring the integrity of narrative methodology.

Riessman (1993) advocates for trustworthiness over validity: “The trustworthiness of our interpretations is not based on objective reality but as processes in the social world” (1993, p. 66). Mishler (1990) highlights the pragmatic uses of narrative inquiry, judging trustworthiness according to how well interpretations reflect their origins in narrative data. As such, the researcher must make transparent processes of interpretation and make primary data available to other researchers (Riessman, 1993). Narrative research must demonstrate its meaningfulness by fulfilling its objectives credibly and clearly (McNiff, 2007). Making the narrator’s acts of research part of the narrative, narrative inquiry attempts to capture the “whole story,” while aiming for findings well supported by verisimilitude, the appearance of truth or reality (Mertova, 2009). Furthermore, Polkinghorne (1988) argues that in contrast to quantitative frameworks, the validity of narrative is more closely associated with meaningful analysis than consequences, wherein trustworthiness of notes or transcripts becomes a guarantor of reliability. In this way, validity stems
from “the analyst’s capacity to invite, compel, stimulate or delight the audience... not on criteria of veracity” (Gergen, 1985, p. 272). For Huberman (1995), the validity of narrative research requires a complex of qualities, including access, honesty, verisimilitude, authenticity, familiarity, transferability and economy. Another way to validate narrative inquiry is through correspondence. Member checks about data and categories of interpretation can take results back to the groups from whom the data was originally collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to assess their validity.

Concerns about validity become especially acute in autobiographical work. The autobiographer cannot resurrect the past with scientific accuracy. The past can only be interpreted from the standpoint of the present, acknowledging the perspective of the autobiographer (Gusdorf, 1980). Indeed, postmodern perspectives embrace such partiality: “There are simply different modes of telling about the world, including the world of the person. None, from this perspective, are to be regarded as privileged, as truer, than any other” (Freeman, 2007, p. 133). In the place of traditional quantitative modes of validation, Conle (2001) argues for four criteria to evaluate the meaningfulness of narrative inquiry: the objective truth, the emotional truth, social/moral appropriateness, and the clarity of the story. Embracing such categories, it is a certainty that “validity is value laden” (p. 218). To assess the validity of my own narrative research, I drew upon not only my personal recollections but checked them against the contemporary perspectives of my project’s participants. The resulting resonance worked to clarify the meaning and validity of my own narrative.

McNiff (2004) recognizes the power of “values as standards of judgment in evaluating the worth of educational inquiry” (p. 218). Autobiographical reflections are not reproduced as an object of truth but a story told and retold, as time and space shift our perspectives (Freeman, 2003a). As we experience new things, our perspectives on past occurrences will also shift. I was
more capable of articulating my experiences and examining them as the participants’ narratives informed me and allowed me to reflect on part of my experiences in education.

Part of qualitative validity is acknowledging the way I interpret or read the student teachers’ stories may be different from what they intended. I recognize that their voices have been moderated through my own biases as a researcher. Knowing this, I did my best to capture their voices and my own, as I wove them throughout Chapter 4.

One of the risks involved in narrative inquiry, is outlined by Connelly and Clandinin (1990) when researchers attempt to smooth the narrative. “Smoothing is the tendency to invoke a positive result regardless of the indications of the data” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 96). Such risks can be minimized by adapting Webster and Mertova’s (2007) critical event in the analysis, which recommends you provide the reader with access to the research data. My digital data from the student teachers’ stories and my autobiographical remembrances of my student teaching experience can be found on the PostArtTeachingStories wiki site.

Ultimately, the validity of narrative inquiry in the vein I have pursued comes from the transformation of the emotional attitudes of participants and readers, fostering greater empathy and mutual regard. Such internal empathic validity occurs when the practitioner and/or the research participants are changed by the research, but the work must also finally “influence the audiences with whom the practitioner’s research is shared” (Dadds, 2008, p. 7). In my research, I strive to meet such objectives by illustrating how my interpretations of past experiences foster empathic understanding of my teaching practices and identities, especially through the transformative process of this self-study. Nevertheless, since narrative inquiry and arts inquiry often produce more quandaries than it resolves, I am left with many questions. As a final thought on validity, Sullivan

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4 https://postartteachingstories.wikispaces.com/Welcome+to+Post+Art+Stories
(2004) states, “If a measure of the utility of research is seen to be the capacity to create new knowledge that is individually and culturally transformative, then criteria need to move beyond probability and plausibility to possibility” (p. 72).

*Arts-Based Practices: Validity and Ethical Considerations*

The problem of validity arises by not creating a critical community within arts-based research as there are few measurements of quality (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). Cahnmann-Taylor (2008) suggests in order to foster such a critical community more arts-based educational researchers must share their techniques and aesthetic sensibilities so that arts-based approaches may continue to develop its scholarship. Cahnmann-Taylor (2008) states that there are multiple researchers writing about arts-based research criteria but fewer examples of what it looks like in the areas of literary, visual, and performing arts.

Arts-based research present five tensions associated with judging criteria of soundness and worth within arts-based paradigms. First, imaginative vs. referentially clear, consider these questions about expanding perception presented by Cahnmann-Taylor and Siegesmund (2008): “Do these works of scholartistry exhibit qualitative reasoning? Does the work inspire dialogue? Does the work help us understand issues of teaching and learning in new ways?” (p. 232). Next, we must consider the particular vs. the general, asking the questions of, “Does the work help us to attend to qualities of a question or problem that heretofore might have gone unnoticed? How is the audience brought into this process of discovery? Does the audience become an active participant in the construction of meaning, or is the meaning imposed on the reader by the researcher? Does the experience of the particular bring the reader and the researcher together in a sense of shared conversation and responsibility?” (p. 233)
The third tension is the aesthetics of beauty vs. verisimilitude of truth. Again consider critical questions such as does beauty encourage open or closed conversations? Arts-based research believes works should extend and help develop conversation rather than provide a summative conclusion (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). The fourth tension is better questions vs. definitive answers. In other words, does the work allow for purposeful asking such questions as, “How has the inquiry advanced understanding?” (p. 241). The final tension being metaphoric novelty vs. literal utility. Considering that many arts-based researchers employ metaphors, asking, “Does the metaphors employed in the work of scholartistry expand our understanding?” (p. 242). And, “Does the metaphor make felt qualitative meaning more accessible?” (p. 242). It is in these tensions and questions that criteria for validity can be established.

Being conscientious about producing art that honors the evolving complexity of relational conditions (Irwin & Ricketts, 2013) we need to begin with clearly stating the ethical considerations of arts-based practices (Bresler, 2006). As such, it means to examine the virtues and ethics of being an Arts-based researcher, practitioner, and raconteur. In doing so, I must consider empathetic validity (Dadds, 2008), recognizing that others words, expressions, and images have the potential to profoundly change my way of thinking and feeling towards others and my own experiences.

According to Irwin (2013) arts-based research, “highlights the importance of knowing (theoria), doing (praxis), and making (poesis) as three forms of thought” (p. 66). Conducting arts-based research for me, was about embracing ethical considerations of empathetic validity by; recognizing intuitive knowledge, which encourages alternative interpretations and hybrid ways of knowing, “acquiring knowledge that goes beyond simple rule following” (Boje, 2005, p. 195). Art-based researchers have the ability to perform personal praxis by presenting and deliberating other
ways of being, sharing internal experiences through their research practices and methodologies, and contributing towards future frameworks within our communities. Through publicly sharing our processes of making meaning with others, we are engage with one another in other ways of knowing, establishing new knowledge. As Boje (2005) explains that *prolepsis* is, “the ability to enrich common knowledge with the powers of personal experience” (p. 192). Acknowledging ethical considerations of hybrid forms of arts-based research is recognition of empathic validity, reconsidering how to present multiple ways of knowing through the layering of our own lives, interpretations of other’s lives, and other’s interpretations of their experiences. To contemplate how we go about representing multiple voices and the gaps within the narrative arts-based framework.

It is within these gaps and fissures that we place ourselves in the position of researcher as participant. As I used methods of autobiographical memory work and processes of resonance to reflect upon my own experiences, I also wanted to keep the 11 student teacher narratives intact from the wiki site. As I wove their narratives in with my own memories of the practicum\(^5\), it created something new, “where linearity is disrupted and the importance of the complexity is embraced” (Irwin & Ricketts, 2013, pg. 67).

Selecting hybrid forms of inquiry such as narrative and arts-based inquiry was a necessity for me, as I came to empathize with and understand the pre-service art education student teachers’ stories, sharing in both the joys and disappointments in teaching. Dadds (2008) refers to this kind of process as internal empathetic validity, where the researchers and/or participants are transformed in the process of the research. Only after the research is shared with a broader audience

\(^5\) The student teachers narratives and my autobiographical remembrances of the practicum experience can be found on the wiki site, [https://postartteachingstories.wikispaces.com/Welcome+to+Post+Art+Stories](https://postartteachingstories.wikispaces.com/Welcome+to+Post+Art+Stories) under the section, Our Stories.
outside the research group does it have the potential to influence others and be considered as external empathetic validity (Dadds, 2008).

Through the contributions and support of others who are experiencing the same event, pre-service art educators can imagine unique insights and embody their work as artist-researcher-pre-service teacher. Sullivan (2006) recognizes the potential of arts-based research as a public act stating, “Art practice, in its most elemental form, is an educational act, for the intent is to provoke dialogue and to initiate educational discourse” (p. 33). It is with this intention, that I delve further into examining my own theoretical positions and experiences in education so that the discourse of student teaching practices can be further explored and improved upon.

O’Donoghue (2009) states that appropriate attention to relational aesthetics and auto/biographical writings from artists concerning their lives and practices have not been given its due in arts-based research. When we take into account relational aesthetics, ethical considerations must be present within the research framework. This is where the infusion of self-study frameworks greatly compliments arts-based approaches.

Anonymity – Ethical Considerations

Many assert that digital storytelling is meant to be shared publicly with others (Lambert, 2000; Roland, 2006), but since educational institutions are not decentralized like the Internet, I felt it was necessary to protect the pre-service art educations students’ identities on the wiki site. As the student teachers critiqued institutions that may one day employ them or mentor teachers who may become their colleagues, it is important to remember that anonymity can allow participants to delve deeply into the uncertainty and struggles of teaching in order to question dominant myths,
clichés, and misconceptions in teaching culture. Giving them the freedom to critique institutions and mentor teachers and to discuss any pertinent influences in their practicum experiences.

In the additional follow-up questions with three of the pre-service art education students who participated on the wiki site, I asked if they felt safer posting their narratives anonymously. The unanimous answer was, yes. The three student teachers felt they could give specific details in their narratives because their identities would not interfere with the purpose of their narratives. One student teacher expressed she still had a working relationship with her former mentor teacher and would not want to cause her harm or hurt her feelings. Another student teacher felt keeping the names of the students and teachers out of her narrative protected them from harm but still allowed her to discuss some of the difficulties she had during her practicum experiences. The three student teachers’ responses to the additional questions can be found in the appendix of this study.

Conclusion

My story is about personal experience in which there was an abuse of power, and my research is about how to resist, deconstruct, and dismantle the status quo of power structures within the practicum. While at the same time this study reflects a personal praxis that involves empowerment, which comes from embracing reconstructions of our own autobiographical narratives. In order to approach this reconstruction, I aligned with methods that felt intuitive to me as an artist, researcher, and educator. Therefore, the hybrid methodologies of arts-based inquiry and narrative inquiry used in a self-study framework have been outlined in this chapter. The results of using narrative analysis (Riessman, 1993; Webser & Mertova, 2007) to discover themes and patterns, and the visual strategies of mapping, indexing, and modeling (Sullivan & Miller, 2013) to examine both visual and textual data is further explored in Chapter 4.
Deconstructing the Myths of Teaching, *clay and paper*, by Joana Hyatt

Our stories are clustered around words, images, events, that evoke emotions from the tenuous journey of becoming art educators. Creating a reflective safe space for myself to remember what I intentionally wanted to forget, I forged a space of resistance, allowing my autobiographical narrative of becoming an educator to unfold. In these spaces of resistance, emerge the institutional constraints of inherited discourses and the oppressive structures of myth in teacher training. The constraints and myths of teaching that were present during my student teaching experience; now reside within me, and are reproduced through my own teaching practices.

Finding my way during teacher fieldwork meant I had to navigate the unknown terrain, mired with confusion, rejection, and isolation. To create a safe space of inquiry, I situated myself within a group of newly minted art education student teachers in the midst of their own processes
of understanding the complexity of teacher fieldwork. It is within this itinerant and contentious place; I discovered a space of communion, where we can share stories that visualize the vulnerabilities of teaching and embrace the feelings of being nomadic and uncertain.

(Journal, 2013)
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Introduction to Findings

Chapter 4 is divided in two major sections. The first section addresses the results from the initial analysis of data, using narrative analysis (Riessman, 1993; Webster & Mertova, 2007) and visual strategies of mapping, indexing, and modeling (Sullivan & Miller, 2013). In the beginning of the chapter, I reintroduce the five metaphors that were in the prefaces of former chapters. These visual metaphors resulted from an ongoing inquiry that was produced from deconstructing and reconstructing experiences from my own autobiography of becoming an educator. During the research process of reconstructing an autobiographical narrative of becoming an art educator, two major themes emerged. Those themes were perpetuated myths and predetermined discourses promoted in many educational institutions and teacher training.

Deeper analysis of the data produced subthemes; social control, isolation and fragmentation within the practicum, the myth of practice makes perfect in teaching, teacher image as social control, myths concerning the images and stereotypes of teachers. I also address conflicting paradigms between the university and public teaching, defensive teaching that masks the vulnerability and complexity of teaching, and finally feelings of failure when student teachers cannot meet the impossibility of such myths. The second part of the chapter examines strategies of reflection and resistance that can be explored in digital communities. In many instances, narratives often contain multiple themes (Keats, 2009; Polkinghorne, 2007) therefore; the stories/images presented will have multiple thematic connections.
The Five Visual Metaphors

Reintroducing the five metaphors that emerged from the research processes of remembering, resisting, and recreating my own autobiographical narrative of becoming an art educator, allowed me to reflectively reframe my journey and deconstruct my past student teaching experiences. Using my voice to narrate the myths and inherited discourses influencing teacher fieldwork, I visualized and wrote about the constraints that I felt were present in my student teaching experiences. In creating spaces of resistance in rewriting my narrative of becoming an art educator, textual and visual forms of reflexive empowerment emerged. Tensions that were present during the practicum, were remembered and palpable, sometimes leaving me angry, and at other times, determined. I rewrote and recreated my journey into becoming other than what is recognized and legitimized within hierarchical educational institutions. In becoming other, I push against and resist what is presented as a good teacher according to the promoted institutional discourses and myths that are produced and reproduced through rituals, routines, and documentations in teacher training programs (Britzman, 2003). Hegemonic roles and myths in teacher training favor those who never question the status quo of institutional practices, who abide by archaic forms of documentations and evaluations, and who do not resist the univocal narrative of teachers as the solitary expert who are responsible for all learners. Furthermore, promoting a tenuous ideology that supports the training of teachers who successfully mask the vulnerability of teaching according to the myths perpetuated within many educational institutions.

As I produced the five visual metaphors that aligned with the two major themes of my study; myths and inherited discourses in teaching training, my story emerged from the recalling memories as I read the narratives from 11 pre-service art teacher candidates’ experiences in the practicum. As I mapped the supported institutional connections (and disconnections to our own
reflective journeys) in the student teaching practicum, I illustrated my frustrations of trying to research a system which favors transient documentation and uneven development in the preface to Chapter 1: *The Fragmented Journey*. From recalling my experiences of the practicum, myths and inherited discourses led to misunderstandings about student teacher and mentor teacher roles. Myths and inherited discourses can also prevent the student teacher from deeper reflection concerning self documentation of their learning journeys. Instead, hierarchical documentation is favored leading to transient, temporary, and tenuous assessments in teacher education, further dividing the important connection between reflexivity and teacher identity work. After the realization that student teachers’ experiences are not connected but fragmented, I changed the mind-map to a desert landscape which covers to flows of information in networks.

*Figure 4. Side by side comparison of The Fragmented Journey and mind-mapping experiences.*

Researcher’s Inquiry into the First Visual Metaphor, The Fragmented Journey

The concept of *freischwebend* comes from German aesthetics, meaning to hover above (Bauman, 1992). This sense of looking from above enables one to recognize complexity as a state of being lost in order to find something. After researching disconnects in educational institutions,
I realized the failures I personally felt from my practicum experiences grew from teacher training methods and myths that blocked the exploration of one’s own educational background and autobiography. I covered the flows of information shared in a collaborative network with sand to represent a desert of fragmentation and uncertainty. In recognition that within the practicum experience, there are no flows, just sand, wind, and a feeling of displacement. The words that are still visible represent pools of experiential knowledge that never quite connect in the student teaching practicum. Afterwards, I realized that because of the transient experiences contained within pre-service fieldwork, many pre-service educators never make the connection to their past educational narratives and how they currently influence their present one. As I began to reflect on my undialogic experience of student teaching in my research, the notion of a linear path of teacher education appeared suspect. I was unable to map my experience as an organized journey completed by the student teaching practicum because no such endpoint existed, and no predetermined map can describe an individual journey.

