CONNECTIONS ON THE PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE LANDSCAPE:
A NARRATIVE INQUIRY INTO THE EXPERIENCE OF A BEGINNING TEACHER,
HER ADMINISTRATOR AND A TEACHER/RESEARCHER

by

Frances Anne Squire

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This is a narrative study of the experience of a beginning teacher and her administrator during her first four years of teaching. The study is set within the context of the professional lives of three women, the new teacher, the principal and the teacher/researcher who occupy different positions on the professional knowledge landscape. It focusses, in retrospect, on the new teacher's entry to the teaching profession. Within this context, we have worked collaboratively across two particular school settings to explore the nature and meaning of this experience, highlighting the role of the principal in the growth and development of the novice teacher. The inquiry has explored, from three perspectives, the ways in which our lives connected and shaped each other's during the new teacher's first years in the profession. While keeping the experience of the new teacher central to the inquiry, the professional knowledge contexts of all triad members have emerged through the research process.

The study is composed of interacting levels of narrative accounts which appear in various literary forms, stories, poems, letters, memos, dialogues and reflections reflecting the language of school communication. This collection of school stories forms the heart of the thesis. As the teacher/researcher I draw from these reconstructed stories and accounts of experience and describe how, through the research process, both the new teacher and the administrator came to new
understandings about beginnings in teaching. I illustrate how stories of expectation, cover stories and stories of ownership reveal insights into the qualitatively different professional knowledge landscapes of the participants. Through the research process we engaged in conversations of practice which bridged these landscapes and enhanced our understanding of the multiple contexts of teaching and administration. The study points to the importance of collaborative research as professional development, as a place for professional dialogue and reflection. Further, this narrative inquiry highlights the importance of story as a viable mode of knowing in teacher development research. By reconstructing, contextualizing and analyzing our teacher stories, this study has evoked credible images of the lived experience of school people.
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Chapter One

Beginnings

The three of us sat comfortably in Lisa's office, shrugging off the tensions of the teaching day. The aroma of fresh coffee and banana muffins filled the spacious room. The late afternoon sun streamed through the wide windows that opened to the now deserted playground. On the coffee table between us lay the cassette recorder whirring softly, echoing the quietness of the school. I was nervous. This was the moment I'd been waiting for, to officially begin my thesis research with our first triad interview. Rebecca, a teacher entering her fourth year of teaching and Lisa, a principal with 20 years experience had both agreed to participate in my research study which was to explore the relationship of a beginning teacher and her administrator through a collaborative narrative inquiry. I had purposely taken a position at this new school so that I could be a part of their teaching lives as well as a researcher. As we began our conversation my tension eased and I stopped watching the controls on the recorder. Stories of shared experience at our former school where Rebecca had begun her career under Lisa's guidance, bubbled up as we laughed and recalled our first impressions of each other. When Rebecca reflected on her first year of teaching the tone changed and Lisa and I became quiet listeners intent on understanding her stories of distress and isolation. The stories, publicly voiced for the first time were unexpectedly frank and because the beginnings were shared, involved Lisa and me as characters in their telling. Webs of connection circled around us as we reconstructed our impressions of past experience, understood in the light of our present perspectives. We listened. Too often we enthusiastically interrupted the stories of others with overlapping stories of our own. We agreed and sometimes disagreed. I was overwhelmed by the sense of responsibility in the giving and receiving of stories but I knew that the voices of all of us, as ordinary school people, were crucial in creating an authentic representation of teachers' lives as they are lived out in schools. I recognized, in the complex interactive text of that first session, the challenge of representing those voices in an authentic and meaningful way. The tape stopped. The cool sunshine had turned to the purple hues of dusk. We gathered up our belongings, each full of our own thoughts, vitally aware of the new chapter we were beginning in our professional relationships.
I begin my thesis by telling this story because it prepares the blank canvas of the unwritten thesis with a preliminary layer of characters and themes which provide the genesis for the narrative inquiry. The story is about three teachers, each at a different stage in their teaching lives involved in the tentative beginnings of a new research endeavour. It reveals a glimpse of the growing collaborative relationship which will characterize the inquiry. It focuses on the power of story and the inherent difficulty of interpreting personal story in an educational research context. The story is set within the landscape of a particular time and place with particular characters who will, in concert, direct the research inquiry. By placing the characters in a context, the story foreshadows the importance of contextual meaning in the study, my compelling desire to tell an authentic school story, one that resonates strongly with my experience of thirty-two years in diverse educational situations, one that captures the immediacy and intimacy of school life as experienced by my participants and myself.

**Introduction To the Study**

Although there has been considerable attention in current educational research to issues of new teacher development, little attention has been given to the role principals might play in the professional knowledge development of novice teachers. The phenomenon I wish to investigate expressed as a question is: How are school administrators involved in the professional knowledge context of beginning teachers as they move through their first few years of teaching? To explore this phenomenon, I chose to investigate the relationship between a specific beginning teacher and her administrator across two particular school settings they have shared during the teacher's first three years of teaching. Within that time frame I was involved with the new teacher as a parent, an Induction Program coordinator and a teaching colleague, and with the principal as a teacher on her staff at both sites.

Following Clandinin and Connelly (1995) I have adopted the metaphor of a professional knowledge landscape to characterize the relationships among people, places and things which constitute the moral and intellectual nature of the professional knowledge context. The diverse relationships and situations comprising the new teacher's professional knowledge context are explored collaboratively
from three perspectives, those of the novice teacher, her administrator and myself as a researcher and colleague as we reconstruct our shared experience in two schools. This exploration has reached back into our narratives of past experience to appreciate and understand antecedent factors, to make sense of current practice on the professional knowledge landscape by interpreting past events through a landscape lens. The specific task of the study is to represent the meaning of participants' experience, to allow their voices and stories to speak for themselves, to allow the reader a vicarious, credible glimpse into their ways of understanding professional knowledge.

I was immediately drawn to Connelly and Clandinin's landscape analogy during my Doctoral course work. It seemed to be a useful way of linking the notion of teachers' personal practical knowledge, a construct illuminated in their first research program, to the communal exigencies of the workplace environment. It seemed to be a way to represent the story of lives lived in and out of classrooms, shaped not only by personal constructs, motivations and desires, but by diverse political and social pressures. By using a landscape metaphor I could set the principal - beginning teacher relationship in a context over time and penetrate the surface of a wide range of interconnected personal and professional knowledge issues. As well as this intellectual appeal, the metaphor struck an emotional chord. Identifying strongly with the notion of place, I envisioned a shaping of the thesis research in terms of overlapping personal and professional landscapes. I felt that the landscape images would allow me to draw on my background in Visual Arts, to extend and personalize the metaphor developed by Connelly and Clandinin, to make meaning through the language of the arts.

The work of Elliot Eisner has also directed the conceptualization of my study and touched an emotional response with the notion of educational criticism. Eisner believes that the same qualities essential to criticism in the Arts can be transferred to the process of educational research. Educational critics should be connoisseurs of that which they observe, describe and interpret so that they may first appreciate and then portray the situation with all its rich nuances of flavour and intensity. As Eisner (1991) explains:

*Works of art - like classrooms, schools and teaching - participate in a history and are part of a tradition. They reflect a genre of practice and ideology. Those who know the tradition understand the history, are familiar with those genres and can see what those settings and practices consist of, are most likely to have something useful and informed to say about them. Criticism*
is an art of saying useful things about complex and subtle objects so that others less sophisticated, or sophisticated in different ways, can see and understand what they did not see and understand before. (p. 3)

Reading Eisner confirmed my decision to design and facilitate an interactive narrative study in which my background and experience as "a connoisseur" of school life would be central to its success. Not only did I have a long classroom history in many schools, at many grade levels, but I had also worked extensively over the years in teachers' professional development programs. I knew the genres and was excited about attempting the role of an educational critic.

The study is set within the context of the professional lives of three teachers occupying different positions on the professional knowledge landscape and focusses on the new teacher's entry to the teaching profession. Within this context we have worked collaboratively to explore the nature and meaning of this ongoing experience, highlighting the role of the principal in the growth and development of the new teacher. The inquiry has explored the ways in which our lives connected and shaped each others' during the new teacher's first years. Although we have kept the experience of the new teacher central to the inquiry, the professional knowledge contexts of all triad members have emerged through the process of the narrative inquiry. The common themes interwoven in the three landscapes are compared with their similarities and differences adding to our knowledge of the contexts of teaching. What can be said, for example, about beginnings and endings experienced from different vantage points on the professional knowledge landscape? How does a beginning teacher acquire knowledge? How does this compare with the ways in which a principal or an experienced teacher learns? How are their beliefs and practises interconnected? Because the participants gained new understandings of their respective positions on the educational landscape through an examination of such issues, the study also points to the educative value of collaborative research. Each participant has restored parts of their past experience as new understandings are brought into focus and invited to bear on present practice.

The study is composed of three interactive levels of narrative accounts. These accounts, appearing in various literary forms, stories, poems, letters, memos, dialogues and reflections attempt to depict and capture the flavour of the unpredictable, fragmented nature of typical school communication. In creating these accounts and making decisions about style and structure, form and meaning, and
intention and audience, I was constantly reminded that the thesis was an investigation of not only subject matter but also an exploration of the creative process of writing about the lives of self and others. Some stories are serious, while others reflect the humour and laughter that also pervade our lives in school yet are so rarely visible in educational research. The stories will emerge as "teacher stories, stories of teacher, school stories and stories of school" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1996). First, there are individual stories which illustrate and define the contours of the main characters and give background for the central new teacher's story. Building on these stories are the reconstructed stories of shared experience during Rebecca's first three years of teaching. The third level of narrative representation involves the telling and retelling of the collaborative research story. Although Rebecca and Lisa have both contributed their own stories or poems to the thesis, most of the writing is mine. I have endeavoured to keep the voice and intent of the participants' words true to the context within which they were spoken and all written accounts have been discussed with and validated by the participants.

In chapter one, Beginnings, I briefly sketch the main purposes of the study and then move to my own story of teaching and learning set within the metaphors of landscape providing personal justification for my teacher-researcher role. I begin the chapter with a narrative account of the first triad research session.

Chapter two, Setting the Study in the Research Landscape, sets the thesis within its educational and social context and defines the perspectives informing the research. It continues by describing the theoretical research context for this particular aspect of teacher development and demonstrates the need for the inquiry. Situating the study in the framework of narrative studies, the chapter goes on to describe methodological issues, site and participant selection, researcher roles and relationships, data collecting procedures, analysis, interpretation and representational form. Criteria for narrative evaluation and epistemological considerations conclude the chapter.

Chapter three presents the specific Context of the inquiry by describing the two school settings and introduces the participants through letters and stories of antecedent experience. The selected stories build individual images of the new teacher and her administrator which place into context the
next section of shared experience.

Chapter four begins the three-year story of **Connections on the Professional Knowledge Landscape** as the new teacher, Rebecca, begins her career. The chapter is based on Rebecca's stories of her difficult first year and our connections to those stories. It describes and interprets how the principal was involved with Rebecca's growth and development from the perspective of both participants and explores the tensions within these perspectives. The chapter explores the nature of Rebecca's anticipated stories of teaching and sets those stories and the stories experienced within the frameworks of professional knowledge landscapes. By unwrapping the concrete details of Rebecca's experience through story and analysis, the chapter paints a picture of the professional knowledge landscape of a first year teacher.

Chapter five, **Interim: Landscapes of Learning and Possibility**, describes and documents the change which begins at the end of her first term of teaching. It creates a bridge between Rebecca's first year which ended in her layoff from the Board and her arrival at Millside in her third year. Her second year of teaching is described as a landscape of learning as she establishes her position on the multiple landscapes associated with supply teaching.

Chapter six, **Monet to Escher: Halverston to Millside**, continues the story as the principal and the new teacher move to a new school, one with a very different knowledge landscape. The chapter begins by focussing on stories of the school to set the context for the continuing narrative. It documents the stories of Rebecca's ongoing professional development in a new context as a special education teacher and presents an account of the principal's traumatic entry to the school. The connections on the landscape are once again revived when I arrive at the school for the year of collaborative research and continue to tell the story of our professional lives on a common yet different landscape.

Chapter seven, **Beginnings, Endings and Ownership: The Story Continues at Millside**, integrates the emergent themes of ownership and place with the metaphor of professional knowledge landscape as I focus on the landscapes of three teachers and their administrator at Millside. Set beside the
stories of Rebecca and Lisa are those of myself and Susan, another first year teacher on staff.

Chapter eight, Landmarks, tells the collaborative research story highlighting the insights emerging from the study relating to new teacher development and the function of story in teacher development research. Insights into the qualitatively different professional knowledge landscapes experienced by the participants within the school community are then described and explored with attention given to future possibilities for practice. I conclude chapter eight with a companion story to the first story of the thesis; this time closing the research by telling the story of our last triad session.

Landscapes of Teaching
From Teacher to Researcher: Stories of Experience

As a teacher I have always lived in two professional landscapes, one inside the child-centered classroom, one outside in an adult-centered teacher development milieu. My experience and understanding of these places and their relationship constitute the personal background for the study. During a thirty-two year career in education I have lived out my professional life as much with adults outside the classroom as with students inside classroom walls. My story of myself has been shaped in certain ways because of the particular professional landscapes I have experienced and the multiple positions I have held on the landscapes. At various times and in differing contexts I have been a teacher of children and adolescents, a university teacher of adults, a staff developer and a graduate student myself. Often the roles are concurrent, providing many opportunities to bridge diverse educational contexts. The personal biography that I bring to the profession also influences my life as a teacher and so I choose to represent my journey from teacher to researcher through story and images as a beginning narrative inquiry of self. This narrative inquiry was a key prerequisite to my thesis research because the process allowed an acknowledgement of my own unique experience. As Peshkin (1988, cited in Eisner, 1991) explains, this constitutes "a positive exploitation of our own subjectivity." Before we presume to gain access to the meaning of our participants' experience, Eisner's (1991) notion of "self as a research instrument" provokes us to know that instrument well, to examine our experiential legacy from the past and to question our present assumptions. To begin that process I tell three particular stories emerging from three distinct vantage points on the
professional knowledge landscape. Embedded within these accounts are the strands of personal and social narrative experiences which have given shape to the thesis questions. Through the reconstruction of these stories I have come to understand how the concept of "beginnings" exerts an intellectual and moral hold on the inquiry.