Indexing the restrictive structures of the field experience, illustrated the roles of teachers perpetuated in that culture, and predetermined discourses that are practiced in teacher training. Such practices are produced through processes of rituals such as, daily routines, evaluations, and documentations, resulting in practices of social control as student teachers are often called upon to reproduce sameness in a rigid system that does not allow them to question archaic practices and superficial roles. This leaves no room for negotiations into individual learning journeys. As I recalled and created an image of disembodied resistance that I experienced during my own student teaching practicum, I remembered feelings of coercion and oppression as a form of punishment for not following the indoctrinated rules of teaching. As a form of resistance, I went through the expected routines but remained emotionally disconnected from the student teaching experience.
This resulted in the visual assemblage, *Borderlands* (Figure 5); this became a way for me to visualize indoctrination into the body of education.

![Image of Borderlands](image)

*Figure 5. “Borderlands.”*

*Researcher’s Inquiry into the Second Visual Metaphor, Borderlands*

The voyeuristic viewpoint produced in my still photo captures the resistance I felt during the initial phase of my student teaching experience, indoctrination into the body of education where differences are suppressed. Experiencing an out of body sensation, incorporeal from my own educational history, the institutional processes of coercion and normalization created within me, a form of disembodiment as resistance. The gaze becomes a form of silent resistance; this can be expressed through the body, resulting in physical and psychological detachment from oppressive situations. As a researcher, I was able to visualize this resistance and create an image that for me represents a form of empowerment by acknowledging my position of marginality.

Modeling the multiple processes of visualizing the data of my research using methods of memory work and resonance, I produced a pastel drawing in Preface to Chapter 3: *Resonance and*
Remnants. As I began recalling the vulnerability of being a student teacher and my mentor teacher’s bullying tactics towards me, I realized that teachers often mask their own vulnerability of uncertainty and isolation, reproducing the same hegemonic practices as they initiate other student teachers into local teaching cultures. In the image below, I combine a portion of the narrative that I was writing while creating the pastel drawing. In the process of recalling the vulnerability of being a student teacher and my mentor teacher’s bullying tactics towards me, I realized that teachers often mask their own vulnerability of uncertainty and isolation, reproducing the same hegemonic practices as they initiate other student teachers into local teaching cultures.

Figure 6. “Remnants.”

Researcher’s Inquiry into the Third Visual Metaphor, Remnants

The illustration and words describe a deconstruction of my teacher self, depicting my (un)becoming. As I began the process of peeling away the inherited discourses and the normalizations that I had consumed from my many years of teaching within educational institutions, I discovered through autobiographical memory work how arduous and painful
deconstruction of the self can be. This image represents for me, the internal processes of the fracturing, a breaking away of self, exposing vulnerability, humanizing my own educational biography as multiplicitious, contentious, and complex. As I learn about myself and others through this process of self-study research, this image represents for me the internal processes of persuasive discourse and the visualization of identity work that can lead to multiplicities of understanding the self in flux.

Modeling was also a vital component to understanding how multiple stories of experience weave the narrative into something new and much more complex, assisting me in understanding the broader framework of student teaching field experiences, as I produced a mixed-media piece, in the preface to Preface to Chapter 4: *Deconstructing the Myths of Teaching*. I wanted to create a platform of a decaying book representing the old ways of hegemony in teacher training. In weaving the student teachers’ stories in with my own memories, it helped me visualize the process of collaboration and reflection. Their narratives assisted me in locating multiple voices within the practicum experience, producing a dialogic understanding. Something that I did not feel was present in my own student teaching experience.

*Figure 7. “Deconstructing the Myths of Teaching.”*
When stories of experience are patched, pasted, worked together, new forms of inquiry can materialize. The whole creates something completely different than our fragmented experiences alone. When I began to weave the narratives of my past student teaching field experience with the other 11 art teacher candidates’ narratives, I began to see it as a way to overcome my feelings of fragmentation. This provided a framework that would allow me to critique the hierarchical methods of teacher training that exist within my own teaching practices. The holes are still present; my story and the pre-service participants’ stories are still partial, situated, and incomplete as knowledge and knowing thyself are always in continual state of flux.

Through blurred genres of knowing and using visual methodologies, I created alternatives to the static visions of becoming an art educator. As I placed the new narratives on top of the old, woven stories of multiplicity emerged, highlighting the different pathways in becoming art educators. On one side of the book is my solitary narrative. On the other side exists a weaving of the new narratives, a cacophony of voices. The book metaphorically represented for me, a relic of modernism, and archaic forms of teacher training, which are reproduced and indoctrinated through rituals, routines, and documentation.

As a final visual process of remembering, resisting, and recreating my story and teacher identity, I produced, *Tilling the Field*, which connects to the beginning of my journey in conducting this study, aligning with future implications of art teacher candidates’ fieldwork experiences in Chapter 5. In the visual metaphor of a cornfield maze, I recalled what it felt like to be in a place or space of safety. Producing a reflexive form of praxis, I created forms of resistance and empowerment for myself and others that included visual and narrative methods involving teacher
identity work. Through sharing stories and the creation of visual imagery that recognizes polyvocal stories, which are different from the institutional norms of teaching, pre-service educators may gain a greater insight into their own individual processes and alternative forms of documenting experiences in becoming teachers.

*Figure 8. “Tilling the Field,” photograph by Joana Hyatt.*

**Researcher’s Inquiry into the Fifth Visual Metaphor, Tilling the Field**

Although this place would appear to be confusing because it was in many ways like a maze with so many spaces to get lost in, it was for that exact reason that I longed to be inside them. To be in a place that would allow me the space to reflect. An online community can serve as a temporary space of belonging, a space where narratives and art can assist us in recalling experiences and guide us to deeper inquiry concerning the practices and relational aspects within the teaching practicum. It is a space that can tolerate and encourage ambiguity and uncertainty of how to teach and what it means to be a teacher.
Myths and Inherited Discourses in Teacher Training

In the following exploration of results and findings, I examine narratives and images which resulted in the development of two major themes; myths and predetermined discourses that occur within student teaching fieldwork. Under these two major themes, subthemes emerged that outline the forced social practices of learning to teach. In myths, I found conflicting paradigms of what university and public schools want from student teachers and their measurements of success in the practicum, this lead to uncovering local myths that are perpetuated within certain teacher cultures.

The second theme was inherited discourses which align with forms of social control, such as documentation, evaluations, and confusion over mentor teacher roles. Because myths and inherited discourses go unquestioned in archaic systems of educational institutions, the results of these two themes can lead to feelings of isolation, vulnerability, failure, uncertainty, and apathy from student students and mentor teachers alike. Forms of resistance can manifest within the practicum, creating micropolitical actions of classroom control that mask the vulnerabilities of teaching. These solutions and methods of identifying modes of resistance to institutional narratives thrust upon student teachers and full-fledged art educators alike will be discussed further in the second portion of this chapter.

The Reproduction of Myth and Suppressing Difference

The cultural myths of teaching narrate a heroic story, an ideology of autonomy that one can rise above the overwhelming isolation of teaching. To talk about such things as not knowing and being uncertain is to be vulnerable, which contradicts myths of the self-made teacher. As Britzman (2003) notes, “each myth distorts the social sense, and institutional context of learning
to teach, the constructed qualities of knowledge, and the ambivalence made from relations of power” (p. 7). In this context, many institutional criteria mistakenly see the teacher as solely responsible for all learning, according to competencies outlined in student teaching evaluations. This situates the student teachers’ actions or inactions as the problem, in order to provide oversimplified solutions to very complex teaching environments. Such archaic evaluations and methods, place all the responsibility on the student teacher’s ability to control the class and master the subject. These practices neglect conflicting narratives that are a part of classroom environments producing the idea that teaching and knowledge are static, confined, and mastered, rather than teaching and knowledge as something dialogic, fluctuating, and complex.

*Practice Makes Perfect*

It is a huge responsibility that educational institutions place on the shoulders of student teachers. The myths of teaching place them as the sole proprietor and dispenser of knowledge. During the practicum experience, the realization concerning the complexity involved in the actual practice of teaching is comprehended by many student teachers. As student teachers’ come to terms with their own remembrances of being students, and the myths of teaching that reinforce the idea that they must be the one in charge and responsible for all learning, is when the complexity of teaching is realized by novice educators.

*Figure 9. Narrative: The Incremental Approach, by Student Teacher 1, ArtIsAHammer.*
If this semester has taught me anything, it is this. Learning how to teach isn't a quick thing - there is no life altering moment where everything clicks into place questions suddenly have answers and doubts cease to have any room to breathe. It's not like that. It's an every day, every lesson, every interaction process, wherein you constantly reflect and revise, plan and re-plan, try and try again. Doubts exist. They come as unbidden whispers or as unintelligible flutterings of random anxiety or even the voice of a student saying simply, "this project sucks." Many small things have become apparent, but haven't been any earth shattering revelations, no epiphanies that stop time and catch your breath.

(Student Teacher 1, ArtIsAHammer)

Student Teacher 1, ArtIsAHammer, created a vimeo presentation of the practicum experiences titled, The Incremental Approach. The video was inspirational and the artwork that the student teacher produced with students during her practicum was impressive. The frustrating realization for me as I was reading this narrative, was understanding that teaching sometimes is not incremental. Incremental suggests progress, something increasing in value or something gained. Because of institutional constraints and fragmentation concerning archaic forms of measuring students’ progress and/or documenting our own practices as teachers, even incremental goals are often difficult to measure or attain. This pre-service art teacher candidate speaks of the everyday realities and struggles to motivate students, something that student teachers and teachers alike must face. Even more astute is the way she confronts the myth of experience, which is supposedly a sudden awakening that takes place sometime during the practicum, a moment when everything is known about teaching. Her narrative contradicts this myth by illustrating that teaching isn’t instantaneous.

Social Control

I remember how it felt to be bullied by my cooperating teacher. The memories still sting me. She warned me many times if I didn’t do what she wanted she would give me a bad evaluation and there wasn’t anything I could about it. She knew she had the power and I was powerless. I did my best to not let her intimidate me and told her several times that I was going to have an open file whether that
was recommended by the university or not. But the truth is I had a closed file because that is what was recommended by the teacher placement office in the college of education.

(Journal, 2011)

Power and control are often exerted through social practices that engrained in the everyday rituals and procedures of teaching. These social practices, which reflect implicit values of the local teacher culture, are embedded in the mundane procedures of teacher training and reproduced through documentation, evaluations, and the unspoken expectations concerning student teachers behaviors. Social control through isolation and predetermined ideologies of successful teaching, produced through institutional evaluations, often cause student teachers to mimic cooperating teachers’ style and methods, further preventing art education teachers candidates from envisioning alternative ways of teaching which can challenge hegemonic roles and hierarchical structures embedded in institutional narratives of teaching. After reading the student teachers’ short narratives on the wiki site and other literature concerning social practices in the teaching practicum, I began to make personal connections to my own oppressive experience. Realizing that during my student teacher practicum one of my mentor teacher practiced social control in many ways. Below is an excerpt from my reflective journal describing how she often used the evaluation as a form of control:

My mentor teacher:

In her mind, she may have been toughing me up for what was to come. Or was she introducing me to the way she was indoctrinated into the teaching culture, standing by the institutional rules in which she was instructed and continues to follow. In other words, she was serving a custodial ideology that legitimizes institutional power referred to as “Guarding the Tower.”

Did she feel the need to hold me accountable and indoctrinate me to the rules? Did she see it as her duty to “Convert the Native” When she told me, “you will dress like this. You will behave like this, and when I tell you to do this, you will do it without question.” She saw me as a blank slate or someone with very little previous knowledge or experience, at least not someone who is recognized within the teacher culture.
You cannot negotiate within an institution if your definitions or interpretations are not recognized within that culture. The accepted dominant ideologies are the only ones legitimized by persons who perpetuate those myths within the educational institutions.

By using the same cultural norms that were produced and reproduced within a local teacher culture, the only way that many teacher candidates survive the practicum is to adhere to the myths that one must perform in order to receive a good evaluation and recommendation, to conform to and obey without question, the inherited discourses and authoritative knowledge that exists within this fragmented world. How can you genuinely discover your teaching self or your own educational biography when there are restrictive measures in place that prevent you from doing so?

For all the attention given to new ways of including narratives and the broader concepts of visual arts in school curriculums, we need to realize unless we change the way we approach teaching pre-service educators and redress how they are evaluated, nothing else will change. Because others have the power to determine whether the student teacher is deemed successful, mimicking what a good teacher is according to predetermined discourses becomes the only option. Evaluations are the ultimate form of social control, determining whether the pre-service educator appropriately performs hegemonic roles of what is considered good teaching within that culture.

(Johnson, 2013)

Shaughnessy (1987) examines stages of teacher development when mentor teachers work with novice and pre-service educators. In the first stage, “guarding the tower,” the teacher feels as if she represents the institution and its pedagogy, protecting the institution and its teachers from outsiders. Next, in “converting the natives,” the veteran teachers view the novice and pre-service educators as empty vessels lacking their own knowledge and previous educational experience, which the veterans alone are responsible for filling with the unquestionable truths of institutional knowledge (Britzman, 2003; Freire, 1970).

Student teachers are discouraged from questioning taken-for-granted procedures, routines, and documentation methods—the status quo of institutional norms: “Preservice teachers were, for the most part, educated in how to follow orders—i.e., to take a prescribed curriculum and deliver it with a variety of techniques” (Ginsburg, 1988, p. 298). Student Teacher 2 describes her mentor teacher’s social control over her instruction when teaching, “She used a microphone to speak in—
in a class of only 15! She would sit at her desk and speak (into the microphone) over me when I was in the middle of any instruction.”

Figure 10. Narrative: *My Story*, by Student Teacher 2, Drgnfly007.

The old-fashioned signage (Figure 10) accompanied the student teachers narrative, *My Story*. The sign illustrates commands, orders, and rules crammed into a restricted space, as if there is no room for anything else, certainly not dialogue. This student teacher’s narrative expressed shock and disappointment that she spent three hundred dollars of her own money to buy supplies for students to do an art project. Social control over authority was apparent in her narrative as she explained that her cooperating teacher would often interrupted her instruction of students using a microphone system. Unfortunately, this behavior is not uncommon (Mays-Woods, 2003). Her narrative and image make visible the micropolitical actions within the student teaching practicum and social constraints in the teaching environment that are rarely if ever discussed in methodology courses or considered in teacher training programs.

Tied to social control, an emphasis on teaching style often unfortunately overwhelms concerns about social and relational pedagogy. Within my own practicum experience, I was told to retrieve lunch for my cooperating teacher, run errands, and to follow her instructions without question. Whenever I slightly deviated from her instructions, she would punish me by sequestering
me to the copy/resource room to make copies and cut out materials for class. I wasn’t allowed to teach until she said, I learned to follow orders. Unfortunately, these incidences are never considered in most teacher education courses or as part of the practicum experience because student teachers fear that they will be seen as trouble-makers or unable to resolve problems on their own. This makes negotiation or social interdependency seems unsatisfactory and only desirable for the novice teacher who cannot make it on his or her own (Britzman, 2003). Autonomy is seen as strength, and reliance on the community is seen as a weakness. Such inherited discourses and educational norms of teaching insist that if one follows a predetermined outline and linear path, one becomes a capable teacher through practicum experiences. No matter how oppressive and destructive those experiences may be to the well-being of the student teacher. Just so, my undialogic experience as a student teacher made me feel strongly that I simply was not a teacher, lacking preordained essential qualities, which led me to reject teaching altogether. My personal narrative conflicted with the narratives of educational institutions.

I remembered the hegemonic processes of becoming an art educator, which did not allow me to question or critique the status quo of teacher training, nor align it with my own autobiography as I was forced to cast aside my own cultural history and educational experiences. In such homogenized practices, which suppress difference, I ask, where are the spaces for the voices that are silenced or constrained in the practicum? This suppression led to my own submission, eventually causing me to succumb to the perpetuation of myths in teacher education. Consequently, I participated in the reproduction of myths and allowed myself, my being, to be consumed within the body of education, denying my own difference and the differences of my students.
Through discourses of common sense or concepts and ideas that we take for granted, we often resist the lived complications of teaching and learning (Britzman, 2003). Experience is not necessarily the best teacher because not everyone lives the same event in the same way. Indeed, not everyone will have an informative or constructive experience in the student teaching practicum. As we reject the assumption that all teaching fieldwork is good, we must realize that social control exerted by mentor teachers during the practicum experiences can, in fact, be harmful to the teacher candidate as stated by Participant 3 Godwilling:

Participant 3, explained her disdain of mentor teachers imposing social control over student teachers: “Mentor teacher trying to produce miniature versions of themselves through their pre-service teachers or utilizing them for what could be considered ‘free labor’ do not understand their function as a supportive role.” She goes on to explain why this social control is damaging to the student teacher: “Mentors must come to realize that when you force a pre-service teacher to do exactly what has been done, or rather, what you want, the student teacher loses out on experimentation of method and theory.”

Participant 3 also experienced the realization that the practicum experience was not the end-all to her teaching experience. That there wasn’t a magical finishing-line that validated her struggles and triumphs of completing the academic journey into teaching.
As a student teacher and educator, I felt coerced into fitting into the predetermined roles of what is considered a good teacher. Because hegemonic social structures are embedded within school systems, less oppressive arrangements are rarely, if ever, explored. If other arrangements are offered, they are looked upon as suspect (Hartley, 1992) or as extracurricular but not necessary (Kidd, 2011). The student teacher enters amidst already-played-out performances, hegemonic roles of student and teacher. Because student teachers are required to master control of not only themselves but the students in the classroom, while appeasing the classroom teacher, alternative identities rarely emerge in the practicum. “[Student teachers] possess no comparative perspective and lack both the prior experience in, and institutional support for, challenging the status quo and understanding how institutional constraints become lived practices” (Britzman, 2003, p. 236).

Looking the Part: Image as Social Control

Considering the time period of the late 1980s, I thought I was dressed rather conservatively in a white peasant blouse and khaki pants. However, when my first cooperating teacher suggested that I wear a shirt that didn’t show my bra when we were sitting with a group of teachers in the teacher’s lounge, I was mortified! The group of teachers’ laughed. I felt as if they were judging everything I wore. As if I were being scrutinized by church officiates. (Journal, 2012)

Through my self-study research, I came to comprehend the complexities of the social practices and oppressive feelings imposed upon me in the practicum. At the same time, however, through self-study research, I realized that my cooperating teacher was not to blame for what I interpreted as coercion and bullying. After reading other teacher candidates’ narratives, as well as doing research in current literature on teacher education, I realized it was not simply my cooperating teacher imposing social control over my field experience and enforcing restrictive
teaching practices. Although she was directly involved, such practices were structurally embedded within the institution of teaching itself, and reproduced locally through teacher cultures.

If I had not constructed my own narrative account and conducted research in this area, I may have continued to blame my cooperating teacher for my unsatisfying experience and the depression that followed my practicum. By investigating others and my own teaching practices, I came to understand standards of good teaching and what a teacher is supposed to visibly represent are reproduced through cultural norms that view other ways of teaching or looking as suspect. Institutionalized narratives call upon teachers to be homogeneous and without previous history in order to appear neutral. In doing so, teachers and student teachers are called upon to wipe away individual characteristics and their own cultural values. Educational institutions see individuality as problematic as student teachers are reprimanded for deviating from the norm in appearance or actions.

Imagery of teachers varies widely. We may consider the stereotypes of the schoolmarm, spinster, or authoritarian nun and contrast them with conflicting images posed in rock anthems like Van Halen’s *Hot for Teacher* and movies depicting female teachers as sexual temptresses or child predators (*Notes on a Scandal, To Die For*) (Keroes, 1999; Weber & Mitchell, 1996). Local knowledge can produce its own set of cultural myths about teaching, suppressing multiplicity. As such, Britzman (2003) asks an important question, “How do student teachers and the significant others with whom they interact make sense of their inherited and socially constructed circumstances?” (p. 33). How myths are adapted, perpetuated, and sustained depends greatly on local context. Instructing pre-service art educators and working in other domains of teacher education, I have found that the dominant images of female educators are teacher-as-saint and teacher-as-temptress.
Teacher-as-Saint/Teacher-as-Temptress

Although I did not intend for my study to be a regional one, all fourteen of the student teacher art candidates that shared narratives and images on the wiki site attended universities in the south. The bulk of my own teaching experiences have been conducted in the southern United States. The localized myths that emerge in my research are rooted in the conservatism of the Bible belt. Such myths are often invoked by derogatory remarks about teachers’ clothing, adornment, or lifestyle. The teacher-as-saint selflessly gives of herself continuously without expecting reward. While this theme is implicit in many of the narratives, one student teacher’s story, *A Lost Cause?*, takes this notion as a central concern. Participant 4, pjammy, writes about teaching at-risk students with overwhelming obstacles in their daily lives and she asks some important questions that are never addressed in teacher education courses:

They still need guidance and direction. I know that this is why I became a teacher, to help guide and direct students through their journey in education, but I know I am not expected to save all of them. At what point do we decide they are a lost cause? At what point do we let me go? How far do we go to save them?

The teacher-as-saint image is recycled through social networking sites such as Facebook, which projects images of women teachers protecting children without regard to their own safety. Although this may not seem negative on the surface, this vision of sainthood can make pre-service educators feel guilty if they are not continuously giving of their emotions, time, and money for the betterment of their students’ lives, even possibly to the point of exhaustion and financial ruin. This myth directly affects the emotional well-being of the novice educator and can lead to burnout and attrition. Below is my response to Participant 4, pjammy:

In reality, you are not expected to save any of them. I think that is an unrealistic goal and dangerous for you to put that much pressure upon yourself as a new teacher. Paulo Freire believes we cannot save others through our teaching but we can enter into fruitful dialogue and contribute towards that learning by being both teacher and student. Learning from our students and sharing our passion and knowledge about the creation of art, as well as
engaging them about issues related to art through critical reflection can be an extremely beneficial and positive outlet for all students.

The art you expose them to now may have a positive effect later in their lives. You must not think your teaching is in vain because you do not get an immediate response or a particular response from certain students. These students are dealing with complex issues; feeling overwhelmed many of them simply shut down and are not willing to put themselves out there for any kind of evaluation.

To answer your question, “At what point do we decide they are a lost cause?” My answer would be, never. We do not make that decision, nor should we. We do what we can, when we can, because we never know what each individual will take from those shared experiences in our classrooms.

Similarly, Participant 5’s narrative addresses the corrosive effects of the image of the temptress-teacher, poking fun at herself as a fertility goddess in the mold of the Venus of Willendorf. She explains that her cooperating teacher suggested she not wear maternity shirts to class because, she warned, “little boys will want to look down your shirt.” Instead, the teacher asked her to wear church shirts in the classroom. The art teacher candidate explained that after her recent pregnancy, all she could fit into were her maternity shirts. The cooperating teacher then suggested that she wear a dickie. Although the video is creative and amusing, this type of censuring of women’s clothing is disturbing. Female teachers and students’ clothing are often politicized and controlled through school dress codes.

Figure 12. Venus of Dickies by Participant 5, Venus of Willendorf.
Strangely enough, something similar happened to me in my practicum twenty-five years ago. I was told by my first cooperating teacher that I must wear loose clothing that was not too revealing because middle school boys might get the wrong idea. Understanding that the field of teaching is a political one which restricts our choices and constrains our actions and expressions as teachers and students, we must remember that not all actions and rules are produced by the classroom teacher. Many times it is the administration that decides the particulars about dress codes in schools (Raby, 2005). Britzman (2003) recognizes that not only is the practicum a site of contention but the very body of the student teacher becomes a “site of conflict” (p. 27). This particular student teacher was also admonished for teaching an art lesson about beauty and adornment that included a multicultural lesson on why certain cultures express themselves through artistic forms of tattoos and body piercing. Further illustrating the division between the development of theory in curriculum and the censorship of art in public schools, leading to conflicting paradigms of what is expected of student teachers and what roles cooperating teachers should assume in mentoring them.

Conflicting Paradigms – Mentor Teacher Roles

Drawing on such categories, my research suggests that student teacher evaluations completed by only one person can lead to abuse of power bases, especially in the areas of reward-based and coercive power, which leads to the legitimating of arbitrary control. One essential factor in reconsidering the evaluation process is the deeply divergent evaluation criteria typically employed by cooperating teachers and university faculty (Akcan & Tatar, 2010). As pre-service student teachers become caught between pleasing university supervisors or cooperating teachers, eventually, mentor teachers will gain the upper hand because they wield the ultimate power of
evaluation (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Graham, 1999). Amid this fragmentation of knowledge and experience, pre-service art student teachers learn that issues of social justice, community, and critical pedagogy they explore in their university training are not applicable to the everyday experiences of the classroom, especially if their cooperating teachers and administration do not support them (Darts, 2008). Participant 3’s narrative, Maybe Not All Teachers are Cut Out to be Mentors, explains that university experience is not validated by many mentor teachers and that their role should be one of facilitator providing support:

One of the reasons I wanted to write on this topic is because one of my mentor teachers brought this matter to me and we discussed it in detail. She believes that there are mentor teachers that honestly do not understand their function as a supportive role in the classroom. Pre-service students have already gone to school; they have had some classroom experiences. They are not starting from the ground up. They do not need to be taught basics, they need to be supported in front of the students and treated as an equal in order to gain the students trust. I believe without this support, the student teacher will be unsuccessful. This is the pre-service students’ opportunity to try and test out techniques they have been theorizing about for the last 4 or more years. This is the time when they can find out what works for them and what doesn’t. We should think of it as a dress rehearsal for obtaining tried and true skills to carry with us into our own rooms. More importantly, the mentor teacher should look at it from this perspective as well.

In schools, fieldwork and the teaching experience are considered reality, while university coursework is associated with abstract ideas. The teaching practicum is seen as an avenue in which to fill in the gaps between abstract ideas and classroom practice. This leads many students (and some mentor teachers) to assume that university theories and ideas must come to a dead end (Britzman, 2003, p. 62). At the same time, many education academics value subject expertise over pedagogy and teaching experience, so student teachers “must struggle to validate their own efforts amid a population of disbelievers” (Britzman, 2003, p. 55). As such, contention within the practicum develops over conflicting paradigms. Skills of pedagogical experience are tied to managing and controlling the classroom. Further escalating the divide between theory and practice, and pedagogy and knowledge, is the question concerning the appropriate roles of mentor teachers.
Reading the narratives of the art education student teachers, I discovered conflicting paradigms of what is considered good teaching and shifting ideologies of what role mentor teachers should play.

In the following excerpt from the narrative of Participant 6, youlivelyoulearn, the push and pull between conflicting paradigms and feelings about students is evident. The mentor teacher assumes the student teacher is young and inexperienced. The student teacher assumes the mentor teacher is old and has given up. I wonder how many times this scenario is played out in field experiences. Unfortunately, there rarely emerges a space where such conflicts can be further discussed and negotiated (Zembylas & Barker, 2002). I noticed that Participant 6 uses quotation marks around the words “expert” and “novice,” emphasizing this division in her practicum experience:

It seems that after a certain number of years, a lot of teachers develop bitterness and a bad attitude toward their students, which they try to push off onto everyone else. This is especially apparent when dealing with those who act out. The "novice" teacher may read a difficult situation with a student as an opportunity to help or understand the student, whereas the "expert" teacher sees the child as a mere annoyance. When the "expert" teacher sees the "novice" teacher's positive outlook on the situation, he/she replies, "You're still young", to which I outwardly reply with a polite laugh of agreement and respect, and inwardly reply, "Thank God." Kids are just waiting for someone else to give up on them, to confirm their fears that they are not good enough. I refuse to believe that I have to take on that state of mind. If I ever find myself thinking like an "expert" teacher, I might as well retire from teaching and let the "novice" take my place.”

In such divisions of expert versus novice, Maxine Greene (1988) wrote about the mystification in teacher education as a crisis of silence, where no one dares to question knowledge, fearing retribution. Britzman (2003) states that interference with one another is necessary in teaching, because this sets the stage for renegotiation of conflicting ideologies and the crisis of self, which is produced from such conflicts. When student teachers are stripped of their individuality and difference is suppressed, they do not necessarily feel comfortable in voicing their own opinions. Therefore, Maxine Greene’s (1988) crisis of quietism is very real in teacher training.
You cannot interfere or negotiate if your interpretations of knowledge and teaching are not legitimized within the institutions of public education. This powerlessness can bring on feelings of apathy, anomie, and/or feelings of failure as student teachers are not allowed to be different or to negotiate their own learning journeys within the practicum field experience. Participant 6 writes a note to her future students:

Dear future students of mine,

If nothing else, I will never give up on you. I will do what it takes to show you that I care, whether it’s being goofy and teaching from on top of my desk, or disciplining you as needed to show you that there are boundaries. I will not resort to negativity towards you. I may look older as the years go by, but in my heart I will remain forever young.

with love,

Your future Art teacher

Isolation and Fragmentation of Experience

Experience becomes a form of validation structured within the teaching practicum to attain control and conformity to prevailing standards of practice, in opposition to difference and theory. When pre-service art educators are not allowed a collaborative social environment that enables them to openly discuss and deconstruct the myths of teaching, student teachers can begin to feel isolated within their practicing mentor teachers’ classrooms. In many institutions of learning, seeking assistance, advice, or additional help is seen as a sign of weakness on the part of the student teacher (Britzman, 2003). Therefore, learning to teach is considered a private matter and an individual activity that one must either master or miserably fail alone. In such isolation, the novice educator must adhere to hegemonic roles normalized within localized teacher cultures, making possible the reproduction of acceptable institutional biographies that suppress difference. In such inherited discourses, cultural myths support hierarchical school structures that normalize teachers’
roles. There was little space during my first practicum that encouraged me to question these myths of teachers as autonomous, self-contained, all-knowing experts. Therefore, student teachers often automatically assume that if they cannot measure up to mythical standards, they must indeed be failures as teachers. Nevertheless, some teacher candidates realize the teacher education system has failed them and without support, they cannot overcome the formidable social structures embedded within educational institutions.

Illustrating the institutional boundaries of inherited discourses in teacher training concerning the myths of isolation and fragmentations, I created a three-dimensional map deconstructing my previous experiences in student teaching. Visualizing the institutional borders, boundaries, and structures of myth, is an empowering tool in learning to locate and reflect upon our experiences in teaching. Researchers’ and educators’ shared commitment to visualizing the construction of power and knowledge in curriculum can make visible “social wealth, social inequalities, and institutional forms of oppression” (Britzman, 2003). Arts-based inquiry is an essential component of such visualization (Diamond & Van Halen-Faber, 2005).

The images I produced through my research processes, illustrate forms of indexing and mapping (Sullivan & Miller, 2013) that served as the groundwork for such research avenues in my study. The first metaphor in Preface to Chapter 1: *The Fragmented Journey*, emerged by examining and indexing the hierarchical structures embedded in the social structures of teacher education. During my initial student teaching practicum, I felt isolated from my trusted university peers and professors. Immersed in a world of hegemonic processes and institutionalized norms, I was forced to teach and behave in ways contrary to my convictions about art education.

After my field experience was over, I gladly left behind the sporadic trails of documentation, hierarchical evaluations, and the closed teacher files for a nomadic foray into
teaching. Little did I realize that my journey would continue to be fragmented because I never scrutinized my educational biography. I never gave myself a reflective space to question and to deconstruct what was forced upon me and what resided within me. Although I questioned the myths and norms of teaching during my student fieldwork, it resulted in my leaving the practicum and the institution of teaching. Later, I finished my student teaching on a better note but I personally abandoned hope of changing the system of teacher training. By indexing the hierarchical structures in teacher education that force such choices on art teacher candidates, I explore alternatives which empowered me to critically analyze my own experiences in teacher training and how that training affects my current teaching practices.

Teacher candidates are judged on how well they control the behavior of themselves and others during their practicum fieldwork. This leaves no room for the unexpected and the spontaneous which can provide opportunities for dialogic imagination (Bahktin, 1981). Britzman (2003) notes that the common themes of teacher as expert and teacher as self-contained invokes an “autonomous and competitive individual,” which creates “a narrative of standards that render irrelevant arguments for other ways of becoming a teacher” (p. 6).

The punishment of isolation, illustrated by the time my cooperating teacher sequestered me to the copy room away from students, serves as a technique of this social control. Social control can also manifest in micropolitical actions among cooperating teacher, student teacher, and students. To assume the classroom is a neutral zone is a grave mistake (Britzman, 2003; McNay, 2003), and teacher education must recognize that educational spaces are political. Within these spaces, social control and power relations perpetuate myths that the teacher should control everything, and everything depends on the teacher (Britzman, 2003). Isolated within the classroom walls, student teachers are judged on how well they control the behavior of others and themselves.
during their practicum fieldwork. Successful learning becomes equated with controlling students’ behavior: “When the double pressures of isolation and institutional mandates to control force teachers to equate learning with social control, pedagogy is reduced to instilling knowledge rather than coming to terms with the practices that construct both knowledge and our relationship to it” (Britzman, 2003, p. 225). Prioritizing control, planning, and the prediction of outcomes leave no room for the unexpected and the unplanned to provide opportunities for dialogic imagination. Likewise, the myth of the self-made teacher with innate abilities cancels out any discourse that includes uncertainty, vulnerability, and questioning the status quo, thus canceling out theory to practice ideology.

The myth of the teacher as social controller and conveyer of all knowledge is firmly entrenched in the teacher culture. The myth that if you control the students, the environment, and the outcomes, you will be a successful teacher becomes the sole focus in the practicum experience. The idea that classroom management alone will dissolve the complexity of teaching is a dangerous assumption. In methodology courses, theory is often decontextualized and abstracted from its local practices, which can lead teacher candidates to abandon all forms of theory in the field (Britzman, 2003). Instead, “the valorization of an essentialized self as the sole source of knowledge” (p. 230) becomes primary. A division then occurs between practice and theory, when in reality, they should be unified: “The mistaken assumption is that somehow, teaching style metamorphoses into knowledge” (Britzman, 2003, p. 231). In this way, the student who plays the role of teacher learns to create the acceptable appearance of teaching as a mechanical practice. Along with mastering teaching as a mechanical practice, social control and myth becomes a visual expression as student teachers are required to look the part of the expert and abide by the myths of teachers as social controller and saint.
Feelings of Failure

Because I had no previous experience in teaching to ground my professional learning, I believed in the cooperating teacher’s threats and her admonishment about my teaching style. Not wanting to appear any more of a trouble maker than I was in her eyes, I didn’t argue with her during the rest of my practicum, even though she hurt my feelings deeply and made me feel as if I did not deserve to be a teacher. Fighting against the norms of educational institutions is tiring. Going against your supervisors or instructors is tiring. Going against the grain is tiring. Resistance is tiring.