**Beginnings**

I need beginnings
Clean white pages
No mark, no mistakes
No certainties
A life waiting to be written
Beginnings are knowing you'll never feel exactly that way again
Something, someone is going to touch your life
And you
And your life will change
The text takes on a shape
Until the next new beginning
Another clean white page

Looking back to my early school experiences I can clearly remember the excitement of the beginning of each year, the roughness of a new plaid wool skirt, the smell of a new leather bookbag, the plastic pencil case with its carefully sharpened HB pencils and the treasured coloured pencils in a special fold-out box. With a mixture of confidence and anxiety I anticipated new friends, the new room and the crucial first encounter with the new teacher. The wonder and drama of each September was captured by the marvellous blank notebooks distributed on the first day. I loved the whiteness, the clean, flat compact paper with their orange, green or pink covers. I would run my hand over the smooth pristine covers, no crumpled pages, no torn edges, no doodles to mar their perfection. Beautiful fresh pages ... waiting. There was a real physical sense of pleasure in naming the book, and declaring it mine. Making those first marks began the year ...... no other marks were ever as physically satisfying. I hated writing on the backs of those first pages. The paper was uneven and bumpy. The words never looked the same. (Personal Journal, 1992)

I see those fresh white pages as a metaphor for my professional and personal life. I have continually begun fresh white pages where I can encounter something new. New stories of change have been almost the only constant for the last thirty years as I have lived out parallel careers as a teacher and staff developer. The anticipated stories of something new, something different, something
challenging is like those pages - always a chance to begin again, to construct "new possibilities of the existing self" (Crites 1986, p.167). As Crites describes, "the future ... remains forever the play of possibility from which all things proceed. It is the land of hope's wild dreams" (p.167). My story of the thesis journey began as a daunting white page on that landscape of dreams, one with its share of bumpy and uneven back pages as I struggled with the challenging task of writing a narrative thesis. Yet the compelling nature of a narrative inquiry continually beckoned and intrigued me with its inherent "play of possibility", the invitation to conceptualize life as a story, to explore a narrative meaning of experience.

Beginnings are knowing you'll never feel exactly that way again
Something, someone is going to touch your life
and you
and your life will change.
The text takes on a shape...

These words seem even more relevant now than they did when composed at the beginning of my thesis course work. Little did I know the ways in which narrative would take hold of my life and shape my professional and personal landscape for the next four years. The text of my life has been changed and enriched by the people with whom I have worked and the written texts with which I have interacted in the Doctoral program. Mary Catherine Bateson (1989) speaks of a sense of "repeated redirection" as we compose our lives. This notion of improvisation, "recombining partly familiar materials in new ways, often in ways especially sensitive to context, interaction and response" (p.2) resonates with the way I position myself as an educator; a person who also surfaces as a character in the educational stories of many others, family, friends and colleagues. With her introduction to *Composing a Life*, Bateson provides the key to a deeper understanding of myself, my journey from teacher to learner to researcher, my commitment to teacher development:

This is a book about life as an improvisatory art, about the ways we combine familiar and unfamiliar components in response to new situations following an underlying grammar and an evolving aesthetic.  (p.3)

Reflecting on the myriad of new and retold stories in my educational life, I have come to recognize that there is indeed an underlying grammar which grounds each new challenge just as there is an
evolving aesthetic in the way I continue to cope with high levels of ambiguity, attempting to create a sense of wholeness from disparate experience. These images from Bateson beg further questions. What components of a life make up the underlying grammar? Are there links here to the aesthetic form of the thesis? What constancies, connections and recurring themes can be found in both composing a life and composing a thesis? As I began the narrative inquiry with my participants, I drew from the theoretical constructs of Clandinin and Connelly (1992), who argue the notion of narrative unity which underscores the coherence and continuity of experience, to pursue these questions. My pursuit was further guided by the words of Cole and Hunt (1994) who advise:

> Travellers who accept that their thesis journey emanates from their own deep values and beliefs experience many benefits. By beginning with themselves they build a foundation for their inquiry based on their own experienced knowledge. (p.161)

Through the research process I have confirmed my belief in the centrality of relationship as the core value in teaching and learning. I have come to see the "familiar" components of relationship such as positive regard and caring as the elements constituting the "underlying grammar" in composing a life. Each story told during the research process evoked the salience of relationship in teaching and learning whether by celebrating its presence or mourning its absence. Further, through the writing process I have confirmed my belief that educational experience can be represented in response to an "evolving aesthetic" form.

Beginning with my own school stories and acknowledging my own experience has also generated a deeper understanding of the educational milieu or context within which I have worked for three decades. Understanding the changes that I have experienced in my practice as a teacher and staff developer reflects Crites' notion that who we are as educators, "bears the imprint of a time and place" (Crites, 1971, p.291). In the multiple roles of a university pre-service professor, a professional development leader and a classroom teacher, I have experienced shifting images of teacher development over the last thirty years, images moving appropriately, in my view, from "prescribed to personal pedagogies" (Abbey, 1993, p. 5). The story of my current involvement with teachers at the preservice and inservice levels is characterized by the struggle inherent in moving from prescribed to personal pedagogies. Now recognizing that as a staff developer or university professor
I cannot "transform" someone else, I look instead to ways of creating a context in which a discourse of inquiry and reflection can flourish for myself and others. The roots of this shift in philosophy stem from a critical incident representing a "clean white page" that was not smooth or pristine. The story is pivotal as a provoking catalyst for my personal story of teacher development. I present it here in its written form, although its stronger and more comfortable guise rests in its oral telling and has been shared with many diverse groups of educators.

**Cracks in the Metaphor of Control**

In 1989 I changed schools once again. I felt compelled to return to Visual Arts and transferred to Acres school, a large K-8 middle class school with a history of staff problems. I knew, however, a fair number of staff from other schools and I looked forward to the new beginning with anticipation. I prepared my art room with enthusiasm, arranged a display of children's art for the hall and imagined the arrival of the new troops! My previous few years at Bellwood had been a teacher's dream, two grade seven enrichment classes of 16 and 18 students. I was somewhat overwhelmed by the large classes of thirty-five pouring into the room. The first day went well. The second did not!

At 9:05 an unruly mob tumbled into the room pelting bookbags at each other and knocking over the art stools. Somehow I got them reasonably settled down and began my introduction. After about three sentences the class, en masse, signalled by some unseen command began to chant a sound that, translated into writing, might be "nyeh, nyeh, nyeh." Their defiant faces and voices challenged me to do something, to react. My knees melted, and an iron fist slammed into my stomach as this wall of sound, rhythmic and taunting, separated me from them. I took a deep breath, counted to three and said as calmly as I could, "I can't teach when you're making those sounds. I am going to sit down now and when you stop we'll begin." With as much semblance of dignity as I could muster, I retreated to my desk, my face scarlet, my anger growing. I remember feeling, "This isn't fair - you haven't even given me a chance. How can this be happening?"

The sounds continued for 8 minutes and 32 seconds. We sat confronting each other for the longest
8 minutes of my life. I remember thinking, "How will I explain this incredible situation if anyone comes to the door?". Though humorous now, it certainly wasn't at the time! Then the sounds died out. Again, some unseen director making his or her decision. I stood up and began to teach the gesture drawing lesson I had prepared, trying to "make everything all right."

It would make a neat tidy story if the next hour and twenty minutes had gone well. They didn't. But I kept on teaching, voicing my expectations and praising the work they were halfheartedly doing. I had no choice. It was obvious. They were in control. Even if I had wanted to call the office for assistance, I couldn't. I didn't know the code. I knew also if I had called for help, my credibility, little as it appeared to be, would be even less! The class finally left, turning over two desks in the process, with one lively redhead declaring on her way to the door, "Stupid subject - I don't ever want to come back to this f... class!" Her individual reaction was actually easier to take than the unexpected group hostility encountered earlier.

I had a planning period - a fact for which I will be eternally grateful. Holding back the inevitable tears of dismay and frustration, defeat and anger, I fled to the staffroom. A small group of teachers was having coffee. Assuming a positive facade, I said hello, laughed and queried - "Who can tell me about 8-2? I've just had the worst teaching experience in 27 years!" An ominous silence fell over the group. One male teacher, impeccable in his brown tweed suit, turned slowly in his chair, folded his arms and spoke directly to me - "Oh really? That's funny. None of US ever have problems with that class ... I thought YOU taught courses on that type of thing." His voice was mocking and disdainful as he leaned back and waited for a reaction.

Stunned, I had none. I moved to the kitchen and poured a coffee as disbelief and anger welled up in me. What a mistake I had made in changing schools! Here again, just as in the classroom, a newcomer not being given a chance. Mary (8-2's homeroom teacher) came into the kitchen. She looked rather furtively behind her and whispered softly, "Don't mind them - come on down to my room and we'll talk about it." Amazed that we had to go into hiding, I was nonetheless grateful for her tentative support. My confidence and control had been badly shaken that day, but the disequilibrium I felt became a catalyst for my development as a teacher. (Course Work, 1992)
My purpose in writing this story in 1992 as part of my personal and professional narrative was to highlight a significant event that became turning point for my career, precipitating the experiences which led to the Doctoral program. When I first responded to the story at that time I was interested in what I then understood as "school cultures" and how different schools could be as places for teaching and learning. I made brief mention of the event as a disturbing experience that provoked questions about my place in the school. I wrote:

The situation that day in my classroom was disturbing enough. The comments in the staffroom were more significant. My sense was of a staff who could not admit uncertainty in themselves, who would or could not acknowledge uncertainty in others. How different this staff was from the one I had just left, where problems were shared with compassion and humour. How much was crystallized about my new staff in one teacher's offhand remark. How much would prove to be true!

Revisiting this story and my initial reactions through the lens of the professional knowledge landscape, I understand more about the function of this story in my ongoing narrative inquiry. I see the experience being reconstructed as both a teacher story and a story of the school. The teacher story tells the story about loss of control on the classroom landscape, a story with an unanticipated plotline of student misbehaviour and teacher uncertainty. I had met many new classes in my teaching career and usually the experience had proved to be exciting and positive, the beginning of new relationships between teacher and student. I really had not anticipated any other kind of outcome and so the hostility I faced was an unpleasant surprise. My story of myself was that of an experienced teacher who was able to establish positive relationships with students and staff, handling most classroom management issues with ease. Because I taught professional development courses for teachers linking issues of theory and practice for myself and others, I probably considered myself a role model of sorts. The teacher story continues as I immediately sought advice and support from others on staff in response to a difficult situation, a response conditioned by experiences in other schools. The ensuing hostility I faced in the staffroom was harder to understand than the students' response.

At this point the story moves from the confines of the classroom to the shared community of the staffroom and becomes a story of the school. For many years I had been interested in staff relationships, in what I first understood to be "school culture", and how that school culture makes
a school a good place to be or the opposite. As a result of my doctoral readings and research, I now view these issues from the perspective of a narrative inquiry and have come to believe with Clandinin and Connelly (1995):

that teachers' lives take certain shapes because of their professional knowledge landscape. They draw on their individual biographies, on the particular histories of the professional landscape in which they find themselves, on how they are positioned on that landscape and on the form of everyday life that the professional landscape allows. (p.27)

By acknowledging the historical and personal dimensions of school relationships through the metaphorical language of landscape, Clandinin and Connelly seem to recast the idea of culture in terms of professional landscape in order to find a more philosophic and personal way of talking about the complex factors involved in teachers' lives in a school. Considered from this perspective, I can see the dilemma that emerged as my story of myself with its particular biography and history of working in collaborative schools came into conflict with another story, one of a school with a history of problems and staff unrest. As a newcomer I was positioned as an outsider, an outsider who, in the eyes of some, brought with me the pretensions of "an expert" because of my association with the university and professional development programs. At my former school these juxtaposed positions on the landscape had been accepted, with interest and support shown by staff and administration for my various out-of-school professional activities. In the sharing of these out-of-school stories of experience there did not appear to be any resentment, just a recognition that this was "Fran's thing", that an important part of my professional life existed beyond the boundaries of the school. People on staff would often joke about where I was off to next as I travelled around the province giving workshops on communication skills and classroom management issues. In fact, all levels of adult/adult communication at the school were filled with humour and the tacit understanding that people were free to disagree. Regular Friday morning breakfast meetings for the intermediate division provided a way of getting caught up with current issues of concern or the sharing of success. I had carried that image of myself and my former school confidently into my new position not realizing that the story of this school might be differently manifested. Restorying the cryptic remark of the staff member that second day of school, I understand now that I had entered into a different "form of everyday life", one that did not perhaps accommodate or
understand the dual roles of teaching adults and children.

At that time the immediate dissonance of the event was ameliorated by two critical experiences. Just as I was struggling to understand this new school community and why the situation had been so disquieting, I was introduced to the theoretical constructs of school cultures (Hargreaves, 1989). Suddenly here was educational literature which was speaking directly to me, to my experience. I recall being utterly absorbed in Hargreaves' descriptions of isolated, balkanized and collaborative school cultures, recognizing where I had been and why I was a misfit in my present "closed-door" school. Intellectually curious for the first time in many years, I asked myself questions about connectedness, isolation, professionalism, the principal's role and the meaning of these interconnected themes for student learning. Another serendipitous invitation for learning was extended in November of that year. After some delicate negotiations with my principal who did not believe in out of school professional development opportunities, I was sent by the Board to attend the National Staff Development Conference in California. After spending five full days with Judy Arin Krupp focusing on the "Individual in Staff Development", I was excited by new notions of adult learning and development and knew that I needed to learn more. I recognize now within the context of professional knowledge landscapes a new vista of opportunity had opened; one that irrevocably changed my story of myself as a teacher and staff developer. That week, coupled with my dismal fall term, precipitated many important decisions. I knew that I must go back to school to complete my M.Ed. begun back in 1978. I was ready to be a learner again now for my own reasons. I knew that the focus of my contribution to educational practice would now centre on adults, on the continuum of teacher development. I knew the direction of my life had changed once more. Returning to my school, I was ready to take on the challenge of difficult classes and an entrenched staff with my usual confidence and optimism, renewed by the California sunshine and my decisions.

Why is this story central to the thesis process? Why have I retold the story to so many groups of preservice and experienced teachers, administrators or support staff in the past four years? The words of Witherall and Noddings (1991) suggest possibilities:

The power of narrative and dialogue as contributors to reflective awareness in teachers and students is that they provide opportunities for deepened relations with
others and serve as springboards for ethical action. Understanding the narrative and contextual dimensions of human actors can lead to new insights, compassionate judgement and the creation of shared knowledge and meanings that can inform professional practice. (p. 8)

I have already spoken of the immediate personal responses to the narrative event - the anger, the confusion, the loss of self-confidence, the belated recognition that one's workplace made a considerable difference - and how these feelings created for the first time in my career a sense of classroom as an unsafe place, classroom as a place of tension, as a place of unresolved relationship. As I began to retell and reconstruct the story, I came to understand other meanings for myself and the other actors in context. I have shared those meanings often with my peers, using the tellings as springboards for ethical action. I have come to believe that telling teaching stories bridges contextual gaps between teachers. Telling stories joins us on the professional knowledge landscape. My workshop participants and B.Ed. students can now see me as a person who experiences and makes sense of difficult and complex situations just as they do. By relinquishing the image of expert teacher in charge of their learning, I establish myself as a learner, a facilitator, one who inquires with them.