She never discussed my evaluation with me other than to say, “You will not make a good art teacher.”

Of course this was devastating to me and I quickly fell into a deep depression. I did not leave my house for over two months. I was sure she had given me a bad evaluation, no matter how hard I tried to teach the way she wanted me to or how positively the students and parents reacted towards my teaching. I knew my career as an art teacher was over before it had ever begun.

What was the hardest thing to forgive and forget is my last day with her, when she told me I have trouble listening to advice from my superiors. If she is the superior for whom she was referring, I would have to agree with her summation. This only quickened the pace of my depression that dragged me into an abyss from which I saw no way out.

My family became concerned since I was no longer my cheerful self. I wouldn’t return phone calls and soon, I would not get out of bed. Occasionally, I would draw in my sketch pad but that even seemed like it took too much effort. I felt exhausted all the time and hopeless. I didn’t complete the second half of my student teaching practicum that semester. I didn’t care anymore about becoming an art teacher or even about myself in general. I had given up on my hopes and dreams. I was tired of trying to fight the institutional indoctrinations in education.

(Journal, 2011)

Many student teachers experience cycles of self-blame, feeling they have somehow failed to meet the archaic requirements and hegemonic roles accepted within educational institutions (Britzman, 2003), a condition that also stems from the fear of seeming unprepared or vulnerable, admitting one does not know the answer. Nevertheless, admitting uncertainty can serve pedagogy,
inviting students to participate in creating solutions in the classroom. The destructive myth that
teachers should be self-contained experts in their fields, controlling everything that happens in
their classrooms, is perpetuated in education. In education, we embrace the myth that knowledge
is stable, but in fact, “culture is never static” (Britzman, 2003, p. 63).

Teachers do not own knowledge so why should they be solely responsible for shaping
learning, especially when the societies we aim to enrich are always in flux? Many critical and
social theorists have argued that knowledge is socially constructed, shaped by culture (Stout,
2013). Britzman (2003) suggests that for educators to allow students to construct knowledge
socially—a process wherein all contribute to knowledge—it is necessary to become comfortable
with not knowing, embracing vulnerability of uncertainty in the journey. After years of working
with pre-service educators, my impression is that they are not comfortable with the idea of
uncertainty, which is not surprising considering educational institutions do not tolerate, much less
embrace, forms of ambiguity.

For many student teachers, they finish the practicum and assume they are not teacher
material because they don’t mesh with the predetermined roles of teachers as social controller and
expert. My first cooperating teacher told me I was not good teacher material, but what “teacher
material” means remains undefined. What makes a person teacher material? What is teacher
material when everything is constantly in flux? Certain discourses that can illuminate the myth
and mystical characteristics concerning what is teacher material, unfortunately, these are never
discussed and considered part of taboo discourse in education (Britzman, 2007). For example, the
doubts I experienced about curriculum, teacher’s roles, or conflicts between my education and my
practicum institution were suppressed in my training. The overwhelming complexities of teaching,
especially amid conflicts between student teachers’ and cooperating teachers’ ideologies, were
ignored in my educational coursework. The social aspects of student teaching are, then, part of a taboo discourse. The relational aspects of negotiating the field are rarely approached, despite being central to teaching.

A part of this negotiation is learning that micropolitical actions are central to the practicum. Exposing your personal and institutional biography through discourse and narrative inquiry requires a place and space in which one feels safe to explore the biography of self, allowing it to unfold. It is through the process of unfolding that one becomes attuned to the sense of becoming. There are private aspects to autobiographical inquiry and pedagogy surrounding becoming a teacher, and many teacher candidates do not feel comfortable disclosing this personal information in a public platform or even with cooperating teachers. Based on sensitive experiences such as “coping with competing definitions of success and failure, and one’s own sense of vulnerability and credibility... [b]ecoming a teacher in a classroom is a personal matter. And it can feel as if experience itself is a crisis” (Britzman, 2003, p. 4).

Defensive Teaching: Masking the Vulnerability of Being Uncertain

Competency in student teaching is often seen as abiding by the rules of authority, controlling one’s behavior and those of the students, and successfully masking the vulnerabilities of teaching. As I processed the student teachers’ data and rendered the results of my analysis, I realized for the first time that my cooperating teacher’s authoritarian behavior and coercive actions towards me may have masked something she did not wish me to see, her own uncertainty and struggle with vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 2009). In many ways, she may have been reproducing what was done to her as a student teacher in the same educational system in which social control is equated with learning and normalization with teaching culture (Anderson, 2007).
When student teachers cannot live up to the myth of teacher as a self-contained expert, they either choose to mask the complexity and vulnerability of teaching, acting as if they are experts and exerting social control, or they choose to abandon teaching because they know they will never live up to the myths of being a good teacher. They are rarely approached about teaching in a way that recognizes knowledge is constructed and therefore, can be deconstructed by learners in order to make meaning. In this way, the teacher as expert myth is a normalizing fiction that protects the status quo of institutional knowledge and masks the vulnerability of being uncertain (Britzman, 2003).

Part 2: Resistive and Reflective Strategies

The second half of this chapter addresses reflective and resistive strategies that resulted from analyzing the student teachers’ narratives concerning their own practices in dealing with hierarchies and constraints within the practicum experience and my engagement with other graduate art educators in how we can go about reclaiming our interpretations of our learning journeys within the body of education. Forms of disembodied resistance such as fracturing and decentering, as well as reclaiming space as a visual resistance and performative pedagogy will be explored. Such strategies allow for questioning institutional interpretations and mapping discursive negotiations. Reflexive strategies in the later portion of this section evolved because of my research processes using narrative and arts-based inquiry, leading me to experience a form of empowerment by rewriting my autobiographical narrative of becoming an art educator, successfully pushing against inherited discourses and myths concerning my own teacher training, creating a space where alternative ways of envisioning myself as an art educator could emerge.
The disembodiment that I experienced as I accepted the disingenuous roles of teacher identity during my practicum experience illuminates the tension of suppressing difference within oneself. Resistance for me became a heterotopia space (Foucault, 1984) where I detached myself mentally and physically from the institutional norms that were forced upon me as a student teacher. I was present, but not present. “Depending on their purpose, heterotopias serve as steam-releasing sites, deflecting the forces of change by locating them outside society” (Dehaene & DeCauter, 2008, p. 191), they can also serve as a means to deflect forces of normalization. As a form of protest, I went through the motions but could not recall my daily practices of student teaching. While being coerced into pre-existing models of the naïve and obedient student teacher that must be molded into fitting within a preexisting norm, I voluntarily distanced myself from the field experience, realizing that there was no room for compromise or negotiation of my own learning journey. Wild (2011) speaks of heterotopic spaces as real sites, “it is a place that represents, contests, and reverses culture by allowing difference…Heterotopias are counter-sites, space which contradict the other spaces that we occupy” (p. 424).

Foucault (1984) recognizes that heterotopias exist beside and outside the margins of hegemony, “Those marvelous empty zones at the edge of cities” (Foucault, 1997, p. 355). Soja (1996) speaks of heterotopic spaces of defiance and resistance and Gramsci (2002) notes such spaces serve as enclaves of resistance. Crafting safe spaces of heterotopias is a form of resistance and provides opportunity for reflection and praxis. In such spaces, novice educators can come to comprehend the hegemonic roles that are perpetuated in teacher training and be afforded enclaves that embrace difference. Such spaces are ripe for forms of resistance that encourage critical
reflection and critical dialogue (Soja, 1989). A place where meaning is negotiated and allows the
pre-service educator to ask, where do I fit in?

What happens when the arts-based researchers’ memories of being in a space and time
brings back feelings of disembodiment, where the researcher remembers experience as a detached
form of resistance, emotionally and mentally disconnected from that environment? How do I go
about, portraying this out-of-body experience? I discovered that arts-based methodologies not only
allow one to explore lived-in spaces (Springgay, 2008) but visualize resistive spaces of
disembodiments, retreating from institutional norms, standing a part and questioning the status quo
of myths and inherited discourses in education. “It is tempting to think about the heterotopia as a
place that is seen/created from the Other, unreal side of the mirror – looking at the real” (Doron,
2008, p.209). In this way, our artistic renderings of disembodied resistance become a gaze of
protest.

Such creative enclaves support our deconstruction and reconstructions of self. These
heterotopias allow for reflection and solitude but before rendering student teaching experience as
problematic; we must remember our own autobiographical narratives in order to understand our
own becoming, and map our becoming as different pathways into teaching. Arendt (1993) views
becoming, as a state of continuous renewal, viewing newcomers in education as being in the state
of becoming, this aligns with Britzman’s (2003) beliefs that student teachers are the newcomers
who can push against the inherited discourses within the body of education, if supported in such
endeavors. In this way we can view teacher training and teacher induction as a site of contention
and conflict. In various stages of conflict, learning to resist and negotiate becomes a necessity.
Decentering and Fracturing

Working from Collins (1999) deconstructive framework, *The Rubric of Decentering: Claiming Marginality*, decentering as a concept, is seen as applying a strategy to empower oneself by our very marginality. Decentering is an important strategy in the context of student teaching, as both a reflective and resistive social practice which allows one to view multiplicities of experience and interpretations of those experiences by changing one’s perceptions and to speak from outside the “margins of power” (Collins, 2006, p. 43). Giroux (2012) speaks of decentering as “dominant configurations of power and knowledge” (p. 246). Segal (1996) presents the phrase “decentering the classroom” as a “catch-all phrase for pedagogies that maximize student involvement in learning, itself defined as a social process” (p. 175). Questioning taken-for-granted assumptions about teaching identities creates spaces to make the everyday unfamiliar (Derrida, 1976). In the process of decentering I first began the deconstruction of my institutionalized teaching self, as a form of unraveling my previous experience in student teaching. This meant I had to push against the certainty of knowledge and experience as something static and unchanging. It also meant that I must question my beliefs, values, and teaching practices. This process can be accomplished through a connected distancing (Bresler, 2013) referred to as “decentering of the subject” (Foucault, 1984, p.50).

Decentering, from a poststructuralist viewpoint, allows one to disrupt the constraints and hegemonic myths that are a part of the language of inherited discourse of learning to teach in isolation (Britzman, 1992; Popkewitz, 1998), opening avenues to imagine multiple interpretations. Decentering as an embodied resistance allowed me to look at the hegemonic processes of the student teaching practicum. From the resistive act of decentering, I was able to visualize my own resistance and legitimize my perspective of marginality (Collins, 1999).
Decentralized networks have commonalities that shift power to equalize distribution within a system (Barabasi, 2002). Power becomes equally distributed through such networks as various actors interpret and negotiate their own meanings within a group (Castells, 2010). In this context, decentering exposes the borders of hierarchies within educational institutions and social class (Biewener, 1999; Popkewitz, 1997), which stand rigidly in a uniformed fashion, protecting the master narratives of teaching. At the same time, grand narratives are not based on multiple realities, but rather on inherited discourses seen as truths (Britzman, 2003). Moreover, decentering is an intentional yet playful kind of resistance, a stepping away from what is known to see what remains hidden within the self: “Detachment and connection are most generative when regarded as connected” (Bresler, 2013, p. 45). Detached connection alters one’s interpretation of experience, envisioning other ways of being, within both social practices and internal processes of becoming. This form of detached connection was referred to in a narrative excerpt and artwork produced by Participant 7:

![Figure 13. Narrative: Patchwork Road Map, by Participant 7, MyArtEd.](image)

Throughout my student teaching semester, instead of getting wrapped up in the awkward or uncomfortable moments, I would force myself to take time to look at the bigger picture and focus on the overall purpose of my time in the classroom. In doing this, I would analyze my experience as though I was looking down from the clouds, mapping out my steps and highlighting the moments that were unforgettable, almost like an aerial map.
The process of decentering occurred to me when I began to examine Participant 7’s narrative and artwork along with the other art teacher candidates’ narratives. Their descriptions of fieldwork and the images they shared suggested that my own practicum experience may not have been an anomaly. Witnessing the different ways student teachers handle such situations spurred me to acknowledge other ways to resist hegemonic roles played out in teacher education. Through my literature review, I was able to further understand that myths and social practices are inherited and reproduced from within educational institutions, asking us to socially control students and, thus, student teachers. In local teacher cultures, these inherited social practices are adapted, but still with the intention of suppressing social practices of students and teachers.

Understanding the complexities of oppressive methods during my teacher fieldwork enabled me to move past the point of blaming and begin processing social and relational aspects of reconstruction. Distancing myself from blaming individuals, I began to see my teaching practices, identity, and relationships from a completely different perspective. This process initiated my own inquiry into decentering and deconstructing my teacher identity. Realizing that I, too, played a part in allowing myself to go along with the status quo and even reproducing teacher myths during my years of teaching in the classroom, I began to deconstruct my teacher identity through narrative inquiry using a form of visual decentering through arts-based inquiry.

The methods of visual and narrative inquiry along with decentering allowed me to question not only the institutional myths that I perpetuated in my own practices, but also to initiate the process of questioning my predetermined values, beliefs, and morals. As I interrogated internally the inherited discourses of my life, I felt a fracturing of self-beginning as I turned away from a naïveté of certainty. The internal processes of (un)becoming allowed me to embody a persuasive discourse which produced a fracturing, a breaking away from institutional paradigms and
narratives of teaching, which no longer fit my autobiography. Fracturing is an internal process that is not easily accomplished; it feels as if I am ripping at the seams of my life, and tearing the fabric of my beliefs into shreds. It is an arduous process of unmasking emotional vulnerabilities and embracing uncertainty, admitting one does not know the answers.

In interpreting Deleuze and Guatarri’s (1987) metaphor of the rhizome in *A Thousand Plateaus*, I began processing the idea of (un)becoming. Recognizing of the internal splintering as a fracturing of the self through a psychoanalytical framework, I turned away from the body of education, questioning my teacher identity, yet still remained connected to it through my actions and beliefs, as well as the myths that I reproduced through my own teaching practices. In teacher education, and within institutions of learning, novice educators search for predetermined step-by-step methods that guarantee positive results and provide certainty. Student teachers seek out these step-by-step procedures, which they believe will answer their questions concerning dilemmas in the classroom. As many of them encounter complexity and feelings of crisis in becoming teachers, that search becomes one of desperation and disillusion. Realizing what I gave up in exchange for myths of certainty, my own autobiography of becoming a teacher, I implore students to seek out their own answers through critical reflection and a tolerance of ambiguity. Such dynamics are expressed in the response written by Participant 4 in *a Lost Cause:*

I do understand that I am not expected to actually save/ turn every student into a lover of art and learning. But I think at the time I was searching for a How To.... a step by step instruction. A bit in fantasy land imagining that. The human mind and behavior is not always predictable and people do not always respond the same way in the same circumstances. I hope in time and experience I become stronger in approaching these situations, and I also hope I never become bitter or too weary to work with students.

Although the student teacher realizes that a step-by-step method to save students is unrealistic, she equates experience with strength and knowing how to handle all situations, which is also unrealistic. After reading the shared narratives of the student teachers, it is clear that after
completing a preordained path, pre-service educators are left with many questions about guaranteed, essentialized truths. Because questions and narratives that do not fit neatly within the master narratives promoted and reproduced by institutions of education, questions such as the one this pre-service teacher asks about saving students, are rarely addressed in the practicum. Teacher education must assist student teachers in learning how to negotiate and become inventive in their adaptations to their current environments. Semetsky (2007) expands on the idea of Deleuzean concepts in learning how to adapt and invent a novel concept:

For an athlete who finds herself in a novel situation, there is no solid foundation under her feet, and the world that she has to face loses its reassuring power of familiar representations. To learn means to move together with this particular milieu. The athlete has to invent a novel concept of what does it mean to swim in the midst of the very encounter with the unknown problem, via her own experience. (Semetsky, 2007, p. 201)

This scenario applies aptly to the novice pre-service art education student teacher, who is very much like a swimmer who learns to move along with a wave. So do art teachers have to learn to adapt to educational constraints. It is not enough to ask them to shift their thinking; they have to invent novel ways to create their own experiences and meanings within the practicum. This is extraordinarily difficult because they are often denied the ability to interpret their previous experiences with education through reflective teacher identity work. To address such imperatives of self-created meaning, Deleuze uses the word tracer to indicate the action to draw in creating rhizomatic maps. Such maps cannot come from what has existed before. According to Massumi, creating a rhizome can mean to blaze a trail or open road. In the desert, such an action is impossible because the roads are quickly covered. Therefore, each new set of students and each new set of field placements will require different kinds of space, distinct styles of mentoring, and multiple ways of documenting their journeys. Participant 8 experienced a kind of decentering and felt a
sense of anomie concerning the fracturing of identity from student to teacher as expressed in their narrative:

Through this semester of student teaching, my mind began to unwind and rethread a new understanding, especially during the high school placement, of the small little world I had created in this little town for the past five years. I noticed when I came home from work and would drive through campus, I gradually started feeling out of place in an area I have called my home for half a decade.... At stop lights, I would just look at the kids and realize that the freshman were only a year older than the kids I was teaching and, suddenly, I would become incredibly uneasy as I realized how much can change in such a short amount of time. Within the semester, I felt a wide rift grow and mold from my college years to my career years and a creeping feeling sunk into my gut; I belong in the classroom now.