This reconstruction of my own story as a learner was provoked by a significant person in the M.Ed program. A fellow faculty member and visiting Harvard professor, Eleanor Duckworth, taught us to see ourselves as learners once again, to explore our own ways of knowing. Eleanor's modelling of intellectual curiosity was significant for me as I came to realize, with considerable discomfort, that as a learner I had shut down curiosity about many things. As a teacher and as a workshop leader, I had somehow lost curiosity about my students and my adult participants, concentrating on my skill as a performer. Creating a performance in which all elements were in harmony was crucial. Dissonance, questions, problems, the stuff of real learning was smoothed over. (Little wonder that the hastily improvised performance in the art room caused dismay). Eleanor challenged us to rethink our roles, to respect the learner's autonomy and to establish a learning climate in which we as teachers "get off centre stage".

With Eleanor's challenge and a reconstruction of my experience, I can empathize more fully with teachers in my courses and on my staffs who face more critical situations every day. I can begin to
understand that teachers' stories of themselves are different, just as our students' stories reflect each teller's uniqueness. I have found that other teachers can relate with empathy to the chilling sense of separateness from students and staff that I had experienced so physically and emotionally. Together we can share and explore the questions that lie beneath the surface of the story. What was the meaning of the students' actions? Why did some staff resent my other roles on different professional knowledge landscapes? What role had the previous principal played in fostering the story of the school? How was the new principal understanding his role in a very different professional landscape? How do our school workplaces impact on our lives with students? And, most important for me, why was this experience so significant, so disquieting? What is it that compels me to go back into the story as I begin the thesis process?

Perhaps that question can be answered by reconstructing an image of myself thirty-two years ago as a first year teacher, now framed as a "memory box" reflection. The story reveals another venture to a staffroom by a beginning teacher who is finding her place on the out-of-classroom landscape. By exemplifying my initial images of perfect teacher, perfect class and perfect control, the story encapsulates how I understood teaching for a substantial part of my career before I started questioning my controlling role in the classroom. The story links my roots in art education with those early memories of teaching.

Charlie's Painting

Memory boxes can take many forms. A portfolio of children's art that I use to teach Visual Arts in the B.Ed. program at the University is a significant memory box for me. The earliest piece in the portfolio dates back to 1964, my first year of teaching. Springing from the yellowed newsprint is the joyful, symbolic image of a young child, painted with confident splashes of brown paint. Charlie's arms and legs are outstretched, filling the page with his exuberant presence. He has painted himself with huge ears that sail out from the sides of his head. At six years old, in Grade 1, the world was his. Through this compelling image, I am drawn back to view myself as his teacher 32 years ago.
Picture this 19 year old in her first classroom, Miss Squire, encased in blue polyester, very high heels, hair cemented into place with hair spray. Too young to vote, too young to drink, but old enough to have a real job. At work she was an adult. The world was hers. She could print on her own blackboard with wonderful coloured chalks. Eight sentences for the top group. Five for the middle group, and three for the low group. She understood order and structure and she knew how to fit into the educational hierarchy. She watched and accepted and became what she saw. In her primary wing she was the youngest by 20 years but, by imitating, she became a middle-aged teacher, her hair pulled back into a tidy French roll, her favourite teacher attire a cashmere twin set with pearl buttons.

The five grown-up teachers acknowledged her attempts to fit in by inviting her to tea at noon. They never left the primary hall. Ever. Miss Squire's problem was she didn't like tea and even less their teacher talk. After several weeks of pretending to sip the tea and pouring it down the sink when they weren't looking, she ventured to the main staff room, a place she'd never been. She entered this unknown adult realm with trepidation. A few people nodded. No one spoke to her. Clutching her brown bag lunch, she melted into a chair in a far corner of the room. A small, intense little man peered down at her and growled, "You're sitting in my chair."

Her reaction, of course, was to immediately leap up, spill her lunch and "make everything all right" by retreating to the safety of the primary hall. Her reaction, coupled with his behaviour, paints a clear picture of how Miss Squire and her colleagues entered the teaching profession, accepting, fitting in, being little adults who hadn't yet grown up.

I learned to teach. I loved it. It was my room. my six year-olds, and we had a little world of our own that we shared with Dick and Jane and Sally, Dr. Seuss and Spot. I didn't really think or worry about what I was doing. Teaching was like breathing in and breathing out. "Teacher" described more than what I did; it described who I was. We painted, we sang, we played games, and somehow the children learned to read. I don't remember consciously teaching them. They sat in straight rows, did their seatwork quietly, and moved back to the reading table when called. I was proud to have a class of obedient children. Who taught them to do those things? How could I have taken a
group of exuberant kindergartners and socialized them to such constraints so quickly? Did I take away some of their joy of learning? Why did I equate silence and order with learning? Those Grade 1’s are 37 years old today! Sometimes I wonder what stories their lives have played out.


Charlie’s painting, my memory box, evokes images of the idealism, energy, and optimism many of us had beginning our teaching careers. I see myself in memory as an older version of Charlie, arms outstretched, ready to embrace the world of teaching. The story, however, emerging from the memory box, paints a picture of a landscape defined for us by others, where that energy was channelled in prescribed ways. New teachers were meant to know their place both in the classroom, where we were closely monitored by subject consultants and in the staffroom where we learned from older teachers about the way things were! When I look back on the story of my first foray to the staffroom, it reminds me of the story of The Three Bears, with Papa Bear exclaiming, "who’s been sitting in my chair?" Although the story is humorous in retrospect, it points to the socialization of new teachers in my first school as embedded in stories of hierarchies and position. Papa Bear had established his territorial position within the communal staffroom area and it was obvious from my unintended imposition that his teacher story of ownership had not been challenged before. Because I was unaware of this school story or his place in it, I had intruded on his space, altering his physical landscape. Extending the analogy, the five primary teachers were, in their own way, like Mamma Bears, kind, solicitous and frequently patronizing, although they would not have understood their motherly advice in that way. It is my recollection that although we were officially, fully qualified teachers, we were considered as apprentices of teaching who had much to learn and that we were expected to learn quietly and obediently! I understand now that the story of the school invited new teachers to participate only within certain boundaries and that the process of socialization into teaching focussed on an understanding and unquestioning acceptance of the values and traditions of the particular school.

And what about the leaders in this school story? To the best of my knowledge I never saw or met the principal on an individual basis. Mr. Blake remained a mysterious, formal figure within the office complex whose sole purpose seemed to be chairing occasional staff meetings and composing
memos to staff which I never really understood. I never saw him speak to a child. I don't recall him ever visiting the classroom. Perhaps the vice principal carried out the teacher evaluator role. Those details are lost in memory. I do have a sense that the three of us who were new that year, in 1964, moved cautiously among our peers and administrators as we explored the school landscape outside our classrooms. I remember one terrifying experience when my name appeared unexpectedly on the duty roster for the intermediate yard. I can look back and see myself trying to gather up the courage to face these unknown, large students on their turf as a mere primary teacher and short at that! After my experience with Papa Bear in the staffroom, I was reticent to ask any intermediate teachers how to carry out the yard duty responsibilities and so agonized in isolation about the upcoming assignment. The world outside our own classrooms seemed far away and full of unknowns, endless horizons of competent strangers moving in concert to unspoken and unfathomable rhythms.

In contrast, I recollect an amazing confidence within the familiar landscape of my own classroom. Perhaps it was a naive confidence, but it was there. The certainty and joy I felt was like the passion for life so evident in Charlie's beautiful painting. From my current role in teacher education, I see those same qualities in our newest colleagues at the Faculties or in their first classrooms. I have come to believe that their first years, however, will not be so simple or well-defined as mine. Working with student teachers and first year teachers, I have seen the complex role of the teacher quickly challenge the optimism, energy, and idealism of newcomers to the current educational landscape. I have wondered if we, who are the experienced teachers and leaders, are truly aware of how different things are for our new colleagues. Thinking about this experience precipitated the broad research questions of this inquiry, revolving around issues of new teacher development, leadership and my own story of professional growth and change.

In the previous section I have presented three images of myself, as a student, a first year teacher and an experienced teacher in transition. The three stories and my subsequent reflections highlight the theme of beginnings and the establishment of place on the professional knowledge landscape. The stories are connected by the theme of relationships within each beginning in a school community. The notion of beginnings was central to yet another position on the professional knowledge landscape; one which precipitated the specific questions during this study of new teacher and their
administrators.

After completing my Master's degree and enrolling in the Doctoral program at O.I.S.E., an exciting opportunity opened up a new vista of experience in education. In 1991/92 our board hired one hundred and fifty teachers, many of them right out of Faculties of Education. It was decided to create the half-time position of New Teacher Induction Officer to facilitate the new teachers' orientation to the system. I assumed that new role, combining it with my teaching position at the Faculty. Each position enriched the other as I shared my time with pre-service and first year teachers using the experiences of one group to provoke discussion and reflection with the other.

I organized a voluntary program for the new teachers, which included centralized workshops and orientation sessions balanced by the provision of school-based mentors. I carefully preplanned sessions based on current research reflecting the needs of new teachers (Veenan, 1983); mentoring practices (Little, 1990; Bey & Holmes, 1992) and principles of induction programs (Huling-Austin, 1990; Cole & Watson, 1991). Institutional socialization needs as explicitly requested by superintendents were incorporated into the program content. One school site was selected for an in-depth case study of seven arranged mentor partnerships, which I used as my Qualifying Research Paper. The results of this research and reflections on my role as coordinator pointed clearly to the importance of local school-based strategies accompanied by positive administrative support as the key to success in doing more than just surviving the first years of teaching. At the conclusion of that first study, in which most of the new teachers found their relationships with administration to be exacting and challenging, I suggest:

Active administrative support and guidance is critical in the teacher's first years even if the teacher is confident and self reliant. Their opinion counts perhaps more than they realize. The formal power available to administrators suggests they could be powerful socializing agents however... the new teachers recognized the (principal's) distance and limited contact and turned instead to the more powerful socializing agents of their new teacher peer group and the designated school supporter.

I go on to ask, "How can principals and vice principals increase their knowledge, understanding and awareness of the particular needs of new teachers in the 1990's? How can administrative leadership create a climate on staff into which new teachers are welcomed and assisted professionally?" (1992, p.93)
These questions lingered in the background as I designed the thesis research to focus on a deeper understanding of the interaction between a specific principal and a specific new teacher. I felt that the relationship could be explored through the perspectives of both partners within a collaborative research project. In addition, I as a teacher/researcher at the same school, would be an integral, natural part of the triad rather than a visiting outsider. I recognized that I wanted the research to centre on the experience of select "recognizable" individuals. Part of this understanding stemmed from my immersion in the literature on narrative ways of understanding experience during Doctoral course work. I also gained important insights through reflection about the induction program I had created.

Revisiting my central coordinator's role in the new teacher program, I now understand that I had concentrated on new teachers' technical competence, socialization and orientation issues without attending to the nuances of whole school support for individual teachers, thus perpetuating a top-down, decontextualized image of teacher development. Further, the program did not consider what we are beginning to understand about learning to teach. For example, Huling-Austin (1992) draws our attention to the lack of connection between the growing body of literature on how novices acquire and structure their pedagogical content knowledge and the design of induction programs. She highlights the importance of strong interpersonal learning partnerships at the school level to facilitate this cognitive growth. I see now that my role was to provide an enabling framework of orientation for the new teachers. It was at the school level that the wider professional development potential of induction programs could be realized.

Recognizing that the existence of a central induction program did not guarantee or foster new teacher development in a transformative sense, I began an examination of school-based strategies, which would inherently reduce the system coordinator's role and place additional responsibility and expectations on school administrators and staff. Fortunately, in some schools it is understood that becoming a teacher is a process, not an event. It is a gradual and evolving process of growth through experience. In their first year, as new teachers grow through a reconstruction of experience, their needs and concerns vary and change. It is unlikely that teachers in their first months of teaching
would be ready to focus on self-assessment or collaborative reflective practice. Their full attention would be on the more immediate matters of new roles and responsibilities, day-to-day issues of classroom management, planning and building relationships.

With these changing needs in mind, as well as the recognition that principals have a crucial role to play in creating a context for new teacher development, I worked with Ardra Cole during my doctoral program to prepare a handbook for school administrators which considers the year in four phases (Cole, Squire & Cathers, 1995). Stage one and two, Before School Orientation and Beginning of the Year Orientation, speak to the importance of setting the stage with procedural support and information as well as focussing on a diverse array of collegial support strategies which are dependent on the context of the situation. Stage three, Initial Assistance and Support Beyond Orientation, addresses the need for informal sharing and discussion with colleagues and administration. As mutual stories of experience are shared and questions raised, particularly within the safety of a trusted collegial relationship, new teachers can begin to develop self-reliance, exploring and articulating the intricacies of classroom practice. Stage four, Ongoing Assistance and Support, suggests that opportunities can be provided for new teachers to develop skills of self-assessment and habits of reflective practice, engage in ongoing inquiry into teaching practice, and begin to articulate long-term professional goals and plans. Rather than concentrating fully on how to teach, the "not so new" teacher may be focussing on what it means to be a teacher. Practical strategies could include inter-classroom visits to observe a variety of teaching styles, reflective follow-up, using new teachers as resources thereby acknowledging their expertise, encouraging journal writing or letter exchanges with colleagues or administration, and most importantly actively modelling the concept of the teacher as a lifelong learner.

The message in this document is that the workplace climate and prevailing norms of professional practice fostered by the school administrator have a significant influence on how our newest colleagues can or cannot be encouraged to reconstrue alternative views of teaching. In a school where the socialization procedures demand adherence to established norms and routines, the new teachers may be compelled to set aside their high ideals, creating a dilemma for themselves involving choices between highly prized values (Cuban, 1992). In a school where the focus on
adult/adult relationships reflects a supportive learning community (Barth, 1990), a new teacher may continue to learn on the job while discovering his/her own unique sense of professional identity.

This collaborative, narrative inquiry has provided a valuable opportunity to explore, through conversation and story, the concepts surrounding these professional knowledge issues from each triad member's perspective. In addition to the subject matter of these teacher development and leadership themes, the research has invited an active exploration into the contribution of story as a legitimate mode of knowing, "the power of narrative as an epistemological tool" (Witherell and Noddings, 1991, p. 9). These entwined strands of inquiry interact dialectically throughout the thesis, probing the surface stories to construct the meaning of the participants' experience in ways, plausible and accessible, to other teachers and administrators. By examining collaboratively the professional knowledge landscapes of three educators positioned in three quite different places on that landscape, the participants and I have reached a deeper understanding of our own professional growth and our roles in mediating the professional knowledge context of the new teacher. For me the study has constituted yet another beginning, one which connects in diverse ways to my past, bringing together the strands of my own teacher development story. The purpose of this chapter has been to prepare the blank canvas for the images that follow, to allow the reader a personal glimpse of the artist who attempts to represent the images through the narrative inquiry. In the next chapter I continue to tell the story of my journey through the literature, laying down a background wash by developing the theoretical framework for the inquiry.

As I come to the end of the beginning, I am reminded of Bateson (1989) who speaks in aesthetic terms of landscape, story and the improvised life. Her words resonate strongly with my purposes and understandings in composing a thesis within the broader context of composing a life.

The process of improvisation that goes into composing a life is compounded in the process of remembering a life, like a patchwork quilt in a watercolour painting, rumpled and evocative. Yet it is in this second process, composing a life through memory as well as through day-to-day choices that seems to me the most essential to creative living. The past empowers the present and the groping footsteps leading to this present mark the pathways to the future. (p.34)
Chapter Two
Setting the Study in the Research Landscape

I turn now to the research context of the study, highlighting needs identified in the literature for a case study which provides access to the lived experienced of a particular principal and novice teacher and explores the details of their practice in collaboration with an experienced teacher/researcher. I knew at the outset of the Doctoral program that my research would centre on issues relating to new teachers, thinking perhaps to extend the qualifying study on mentoring and levels of support for novice teachers. However the niggling questions of administrative influence on new teacher development kept surfacing as I thought about the stories already shared by the teachers in my induction program set beside my own stories of experience in relationships with administrators. As I began to further my reading in the area of principal/teacher relationships, two strands of literature were instrumental in the conceptualization of the study; Cole's (1994) interpretive research on administrators' perceptions of their new teachers and the Connelly/Clandinin research program of narrative inquiry into teacher development.

First, a review of the literature on school-based support strategies suggested the key role administrators might play in new teacher development (e.g., Anders, Centofonte & Orr, 1990; Burden, 1990; Cole, 1991a, 1991b; Cole & Watson, 1991; Crain & Young, 1990; Hetlinger, 1986; Hunt, 1968; Leithwood, 1992). However I found most suggestions tended to be prescriptive, in some cases little more than checklists of tips for principals dealing with new staff. Two of the studies provided more depth, for example, Hunt's classic 1968 article provided an understanding of the different kinds of support novice teachers would need in various phases of their first year but did not reveal examples of actual practice. Cole's research on school-based professional development and workplace relationships (1991a, 1991b) alluded to the principal's complex role in the school context, indicating a fruitful area for further research on the specifics of principal/new teacher interactions. Other related studies indicated that principals have not traditionally been central in the induction phase of teachers' careers (Zeichner & Gore, 1990) and their perspectives have been represented sparingly in literature on induction and mentoring (Little, 1990). Literature linking teacher development and administrative leadership often generalizes the teacher population and does not
take into account the differences in dealing with novice and experienced staff (Barth, 1990; Fullan, 1988; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991).

In contrast, Cole (1994) focuses directly on the dilemmas and paradoxes that administrators face while facilitating the development of new teachers. Examples are drawn from the case studies of four school leaders involved in pilot projects for teacher induction. Supplementing this data are results from twenty-three additional administrators who participated in focus group discussions. This critical consideration of the principals' perspective of their roles and responsibilities fills a gap in the literature and draws our attention to areas of expressed tension and concern. Concisely stated, these are: a) Conflicts associated with administrator roles and relationships with new teachers. (b) Responding to the professional development needs of all teachers. (c) New teachers' needs and capabilities vs. needs and structure of the school and system.

Cole's research provided an educational context for my study provoking a more intensive investigation into how these possible dilemmas might be perceived and resolved by specific participants. I was interested in how the problem areas noted by administrators could be understood as part of a teacher or administrators professional knowledge landscape. I was also curious about other areas of tension and/ or positive resolution which might arise as a principal offered support to a new teacher. By taking the next step to invite the new teacher into the discussion of these issues, I believe that a mutual reconstruction of experience has added to our knowledge of this phenomena of the new teacher /administrator relationship. The research triad of principal, new teacher and researcher has explored these issues among others within the context of their individual and communal professional knowledge landscapes, extending Cole's study by focusing on the rich details of practice in a particular relationship.

The study will fill a gap in our understanding of educational leadership. Young (1994) points to the particular need for studies of Canadian women administrators which explore various perspectives of women's beliefs and practises in educational administration not just self reports through interviews or questionnaires. By inviting the perspectives of a new and experienced teacher to join with that of the principal to examine specific cases and stories that describe the complexities of
administrative leadership this study adds to the growing knowledge base about women in administration. My conceptual framework was not rooted in any particular feminist perspective per se but because the studies' participants are women and we are involved in discussing women's lives, the findings have something to say about the roles and lives of women in education. Although I was not purposely seeking to determine "women's ways" (Shakeshaft, 1989) of administration, I found, as did Young, (1994) that much of the participant's leadership style was based on qualities of relationship, communication and caring. However I was also aware of the danger of fitting the stories into a framework which could exclude other characteristics of individual leadership and actively sought examples and practises which did not idealize the principal's role, which as Young has suggested, do not "sentimentalise and reinforce any one too-simplistic stereotype" (p.363).

Focussing then on a case study set within the broad context of teacher development and administrative studies, I looked for studies which explored the meaning of new teacher /principal experience, turning to the narrative research strand of Connelly and Clandinin. Clandinin (1989) is interested in understanding a beginning teacher's experiences and the cultural/professional context within which personal practical knowledge is embedded. Using personal experience methods, Clandinin discovered that the images of teaching held by the novice teacher were often in conflict with the rhythms of school time. I noted with interest her participant teacher's sense of professional isolation, particularly from administration, as he dealt with the uncertainties of learning to teach. His only opportunities for reflection existed within the research relationship. The conclusions reached in the study provided entailment for my work by advocating opportunities for the "reflective reconstruction of the novice's narrative of experience" (p.139). The ongoing reflective triad interviews, journals, letters and story writing which took my teacher participant Rebecca back through her first three years of experience to reconstruct her stories of learning to teach provided her with this kind of opportunity. Offering further substantiation for the collaborative research design, Aitken & Mildon (1989) provide a similar narrative account of four teachers' journeys from pre-service through their second year of teaching, investigating the role of previous personal knowledge on teaching success. These teachers also experienced isolation, lack of peer and administrative, professional or personal support. Aitken and Mildon advocate an increased emphasis on personal reflection through professional peer conversations during these crucial years.
Situating her research within the Connelly/Clandinin strand, Craig (1992) also explores the experiences of two beginning teachers examining how professional context knowledge becomes a part of beginning teachers' personal practice knowledge. By using "telling stories", a form of narrative inquiry in which stories are constructed and exchanged between researcher and participant, she conceptualizes the notion of "knowledge communities." By knowledge community she means "groups of two or more people who meaningfully associate with each other. The people in our knowledge community are the people with whom we story and restory our narratives of experience" (p. 168). Several implications of Craig's work strike me as relevant to my research. The triad structure of the research relationship has constituted an example of Craig's knowledge community as we learned about each other's positions on the educational landscape and the importance of communication between those positions. Other knowledge communities established by myself and the participants within and outside of our school community have been further identified in exploring the professional knowledge landscapes outside the classroom. Craig's study also touches on issues of principal/new teacher relationships as she includes the administrator of one school in her narrative account. Craig came to see how the principal held an image of himself as rebel and expressed this image in his practice. He also, like the new teachers, needed someone with whom to discuss that practice and was open to explore his image of the principalship with Craig. Craig identifies the exploration of administrators' knowledge communities as a future research possibility. A similar need for professional conversation was signalled by Lisa, the principal participant in my study from the first entry negotiations. She identified her participation in the research as a significant opportunity for personal and professional growth, anticipating new understandings about principal/teacher relationships. Relating to Craig's observations, I was interested in how much open dialogue would occur within the triad of teacher/researcher, new teacher and administrator. We discovered that, given the time and space for communication and perhaps, more important, the time for reflection on our dialogue, we came to understand our own teaching landscapes and the landscapes of others in new ways, within a unique knowledge community.

One of the most influential studies for my work was the narrative account of "Phil Bingham", principal at Bay Street School (Connelly & Clandinin, 1984, 1988, unpublished manuscript). Establishing a dialectical researcher/participant relationship, Connelly and Clandinin came to
understand the theoretical expression of Bingham's personal administrative philosophy as expressed in detailed accounts of practice. Bingham's practice is explored from the standpoint of personal images of community, images whose origins are traced from personal narrative accounts. Connelly and Clandinin focus on the ritualized public expression of Bingham's philosophy and the personal imagery behind such rituals, to present an account of his personal practical knowledge. By exploring Bingham's philosophy (the school ethos) in terms of images, rules, principles and metaphors and by eliciting relevant biographical and historical elements from Bingham's experience, Connelly and Clandinin develop the notion of narrative unity of this administrator's personal and professional life. Although this study does not focus specifically on new teacher/principal relationships, the principal/staff relationship is described in depth through field notes, interpretive accounts, and constructions and reconstructions of Bingham's experience. As I began to work with my principal participant, coming to understand her philosophy through personal imagery and its ritualistic expression in school stories, the methodology of the Bay Street study provided a narrative exemplar. By including the new teacher in this process of narrative inquiry, I believed I could extend our understanding of administrative landscapes through the multiple perspectives of three different educators each of whom has created her own professional knowledge landscape.

Assessing the literature survey, I confirmed for myself that the research context was clearly viable. Despite a wealth of literature describing first year teachers, little is known about the transition from novice to experienced third or fourth year status. Extant studies which touch on issues of principal/new teacher relationships do not include in-depth case studies enriched by the perspectives of both participants. The narrative inquiry models which provide research exemplars focus on new teachers or principals alone, rather than in partnership research between the two. I came to believe that the study gains its uniqueness from the triad structure of the researcher/participant relationship. I believed that this multiple-perspective format held great promise for a rich exploration of teacher development issues.
Rationale and Background for a Narrative Inquiry

I continue this chapter by juxtaposing two descriptions of story, one metaphorical, stemming from personal experience; the other, a theoretical excerpt from the work of Polkinghorne (1988). The accounts symbolize my journey through the landscape of literature on narrative and story in the way one is set beside the other in an interdependent relationship of inquiry. Theory and personal experience became inextricably linked during this process of exploration as I understood for myself the notion of narrative as both phenomena and method.

Trilliums

This year, immersed in the thesis writing process, I worked at home in the mornings and travelled to my school by bus, in fact three buses, to teach in the afternoons. On those bus rides I would often reflect on the morning's writing, letting ideas drift into consciousness, simmer and coalesce as I gazed out at the bleak, suburban landscape. On part of the journey the bus travelled along a transit-way in the process of construction. Beside the transitway huge concrete store blocks were being erected replacing the forest, green and dense, that had once graced the setting.

Spring came very late to our city this year, finally sweeping away the grey remains of a long, harsh winter. One tentatively warm day in May I was staring out the bus window thinking about "story" and its relationship to research (wondering at the same time what questions had occupied my mind on similar trips before the thesis process began!). There on the side of the roadway was a tiny patch of green stubbornly surviving the ravages of the construction work. Nestled among the slender seedlings, ferns and bushes was a cluster of trilliums, brilliant white set against the green. The image swept by in a moment of recognition, replaced by a jolt of clarity. White trilliums, grey concrete, survival, purity, a kernel of meaning. White trilliums, like stories, sturdy, evocative, moving with the breeze - surviving. The grey concrete-like blocks of educational research, verifiable truth, definite, crowding out the trilliums. White trilliums, like stories, nestled in their patch of green.

Narrative meaning is a cognitive process that organizes human experiences into temporarily meaningful episodes. Because it is a cognitive process, a mental
operation, narrative meaning is not an object available to direct observation. However, the individual stories and histories that emerge in the creation of human narratives are available for direct observation. Examples of narrative include personal and social histories, myths, fairytales, novels and the everyday stories we use to explain our own and others' actions. (Polkinghorne, 1988, p.1)

Both of these excerpts have something to say about story and meaning and each conveys its message in a different form. For me, they are not exclusive; the narrative form enhances the explanatory mode while the explanatory grounds the visual images of the trillium story. I have learned to have confidence in such images to describe a way of knowing that does not depend on rational verification of facts but rather invites meaning through the senses. As I moved through the Doctoral course work, the proposal stage, data collection and writing the thesis, there has been a constant play and interaction between the theoretical literature and what I was experiencing through my own stories of research and discovering through the stories of my participants. Connecting these experiences became the compelling challenge of composing a narrative thesis.

I have already acknowledged the impact of teachers and writers such as Duckworth, Krupp, Hargreaves, Cole, Connelly and Clandinin, Dewey and Eisner on my growing understanding about how I wanted to construct my thesis research, moving inexorably to the study of individual experience. I now extend that search for understanding by describing the way in which these and other writers confirmed my belief in story as a viable way of knowing. Linked with the practical experience of collaborative research and the challenge of the interpretive writing process my tentative knowledge has been influenced and shaped by the literature on story, narrative and landscape. I found that readings previously absorbed and understood at an abstract, theoretical level during course work took on different interpretations set in the context of the actual research. The process of writing up the research sent me back into familiar sources to reencounter the texts with fresh insights as I began to internalize ideas about the power of story in understanding the meaning of experience. I began to trust that moment of emotional or intellectual connection with the literature, that moment when there is an intense personal reader response to the written word, similar to the aesthetic response engendered by a compelling novel, painting, architectural monument or a breathtaking landscape. Beattie's (1992, 1995) innovative approach to connecting the literature with her personal experience, citing examples of her own growth and learning confirmed my belief that
literature could be an intimate partner in the research process rather than a disembodied separate chapter. I began to trust those delicious, bright moments of "Aha!", what Duckworth (1987) would call "the having of wonderful ideas", the essence of intellectual development. I began to trust the murkiness of uncertainty and indecision that often precede such moments and to take the time for periods of confusion from which I could construct my own knowledge of narrative, story and collaborative research. I learned to trust my own ideas and to acknowledge rather than depend on the ideas of others. In the following section I trace the ideas from which my construction of narrative knowledge is built.