The rift that Participant 8 describes between the college and the classroom goes beyond feelings of displacement. Throughout student teaching there is a burden placed upon the art teacher candidate to put into practice the theories promoted from methodology courses at the university. As they are in this process of transforming theory to practice, which many public schools find unnecessary, the art teacher candidates are also required to completely transform their identities from college student to classroom teacher as expert and social controller. For many, this means a letting go of knowledge as something dynamic and dialogic to something given and static. I find it interesting that Participant 8 speaks of a wide rift and mold growing from their college years to their current career as an educator. This is not said from the excitement of becoming a teacher, more as a statement consenting to a predetermined ideology and identity. In this narrative, the pre-service art education student teacher’s statement “wide rift and mold” suggest the inherited discourses and hegemonic teacher roles that student teachers are expected to embrace without question in what Britzman (2003) describes as, “identities of their teaching selves in contexts that are already overpopulated with the identities and discursive practices of others” (p. 221). Since student teachers are rarely given the opportunity to theorize and create their own autobiography of becoming educators, they will continue to see a wide rift between theory versus practice, the
university versus public education, knowledge as static versus knowledge as dialogic (Britzman, 2003). Furthermore, they have never been given the opportunity to connect their past experiences in education to current ones. As such, student teachers need spaces to question the status quo of institutional knowledge, hegemonic roles, and the official support to express emotions concerning uncertainty, struggle, and vulnerability of identity work. Such resistive spaces allow one to be vulnerable, discussing and illustrating the complexities of becoming a teacher, scrutinizing the duality one experiences by confronting feelings of anomie, pushing against institutional norms to find their voice through this arduous and often disorienting journey of what it means to teach (Britzman, 2003; Zembylas & Barker, 2002).

Finding Voice

After two months of prodding, my older sister convinced me to finish my student teaching practicum with her former cooperating teacher. My older sister was an art teacher in a school district that was much closer to where I lived. She decided we needed to take matters into our own hands. So she called her former cooperating teacher, Mr. Johns.

My sister began making phone calls to the teacher placement office and as I watched her move and speak in happy chaotic rhythms, a rhythm that I used to know and participate in, I started to realize just how bad I had been feeling over the last two months. With her assurance she told me the rest of my pre-service teaching experience was going to be a positive one, she was confident Mr. Johns would appropriately guide me by providing support, insight, and encouragement.

My sister knew I would have a rewarding experience with this teacher, even though Mr. Johns was not advocated by the university. This was an unorthodox move on the part of the university to allow me to choose a mentor teacher. But because my sister and I made an appointment and pleaded our case, they agreed, considering the new placement was much closer to my home, since I did not have adequate transportation. This was really the only option I had to possibly finishing the practicum. I believe for the first time since the
The struggle to find one’s voice is a political endeavor created through resistance, but it is also about negotiating power from a relational standpoint: “The crisis here is one of quietism for both teachers and students, a fear of ideas, and a fear of questioning knowledge,” (Britzman, 2003, p. 9). Moreover, one must bear the fear of retaliation for articulating a conflicting narrative that does not fit neatly within a particular teacher culture or the grand narratives of education (Anderson, 2007; McNay, 2003). Even more important than finding voice is building a space to participate in dialogue that invites others (Kidd, 2011). When voices are marginalized, there can be no change, but resistance also often manifests through voluntary silence. When one’s interpretation of experience is not recognized within hierarchical institutions, and words and actions of negotiation are not addressed, then silence becomes a form of resistance, a refusal to pretend, accept, or perpetuate myths within that culture. Silence then becomes a standoff. Moreover, when words alone will no longer suffice, and what is left is activism and art, art educators can find ways to communicate and negotiate their own biographical understandings through visual means. Arts-based inquiry can often say what we dare not speak of.

The image in Figure 14, illustrates beautifully the uncertainty and struggle involved in teacher identity for many pre-service art educators. There was no additional narrative accompanying this image by Participant 9 but the illustrated collage of drawings containing text told the story of the emotional conflict that is present within student teaching fieldwork as the art teacher candidate must overcome feelings of vulnerability and inadequacy. The vocabulary of becoming an educator is clearly expressed and illustrated in the words on the chalkboard. Words, such as stress, fear, and anxiety are clearly marked. Next to them are printed other words that
clearly mark the contradiction of emotions and feelings concerning teacher fieldwork, motivation, passion, and inspire. This simple drawing illustrates the duality and complexities of learning to teach.

Figure 14. Reflections of a student teacher by Participant 9, Dr. Seuss

Depicting the uncertainty and nomadic feelings of not belonging in the university or in this particular classroom the image of a red megaphone seems to shout out, “What is my place?” The struggle for voice and identity are clearly present in this visual narrative, as the student teacher realizes that they are indeed a guest in this classroom. The student teacher writes, “I struggle with being in someone else’s classroom and the rules already in place” and “I don’t want to step on anyone’s toes.” Student teaching, no matter how successful one might feel in the practicum, is an uncomfortable space to inhabit. As the face covered with hands in the lower right hand corner illustrates, there is apprehension in sharing ones’ thoughts and/or actions that don’t fit within the norms and myths of teaching. The student teacher ponders this quandary when they ask, “Will they like me?” I often wonder if the student teacher expressed these concerns with the mentor teacher and if so, how these fears would be addressed.
In the image from Participant 9 is my favorite passage, “Every student has a story. I want to know them all.” This sentiment expresses how I feel about pre-service art education student teachers, for they too have voices and their own stories to tell. As a researcher using narrative inquiry, I believe in its ability to contradict the grand narratives of teaching. As Britzman (2003) states, “The struggle for voice is a struggle for narrative” (p. 22).

There are three areas of contention concerning finding voice in the teaching practicum: biography, emotions, and institutional structures (Britzman, 2003). The struggle begins when the biography of the student teacher contradicts the institutional biography. Nowhere in pre-service training do we ask teacher candidates to narratively reexamine their biography of education, nor do we ask them to reflect about how that educational biography currently affects their social practices and beliefs about in teaching. The method of resonance through writing (Clandinin, 2007; Conle, 2000b; Conle, Xin, & Tan, 2002) allowed me to analyze our stories and string together events that allowed for intuitive and spontaneous outcomes referred to as ‘narrative clusters’ (Conle, 1996). These collective voices within the narrative clusters are not only used in narrative to give the silenced and marginalized a voice (Richardson, 1990, p.265) but as a way to assist those individuals that lack the cultural capital (teaching experiences, educational connections and affiliations) to openly critique their mentor teacher and those learning environments.

**Decentralized Spaces – A Place of Confluence**

*Mr. Johns was not a typical mentor teacher and he was not signed up with the student placement program at the college I attended. In Mr. John’s words, “Joana, I don’t know what I can offer you as far as the correct method of teaching art. I never went for the traditional methods of teaching art and I am sure the university would not approve of my teaching style. My teaching practices are a bit unorthodox,” and he was right, they were. However, what he taught me during those nine weeks proved to me he was the right art*
educator I needed to be with, not only during my practicum but for life. He delighted in conversations with junior high students in his classes, using sarcastic wit to entice and provoke his students as he approached art assignments as if they were problems to be contemplated and solved.

(Journal, 2012)

From the beginning of my research, Sweeny’s (2004) question resonated with me, “If art educational spaces were organized according to the decentralized structure of the Internet, then could such a model allow for a socially relevant, critically oriented approach to art education?” (Sweeny, 2004, p. 76). As I examined the possibilities of disrupting institutional narratives and disrupting the idea of static knowledge concerning meanings about student teaching, I examined how visual and verbal discursive practices from pre-service students, cooperating teachers, and supervisors may help (re)negotiate and deliberate new pathways to understanding the complexity involved in teacher identity and teaching practices by using arts-based and narrative methodologies.

When working in a digital collaborative community of peers, such complex visual narratives entails asking for clarity, providing feedback loops, and listening to multiple interpretations of each individual’s journey: “Personal meanings are contingent upon context and upon the perspective of others, they are always shifting. The meaning one makes from practice are in a state of continual and contradictory reinterpretation as other contexts and other voices are taken into account or are ignored” (Britzman, 2003, p. 37). Britzman argues that we must productively interfere with each other in order to create conflict, to stir up alternative viewpoints, and multiple interpretations. Such discursive exercises create conflicts that decolonize spaces through narrative, both verbally and visually. “Through critique we are made able to challenge what Foucault terms, “regimes of discourse,” or authoritatively sanctioned and conventionally taken-for-granted ways of understanding, speaking, and acting” (Britzman, 2003, p. 37).
Competing voices may be heard in a space where dialogue fuels the power of language to consider difference. Such discourses help students understand their own power to “convince, negotiate, and act upon possibilities unforeseen, as dialogic imagination” (Britzman, 2003, p. 104). In this light, it is clear that educators must prepare student teachers to be negotiators, interpreters, and instigators to illuminate other pathways into becoming art educators.

Making the familiar strange and questioning the institutional status quo that embraces taken-for-granted practices and forms of knowledge production are essential avenues to social change and effective personal praxis. “Rejecting the status quo is a precondition for social change, but so too are the discursive practices that make available different visions and actions” (Britzman, 2003, p. 102). Allowing institutional structures that produce myths and hegemonic practices to go unquestioned masks the vulnerability of teaching and the complex daily negotiations it requires to be a teacher (Britzman, 2004). The activities that recognize teachers as “negotiators, mediators, and authors” (pg. 28) hold a special agentive place which allows them the space to understand more intimately who they are becoming. Britzman (2003) defines this space as “the place where identity becomes infused with possibilities” (p. 29), where myths and stereotypes of good teaching are debated, deconstructed, and reintroduced in new contexts beyond institutional spaces. In this context, “Students do not simply absorb cultural authority. They mediate it, refuse it, or refashion it with their own significance. This approach to school knowledge recognizes the contexts in which knowledge is produced and interpreted and attends to the subjective investments of those who produce it” (Britzman, 2003, p. 59).

Equally as important to the recognition of the power of mediation, refusal, or refashioning, is understanding that being open to multiple interpretations makes possible the letting go of
predetermined myths and stereotypes. Such a process activates the power of negotiation to foster a critical voice:

To assume a critical voice then does not mean to destroy or devalue the struggles of others. Instead, a critical voice attempts the delicate and discursive work of rearticulating the tensions between and within words and practices, or constraints and possibilities, as it questions the consequences of the taken for granted knowledge shaping responses to everyday life and the meanings fashioned from them. A critical voice is concerned not just with representing the voices of oneself and others, but with narrating, considering, and evaluating them. (Britzman, 2003, p. 35)

As educators we must look outside what is spoken, what is given or obvious. We must go to the borders and margins, where others voices may be silenced. As we narrate experience we must learn how to negotiate through restating, listening, recognizing, and questioning our own assumptions about teaching, in a continual process of evaluating our practices.

Social Practices of Self in Digital Space and Localized Place

Digitally safe spaces should be carved out as a place for performative critical pedagogy that allows students the opportunity to “reflectively frame their own relationship to the ongoing project of an unfinished democracy” (Giroux, 2010, p. 193). Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) and Pierre Bourdieu (1977) call attention to the importance of having spaces to improvise, (re)authorizing and (re)enacting social practices. Such spaces must enable educators to theorize about the local places of agency in counter-hegemonic struggles against dominant discourses (Holland & Lave, 2001), especially those reproduced at the local level. Lave (2012) further illustrate how learning practices and processes are embedded socially through relations, which involve participation and consent within local social structures that can affect individual identity.

Frederick Erickson (2004) analyzes local talk and social interactions as possessing the possibilities of uniquely original and influential action within localized networks. These processes
occur beyond temporal and spatial horizons to address the immediacy of the specificity of the interactions of a particular occasion or critical event. Erickson (2004) illustrates how local talk can be “endlessly inventive and opportunistic; constituting a myriad of tactical moves through which local social actors’ negotiation abilities can change the game” (p.62) by (re)invention and (re)creation (Erickson, 2004; Levinson, 2010). At the same time, Erickson (2004) recognizes that within a particular frame of institutional social systems, immediacy is present, providing opportunities for tactical moves by actors within the social network as each brings a set of lived experiences within the field of education. This strategic move allows the local context to penetrate social systems. Recognizing the complexity and contingency in everyday social interactions, talk within localized networked communities can serve to disrupt the status quo and connect to a larger basis for broad social change in the education, evaluation, and mentorship of art educators.

When we create, share, and examine our personal narratives of the teaching field experience, we represent the places we are from, who we are, our dialects, our colloquialisms, our beliefs, and our stories. Place-based education tied to critical pedagogy is a powerful combination; it connects to place, context, settings, history, culture, ecology, and local politics. It is not enough to look at educational institutions broadly we must also examine inherited discourses concerning the local politics of teaching. In this way, our narratives explore and create roads through terrain which is situated relationally and politically. People "in a situation" find themselves rooted in temporal-spatial conditions which mark them and which they also mark. They will tend to reflect on their own "situationality" to the extent that they are challenged to act upon it (Freire, 1970/1995, p. 90). For Freire, The Pedagogy of the Oppressed illustrates the importance of space, place, and geography in the origins of critical pedagogy. Similarly, Woodhouse and Knapp (2000) relate such characteristics to the developing field of socio-ecological place. As such, I reflected on such places
and spaces from my own youth, recalling and using the metaphor of a cornfield maze to understand the process of my own becoming as an art educator. Figure 7, Tilling the Field, represents for me, the notion of cultivation in order to improve the field of art education for future art educators, a regenerative notion of starting anew.

Gruenewald (2003) in reviewing such places exclaims they emerge from the particular attributes of place, are inherently multidisciplinary, are inherently experiential, are reflective of an educational philosophy that is broader than learning to earn, and connect place with self and community (p.7). “Perhaps the most revolutionary characteristic of place-based education is that it connects it to the Freirean tradition of critical pedagogy in that it emerges from the particular attributes of place. This idea is radical because current educational discourses seek to standardize the experience of students” (Gruenewald, 2003, p. 5). When education is abstracted from its context, there is a tendency to accept educational discourses inherited from institutional norms and taken-for-granted ideas about teaching. Locally, this process has the potential to acquire adapted meanings. Therefore, learning to negotiate adapted meanings becomes a necessary skill in teaching.

Creating Autobiographical Narratives and Art as Reflective Practice

At the end of the last day of my second practicum, Mr. Johns sat down with me and we went over my evaluation form. We discussed everything he wrote about my teaching performance and recommendations he would make to me on how to continue to improve my teaching practices. He made a note on the evaluation about how my confidence and skill had grown throughout the nine weeks with him.

“And you will make a fine art teacher,” he said assuredly.

I remember those words coming from him pleased me and put me at ease. I respected Mr. Johns. He was an extremely talented artist. His critiques were always carefully thought out and he was careful not to hurt anyone’s feelings but would not turn down an opportunity to
make students laugh at the absurdity of the world and sometimes the art within it. He had a weird sense of humor that suited the junior high setting.

I thanked him for being so honest and open with me and for also challenging me. Mr. Johns made me aware and responsible for the decisions I made as a teacher knowing they would influence the climate and creativity of my future students. He challenged me to become better. But he never threatened, abused his position of power, or made me feel less than him. He enjoyed his job and his interactions with students. Mr. Johns told me that if I needed a reference he would be glad to give me one and then reminded me that after school the teachers were taking me out for dinner and drinks.

It was so different from my elementary experience where I celebrated in the solitude of my car reading a large homemade card made in secrecy containing well wishes from the elementary students. This time I had friends and colleagues to go out with and celebrate the end of my student teaching practicum.

As wonderful as this second practicum experience had been with Mr. Johns, I still had doubts about myself as a teacher. There was nothing in any of the practicum field experiences that changed the fact that I really didn’t think I would ever be completely ready to teach in the classroom according to the myths of being the expert and social controller of all knowledge. Mr. Johns gave me an alternative example of how someone can teach art on the parameter of institutions and make a positive difference in the lives of students through their passion.

(Journal, 2012)

Dewey (1910) described reflection as thinking the problem out. Artist, researchers, and teachers think the problem out by knowing, making, and doing (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004). Reflection allows us to look back at events and make judgments that can alter our teaching practices. Reflection involves reliving and remembering in order to improve our practices. But beyond reflective practices is reflexivity. Reflexivity is turning back upon the mind itself, questioning our actions, and for me, asking why I allowed inequities to occur in my student teaching practicum and what were the values that were promoted in that particular culture that prevented me from questioning such practices? The larger question, why did I allow inherited
discourses and myths to affect my own teaching practices? Reflexivity is taking reflective insights and finding strategies that allow us to question our own attitudes, assumptions, prejudices, and habits of mind. Even more important, reflexivity helps us to understand ourselves in relation to others (Zeichner, 1981). As such, creating an autobiography of one’s previous teaching experience becomes a performative process, a reflective and reflexive form of resistance, and pedagogy of praxis (Freire, 1970; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). Reflexivity in simple terms, means the ability to see yourself in a situation from your own past, understanding how you see and what you see during that time is from your own way of seeing, a turning back on itself (Steier, 1991).

Reflexivity can also be about the positive experiences in student teaching, such as those expressed by Participant 10, Treenabean’s narrative, *My Success Story*:

My secondary level student teaching experience was, to say the least, a roller coaster. It had its ups and it had its down. I made do with what I was given and made the best out of what was provided. I worked around the awkward side-by-side teaching experience I had with my cooperating teacher and ended up creating some of the most memorable and treasured teacher-student relationships I will keep forever in my heart. It also determines not only the ways knowledge is viewed and constructed but the information the researcher obtains through the study.

Such reflective practices and stories shared by pre-service educators practicum experiences can not only critique mentor teachers’ roles but recognize when fieldwork is consider a mutually successful endeavor as expressed by Participant 10. Reflective practices also assisted Participant 11 in dealing with the realities of being in someone else’s classroom but focusing on the positive energy she experienced with the students:
The work [Figure 15] reflects the overall "ethos" of my student teaching experience. One of the most difficult aspects of student teaching was coming to terms with the fact that these were not MY art classrooms. I was in someone else's home, so it was important that I showed respect for their routines and rules. I was an open book, of sorts--open to new, positive ideas, but closed to negative thoughts and energy. Having this sort of mindset helped reduce my stress when I had to deal with difficult situations.

Almost all of my most wonderful, treasured experiences from student teaching revolved around my interactions with the students. I had numerous special moments with students from both the elementary and secondary levels--all of which I will carry with me into my future teaching positions!

The aim of using narrative and arts-based approaches aligns with “resonance, understanding, multiple meanings, dimensionality, and collaboration” (Leavy, 2009, p.16). Art has the powerful ability to connect us to something that goes beyond words and illustrates the complexity of a particular situation, such as those found in teacher identity work and pre-service student teacher experiences.

Summary of Findings

Britzman (2003) notes that many of us will come to “narrate our own stories of disappointment and in doing so will blame theory or judge university coursework, others, and the student teachers” (p. 4). That is where the summary of the results from my self-study research ends, not necessarily blaming institutions or people within them, but recognizing they are a part of
a system of restrictions and constraints. In previous chapters, I have outlined those constraints; restrictive forms of evaluation, inherited discourses that suppress difference and reinforce power inequities, social control and isolation produced from myths about learning to teach, and fragmentation from excluding one’s biographical experiences in teaching. When examining these restrictions that were mentioned in the student teachers narratives and recalled from my own experiences in the practicum, I was able to explore two emerging themes in this study; predetermined myths and discourses promoted in educational institutions and teacher training.

Myths serve to constrain discourse about difference and guard institutional norms. These myths are perpetuated in teacher cultures and within educational institutions. In myths, I found conflicting paradigms of what university and public schools want from student teachers and their measurements of success in the practicum, this lead to uncovering local myths that are perpetuated within certain teacher cultures. Such localized myths often concern regional morals, such as those discussed by Participants 4 and 5, concerning saving students and proper clothing and adornment for female teachers. The bodies of student teachers are therefore regulated as well as their thoughts and actions within the practicum field experience. From my study, I illustrate that the two major themes of myths and inherited discourses are so intertwined, it is impossible to separate the two when discussing narratives stories of the practicum experience.

Both myth and inherited discourse align with forms of social control, from regulating clothing, actions, and reactions through evaluations, documentation, and social practices. Because myths and inherited discourses go unquestioned in archaic systems of educational institutions, the results of these two themes can lead to confusion over mentor teacher roles and student teacher expectations, leading to feelings of isolation, vulnerability, failure, uncertainty, and apathy from student students and mentor teachers alike.
Forms of resistance can manifest within the practicum, creating micropolitical actions of classroom control that Participant 2 illustrated her feelings through her narrative/image of how it felt to be interrupted during her practice teaching by her mentor teacher who used a microphone to correct her teaching. Micropolitical actions can also manifest when the cooperating teacher denies supplies or access to students during the practicum, which is what happened during my practicum experience. Such micropolitical actions intertwined with myths and predetermined discourses often mask the vulnerabilities of teaching.

By using narrative and visual methods, student teachers are able to contradict the master narratives of teaching, and envision other ways of being art educators. Even if these practices are not supported in fieldwork. When differences are supported within communities of peer, student teachers and mentors begin to understand that there are multiple ways to teach. The roles of student teachers and cooperating teachers can be visualized and evaluated to improve the practice of mentoring. For me personally, this study assisted me in understanding the complexity involved in mentoring and supporting student teachers (Bain, 2004). Another realization was comprehending that my first cooperating teacher was reproducing the same myths and discourses in which she was introduced as a student teacher, masking her own vulnerability and uncertainty.

The practicum field experience should be a stage where student teachers are allowed to experiment, as Participant 3 observed, “A dress rehearsal for obtaining tried and true skills to carry with us into our own rooms.” Unfortunately, that ideology does not always transfer over into pre-service fieldwork. Heterotopia spaces within digital communities can provide support for pre-service educators even when that support may not be found in their practicing classrooms or with assigned mentor teachers. Such a safe space gives them opportunities’ to role-play and imagine possibilities that extend beyond classroom practices. Strategies of reflection and resistance can be
explored in digital communities where the pre-service teachers’ identities can remain anonymous. Such implications have the potential to improve mentoring and evaluation that assist pre-service educators with the complexities of teaching and fluctuating teacher identities.
PREFACE TO CHAPTER 5: TILLING THE FIELD

Tilling the Field, photographed by Joana Hyatt

Changing the radio stations as I drove along a country road on the last official day of summer, it was a journey I had taken multiple times to the university and back home to Piedmont. Closing time, by the Semisonic’s was the song playing on the radio. “Closing time ... Every new beginning comes from some other beginning’s end,” the lyrics resonated within me. I looked out at the scorched cornfields that lined the road, with husks as dry as parchment paper. I knew if I touched the fragile cornhusk, it would crumble in my hands.

“The sun done ate ‘em up,” the old farmer told me the day before at the Edmond Farmer’s market when I commented about the puny sized ears of corn stacked in bushels on the table.

But that day as I drove past the miles of corn, I saw them as a complete field, glistening in the sun. The palest gold color reflected back against the blue sky, as captivating as a glowing fire. Looking past the farmer’s economic perspective of the dried corn and beyond my own as a
consumer that a healthy field was supposedly green, I allowed myself to see it aesthetically and intuitively, I saw the beauty of the cornfield as a collective whole. The shadows falling down alongside the blanched stalks were reminders of the past, of things we cast aside but remembrances that continue to linger.

I don’t know why that day in front of the parched cornfields, I decided to pull off the road to make a call that I wished I had made a decade before, but didn’t. Pretending it didn’t matter, but it did. I took out my cell phone and called the university where I completed my student teaching practicum. I wanted to know.

I mentally prepared myself to go by the university and pick up the documents so I could include them in my research. I even imagined that I may have trouble gaining access to my files. Emotionally, I was prepared to see a bad evaluation and another one with pretty decent marks. Actually, I had no idea what I would find in my student teaching folder. In the 1980s the teacher placement program at the university encouraged students to have a ‘closed file’ that meant you didn’t know what kind of evaluation your cooperating teacher or supervisor left in your student teaching file.

The phone rang only once, and a woman answered. She was helpful but sounded like she was in a hurry or preoccupied with something else. I introduced myself and gave her a synopsis of my research and why I wanted the documentation from my student teaching placement file.

“May I have your social security number?” she asked. After telling her, I waited for what seemed a long time but was probably less than 30 seconds.

“No. I didn’t think they would be here,” she stated. “Student teaching files are only kept for seven years,” she informed me. I thought, then what? I guess they are destroyed?
“Can you please check again?” I asked in a persistent tone. I am sure she was bewildered with my request but I guess she didn’t want to argue or maybe she could sense this was really important to me.

After a short time she replied, “No. Nothing.” I thanked her and hung up.

There were no longer any open or closed files, there wasn’t a file. I guess all those threats my first cooperating teacher hurled in my direction had a time limit, which I did not realize being a naïve twenty-two year old who was relatively new to the teaching profession. I had no idea that those files were destroyed after seven years...is this standard? Do all teacher placement programs operate this way? If so, why does the cooperating teachers’ evaluation hold so much weight? Why did I have to tolerate the threats of a bad evaluation from my cooperating teacher? Why did the university supervisor and others tell me it was best to have a closed file that did not allow me open access to my evaluations? Why did I not fight them on this issue? Why did I instead, decide to go with the status quo? And why did I live out the first decade of my teaching career feeling like a refugee, fearful and teaching halfway across the country, as if I were hiding out?

An answer to a question I should have asked years ago but pretended it didn’t matter to me, but it did. Instead, I buried the experience as far back in my mind as I could. Still allowing her threats to haunt me for decades, not sure I would measure up and fearful she would somehow reach across regions and tell my current principal, that I would not make a good art teacher.

Not a good art teacher. Those words stuck with me. The threats and accusations aren’t destroyed after seven years with the student teaching files. They linger, if you let them, eating away small bits of joyous teaching moments. Briefly, a flash of anger warmed over me. I was mad at myself for allowing her remarks to persist in my memory for so long. I was hanging on to them when in reality, they no longer mattered.
Looking at my reflection in the rear-view mirror I caught myself frowning. The crease between my brows had deepened since I was that trusting pre-service art teacher. In the distance, I heard a combine beginning to harvest the dried cornfields. Watching the farmer harvest the corn and till the soil in rows, he churned the nutrients back into the ground to make way for yet another crop, a better crop.

Watching the ancient ritual of harvesting, I thought of one of my earliest childhood memories. I was three years old at the time, playing on the back porch of the homestead that my great-grandparents built in Piedmont, Oklahoma. I remember hearing something in the distance, a swooshing sound. It was my great-grandfather, William Valentine Fry, and he was reaping the wheat on a golden field that seemed to have no end. My great-grandparents very livelihood depended on a good crop. On those years when the crop wasn’t good my great-grandfather would say, “Till your fields and hope for a better season.”

I assured myself, it was time to till the field. Moving forward, past the point of authority, entitlements, student teacher files, and the almighty evaluations, to another plane of existence, a place tilled from experience, of hard lessons learned, of reflections from seasons past, a place of vulnerability lying ready for what comes next.

I had earned the right to be a part of the art education community a long time ago, through hard work, perseverance, and genuine compassion for children along with a strong belief in the arts to change lives. I deserved to be here, as a doctoral candidate with sixteen years of teaching experience, and soon to be professor of art education, and I didn’t need my former cooperating teacher’s permission or acceptance. Nor did I expect or want to hear her admission that she was wrong about me because it didn’t matter. That day as I drove down Piedmont Road, I thought to
myself, “I am an art educator who is a part of a larger community of caring and I deserve to be here, wherever here might be.”

(Journal, 2011)
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter, I restate the original research question and describe the process of reframing the question during the study. In summarizing the interpretation and findings, I highlight the methods used; provide a summary of the results, and the challenges that were present during this study. In the final segment of this chapter, I state the broader implications to the field of art education concerning digital communities and heterotopia spaces that allow student teachers and educators the opportunity to resist and reconstruct our teacher identities. Also included in this chapter are recommendations for future research.

In the final segment of this chapter, I readdress why I used visual and narrative forms of inquiry that produced reflexive data throughout my study. In these segments of personal vignettes I referred to as Researcher’s inquiry I utilized art-based and narrative inquiry to understand my own processes of reflexivity. Illustrating for me, safe spaces that allow us to embody our autobiographies, pushing against the inherited discourses and myths of teaching, envisioning alternatives of how to become people who teach and who are taught while participating in reflective and supportive communities.

(Re)Framing the Research Question

Arts-based inquiries grow out of emergent questioning, leading to “interventions, inquiries, possibilities, and inevitably, situations emerge, unfold, or are recognized” (Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, & Grauer, 2006, p. 1237). Schon (1983) realized that this further inquiring does not end with simple solutions to one stagnant research question, rather a continuance of critically
reflecting to improve understanding that allows new questions to emerge. In order to reframe the original research question which is, how do I create a digital space for pre-service art educator’s narratives concerning their student teaching experiences that opens up possibilities for critical pedagogy that reflect democratic practices? I inquired through a non-linear method that reflected an iterative process, about reformation of my own teacher identity. Therefore, the original research question diverged into two sub-questions: How did creating a digital space utilized by art student teachers in order to share their stories and artwork help me better understand the challenges that I encountered during this time? And, how can combined stories and artwork serve to challenge the status quo of the student teaching experience, affording heterotopic spaces in which to reconstruct autobiographies? In this way, the iterative process highlighted emerging concepts through the meaning making, leading to my own research praxis (Leavy, 2009). Furthermore, this redress of the research question helped me to understand that I cannot lead others to personal praxis. I can only provide a framework that may inform others of how to go about their journeys, and possibly provide strategies in learning how to critically reflect and act upon those reflections. Therefore, the possibilities for critical pedagogy and democratic practices were infused in my own reflexive journey as I looked back in hindsight at my practicum experiences from 25 years ago, in order to make sense of those experiences.

In many ways, reframing the research question assisted me in realizing that our combined stories and artworks can bridge feelings of fragmentation and isolation through shared experiences of events. As such, narrative and arts-based inquiry can assist us in visualizing the myths and inherited discourses within educational institutions, realizing that we reproduce these myths through our own teaching practices. Although the original research question was broad and overarching, it could not have possibly contained all the experiential knowledge and events that
occurred while conducting this self-study research. As the research unfolded, the questions evolved, and in turn, the researcher’s inquiry evolved. As I began to understand that this study is a form of self praxis.

Evolving Self-Study: Coming to Know Thyself through Narrative and Arts-Based Inquiry

As the research question and my understanding of my past autobiographical history in teacher training emerged, so does the idea of why creating a safe space for pre-service art teachers’ narratives was important. At first, I had a preconceived notion that the digital space on the wiki site was to assist the pre-service educators in their own learning journeys. Instead, what emerged was the realization that these shared digital spaces facilitating student teachers’ narratives and visual images can lead to questioning myths and common everyday practices in education that disguise inherited discourses that occur in the practicum. As my questions and comprehension emerged concerning the phenomenon known as student teaching fieldwork, it transformed my understanding in how bringing together our combined stories and art images serve to challenge the status quo of the student teaching fieldwork.

With blurred genres of qualitative research, it often produces more question rather than providing positivist answers (Siegesmund & Cahmann-Taylor, 2008). Additional queries emerged during the analysis of the student teachers’ stories and my reflections. Questions such as, whose voices are privileged in the practicum? Whose voices are silenced or constrained? How can educators help pre-service teachers create a safe space which privileges their voices that are often marginalized in the practicum? In order to critically examine questions and negotiated meanings concerning the status quo of institutional myths and inherited discourses, I realized there is no right or wrong answer. Instead, I was left with a deeper understanding of how our stories and past
reflections, as well as the experiences shared by the participants’, help us visualize dilemmas and solutions in dealing with real-world complex situations in teaching and learning.

In autobiographical studies using arts-based and narrative methodologies, the researcher is situated in the study, as they become part of the process and inform the results (Leavy, 2009). As I challenge the status quo of student teaching, I also challenge the research dichotomy of the “public-private split” (Leavy, 2009, p. 37). As a researcher, artist, and art educator of seventeen years, I adamantly reject this false division of subject-object and rational-emotional in social research paradigms. One of my major concerns and research interests has been the well-being of art teacher candidates. Therefore, I align with Leavy’s (2009) interpretation of social research, embracing the philosophy that the researcher’s personal experiences are, “embedded within research practice and resulting knowledge” (p. 37). By refining the research question and opening it up to multiple interpretations, arts-based and narrative inquiry can challenge taken for granted truths and find new meaning through the process of critical reflection.

Self-Study: More than the Self

Through the research process, I was able to recall my past experience within the student teaching practicum. As I reflected on my practicum experiences, I embodied memories of detachment as a form of resistance. As such, arts-based and narrative forms of inquiry allowed me to create alternative spaces and combine my narrative with 11 art teacher candidates’ stories. “The autobiographical self-study researcher has an ineluctable obligation to seek to improve the learning situation not only for self but for others” (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001, p. 16). As I seek to improve the teacher candidates’ conditions for pre-service art educators, I must align with contemporary practices in student teaching and include teacher candidates’ voices. Self-study is not about one
set of moral values placed over others. Instead, self-study researchers critically question our own moral choices and consider other viewpoints from a place of vulnerability (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001).

The methods of imagining the complexities of who we are becoming can be illustrated visually, performed relationally, and understood narratively, making our own internal processes visible to the world through self-study research. In carving out resistive spaces, such as those found in digital networks, it allows for inquiry and self-discovery. As educators of teachers, we must also connect with our own biographical history in education. We must reflect and begin the dialogue with ourselves before we can begin dialogue with others (Moustakin, 2007). And in order to reflect critically we must remember, imagine, understand, empathize, and allow ourselves to be vulnerable once more, to write uncensored, as if writing in our diaries (Richardson, 1990). We don’t necessarily have to share all this uncensored information with others. Instead, educators need to generate it for ourselves so we can recall what it feels like to be vulnerable so that we may embody that vulnerability as a way of coming to know and claim our own personal pedagogy.