I believe that the stories which Rebecca, Lisa and I tell originate in their desire to derive meaning from experience and explain that meaning to others. Polkinghorne, (1988) with others (Mishler, 1986; Bruner, 1990; Denzin, 1989; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Carter, 1993, and Beattie 1995) has explored the theoretical background of narrative in the social sciences and its possibilities for educational research. Polkinghorne, in speaking of the social sciences, argues that these disciplines produce "knowledge that deepens and enlarges the meaning of human existence "and that "the basic figuration process that produces the human experience of one's own life and action and the lives and actions of others is narrative" (p.159). Connelly and Clandinin (1990, p.2) suggest further that "people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them and write narratives of experience." From her experience of collaborative inquiry Beattie (1995, p.41) learns that: "Narrative could be used to illuminate the ways in which we understand ourselves as teachers, appraise ourselves and our experience and evoke and bring to life the meaning of those experiences." Within the literature on narrative I found a general consensus that stories enable us to get inside ordinary experiences which would otherwise go unaccounted for, particularly in traditional research methods. I began to develop a clear sense that narrative inquiry would acknowledge teachers as generators and users of knowledge constructed from their own experience. Narrative inquiry would value that knowledge and reveal its origins and background through the voices of "ordinary" teachers and administrators. I began to see that narrative inquiry calls for personal experience methods to begin the difficult task of "reconstructing" stories of experience for research purposes.
Connelly and Clandinin (1994) reminded me that although the social sciences are founded on the study of experience, they have not traditionally been disposed to consider Dewey's (1938) notion of education, life and experience as inextricably intertwined. Following Connelly and Clandinin, I understand the study of personal experience to mean the study of narrative and storytelling, with experience being both temporal and storied (Carr, 1986). I have come to see narrative inquiry as a way of translating Dewey's conception into practical strategies for educational research. The researcher and the researched are joined in this view of personal experience as growth and transformation occur in the life stories which they both author; life stories which can never be objective or true in the positivist sense. In other words, their epistemological status is always questionable. Recalling Pagano (1991, p.197) who writes: "There is more than one way to tell a story and more than one story," I began to investigate how story, traditionally associated with fiction, could be seen as a viable research tool. How could a form of data as elusive as storytelling be considered as relevant to educational problems? Revisiting Eisner, I first confirmed and expanded my ideas of what it means "to know."

According to Eisner (1991), objectivity usually means seeing things the way they are, to know them in their ontological state. This ontological objectivity or veridicality, based on the correspondence theory of truth, differs from procedural objectivity, seen as methods by which personal judgement in describing reality can be eliminated. Both types of objectivity have been reflected in positivist paradigms through language and procedural norms in which the depersonalized researcher's role is to observe objectively, measure and represent an "ontologically objective mirror image of what is really out there" (Eisner, 1991, p. 45). The objective claim to know is considered value-free. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) concur that researcher objectivity is of utmost concern in the positivist paradigm, contrasting the researcher's role of detachment and impartiality in quantitative inquiry with the personal involvement, partiality and empathetic understanding of the parallel role in the qualitative mode. Qualitative researchers emphasize the value-laden nature of inquiry, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied and the socially controlled nature of reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). In short, the two paradigms, engaged in what Gage (1989) calls the "paradigm wars", represent different perspectives about what it is to know something about the world.
How does a researcher choose between paradigms? And what does that choice have to do with objectivity or knowledge claims? Inevitably, our decisions rest on theoretical and philosophical assumptions about the way we see the world and on our particular expertise as research practitioners (Gage, 1989; Howe & Eisenhart, 1990; Eisner, 1988). Glesne and Peshkin (1992, p. 9) believe that "we are attracted to and shape research problems that match our personal view of seeing and understanding the world." If we believe, as do the positivists, that there is a single tangible reality that can be sought empirically by separating the knower from the known, based on assumptions on linear causality in a value-free inquiry process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), then the choice would be quantitative, with its emphasis on the verification of this objective reality. If, on the other hand, we believe in a constructivist view of multiple realities, knowledge as relativistic, pluralistic and subjective, reality as socially constructed (Barone, 1992; Eisner, 1992; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) then we will pursue naturalistic studies, like narrative, that allow for an interactive construction of knowledge. Researcher and participant are dialectically linked as opposed to the dualist objectivist stance of positivism. Story, therefore, can be seen as a way of getting at the multiple meanings of life in schools, to express the kind of practical knowledge that arises from action, to allow the voices of school people to be vibrantly heard as the complex layers of school stories are constructed through narrative inquiry. I knew that any expertise I might have as a researcher rested on my knowledge of schools and the people in those schools. After three generations of listening to and telling school stories, I knew that only story could evoke the meaning of the new teacher/administrator experience in all its richness and diversity.

As I travelled through the literature on research methodologies and became confident about what I wanted to do and the kind of knowledge I wished to produce, I thought back to 1990 and my first educational research methodology course within the Master's of Education program. The emphasis at my Faculty was on scientific quantitative inquiry and tightly designed, verifiable studies. Although I appreciated the structural beauty of this logical rational approach to research I remember thinking that this methodology could not begin to answer many of the educational questions about the school lives of real students and real teachers. I recall the professor handing out one poorly photocopied qualitative study on the lives of rural women, a study which he summarily dismissed as a bunch of unreliable stories told by selected people to an interested (biased) woman researcher.
I had no knowledge at that time to question his authority, just a persistent feeling of unease about his disdain towards a methodology I found exciting and accessible. My curiosity prompted me to seek out at a later date the single qualitative research course available at my university. I learned more about the range of qualitative designs, however the focus still hovered closely to traditional methodologies. For example, we learned to analyze and deconstruct interview texts through computer-assisted word searches. I found the process frustrating and inconclusive as the contextual meaning was stripped from the isolated word fragments. It seemed that the proponents of qualitative research were apologizing for their radical departure, taking a step back to confirm that verification was possible. It was not until I reached O.I.S.E. that I found a research community within which I could explore the kinds of personal experience methodologies that would allow me to investigate issues of teacher development I considered important. Now, after my years in the doctoral program, I would know how to engage that first research professor in a philosophical dialogue to support my views.

It was in fact the Velveteen Rabbit which confirmed for me that I could find a place as a writer in a research community. Cole (1990) in her research on mentors introduced an excerpt from the familiar children's story to make a point about new teachers "becoming real" with the help of the wise old skin horse. As a reader I was captivated by the analogy and I recall feeling an instant sense of recognition with the article that followed. The salient point to be made here is that not everyone would react or connect to a story example in the same way. For some readers of research such stories might be considered irritating diversions from the factual material, but for others like myself the inclusion of literary sources apart from research findings enhances the understanding of the whole. Situating myself firmly within this qualitative research milieu, I could now make explicit the assumption on which my views of research were constructed. Eisner's belief that we experience the world in multiple, aesthetic ways provided the underpinning for my developing philosophy. As an arts educator, I was drawn to Eisner's use of aesthetic language and sensory metaphors to extend his concept of the primacy of experience in a way that connects with my way of knowing. Eisner (1992) posits the notion of "transaction" as a way to avoid the dichotomy between the concepts of objectivity and subjectivity. He believes that:
Whatever is it we think we know is a function of a transaction between the qualities of the world we cannot know in their pure nonmediated form, and the frames of reference, personal skills and individual histories we bring to them. (p.13)

From this I understand the transactional relationship between objective and subjective, between self and world, and how we make sense of experience creatively. These concepts have strengthened my tentative beliefs about a contextually constructed, framework-dependent view of truth and knowledge; that what we consider true is a product of our own making. I hold a relational view of knowing; connectedness is implicit in my beliefs about knowledge. What I know about the world can only be known through experience.

Narrative research implies a very different kind of personal knowing through experience as opposed to scientific knowing. Bruner (1986, p.13) distinguishes between two complementary, though irreducible, modes of knowing. The paradigmatic mode "deals in causes... and makes use of procedures to assure verifiable reference and to test for empirical truth." The narrative mode, on the other hand, leads to "good stories, gripping drama, believable (though not necessarily "true") historical accounts." The narrative mode looks for connections between events, and accommodates ambiguity and dilemma as central figures or themes. (Carter, 1993) Connelly and Clandinin (1992) see narrative and storytelling as terms representing ideas about the nature of human experience and how experience may be studied and represented in a way which takes seriously the idea of teachers as holders of a particular type of personal practical knowledge. They see narrative as a viable way to access such knowledge. Carter (1993, p.5) describes the movement towards using story as a source of knowledge as causing distress to those who "mourn the loss of quantitative precision." For Carter, "stories capture, more than scores or mathematical formula even can, the richness and indeterminacy of our experiences as teachers." Carter points out that story represents a way of thinking and knowing that is particularly well-suited to issues of schools and teaching.

Armed with this theoretical background on story and narrative I began the research process believing I understood enough to use story and narrative effectively as an epistemological tool, to further the understanding of the new teacher\principal experience. I soon recognized as I wrote the
first interpretations of my participants' stories that I was creating narrative text forms in the service of an argument discourse (Chatman 1990), a pattern readily available in much teacher development literature (Cole 1992, Hollingsworth, 1993) and utilized in many of my own course work papers. My intention in the thesis had been to break away from this familiar pattern and create a narrative text used in the service of narrative. How simple those words had seemed when written at the time of the thesis proposal and how challenging they proved to be. To move away from an argument discourse I knew I had to consider the stories in a more complex way, not just as sources of data to substantiate a point. Carter (1993) considers the place of story in research and its status as mode of knowing. She suggests that "much needs to be learned about the nature of story and its value to our common enterprise and about the wide range of purposes, approaches and claims made by those who have adopted story as a central analytical framework" (p.5). As I began the collaborative research, I was curious about what I might learn about story as research methodology. How could story be a way of knowing? What would I be claiming? How would I justify such claims? What constitutes evidence in narrative methodology? I was reminded of Fenstermacher's (1994) review of teacher knowledge research in which he concludes that many of the teacher knowledge/practical studies using alternative forms of conventional social science are perceived to be lacking an established epistemic status. So I continued to ask myself questions. What essence does a story capture? What does it leave out? Understanding that stories convey a particular, narrator-chosen sense of experience, I grappled with how to create a narrative form, and "remake the experience of being in the world into being in a world of language" (Sheridan, 1992 p.87).

The answers to these questions often emerged from surprising sources. While engaged in the thesis writing process, I discovered sources of inspiration not only from the educational literature but from film, theatre, art, travel and the rhythms of everyday experience. The challenge of turning the world of experience into the world of language was brought sharply into focus by one such event. One winter evening my husband and I watched an absorbing film called Six Degrees of Separation. The final words of the film, spoken by the main character, resonated with the intriguing questions about story and experience that were surfacing in the writing process. In the film a wealthy New York Art dealer and his wife befriend a black youth, an imposter, who, claiming to be a friend of their college son, persuades them he is also the son of Sidney Poitier. The dialogue-rich plot depends largely on
the couple recounting this experience to various friends and colleagues. During the final dinner party scene after the boy has abruptly and painfully left their lives, the wife speaks passionately about what is happening to the meaning of the experience:

*And we turn him into an anecdote, to dine out on, like we're doing right now.*

*But it was an experience.....I will not turn him into an anecdote*

*How do we keep what happens to us?*

*How do we fit it into life without turning it into an anecdote....with no teeth.....a punch line to drag out over and over again for years and years to come*

*Oh, that reminds me of the time that imposter came into our lives. Tell the one about that boy.*

*And we become these human Juke boxes spilling out these anecdotes...but IT WAS an experience*

*How do we keep the experience?*

Intrigued, I replayed the ending of the film several times, turning the words over and over. It seemed to me that "keeping the experience" was exactly what I was trying to do. When do stories become meaningful rather than merely anecdotes for entertainment? I thought about my own stories of beginnings told in Chapter One. What process allows the stories, "Cracks in the Metaphor" and "Memory Boxes" to become an experience rather than an anecdote, polished more brightly at each telling? I wondered if the stories could become trivialized in their retelling? Were they after all just repeated performance pieces, "punch lines to drag out, over and over again"? Perhaps it all comes down to relationship. In one sense a story has no meaning of its own. What matters is what happens because of its telling. How did the telling change the story's creator or the participant or the reader? What did the stories mean for the actors as they were told and retold? What connections could an audience make to their own experience? As I reflected on the sharing of stories so central to the thesis research, I realized that Lisa, Rebecca and I had attempted to retain our sense of experience and make it visible to each other by *turning* the stories, examining them from different perspectives. I use this familiar term to describe the idea of working actively with the stories, telling and retelling, writing and rewriting, exploring possibilities. Turning implies a physical sense of story shapes being shifted from hand to hand, patted and rolled as if by a curious toddler who investigates all the contours and surfaces of intriguing objects he explores. Often the same story would be told by
three different narrators each bringing their personal framework of perception to its interpretation. On other occasions individual stories from the past would be turned through a sense of shifting narrator selves over time, the narrator "now" reflecting on the narrator "then", trying to make sense of the story's implications for the future. By constantly turning the stories, we were engaged in a process of reconstructing or restorying our experience, using the stories as catalysts for growth and change rather than entertainment.

As I began the process of capturing the essence of the original or retold stories in written form, I tried to highlight the ambiguities, doubts and questions emerging from the accounts, remembering that as a researcher I am essentially a story teller myself who writes for an intended audience. I remember that all stories are simply constructions that give meaning to events, events which can, of course, have multiple meanings and a vast number of interpretive possibilities. When we share our stories during collaborative research we make decisions about what to include and what to omit, shaping the stories by imposing structure and meaning to our experience. I understand this shaping of story to happen at three levels; first the story is told orally to others or perhaps written as a journal entry. In its first telling the story is likely to be spontaneous, exploratory in nature, full of temporal loops and spirals, digressions and asides. At a second level, in the role of researcher, story teller and author, I decide how to integrate the story into the thesis, making educational, moral and literary decisions about the written form of the stories shared. The second level of decision making also invites the participants to either author their own stories or respond to my writing. The third level of shaping the stories involves the participation of the reader who will bring to the text his own context to make sense of the narrative interpretations. Thus it is important to realize that the stories within themselves carry no special epistemological status but are an alternative, viable way to convey the complexity and richness of teachers' experience.

In my study I have explored issues of professional and personal knowledge with my participants through story and narrative. Because this knowledge embodies the past, present and intentional future, it is deeply held with a multiplicity of meanings. The knowledge represented in story cannot be reduced to scientific terms through singular interpretation. Through the use of narrative methodology I have explored the aesthetic, relational aspects of my way of understanding by
creating a collaborative research milieu in which researcher and participants engaged in a mutual inquiry of experience. By using narrative methodology evoking metaphors and images, building on the creative processes of art and literature, I sought to blend form and content into a narrative unity.

**Exploring the Landscape Metaphor**

Because landscape is a central metaphor in the research it is important to recognize how I am using the term and how I have been influenced by the conceptualizations of others. In chapter one I made reference to the landscape metaphor of Clandinin and Connelly (1995), describing how I found the analogy both intellectually intriguing and emotionally compelling. Clandinin and Connelly, in generating a set of terms to help them contextualize teachers' personal practical knowledge, create the term professional knowledge landscape which has "the possibility of being filled with diverse people things and events in different relationships" (p.4). In my view they see the landscape as being at once a mental and a physical manifestation of teachers' experience as they describe the landscape existing at the "interface of theory and practise in teachers' lives." Landscape becomes a way to talk in a narrative sense about contextual factors while staying close to a teacher's personal knowledge, background and experience.

Because I was exploring the landscape metaphor to describe the contextual elements of my study I was alert to other uses of the term in the literature and, perhaps more important, to my own interpretations of the concept. What constitutes a landscape? Thinking initially about the word landscape we might visualize a fragment of the natural world, a spectacular physical setting of some personal significance or perhaps a familiar landscape painting by Constable, Thompson or Monet. Chances are the image would consist of winding rivers and lakes, trees, mountains, wind swept plains or pastoral meadows with no human presence. To challenge these assumptions, we learn from Schama (1995) in his book on Landscape and Memory, that the word landscape originated from the 16th century Dutch "landschap" and signified a unit of human occupation, landschap being the human design and use of the landscape as evidenced in the human figures dotting the Dutch landscape paintings. As Schama points out, "It seems right to acknowledge that it is our shaping perception that makes the difference between raw material and landscape." (p.10) Following
Schama, I see personal frameworks and cultural mythologies as construing what we understand as landscape and human presence becomes an integral part of the schemata.

Delving back into the educational literature on story and narrative I discovered several references to landscape comprising relationship and context. Witherall and Noddings (1991) describe their book, *Stories Lives Tell*, as a collection of memoirs on teaching in which they "survey the landscapes of (their) discoveries in teaching and imagine and invent the terrains that lie ahead" (p.10). Soltis (1995), refers to the challenge of teachers and researchers seeing and navigating the complex professional landscapes in which they live, while Bateson (1989) alludes to a changing as opposed to a timeless landscape; a landscape constantly in flux through which women move, creating lives of improvisation. The landscapes spoken of here are constructed, metaphorical images embodying social, political and environmental contexts and provide an alternate way of talking about situation, interaction and experience.

Bruner (1986) links story and landscape in his analysis of narrative structures stating that we know precious little in any formal sense about how to make good stories:

> Perhaps one of the reasons for this is that story must construct two landscapes simultaneously. One is the landscape of action, where the constituents are the arguments of action: agent, intention or goal, situation, instrument, something corresponding to a story grammar. The other landscape is a landscape of consciousness: what those involved in the action know, think, feel or do not know, think or feel. The two landscapes are essential and distinct. (p.14)

Bruner is also thinking beyond a geographical setting when he uses the term landscape to elaborate the components of story imagined and defined through the landscape metaphor. My use of the term then encompasses all that surrounds an individual, the contextual factors that play such a dominant role in human behavior. As I engaged in the research process I became aware of my own metaphorical connections to the term landscape based on my personal experience and professional reading. I came to associate the term landscape with the research process itself. Let me explain how the connections arose.
A treasured possession hangs in my dining room. It is a landscape by David Milne, a well-known Canadian painter roughly contemporary with the Group of Seven. My Milne is unfortunately not a painting. I couldn't afford that but it is a beautiful example of his dry point etching entitled "Prospect Shaft." When I first saw this etching in a gallery over twenty-five years ago I was drawn to the work immediately, passionately, and I knew I had to own it. Subsequently I became acquainted with Milne's writing about his own work. His words captured my imagination as I thought about the similarities inherent in what he wished to express in his painting and what I wished to convey in my research. Milne writes while describing his painting process to a friend:

The kick when I see these things is instantaneous. Then I usually make a very slight line sketch in pencil, a few lines only and go over the values hues and arrangement in my mind - really paint it in my head as a matter of fact. I have done all this the instant I saw and felt it. (Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 1967).

Milne wanted the "kick" of his painting to be instantaneous for the viewer. He wanted his works to be direct and simple, pared down to their barest essentials because he felt that "since art is aesthetic emotion, exhausting, to be sustained intensely only a short time, the more quickly readable a picture is, the more its emotional effect is compressed and the greater its power."

Two concepts strike me as relevant here for my work. First, the "kick" Milne speaks of and captures in his painting is exactly what I want to achieve in my written representation of teachers' and administrators' experience. I did not want to lose the sense of immediacy and vividness emerging from my participant's stories in a morass of academic language which would separate the kick and the experience. Second, in terms of process I saw a connection between our ways of aesthetic creation. Just as Milne saw and felt his subjects instantaneously and recorded their essence for later compositions, the stories I sensed were important to the thesis were those that had that "kick" of recognition and their place in the thesis was often worked out in my head long before they were committed to paper. Milne confessed he never had much luck working up sketches, that if a sketch had intense feeling in it, it had everything. Why touch it? If it hadn't, it had nothing of value. Why bother further with it? Milne's opinions about his sketches resonate with my intuition about the particular stories I chose to shape the thesis. The decisions were almost always based on an aesthetic
emotional response to the initial telling of the story. If there was no emotional connection, the story remained as part of the field data. If it sprang to life, I, like Milne, began "to paint it in my head." (On one occasion Milne said that he would prefer to "wish" his pictures onto canvas rather than have to work through the time consuming and awkward media of brush and paint. To wish the right words onto paper while composing a thesis would be my preference as well.)

The second way I began to think about landscape as a metaphor for research stemmed from the work of Schama (1995) who traces the long history of Western landscape tradition with its metaphorical elements of wood, water and rock. Schama argues that Western culture has not sloughed off its ancient nature myths in its race towards a machine driven universe and that the landscape tradition "built from a rich deposit of myths, memories and obsessions" is there to be discovered and reintegrated with modern culture. I see connections to my research as he speaks of his work being "a way of looking of rediscovering what we already have but which somehow alludes our recognition and our appreciation." Schama goes on to suggest that the strength of the links between Western culture and nature "is often hidden beneath layers of the commonplace. So Landscape and Memory is constructed as an excavation below our conventional sight level to recover the veins of myth and memory that lie beneath the surface" (p.14). In an analogous way I see my research as an excavation of school stories whose origins, meanings and mythologies lie buried in layers of commonplace, everyday events. I see the research as a "rediscovering" of what we already have, a chance to appreciate, in Eisner's sense of the connoisseur, those qualities of relationship and connection often overlooked in the educational milieu.

Methodology

Having laid the theoretical foundation for my choice of narrative inquiry with its emphasis on collaborative research relationships, I now move to the practical exigencies of methodology. I begin with a description of the research site, the participants, and issues of access and negotiation of entry. The researcher/participant relationship is explored with attention to ethical considerations. Data collection tools are explained with reference to analysis and interpretive strategies. Throughout the methodology section I blend stories of theory and practice by drawing from the research literature
and my own practical field experience.

The Site and Participants

The stories reflected in this thesis occur in a variety of educational settings; however, the year of collaborative research took place at Millside School during 1994/95. Millside is a K-8 school in a large urban Ontario school board. With a variety of educational programs, such as special education, middle French immersion, and a regular English stream, it is situated in an upper-middle class milieu which borders on new government housing for recent immigrants and subsidized housing for city residents. This new mix of students has created the need for change in programs and established ways of running the formerly middle class school. The story I had heard of the school prior to my arrival was one of conservatism, stability and hierarchical staff/administration relationships. It was my understanding that many teachers had been at Millside for years and were anxious to maintain the status quo and were resistant to change. New to this school, I became in 1994, a half-time teacher in the intermediate division, part of a newly formed transitions team, responsible for 160 students.

At that time the school was undergoing a radical process of change instigated by a new principal. This change of principal relates to my purposive selection of this site. Purposive sampling compares to what Goetz and Le Compte (1989) call criterion-based sampling. After establishing the criteria necessary for the narrative study, I looked for a site that matched the criteria. Sensing the importance of being an inside teacher/researcher rather than an outsider, I first of all looked for a half-time teaching position in a school with a principal willing to participate in collaborative research. The school also needed to have a reasonably new teacher on staff who was interested in being a key participant in a narrative inquiry. I knew that a former principal, Lisa, had transferred to the school from our previous alternative school and thus initiated discussions regarding a placement in the spring of 1994 when staffing procedures began. With great delight I learned that Rebecca, a former participant in my new teacher induction program was also now at the school teaching in the special education unit. Inviting Lisa and Rebecca to participate in the research process was the next step and I was somewhat amazed at their immediate positive responses. The intricate bonds of the triad research relationship began to form, bringing our pasts together in a new research connection.
My past is linked with the participants in various ways. I first knew Lisa from a parent's perspective, when she was the principal of the school my children attended for five years. My role as the board induction officer created yet another relationship that year as Lisa had seven new teachers on staff, and our roles played out as principal and staff developer. Rebecca was a participant in that induction program, teaching my son's grade two class. When Rebecca and the other new teachers were laid off at the end of that year we remained colleagues as she took on supply teaching assignments within the alternative school to which I had returned as an intermediate teacher. In that capacity Lisa was my principal for one year.

Since Lisa was Rebecca's first principal, I envisioned constructing many triad sessions in which they reflected together on their mutual experiences of growth and change. I expected that since I also had a role in those stories my voice would not be that of a passive recorder but that of an active participant. I was interested in how all three of us viewed the changing professional landscapes from our different positions on that landscape. Because of this unique triad situation, I was reminded of Bateson's (1989) notion of women as conservers, "holding on to skills and relationships that may be recycled at a later date" (p. 235). For me, this study with its personal links and connections with people over time has created a sense of continuity between the past, the present thesis work and the future, in the Deweyian sense of temporal continuity.

Although the nature of the principal/new teacher relationship was central to my study, others within the context of the workplace and the wider system have also influenced the new teacher's professional knowledge landscape. The school context shapes and in turn is shaped by those who dwell within its boundaries. I was particularly interested in gaining multiple perspectives of this phenomena through participant observation in my role as a staff member. Because the school context is important and getting at "school stories" is an integral part of building the narrative data base, others on staff were implicated in the emergent research design as I tried to understand the school's particular ethos and sense of community. I was aware of the political dimensions of collaborative research in school as part of a researcher's responsiveness to context. Cole and Knowles (1993) pose a political question about how participation on the study might be viewed by others in the school community, while Connelly and Clandinin (1993) suggest that "everyday
evidence of the political quality of school settings is seen in the negotiation that occurs between participants and others in the school, and in the interest those others show when two or more people come together in extraordinary ways" (p. 86).

The intent and purpose of the research was established positively with the two key participants through initial telephone contacts from Toronto and a summer (1994) meeting. I had anticipated that informing the rest of the staff of my intent would demand sensitivity and care, in both the initial encounter and ongoing day-to-day peer relationships. To retain credibility as a teacher, I knew I must remain a staff member at all times, even though I might feel that my first priority and passion was the research inquiry. As part of a pilot project undertaken this year as part of the 3303 narrative course work, I explored these issues of conflicting roles and possible staff reactions with three principals to gain their perspective on the political realities of the school context. Recalling vividly my last foray into a new school as a newcomer who represented a different professional knowledge landscape, I was particularly aware of not causing unintended harm to myself or my participants by virtue of our research involvement. Although I felt confident about my insider role, I remained aware of the ethical and political dilemmas created by backyard research (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). I anticipated that one limitation might be the acquisition of what Glesne and Peshkin (1992) call "dangerous knowledge - information that is politically risky to hold, particularly for an insider" (p. 23). I wondered whether others on staff might feel that I had special access to Lisa, however within the context of this large, busy staff my concerns were unfounded. Although I was the central character in my own research story, anxiously balancing my roles, I soon learned that the rest of the staff had little or no concern about my research endeavour. Mild interest was reflected in the occasional comment about how the research was going or whether or not I was finished yet but basically, people simply accepted my presence as a new staff member/researcher.

Access and Negotiation of Entry
Thesis writing begins from the moment of opening negotiations. Phone calls and preliminary sessions with both participants were recorded as field notes. Both participants indicated at the outset a desire to express their voice by writing stories of their own. I recognized, however, that the realities of school pressures might preclude this time-consuming task and that I would construct most
written accounts from their oral telling of stories. I see access and the negotiation of researcher roles as an ongoing fluid process connected to the emergent quality of narrative inquiry, always responsive to institutional and personal commitments. From the beginning Lisa and Rebecca both understood, in a very general sense, the nature of our project. I used and explained the terms "narrative" and "story" to begin the process of understanding how different this research would be. Borrowing from Dixon's (1992) concept of narrative as jazz, I explained to my participants that we would be playing and improvising jazz rather than participating in a well-rehearsed performance. The participants were aware that they had access to all written interpretations and would at all times be informed about the process of our inquiry. Following Cole and Knowles (1993), I knew that I must maintain the delicate balance between intrusion and involvement. Rebecca was enthusiastic and projected that in her second year at the site she would be ready to engage in collaborative reflection. However, I understood that the task might seem overwhelming later in the fall term. Realizing that Lisa had many other responsibilities as a principal I knew she would have to weigh her time with me carefully, particularly public, school time.

Based on their research experience, Clandinin and Connelly (1998) see collaborative research, ethics of participation and negotiation of entry as bound together by the idea of the negotiation of a shared narrative unity. In my case, this negotiation involved establishing new "research" relationships with participant colleagues at the school. Our previous professional relationships provided a comfortable base for the collaborative research. As a triad, we exchanged information often in story form, about our past histories, our beginnings and endings in teaching situations, our stories of change from the alternative school in which our relationships began to the very conservative climate of our current school. Rather than what the objectivist would call bias, I see this purposive sampling as key to the success of the study. Collaborative research constitutes a relationship built on trust and rapport and that foundation had already been laid. Further, since I had a shared history of certain educational events with the participants, that experience could be viewed and storied from the multiple perspectives of three different positions on the professional landscape. Some researchers warn against forming friendships because of the hazards of sample bias and loss of objectivity (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). These researchers, however, argue persuasively that friendship is only a problem if "objectivity" is important to the study. My research purposes were not based on distanced
objectivity but on establishing close professional and personal relationships which would create a context for living and writing interactive narratives.