To be human is to feel vulnerable for not only ourselves in the moment, but to feel vulnerable for others, others who we think of as we reflect on our lives. This leads me to ask the question, how can I ask other students to critically self-reflect if I do not engage in this practice myself? Becoming reflective practitioners (Schon, 1987) is not something you do all at once and you certainly cannot place it into the pre-service program at the last minute or even during the student teaching practicum. It must be implemented in all coursework and carried through by supporting the former students in their first year of teaching. I discovered this fact after I began my study in the middle of the student teacher participants’ practicum experiences. Without fully understanding what it means to be vulnerable, I do not think democratically productive dialogue
is possible with students (Bell, 1998). You cannot make yourself vulnerable or be a reflective practitioner (Schon, 1987) if you are thinking ‘what do I get out of it?’ Going through the motions and practices of reflexivity without fully understanding what it means to reflect and share those reflections with students will constrain dialogue and you will continue to speak from an authoritarian position (Moustakin, 2007).

Throughout my research, the methodology of self-study situates my voice and the voices of student teachers who helped me explore a shared narrative of the student teaching practicum. Using the framework of self-study research, which promotes methodologies from narrative and arts inquiry (Mitchell, O’Reilly-Scanlon, & Weber, 2005) I explicate a form of research legitimizing my own student teaching experiences. Especially effective for reviving the memories I had repressed, self-study research provides a critical perspective on vulnerability, pedagogy, and alternative forms of evaluation. Embracing postmodern fragmentation and a paradigm of no experts, I rely on my interpretations, combined with participants’ stories and images of their experiences, making my research a way to relate journeys of self-discovery through student teaching.

Interpretations and Findings: Researcher’s Inquiry

Visual methodologies allow us to trace our past and link to our own pedagogical experiences. Writing, visualizing, performing strategies of reflective resistance, suggests how student teachers and others may learn to negotiate their own understandings and interpretations of their learning journeys, particularly during student teaching field experiences (Cochran-Smith, 2003). An exploration of this data illustrated how visual and textual narrative inquiry can make transparent the social structures (rituals, routines, and documentations) embedded in teacher
education programs, as well as how such structures produce myths and inherited discourses through rituals, routines, documentation and the training of teachers in teacher programs (Britzman, 2003).

As I recalled and illustrated the hegemonic roles that came into play during my own teaching experience, ultimately, I uncovered an oppressive and isolating field experience suffused with personal feelings of failure. Personal themes emerged throughout the processes of my research by visualizing my past experiences in student teaching (Sullivan & Miller, 2013) allowing me to illustrate each of my research processes as metaphor beginning with Chapter 1, The Fragmented Journey, Chapter 2, Borderlands, Chapter 3, Remnants, and Chapter 4, Weaving the Narrative. Chapter 5, Tilling the Field, is the original inquiry that started this quest in rediscovering my own biographical history and source of pedagogy.

Summarizing the Results

In reconsideration of how to go about synthesizing the analysis and information from the previous chapters in order to answer my original thesis question: How do I create a digital space for pre-service educator’s narratives about their student teaching experiences that opens up possibilities for critical pedagogy reflecting democratic practices? I discovered that an online digital forum and community can serve as a temporary safe space for exploring critical pedagogy that relates to student teachers’ individual experiences and issues concerning the student teaching practicum. That these spaces can lead to a personal praxis of uncovering what sometimes is never fully explored, our own autobiographical narrative of teaching. Reconstructing my memories and questioning the myths that were perpetuated within this local teaching culture, I explored my own resistance to the hegemonic processes of becoming a teacher. This included feelings of
disembodiment, oppression, and resistance. This led to illustrating other ways of being a teacher through inquiry and enacted and negotiated interpretations in order to resist institutional narratives that are often forced upon student teachers.

The first part of my research journey has been outlined, as I researched practices and methods that might assist pre-service art students in preparing them for the fragmented and transient journey of the practicum. Calling into question the way university educators and public school teachers’ engage with pre-service art students through dialogue, guide them through critical reflection, and how we evaluate them in an equitable manner during this process. This involved looking through the lens of critical theory and resistance theory. As the research evolved, so too did the meaning of this self-study. The search for meaning of the self situated in the field of the art education practicum came to the forefront as I (re)examined criticism and inequities that I experienced in teacher fieldwork emerged through the processes of analysis as writing (Richardson, 1990; St. Pierre, 2008) and resonance as remembrance (Conle, 1996). Reflective processes of the research journey also led to a visual inquiry infused by methods used by arts-based researchers (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008; Knowles & Cole, 2008). The second part of this journey led me to forms of resistance and reflective strategies found in methodologies from narrative and arts-based research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Finley, 2008; Foucault, 1972; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002; Zeichner, 1981) in (un)covering myths regarding institutional norms and hegemonic processes that exist within teaching fieldwork (Britzman, 2003).

By reading the other participants’ narratives and remembering my own autobiography, I was able to trace the roots of my own source of pedagogical knowledge. As I wrote and created visual inquiry, comprehending the important themes of my research, uncensored spaces of narrative and arts inquiry for pre-service art educators in the practicum resulted. As our fragmented
stories of the student teaching practicum came together by weaving our experiences, it became polyyvocal and layered with new meanings. These visual strategies allowed me to envision alternative pathways, therefore, allowing me to push against institutional norms and create a safe space for reflective practices.

Reflexive and Resistive Strategies

In practices of reflexivity, one turns back upon experiences, critically engaging with different points of view and interpretations in order to make the familiar, strange (Sheridan, Chamberlain & Dupuis, 2011). In making the familiar strange, educators are able to critically reflect upon the inherited discourses that are often taken for granted and go unquestioned within the practices and evaluation systems in teacher training (Britzman, 2003). Critically reflecting and understanding intimately that our own biographies and past experiences concerning educational institutions and inequities are sources from which we construct our pedagogy (Britzman, 2003), therefore, self-study is a theoretical endeavor of discovering and realigning pedagogical practice to theory.

Another beneficial source for critical reflexivity came about by reading self-study literature from other educational scholars (Conle, Xin, & Tan, 2002). By being exposed to and reading other works that explore issues of struggle concerning marginalized voices, issues of social justice, democratic ways of teaching, university educators and mentor teachers can provide an atmosphere that assists the pre-service art education students in developing a tolerance to other viewpoints and grasp a deeper understanding of reflective inquiry as a means of understanding and evaluating (Beattie, 1995; Cochran-Smith, 1995; Derry, 2005).
Reflexivity to complex problems and understanding blurred genres of arts-based and narrative inquiry must be introduced early into pre-service programs. With the understanding that student teachers are in a time crunch, spending time reading and preparing for their classes and prepping the art supplies for the next day, many struggle with fears about managing the classroom (Nielson, 2010). The teacher candidate often worries about pleasing their cooperating teachers (Anderson, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 1995; Feiman-Nemsler, 1996; Nielsen, 2010; Ross, 1987) in order to receive a good evaluation (McNay, 2003; Ross, 1987). Many of student teachers are undergoing a profound change in their thinking about teaching (Beattie, 1995) and questioning if the teaching profession is right for them (Gruenewald, 2003; McNay, 2003; Rots, Kelchtermans, & Aelterman, 2012).

Education, student placement, and teacher fieldwork is always in a state of change (Ward, Nolen, & Horn, 2010). Cooperating teachers transfer, retire, move, or become exhausted by having teacher candidates in their classrooms without receiving special training, recognition, or reward for good work with student teachers (Bullough, 2005). University supervisors shuffle in and out of assignments, and student teachers move in and out of the system. It is difficult to create and maintain a democratic and supportive evaluation system when all players are constantly in flux. In this context, the realization that the way advisors, cooperating teachers, and the student teachers evaluate the practicum experience needs to be reconsidered and connected to previous and post experiences in the practicum. When student teachers learn how to critically self-reflect, they gain a greater sense of self-efficacy and gain a sense of empowerment from understanding and believing in their own learning journeys (Rots, Kelchtermans, & Aelterman, 2012).

The method of resonance through writing (Clandinin, 2007; Conle, 2000b; Conle, Xin, & Tan, 2002) allowed me to create and weave a polyvocal narrative of my story along with the 11
art teacher candidates’ stories in, *Our Stories*. Stringing together events that evoked emotions and sensations from my past experiences in student teaching as it merged with the other participants’ recollections, allowing for intuitive and spontaneous outcomes referred to as ‘narrative clusters’ (Conle, 1996). These collective voices within the narrative clusters are not only used in narrative to give the silenced and marginalized a voice (Richardson, 1990) but as a way to assist those individuals that lack the cultural capital (teaching experiences, educational connections and affiliations) to openly critique their mentor teacher and those learning environments.

**Disembodied Resistance: Embodying Our Pedagogy**

Using arts-based research methodologies, I explored and visualized my own resistance during my student teaching practicum as an out-of-body experience. As I recalled being in a space and time that brought back feelings of oppression, and remembrances of being disembodied from my own actions and emotions. The discovery that arts-based methodologies not only allow us to explore lived-in spaces (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2008) but also the disembodied spaces of resistance, gave my experience visualization that openings can exist outside the body of education, as safe spaces which are fundamental to the constant reconstruction of teacher identity. The empowering methods of arts-based research give us the means to visualize resistive spaces of disembodiments, retreating from institutional norms, standing a part and questioning the status quo of myths and inherited discourses in education. In this way, our artistic renderings become a gaze of protest.

**Anonymity – Protecting Identities**

Ordinarily, student teachers do not wish to risk being labeled as a trouble-maker or
unemployable because they dared to honestly critique the learning situations they currently find themselves in. Even though student teachers lack teaching experience that does not mean they do not have a right to state their opinions, ask for basic requirements in student teaching, or discuss grievances (many of them legitimate), or provide critiques about their student teaching practicum. Critiques allow misconceptions and cultural myths to surface; narrative inquiry allows multiple interpretations to be created. If we ever hope to improve the condition of education, we must create resistive spaces in our art education programs that allow and encourage these kinds of inquiries and critiques.

Forging resistive spaces protective of students’ identities, central to such a resistive process is anonymity, which is necessary for student teachers to critique hegemonic myths, clichés, and misconceptions in teaching culture. While there have been some superficial attempts to create such dialogue using technology on digital communities such as Facebook and other blogsites, these spaces have exposed students’ identities and failed to mount truly critical inquiry. Such unreflective spaces can constrain discourse; further perpetuating myths and disingenuous role-playing in teacher education. In order to produce reflective spaces that allow pre-service educators to openly question institutional rules and begin to openly critique the restrictive places of schools, we need to provide a safe space of anonymity which protects the identity of the participants. This space should provide a sanctuary that involves strategic ways of building dialogic inquiry so multiple viewpoints can be considered.

Crafting Safe Spaces

While creating visual inquiry through the process of writing and remembering, I experienced one of the more profound and personally satisfying experiences in realizing all of us
have the power to create resistive spaces of unfolding inquiry which allow us to question taken-for-granted practices and rituals. That crafting heterotopias (Foucault, 1984) of safe spaces (whether in a community or in one’s own life) allows us push back against inherited discourses and myths, to question indoctrination into the body of education. This resistance becomes not only one of resistive discourse but a bodily performance of pedagogical praxis (Denzin, 2009) in which novice educators can resist hegemonic roles which are perpetuated in education and investigate their own sources of knowledge (Britzman, 2003). Such heterotopic spaces are ripe for forms of resistance that encourage critical reflection and critical dialogue (Soja, 1989). A place where meaning is negotiated and allows us to ask, what is my place? And where do I fit in?

In the meeting of autobiography, memory, and the creative passion of making and writing, I comprehended how my past educational experience shaped my own commitments to teaching. As I applied such principles to my self-study, the visual images and narratives of PostArtTeachingStories, motivated me as I went into a creative frenzy of writing, mapping, painting, photographing, and rebuilding my memory. Although it had been twenty-five years since I experienced many of the incidents discussed in my research, I did not initially feel comfortable in recalling them. They remained repressed, and I had to construct a safe space that allowed me to engage with and analyze other pre-service art student teachers’ narratives as a way to emotionally approach my own experiences. Such safe spaces have been referred to by other educational scholars as heterotopias (Dehaene & DeCauter, 2008; Wild, 2011) that exist outside the norms of institutional authority and are both public and private spaces (Foucault, 1984). As Dehaene and DeCauter (2008) explain,

Heterotopian spaces are necessarily collective or shared spaces...contingent upon a precise mechanism of opening and closing. That closing means excluding the public, a delineation of otherness and a closure vis-à-vis public space, while opening is an opening unto the public domain. (p. 6)
Therefore, these spaces are temporal, allowing the pre-service art teachers the opportunity to collectively reflective and reframe their own experiences in the student teaching process with others in their community who are experiencing the same critical event. Each heterotopic space then would offer different openings and closings as some would end after the student teaching event ends. Others spaces, would end when the inquiry itself ends or when the communities participants no longer needed the space. However, that would not be the end of meaning making for such spaces rich in narrative and visual data as the heterotopic spaces would reopen again to broader research in education, posing alternatives so that we may continue to improve our practices of embracing difference and multiple interpretations about what it means to teach.

Vignettes as Reflective Resistance

Making memory work an explicit thread in my research sparked forms of poetic communications that unbound my recollections. This process allowed a space for submerged memories to bubble to the surface, giving my narrative a space of inquiry in which to unfold. Uncomfortable spaces that my younger-self did not wish to remember but that my researcher-self insisted must be remembered in order to become vulnerable, to embody uncertainty and struggle, and to recall the restrictive spaces of being coerced. In such a process, research data is defined in unorthodox ways, “comprised of the researcher’s sensual, emotional subjective responses and even dreams, memories, distractions that emerge within those interactions with research participants and their context” (Stout, 2013, p. 29). This type of emotional data is usually not included in field notes or interviews. Such an approach became necessary in my research in order to write about the taboo discourses of teaching that I felt I could not speak of, allowing for an emotionally safe space where I could embody my narrative journey. Vignettes allow many researchers to embody their
research (Kirk, 2005). My vignettes gave me a space in which to explore personal feelings of vulnerability, angst, and frustration, allowing me to readdress the emotional aspects of the student teaching practicum. The generation of narrative spark of meaning amid the invocation of memory is intertwined in my research process with methods of resonance. Memories can be reclaimed in reflective modes that contextualize narrative.

My priority is to allow marginalized voices to be heard, primarily my own, as a student teacher. Producing such a platform, I hope to raise awareness from the art education community to combat unethical practices towards pre-service art teacher candidates. Similarly, my representation of individuals I have worked with raises questions about the ethics of representation. In my research, I portray some of the people in my story that caused the frustration, pain, and eventual depression that beset my student teaching practicum, but they have no voice in my writing. As St. Pierre (2008) proclaims, “for the most part, I have found no ethical problem in publishing stories that reflect the abuses of power; I consider the damage done by the abusers far greater than any discomfort my stories might cause them” (p. 482). My personal vignettes represent the memories I recall in order to shed light upon injustice in student teaching placements that clearly continue today.

Challenges and Epiphanies

Although the online wiki space that I created did not generate the kind of deeper reflection and dialogue that is necessary for many forms of critical pedagogy, it did assist me in reconnecting with memories I had suppressed from my own student teaching. As I did not receive the kind of dialogue with and amongst the student teachers that I had originally wished for, I turned inward to self-exploration. It was only then that I realized that recalling the unpleasant memories from my
practicum could be beneficial. My reflections assisted me in breaking down repressed memories that tend to slip through the cracks and are ignored in educational institutions.

As I reflected upon the student teachers’ stories, the promotion of multiple viewpoints within the student teaching practicum became visible. When other art teacher candidates can view and relate to one another’s experiences it does have the potential to build camaraderie and help them envision alternative solutions. This space with limited communiqué from pre-service art educators did give me a new way of imagining how these spaces of narrative and arts-informed inquiry can serve multiple purposes, as it allowed me to reflect upon my own educational experiences, and realize that those previous experiences continue to play a part in the transitioning and development of my teacher identity.

Another pivotal point for me as the researcher in this journey was realizing that I am not responsible for student’s learning. They are. I can facilitate that learning by sharing stories of experience and information with them, and by providing opportunities for engagement with people and places, I can guide them to different kinds of methodologies that may produce critical pedagogy, but ultimately this is their journey and they are responsible for their learning. However, I do believe providing creative and supportive communities of caring that require efforts from schools and universities alike can assist pre-service educators in bridging the divide between the practice and theory.

Because student teaching is an individual experience, no two journeys will be the same. As such, my self-study research is not generalizable. Nevertheless, my hope is this study assists others to visualize and understand the myths and stereotypes in teacher culture. Such resistive methodologies cannot be based on standard evaluation forms which assess pre-determined behavior and skill sets. It cannot occur with archaic self-assessment forms or documentation from
a cooperating teacher stating the student has mimicked them in an appropriate manner and is so
deemed to have natural teaching abilities (Sims, 2011). Instead, teacher education methods must
allow for difference, which can be uncovered during self-inquiry, exploring narrative and visual
processes of understanding the self as we become people who teach.