The Researcher Role

In terms of the researcher role several issues became interrelated; the centrality of the researcher's experience, the role of the participant observer with its insider/outsider dimensions, and research relationships. In narrative inquiry the centrality of the researcher's experience is acknowledged (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994). Accordingly, a prerequisite task for thesis research was the creation of a self-narrative which, as Diamond (1994) explains, "provides not a simple mirror on reality, but a lens for the reconstruction of experience" (p.9). During doctoral course work and the proposal writing stage, issues of personal and educational justification for the thesis were woven together by stories of personal and professional experienced linked to their wider historical contexts. I have attempted to draw on my years of experience in schools to create authentic school stories in which the lives of the participants and the researcher are interwoven. As Eisner (1991) suggests, "knowing the scene" is crucial to take on the role of an educational critic. I was intrigued by his analogy of schools as works of art, part of a history and a tradition. Those who know the tradition, understand the history, are familiar with the genres and can see what those settings and practices consist of, are most likely to say something useful and informed about them. By maximizing my experience and familiarity in a school setting, I nonetheless struggled to see the unfamiliar, or as Erikson (1986) refers to it, "the invisibility of daily life" (p.121). As a narrative researcher my biography or bias, intuitions, opinions and reflections on my own subjectivity (Glesne & Peshkin, 1993; Van Maanen, 1988) were explicated and explored throughout this study. For example, coming to terms with my bias or biography vis-a-vis administration seemed to be a critical pre-research task. During the proposal stage I initiated a narrative exploration of my own position regarding administrative roles, influences and significance for my teacher development story. An excerpt from my journal, (April, 1994) suggests beginning analytical insights:

When I read the chapters on professional knowledge landscapes (Connelly & Clandinin, in press), I recognized that for me, that time outside the classroom in the communal professional places has always been of great importance. The sense of disturbance Connelly and Clandinin speak of was more a sense of harmony, knowing I had
connections and links to some outside world that gave my classroom role its zest. I realized that I had not thought of these two places as fundamentally different. They were both places for teachers, just at different times. My sense of myself as a teacher integrates rather than separates the two different worlds. As I read the transcripts of my interview about administrators, it was clear that positive relationships with my administrators played a formative role in this notion of teacher self. Several factors exist: my positive view toward administration is predicated on my growing up with a well-respected high school principal as a father ... a deeply-held assumption about mutual respect tempered by hierarchical realities, a personal knowledge of the exigencies of the job, a clear understanding of the "big picture" before I even got into teaching. Now I can understand even more deeply with my husband a first year principal. Second, a large measure of good luck in working with some of the board's best principals. Third, the personal inter-relational strengths that have enabled me to create positive relationships in a school setting, particularly with admin. Listening to the tape, I was struck by the tone of admiration and respect in my voice as I recalled how much I had been influenced by these people in my sense of myself as a professional. As a researcher I must be able to see understand and have empathy for both roles, the principal and the teacher.

The methodological choices I have made offer a multifaceted research situation that is composed of several layers. First, I was a teacher new to the school. Second, I was a university researcher and participant observer within the whole school context, observing and participating in the interactions of staff, administration, students, parents and other school personnel. Third, I was the facilitator of a more intimate research relationship between Lisa, Rebecca and myself. Finally, as a participating experienced teacher, mentor, friend and colleague, I continued to be a self-reflecting practitioner examining the principles, skills, values and philosophies that I bring to my teaching and teacher development practices. In these complex roles I was both an insider and an outsider. With my active teaching role and legitimate engagement with staff, I was an insider, "a full participant" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), who held some measure of credibility simply because I was "in the trenches" like everyone else. I remained an outsider due to my university teaching and research agenda. In this sense I was creating a professional communal place in which I integrated practice-theory dichotomies in a new story of professional practice.
A key issue for me has been coming to terms with the changing concepts of the researcher and the researched. With ethnography and other interpretive methodologies focusing on more subjective, intensive strategies which can be demanding of participants, often perhaps intrusive, the researcher no longer remains apart from that which she is studying. Relationships between researcher and participant are seen as more reciprocal, more interactive. Entering the world of "the other" involves not only a reconstruction of their world but a reconstruction of self as researcher. As part of a growing interest in collaboration, Cole and Knowles (1993) are working on new forms of partnership research based on fundamental assumptions about mutuality in the purpose of research and the interpreting and reporting of findings. They believe in the "potency of multiple perspectives" and see each partner in the inquiry contributing particular and important expertise. The researcher/researched partnership is "multifaceted and not powerfully hierarchical" (p. 478).

This conception of research fits with my present philosophy of research in teaching. Spanning both sectors, university and the field, I am painfully aware of the intellectual schisms that exist. To me, partnerships in research offer a viable way to bridge the gaps and make honest connections. Rudduck (1987) elaborates on the insider/outsider theme by suggesting that while the insider has intimate knowledge, their eyes may be dulled by "routine reconstruction of events." The outsider has ways of thinking and seeing, through "critical reflection on different conceptual frameworks. Each partner can learn from what the other has to offer" (p. 139). Within the triad relationship we alternately acted as insider/outsider partners helping each other see our experience in new and different ways. Assuming the dual role of insider and outsider in my own researcher/teacher position, searching to establish a new position on the professional landscape, I held many interesting dialogues with myself as each role supported the other. These collaborative ideas have guided my conduct as a researcher, the developing relationships with staff and research participants and the ultimate analysis and representational decisions.

The research relationship with Lisa and the teacher participant(s) speaks powerfully to the issues of ethics and research responsibilities. The partnerships I formed at the site necessitated movement between two interest groups, administration and staff. I was constantly aware of the need for confidentiality so that the various stakeholders would not be compromised. Furthermore, in a typical
administrator/teacher dyad the roles are hierarchically defined. In this case, a peculiar twist occurred in the relationship as the university researcher, who has traditionally been considered the outside authority, is in reality a practising teacher evaluated by the administrator participant. I was concerned about the possibility of a conflict of interest so I sought the advice of other principal colleagues. Insights into how a principal might perceive this situation were revealed by one of these principals in the pilot study:

I see this research concept as a daunting thing. That's because training for principals in assisting new teachers is sadly lacking. There is a sense of "I'm a principal and I simply don't know" - but a principal is supposed to be the expert. Now I'll be working with a person/researcher who is an expert in the area. What can you do as a researcher to make me feel more comfortable?

Reflecting on these comments, I recognized that my principal participant might experience similar doubts. It was important that my researcher role invite the creation of a comfortable intellectual space in which both the teacher/researcher and administrator could operate within a new relationship. The notion of power and traditional hierarchies in the research relationship could be understood as reciprocal. Both researcher and administrator might feel a sense of professional imbalance entering the lived experiences of the other. I addressed these issues with Lisa as we engaged in the research process. We agreed that these imbalances and moments of disequilibrium served to offer significant opportunities for professional growth as we struggled to achieve a balance in our research/teaching relationship.

In my narrative study the emergent design and research relationships have precluded specified procedures and demanded daily personal judgements during every step of the field work and writing. Narrative inquiry requires a high tolerance for ambiguity, and an attitude of constant reflexive inquiry. As Connelly and Clandinin (1994, p. 417) remind us, "Experience is messy and so is experiential research." Connelly and Clandinin (1990, 1992, 1994) provide broad guidance for narrative inquiry, focusing on matters of the field, field texts and research texts, however the specifics are left to the individual to choose from a wide array of suggestions for practice. Drawing on Eisner (1991, 1992), I conceptualized the researcher role as making sense of experience through
the transaction between objective conditions of the external world and personal frames of reference, our own internal qualities and biographies. "What we come to see depends on what we seek and what we seek depends on what we know how to say" (Eisner, 1992, p.12).

**Data Collection**
Methodological choices shape the growing body of evidence in narrative research and raise epistemological issues. I now describe my particular choices for data collection, congruent with the purpose of the inquiry. Greene (1992), summarizing Eisner's, Guba's and Barone's (1992) views on knowledge in social inquiry, states: "All agree that what is meaningful in life and hence what is an appropriate and legitimate focus for social inquiry is the sense we make, in concert with others in a given context, of our interactions within that context" (p.40). I was particularly interested in the sense the participants made of their interactions as a principal and developing teacher. How did their professional knowledge landscapes connect? What were the points of intersection? How did each participant come to understand the other's professional knowledge contexts? I recognized that empirical data from multiple sources builds the rich source of interpretive material which allows the researcher to make sense of a given context. I understood that any knowledge claims I made must be firmly situated in the cultural, political, and historical context in which their meaning is to be apprehended. As Greene (1992) claims, "Decontextualized knowledge claims make no sense in interpretation" (p. 40). Keeping these points in the foreground of the inquiry my data collection has included field notes of shared experience at the site, individual and group unstructured interviews and conversations, journal writing, storying, letter writing; document analysis and biographical and autobiographical writing over the period of two school years 1994/95 and 1995/96. Each choice of data collection revealed a consequence for the type of field text created. I describe the range of data gathering in some detail to give the reader a sense of the extensive data base from which the narrative text was formed.

**Field notes.** Connelly and Clandinin (1990) remind us that field notes from participant observation are an active reconstruction of experience in which researchers express their own personal practical knowledge through their choices of what to watch for and what to record. All field texts are selectively chosen, implying an interpretive process shaped by the nature of researcher/participant
relationships. In this case I recorded events, not as an objective outsider but as a character in my school story and the stories of the participants. On the continuum of participant observer involvement, I was positioned firmly as a full participant, a functioning member of the social phenomena under investigation. Field notes were recorded regularly during school and classroom events, when such behaviour was socially appropriate, for example staff, division or committee meetings or observations in Rebecca's classroom. General observation of social interactions in the staff room, informal conversations and the like were recorded as mental field notes and written up at a later date to avoid the appearance of formal, intrusive investigation by an insider. Field notes included daily observations and descriptions of people, interactions and events at the school site with particular emphasis on situations in which the principal and the new teacher were involved. I was interested in understanding all that was going into the creation of the professional knowledge landscape of this school, and how that landscape was being radically altered by the current principal's leadership style. I was particularly interested in how the principal interacted with staff, students and support staff. To gain an understanding of Rebecca's special education teaching situation, I made three visits to her classroom to observe her teaching children with Autism and also attended several unit clinical meetings. Due to my active participant teaching role, most field notes were jotted down in a cursory style to be expanded with full description and analysis later. This process of integration and active reflexivity guided my field work activity during the research as I created the field text. Employing the term "field text" rather than "facts" allowed for multiple interpretations rather than the illusion of empirical truth. I was not so much concerned with fact or truth as I was with building a credible field text over time, from multiple sources and being continually aware of my personal insights, my own centrality of experience in the whole process as Barone (1992) suggests "the authorial presence" of the inquirer.

**Interviews.** A significant part of the emerging field text was the data obtained through interviews, ranging from informal conversations to formal taped discussions. Within narrative inquiry, interviews provide the basic source of evidence (Polkinghorne, 1988). Beginning in early September of 1994, triad interviews lasting one and half hours each were held every two weeks, in the principal's office, after school hours. We continued these sessions until January of 1995 when Rebecca left on maternity leave. Lisa and I continued to meet during the Spring term and I held
several sessions with Rebecca outside of the school after her daughter was born. As the thesis writing began in 1995/96, I met regularly with the participants, separately and together, to share the developing interpretive accounts and invited their feedback and participation in the writing process.

Misher (1986) notes that eliciting stories from participants is not a problem. "Narratives are a recurrent and prominent feature of accounts offered in all types of interviews. If respondents are allowed to continue in their own way until they indicate that they have completed their answers, they are likely to relate stories" (p. 235). These stories offer a unique insight into the operative narratives of a person or group. Polkinghorne (1988) explains "the premise the researcher works from is that people strive to organize their temporal experience into meaningful wholes and to use the narrative form as a pattern for uniting the events of their lives into unfolding themes." (p. 163). My experience in conducting the triad interviews resonates with that of Mishler and Polkinghorne. Emerging from the interviews was a sense of connectedness in response to each participant's stories of beginning experience, either as a new teacher or, in Lisa's case, a new principal. One person's story sparked another. Our taped conversations extended over a wide range of professional and personal topics sometimes initiated by me and at other times directed by the participants. More often than not the conversation would take the shape of a story with the listeners' stories created in response. We noted in retrospect that although the subject matter for each session had evolved through mutual negotiation, a particular theme would often dominate, with one of the triad assuming the lead role in determining the flow of ideas. It is salient to recognize that the leadership shifted not only from session to session but often within a session as well. For example, on December 10th, 1994 I noted, in a summary response to our first set of interviews:

Session three focussed on beginnings. We reconstructed our impressions of our first meetings and how they connected. Rebecca's first year then took precedence as she shared her list of bombardments, revealing how intensely difficult her first term had been. In retrospect this was Rebecca's interview with Lisa and I providing back up commentary........Session four centred on Lisa's entry to Millside, the chronology of critical events and challenges to her leadership. This was clearly Lisa's session with Lisa doing most of the talking and Rebecca and I clarifying feelings and establishing the chronology of events shared........Session six in contrast was relatively neutral in tone and we all shared equally in the talk about
our understandings of professional knowledge.

After each interview I would compose a summary of our dialogue including contextual background relevant to the tone of the session. This summary would be shared with Lisa and Rebecca in written or verbal format before we began our next meeting.

Through a sense of sustained conversation between equals (Yonemura, 1982; Hollingsworth, 1992) I attempted to build an invitational context in which all three participants "are engaged in a process of trying to understand important aspects of their lives ... a context in which the interviewee feels less need to tell stories that are primarily designed to present the self in socially valued images" (Paget, 1983, cited in Polkinghorne, 1988). All interviews/ conversations were audio taped and transcribed and subsequently offered to the participants for their verification. As I began the process of interpreting the material from the interviews, I shared draft copies with Lisa and Rebecca inviting their feedback and exploring new insights and possibilities with them as they occurred. The process of restorying and reconstruction of experience began as those tentative accounts were given back, reflected upon and modified (Craig, 1992; Beattie, 1991; Connelly & Clandinin, 1991).

**Personal writing.** Personal writing in the form of journals, letters and autobiographical, biographical representations reflect another data source in which the participants were invited to engage. Lisa responded in writing to several of my accounts combining poetry and prose as well as composing several letters to Rebecca. Rebecca kept a research journal and also wrote several key stories to add to the thesis. I also participated in personal writing. My thesis research journal, personal journal and research log began as three separate documents but rapidly merged into one text interspersed between two locations. Impressions and ideas were captured at the moment in an ever present notebook or noted later within the computer file labelled journal. An important part of the journal focussed on the research journey by employing the research critic's voice. This opportunity for disengagement and metatalk helped balance the emotional involvement in a narrative inquiry, while the more personal journal sections recorded my impressions of and initial experiments with the written representational form of narrative.

Preparing for this research, I examined a personal "memory box" crammed with old journals. My
The primary purpose in keeping journals was revealed as documenting travel experiences; unique adventures captured by words and illustration. I recalled that a common metaphor for thesis work was indeed one of travel with the thesis seen as a journey (Cole & Hunt, 1994). Embracing this concept, the unfamiliar practice of keeping a daily journal became a rhythmic part of this latest academic journey. The significance of a principal's journal was highlighted by Cooper (1993). My principal participant was intrigued by the professional growth potential of this kind of reflection. Barth (1990) comments on the impediments that hinder principals' learning and professional development. One factor he notes is the lack of time and/or commitment to write reflectively. Although Lisa voiced a commitment to write extensively, she too experienced the pressures of time as our collaborative work unfolded and was able to keep journal only sporadically. She did, however, share many ideas and reflections verbally in snippets of conversation during informal encounters. When I entered the school at noon I was often greeted by the words, "Come on into my office. I've been thinking about the research."