As the researcher, I am aware that negative experiences from my student teaching
practicum influenced my research, but I feel my story must be told to help rid art education of the
myth that all field experience is good, when in reality some field experiences can be quite harmful
to student teachers. Through this study, I remembered what I had forgotten, my own experiences
of struggle, isolation, and oppression during this time and place not quite in the university and not
quite in the schools, a place of in-between-ness, in no (wo)man’s land. My story of inequities needs
to be told because it illustrates the myths and inherited discourses present in teacher education. Art
educators need to examine such stories, which must be brought out of the margins of professional
experience, in order to understand how and why such experiences continue. In order to be socially
critical, we must problematize our research content and procedures, seeing not only current
prevailing conditions in the training of teachers but also to envision a “socially just form of

Future Research: The Potential for Digital Communities

Can digital communities bridge the divide between the classroom and the university
becoming spaces of collaborative resistance? Can we learn from digital safe places, how to expose
our fears, weaknesses, and build upon new understandings? Do we have to remain anonymous to
participate without fear of repercussions? All of these questions still remain at the forefront of my
research as I believe students do learn from one another and that social media is social, as well as
political. Many people feel protected by being with others in a digital community (Turkle, 2011) but digital media must be used more effectively in teaching and not just as a token measure to incorporate technology into already preexisting curriculum.

When there are no spaces of open dialogue in which student teachers’ voices can be heard, the field experience may feel like something that happens to you, not with you. Even if digital spaces are created for open reflective dialogue, educators must be sure that those spaces do not reproduce the same power structures that constrain dialogue and prevent new understandings (Sweeny, 2004). Such constraints stem partly from the ways reflection is marginalized in student teaching, often as a token or extracurricular activity (Kidd, 2012). Social media and digital communities have the potential to become spaces for critical reflection, identity formation, and scenario reenactments concerning real world problems faced by educators and pre-service students. Conflicting paradigms of what is expected from student teachers between public schools and universities will continue to be played out in the student teaching practicum. Having a designated space to (re)enact, (re)imagine, and (re)create our teaching selves and (re)reflect on our teaching is pivotal in understanding the complexities of becoming teachers. Through this study, I believe that digital communities can serve as heterotopia spaces, which have the potential for understanding multiple points of view and leading educators to question our own practices.

Spaces of community that build and establish trust must be protected. Therefore, these digital spaces that are used for reflecting on the student teaching practicum should not be public arenas which allow public access. For deeper reflection, private discourse must be mutually exclusive and but remain in private domains that allow pre-service groups to communicate local knowledge amongst themselves. I believe educator and researchers can learn from such safe spaces and maybe at some point in the future, open these private conversations to a broader public
audience, albeit still protecting students and teachers identities. These heterotopic spaces should exist as a private expanse of social and political identity formation, locating the affective domains of learning to teach, and provide room to negotiate the inherited discourses and myths in teaching (Zembylas & Ferreria, 2009). In the end, these private heterotopias could be stages of self-development in guiding each educator to rediscover their own source of pedagogical history, and sharing that journey with others, becoming both a reflective and empowering tool. This is the crux of my research. As I believe that until such collaborative spaces are created which encourage reflexivity, teachers and pre-service teachers alike, may have difficulty in understanding how to go about embodying their own source of personal pedagogy (Powell & Lajevic, 2011). Unless, we push this agenda, they may never have the opportunity to theorize and create their own autobiography of becoming educators, as they continue to experience a wide rift between theory versus practice, the university versus public education, knowledge as static versus knowledge as dialogic (Britzman, 2003). This is understandable since they have never been given the opportunity to connect their past experiences in education to current ones. Once their experiences connect to their social practices, it then becomes connected to theory. For theory is social practice (Britzman, 2003).

I know that student teaching without continual support and feedback can be an oppressive experience. One that leads some (like myself) to withdraw from art organizations, fearing that they ‘don’t’ belong’ with other art educators. An online digital forum and community can serve as a place to belong (Delacruz, 2009; Rowland, 2010) as pre-service art educators go from methodology courses in higher education to student teaching, from one experience to the next, and from one school to the other. Such spaces can serve as a transitional community that supports their efforts, their desire to make a difference, as well as their hopes and fears. These spaces have the
potential to mentor rural students who live in remote areas where supervisors and other peers may not be able to physically meet as a pre-service group to discuss concerns in practicum experiences. As such, online communities that encourage reflexive practices open up possibilities for criticisms which are missing from many pre-service art education programs (Darts, 2011) as instructors many times gloss over the messiness of teaching and learning environments. In order to genuinely open up these resistive spaces we need to support honest critiques of our curriculum, methodologies, teachings, and placement programs. How are educators of teachers ever going to get better at preparing teachers if we don't?

**Broader Implications to the Field of Art Education**

The data collected from my personal notes and the 11 art teacher candidates narratives assemblages on the wiki site, along with our visual images, illustrate how visual and textual narrative inquiry make transparent the social structures embedded in teacher education programs. Further examining how these structures produce myths and inherited discourses through rituals, routines, documentation and the training of teachers in teacher programs (Britzman, 2003). Moreover, reflective techniques such as metaphor analysis, reflective logs, and other forms of narrative can help student teachers meet the demands of the practicum (Kelchtermans, 2010).

Focusing on teacher candidates’ emotional development in the practicum will help them to understand how context, relationships, and—most importantly—reflections on such matters can affect their pursuit of the practicum and their teaching practices. Such an approach can allow pre-service student teachers to feel empowered and gain self-determination.

A narrative and visual methodology, which encourages educators to explore personal as well as professional history, is a necessary component for the postmodern researcher, educator,
and student. Slattery (2001) recognizes the necessity for a methodology that negotiates the constant processes of (re)envisioning a new wholeness, “The educational researcher as artist working within must engage the postmodern and poststructural philosophies to contextualize his or her research and release the imagination” (p. 374). Slattery (2001) notes in arts-based research, “the goal is to free the self from petrified connections forced on to the self by a repressing society or normative methodologies” (p. 377). A visual and narrative study of self in order to reinvent ourselves and reinvest in the community is a form of social praxis. This self-study gave me the ability to reinterpret narratively, pivotal events of becoming an art educator through multiple methodologies which embraces the multiplicity in the results, because there is no single truth, only multiple interpretations. Therefore, empathetic validity (Dadds, 2008) recognizes the postmodern person is partial, fragmented, and in flux. “Transformation happens not by rejecting these parts of ourselves but by gathering them up and integrating them. Through this process we reach a new wholeness” (Kidd, 1990, p. 50). Peeling away the myths and inherited discourses within our own teaching practices is an arduous and often painful process but necessary in understanding and exposing the grand narratives of institutional norms and exposing the complexity of teaching (Britzman, 2003).

Most fundamentally, re-envisioning teacher training in art education requires a careful assessment of the teaching practicum as a politically charged social experience. Through this kind of mentorship, appropriate boundary processes that assist pre-service educators with social and relational aspects of the practicum and the limitations that exist within all teaching environments can be highlighted. Solutions and strategies can be developed which are context specific and geared to individual students while assisting groups of student teachers in comprehending the complexity involved in teaching art. When we open up discursive spaces and allow multiple interpretations of teaching contexts we are more likely to resolve not only localized issues within
the student teaching practicum but contribute towards a broader understanding of the complexity of evolving teacher identities.

Concluding Thoughts

Self-study research entails explicit moral dimensions, giving the researcher the responsibility to define moral significance and parameters, both for the researcher and others, highlighting the moral choices underpinning research frameworks (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001). Refusing the ostensible moral objectivity of positivist research paradigms, self-study addresses the values, desires, and emotional drives within social practice (Kelchtermans, 2009). In research on teaching, such an explicit moral focus illuminates how the educational experiences of teachers affects their current teaching identities. Entering into moral dialogue with others, learning to listen from a place of vulnerability, we may negotiate meanings in respectful ways.

As such, these spaces of critical pedagogy that connect us with our own biographies in self-study research may fulfill Margolin’s (2011) conception of university teacher training programs that develop and facilitate transitional spaces for pre-service educators, creating safe environments in which they can explore multiple interpretations and options without repercussions. When we begin to fully recognize and engage in creating transitional and/or resistive spaces within our communities, building them around critical discussion of art education, we may establish interventions that make difference visible and the marginalized, heard. Narrative and arts-based inquiry help us bridge the gap between daily social interactions in the student teaching practicum and large scale social structures, such as educational institutions. Highlighting how art teacher candidates’ personal narratives become a form of social critique, as well as recognizing the skill of negotiation which is often overlooked in pre-service education.
Through the investigative narrative writing of self-studies, I believe pre-service art education students are able to reflect on cultural influences and gender issues in their lives. They are able to recognize how these influences can manifest in their own teaching practices and how these influences can inform their values and bias's (Childs, 2005). This type of reflective self-study further encourages the pre-service teacher to know themselves intimately and encourage critical reflection using their own voice (Kirk, 2005). When these self-study narratives are shared with a community it has the capability to generate multiple perspectives, allowing them and us to visualize how metaphors help them understand where they fit within a broader community of art educators (Delacruz, 2009).

Mentorship is something we all need especially as we are navigating unknown terrains in art education (Bain, Kuster, Milbrandt, & Newton, 2010). Our pre-service art educators need the additional support as they find their way through their student teaching practicum, a safe space that provides opportunities for reflection, critical dialogue, and alternative points of view with their peers, anonymously.

Following Freire’s (1970) concept of education as a place to pose and solve problems, we must embrace the choice to create dialogue in art education based on democratic spaces where pre-service art educators both voice and hear the stories of becoming art educators within a community. A community that recognizes cultural differences, affording student teachers a space to question the status quo of institutional narratives, and a place to reexamine powerful sources of pedagogical knowledge. Doing so links knowledge, teaching, and learning with the technological, societal, and educational changes we must examine in classroom experience. Such a forum can, in turn, promote more complex forms of understanding, the visualization of alternative perspectives, and the provision of support through shared communities concerned with ethical practices. Such spaces
have the potential to extend beyond the borders of the practicum and inform many phases of art
teachers’ professional lives. Allowing educators and students to become the teachers we imagine,
providing possibilities from our own reflexive journeys.
APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONS FOR NARRATIVES ON THE WIKI SITE:

POSTARTTEAACHINGSTORIES
Below are the directions and suggestions on how the student participants might create their short narratives exactly as it appeared on the wiki site:

The purpose of this site is to create a safe space on a public forum where identities are protected. A specific place where pre-service art teachers, could go to post stories of experience from their student teaching practicum. This wiki space is intended for creating resistive spaces that recognize critical pedagogy and offer pre-service art educators a place to share constraints that occurred during their student teaching practicum. Many of these constraints are often frustrating, heart-rending, and do not have a clear answer or any answer at all. My hope is that this space will be used as a way to creatively share our struggles and triumphs from our interaction with others through the creation of art. In order to keep Post Art Teaching Stories anonymous, please follow these guidelines.

-Please do not use the names of persons, institutions or programs in your narrative.

-Please do not use images of identifiable people or institutions.

-Please do not use your real name in the narrative or for your login name.

Ideas on how to begin creating your wiki page narrative

Wiki’s allow you to express yourself in visual, textual, and audio formats. Please feel free to experiment with the type of narrative that you believe best illustrates your story or experience.

-A great way to begin your narrative is with an image(s) of your own creation or one from a copyright free source. Consider how the image communicates your overall message.

-Add text or verbal message to the image by embedding a link or place the text within the image. Consider how the text or verbal message affects the visual image. It can support or contradict the visual image depending on what kind of affect you want the narrative to have on the viewer.
- Consider that hundreds of people may view your narrative. Check to make sure you have effectively communicated your message and that you have edited the narrative.

Think about basic **visual communication strategies** (from http://collegeconfessions.org/)

**Contrast**- When you juxtapose one element with its opposite, inherent qualities of that element stand out more dramatically.

**Scale**- Make something huge that is usually small and vise versa.

Point of View- Extremely important in engaging the viewer in your narrative by using an image that is seen from an unusual angle, above, below, even inside out.

**Balance**- Using both symmetry or asymmetry depending on the feeling you wish to convey in your narrative. Balanced symmetrical images tend to relax and create a sense of order. Asymmetrical balance creates tension and uncertainty.

**Negative space**- What is left out can often be profound in visual art. Space allows the viewer to image what if or the feeling of the unknown. Space can also allow for reflection in a narrative piece.

**Focal point**- Having a focal point can serve as an entry point that invites viewers into your narrative.

- Please feel free to visit your wiki page site later and view comments that others have left for you about your narrative.
APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THREE OF THE WIKI PARTICIPANTS
Participant 2

1) Reflecting on your student teaching practicum and the narrative you created, how would you change your narrative, or would you?

Looking back on my narrative, I decided to talk about an issue that reflects on a struggle in my practicum. This issue was fresh on my mind, and big in my heart, but I do wish I had written a narrative of my overall experience. Sometimes it can be easier to focus on the difficult and brush off the easy. I did have great experiences that taught me more than this one struggle did. Maybe it would be more of a benefit to talk about the wonderful experiences and mentors that can prepare you better than you expected and could ask for.

2) What do you believe is something that needs to be changed, addressed, or is missing from the pre-service art education programs in general?

We were lucky enough to have an entire semester of classroom management as a topics class. I think this needs to be part of the curriculum. I also strongly believe that the mentors need to be evaluated before we send students out for their student teaching.

3) Online mentoring and coaching programs have been suggested to assist student teachers in navigating difficulties in their student teaching experiences, do you believe participating in this kind of program would have been beneficial for you? Why or why not?

Not necessarily for me, I was fortunate enough to have two fantastic leaders from my university. Both were experienced and during my first half of student teaching, all of my problems and concerns were addressed very appropriately with them. They kept my eyes on the prize, reassured that I was a spectacular teacher, gave me great advice, and honestly, they told me one bad mentor could land me back an entire semester if I couldn’t get over our ‘indifferences’. So, I sucked it up and dealt with it (her).

4) Concerning anonymity, did you feel safer posting your narratives because you did not have to reveal who you were? Explain.

I still talk to the mentor whom I had all of the problems with. I would hate for her to find out how horrible I think her classroom is. She thinks she is doing a fantastic job, the kids seem happy, so who am I to really judge. Like I learned from my second mentor, it is ok to not be the same type of teacher. So, yes, I feel safer posting anonymously.

Participant 4

1. Reflecting on your student teaching practicum and the narrative you created, how would you change your narrative, or would you?

I wouldn’t change my narrative, the things that happen during student teaching are important. It is also important to let our instructors know about these mentors who aren’t cut out to be
mentors. My university has a very high reputation for the art education program, so we should only be placed with high caliber teachers.

2) What do you believe is something that needs to be changed, addressed, or is missing from the pre-service art education programs in general?

Something I feel needs to be more stressed in pre-service art education programs is classroom management. Yes, creating complete and substantial lessons is important, knowing how to teach and knowing the content, but managing student behavior is the least covered subject. Student behavior is least predictable once you get into the classroom. I was personally blessed to take a topics class covering most of these issues, but this particular class is not offered every semester. I think it is important to not only talk about management strategies, but to create everyday classroom situations and practice these strategies.

3) Online mentoring and coaching programs have been suggested to assist student teachers in navigating difficulties in their student teaching experiences, do you believe participating in this kind of program would have been beneficial for you? Why or why not?

I do not believe I would have utilized the online mentoring. I may have chosen to participate in a coaching program in hopes of learning new management techniques. I would most likely not choose either program, because of time constraints. Student teaching in general takes much of my attention, plus I was trying to work. The mentoring I received from my supervisors was sufficient and they were open to answering any questions I had. I felt supported and felt I was given ample advice from the university program.

4) Concerning anonymity, did you feel safer posting your narratives because you did not have to reveal who you were? Explain.

In some ways, yes. I was more comfortable giving more specific details of my situation because my identity would not interfere with the purpose of the narrative. I was also able to support my narrative with examples, but keep the student's identities private. I felt I would not have been able to fully express my narrative and experience without those details and examples.

Participant 6

1. Reflecting on your student teaching practicum and the narrative you created, how would you change your narrative, or would you?

I think I would have changed it to include more information about the context of the environment. So much goes into play when you are working in a restrictive environment. If I had time, I would have created artwork like some of the other student teachers.

2. What do you believe is something that needs to be changed, addressed, or is missing from the pre-service art education programs in general?

Buy in from the mentor teachers themselves. I was disappointed that more teachers did not show up for our completion ceremony for student teaching. I think that there needs to be more focus on
team teaching in student teaching both with our peers and with our mentor teachers, and doing it correctly!

3. Online mentoring and coaching programs have been suggested to assist student teachers in navigating difficulties in their student teaching experiences, do you believe participating in this kind of program would have been beneficial for you? Why or why not?

Personally, I would have liked to have had another person’s opinion on how to handle the difficult situation I mentioned in my narrative. The only problem with online mentoring and coaching is it is time consuming. It is difficult to tell the complete story online so I think it would be difficult explaining the context of each situation that happens in student teaching. I would have liked more coaching and support. Maybe a casual meeting where all the student teachers can meet and discuss what is happening in our student teaching.

4. Concerning anonymity, did you feel safer posting your narrative because you did not have to reveal who you were? Explain.

I did feel more comfortable because I didn’t want to expose whom the students’ where or the mentor teacher. Even though I did have some difficulties relating to my mentor teacher, I would never do anything to harm her or her reputation.
REFERENCES


Berry & Loughran, R.V. (2005). The role of self-study - Questioning the status quo. In C. Mitchell, K. O’Reilly-Scanlon, & S. Weber (Eds.), *Just who do we think we are?*