Letters, conversations which anticipate a response, were used to exchange tentative narrative interpretations among the researcher and participants (Clandinin, 1986; Beattie, 1994, personal communication). Autobiographical writing initiated through the construction of annals and chronicles (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994) provided a way to connected past history, present practice and future intention. As I constructed biographical accounts of my participants, I drew upon a growing body of research literature (Beattie, 1991; Ball & Goodson, 1985; Knowles, 1992) and the lexicon of the biographer's trade (Edel, 1984; Smith, 1994) to create authentic and recognizable characterizations.

Documents. The data base was extended by examining relevant school documents; handbooks, staff memos, minutes from staff meetings, yearbooks, and newsletters which provided textual data sources. These sources were used to corroborate or question participant observations and interviews. Documents can provide historical and contextual information unavailable elsewhere. In learning about my present new school with its troubled administrative/staff history, documents proved to be a valuable source of information from which to pose further inquiries. Examining Lisa's written communication style through newsletters and memos provided an interesting comparison with
former administrative styles.

To summarize, the tools for data collection were chosen to create a rich, diverse field text from multiple sources, from which a research text (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994) could be reconstructed through analysis and interpretation.

The Research Text - Analysis, Form and Evolving Issues of Epistemology

Moving from the field text to the research text began with a search for "the patterns, narrative threads, tensions and themes either within or across individuals' personal experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994, p. 423). Edel (1984) extended my thinking about the search for narrative threads with his notion of looking for the "figure under the carpet" by first studying the figure in the carpet, patterns visible in a person's work and endeavour. It is only then that we are able to see what lies on the underside, to uncover the private mythology of the individual. By connecting what Edel is saying to the notion of image and metaphor, tools that narrativists use to move from field to research text I have attempted to represent the professional knowledge landscapes of three teachers. By searching for threads and themes across time, by looking back to the individual's past histories as well as investigating current practice, a more comprehensive view of the landscape can be created. As Polkinghorne (1988) notes, the operative narrative of a person or group may not be apparent to the researcher and may have to be reconstructed from fragments of the story. The specific interpretive strategies for eliciting stories from the data derive from Connelly and Clandinin (1990): "Broadening" provides contextual background; "burrowing" focuses on the event's emotional, moral and aesthetic qualities; and "restorying" concentrates on how the event's meanings may have changed for participants. I see this process of restorying as "turning" the story, examining it from different perspectives, retelling it from alternative temporal positions on the landscape. Connelly and Clandinin (1994) argue persuasively that this search for patterns and restorying is created by the writer's experience which encompasses the internal conditions of voice and signature and existential conditions of inquiry purposes, form and audience. I now address these issues.

The traditional propositional language and conventional third-person discourse of positivists has often consciously silenced the researcher's voice in deference to objectivist scientific language. In
qualitative work the way that I see and respond to a situation and how I interpret and represent what I see will depend on the particulars of my unique insight. Verification is not the issue. Representing particular human experience in a vicarious, meaningful way is. Bruner (1993, p. 1) argues that the qualitative researcher is not an objective, authoritative, politically neutral observer standing outside and above the text, but "historically positioned and locally situated as an all-too-human observer of the human condition." Lincoln and Guba (1994) add that all texts are personal statements and that there is a false dichotomy between personal and scholarly self. As I moved from field text to written research text, the search for patterns, themes and forms of representation was informed by my attention to language, voice and signature (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994; Eisner, 1991). Eisner makes the point that educational critics help others see and understand in ways they did not see and understand before through the use of descriptive personal language that allows vicarious participation. Using the appropriate language to depict the particular set of qualities representing the experience and professional knowledge landscapes of three educators has required my experience, skill, imagination and above all my distinct voice heard in the text. Connelly and Clandinin (1994) present the dilemma of personal versus researcher voice in moving from field texts to research texts, as one "struggles to express one's own voice in the midst of an inquiry designed to capture the participants' experience and represent their voices, all the while attempting to create a research text which will speak to and reflect on, the audience's voice." Creating the narrative form to represent the interacting narratives of a principal, new teachers and experienced teacher researcher demanded the multiple "I's" of researcher, teacher, participant, colleague, friend, woman, connoisseur and critic (Eisner, 1991) and theory builder. I was aware of what Bruner (1993) calls the danger of putting oneself so deeply back into the text that it completely dominates. The goal, Bruner suggests, is to return the author to the text openly in a way that does "not squeeze out the object of the study" (p. 6). As a narrative researcher, I strive to create a text that is credible, within my personal frameworks, using the familiar language of schools as a vehicle for expressing my value-saturated interpretations and judgements.

Inquiry purposes involve writing for others, establishing a relationship with an audience, connecting the personal stories and themes that emerge to wider social issues of professional and educational relevance. At the heart of the research endeavour lies a practitioner's strident questions: "So what?
Why does this matter? Who would want to read this text?" These questions have challenged me to create a text that is accessible to teachers and principals as well as other researchers, to create new ways to describe the principal-teacher relationship, to present new ways of understanding professional knowledge contexts, to create a case study text which invites the audience to participate in, read and live vicariously the experience (Connelly, 1987; Crites, 1986; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The content of a particular study reveals a form which is best suited to communicate its particular message. As Eisner (1992) believes, "representation is the process of transforming the contents of consciousness into a public form so that they can be stabilized, inspected, edited and shared with others" (p. 5). The form of representation I choose is "constitutive of the understanding (I) acquire; the medium is part of the message" (Eisner, 1992, p. 12). The personal research challenge lay in discovering a way to blend my academic and professional voice with images, metaphors and language structures that reflected the aesthetic underpinnings of my experience and allowed for the "voices" of others, voices that would be recognizable within the school community. By choosing to represent the data in a variety of literary forms: letters, stories, memos, reflections, journal entries, poetry and prose, I have endeavoured to stay close to the world and language of schools and create a research landscape accessible and interesting to teachers and administrators. Throughout the thesis I describe the choice of form and voice used to represent the data in each chapter inviting the reader to participate vicariously in the experiences conveyed.

An additional challenge for narrative research is the construction of a set of criteria by which the narrative inquiry can be judged. It is evident that narrative criteria are, in a sense, "under construction" by those in the field (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Beattie, 1990; Mullen, 1994; Carter, 1993, Eldridge 1996, Shields 1996). Questions of the epistemological status of stories, evidentiality and narrative validity surface in the literature as each researcher comes to terms with and defends their own set of criteria. Rather than using traditional objective criteria such as reliability and validity or generalization to justify qualitative inquiry, researchers are turning to the criteria of "apparency and verisimilitude" (Van Maanen, 1988), adequacy and plausibility (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and good reasons (Fenstermacher, 1994). These terms help frame the question of justification for each researcher. For Beattie (1990), the criteria for success is the extent to which she can enter into and understand her own world and
that of her participant. Craig (1992) and her participants collaborated to construct a collection of "telling stories" that would be plausible and persuasive, close to the beginning teacher experience. These two narrativist criteria have provided a starting point for the development of my own. I see the criteria for success being the extent to which I have captured the essence of the experience of my participants and depicted it in ways recognizable and meaningful to other teachers and administrators.

Connelly and Clandinin (personal communication) are confronting issues of evidentiality and the epistemological status of stories based on reconstructed memory claims. Informing this investigation are Crites' (1979) views on self-deception. Many strategies for establishing narrative validity are built into the research framework, for example: the multiple data sources, narrative accounts, the reconstruction of meaning by relating individual stories to wider social/educational contexts, researcher self-reflexivity and theoretical sensitivity (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). As I see it developing, theoretical sensitivity, an awareness of the subtleties of the meaning of data has been a key prerequisite to writing up the narrative inquiry. Sources of sensitivity were found through literature, experience and the analytic procedure itself. By continuing to explore epistemological issues, recognizing there is much to learn in the narrative research process, I have tried to remain open to new avenues of inquiry which will create new challenges for narrativist researchers.
Chapter Three

The Context of the Inquiry

One of the striking facts of most lives is the recurrence of threads of continuity, the re-echoing of earlier themes, even across deep rifts of change. (Bateson, 1989, p.8)

Through conversation and reflection I have become aware of the threads of continuity which weave through my own and my participants' lives. These threads pull together significant past experience and link this experience with current practice. To understand how Lisa and Rebecca interacted as a principal and a novice teacher we must first understand what brought them to the point where their experience coincided on a common professional knowledge landscape. By selecting those key stories from their individual biographies which illuminate these threads of continuity, I have shaped the text to best position the ideas of teacher development which underlie the inquiry. I have first chosen the stories that have something to say about the way in which Lisa's images of leadership were formed, images which would later shape Rebecca's experience as a new teacher. I then introduce Rebecca in the same way combining the narrative forms of personal letters and stories.

I begin the introduction of both participants with a letter. Letters provide a way to personalize my narrative representation of "other." By speaking openly to another in letter form I give voice to the relationship between sender and receiver and firmly situate myself within the letter's content. I do not write about another but directly to them. In this case, the letters are also public and become a way to describe and document the particular qualities of each individual from a very personal researcher perspective. Writing a letter not only invites dialogue it also entails risk, an edge of expectancy while awaiting the response.

I wrote this first letter to Lisa for three purposes and in a sense for three audiences; Lisa, the thesis reader and myself. First, I wished to share with Lisa my impressions of her leadership in an authentic and interesting way. The letter was written to be sent and as such invited and received a response from Lisa. From the transcripts of our many conversations and reflections on our years of working together I have tried to highlight those leadership qualities I found to be central to Lisa's
principalship. The qualities I have isolated within the letter are both stripped of their storied backgrounds and meant to be exploratory and tentative in nature. The letter acts as a beginning canvas for Lisa and me to illustrate and represent our shared dialogue about my perceptions of her philosophy in action.

The second purpose is to create for the reader a quick "gesture drawing" of Lisa, sketched through the eyes of a teacher/researcher. A gesture drawing is like a furious scribble usually done with charcoal, soft pencils or chalk. A movement or an emotion is captured in a few swift lines. It is a distilled, subjective representation of the object, which, through its essence is recognizable. By writing a letter to Lisa in which I attempt to capture the essence of her style, I invite the reader to see her through my eyes, to understand the gesture-like quality of this first introduction. As this chapter evolves, each representation of Lisa's experience becomes a working drawing, a gesture drawing that builds to an understanding of the whole. When I work with intermediate students teaching them how to create a unified picture from their gesture drawings, I am involved in a similar process of composing disparate elements into a coherent visual image. In narrative representation, however, the image and how it is perceived depends on the structure and power of language. Just as the immediacy of a gesture drawing compels a viewer's attention so the language of narrative must invite the reader's interaction with the text. As I made writing decisions about language and form, I recalled the words of Sheridan (1992) who explores the relationship of language, reader and the contextual particulars of experience: "If the experience of the teacher or teacher educator as reader is to be brought into relationship with those who write of teaching experience, the language of narrative needs to crackle with action and talk" (p.88). This analogy of words crackling with action and talk stayed close to the surface as I began the task of representing the experience of myself and my participants in ways that would be accessible to other educators.

For me, the composing of the letter imposed an order on the hundreds of images and impressions gathered over our year of collaborative research. It was an opportunity to explore those qualities which define Lisa's professional image. It was a way to articulate those qualities and begin to see how Lisa's philosophy emerges from "the recurrence of threads of continuity" (Bateson, pg.9). I began to understand how those threads of continuity created connections in Lisa's work with
children, new teachers, experienced teachers and parents. I was curious about the threads and connections which seemed tangled or loosely dangling and those that were neatly tucked in place. The compelling stories of continuity and connections which asked to be told demanded my attention as I composed the letter and thought about which stories could best represent Lisa's experience. Each sparse line of the letter branched into multiple stories waiting to be told. I also reflected on my own stories which interconnected with Lisa's. Cooper (1993) suggests that "unsent" letters serve in the telling of our own stories within the context of a relationship (p.99). Although this letter was shared, it can also be understood from an alternate perspective as my research journal from which its contents emerged, thus constituting an unsent letter. It has that sense of self reflection in which my own teacher stories are an integral part of my words to Lisa. Through the act of composing the letter, I story myself as a teacher working with Lisa within two school communities. Although not explicitly stated, the positive context of our relationship is made visible through the images of collaborative leadership I have selected and described.

October 1995.

Dear Lisa,

You say that "women are natural historians." Our taped conversations of last year confirm that belief. Rebecca, you and I seem to dip into the past constantly, making connections to our current practises and relationships. Our conversations are often dizzying loops of past, present and future. Through the laughter, the interruptions, the quiet listening and reflection, we have learned a lot about ourselves and each other. Through our stories of individual and shared experience we are making sense of the world we inhabit.

During the past several years I have come to know you as a person, a principal and a research participant through your stories and our many past and present connections. I have come to recognize and appreciate some of the unique qualities that frame your particular way of being in the world. I would like to share some of these tentative interpretations with you. Let me first reflect as a teacher researcher. I have worked with you in two very different schools, two very different professional knowledge landscapes. Although there have been subtle changes in your representation of self as principal, your deep concern and respect for children is always visible. My sense of you
is that you live the philosophy of "children first". I have seen your spontaneous, emotional response when a teacher shares a special moment of success. I have experienced the high intellectual expectations you set for a child centred curriculum, I have observed the maternal ferocity of ownership for your students, your staff and your school. I have witnessed the extending invitation to the community. A range of emotions, freely shared.

You seem to understand, at a deep personal level, kids who hate school. From your stories I would guess that this understanding emerges not from a theoretical perspective but through the lived experience of a child's perspective. You were one of those kids. Your son was another. Many decisions you have made in your life derive from these negative school stories, an attempt to eradicate and make sense of the pain of schooling. This is a story you name "A Song from the Heart." You wanted to make a difference in children's lives. You wanted to be the kind of teacher that you should have had, that you thought your son should have. And then to the principalship... you wanted to make sure you were the principal of a school in which your son would be happy. You have called yourself a rebellious, independent loner who loves rock and roll and listens as Bob Seager sings "...Mediocrity is easy, good things take time..." You have described yourself as a principal who came to leadership by chance, outside of the prescribed and established system route. A high school dropout in Grade 10, a single mom on welfare at 19 rebelling against the power structures of marriage, school and family. A self-directed learner when you made the decision to go back to school.

Working with you I have observed that you treat teachers as professionals and understand that they work best when they are empowered to live out their own decisions. Significant others gave you a growing sense of empowerment as you developed as a professional; your mother's encouragement to return to school, your involvement in university politics, the ministry acceptance of your Special Education proposal early in your teaching career. You allow people to develop independently, to grow in their own directions. Developmental stages differ. It always comes back to the individual. I have watched you match people together for professional growth and encourage connections and links among staff members. Sometimes these connections are subtle, often initiated as direct invitations. It depends. Supportive of new ideas and innovation, you make it clear that teachers have
to move in child-centred directions. You model this by making public your own learning. You share knowledge freely and make connections between resources and people. You are not afraid of change and indeed have actively sought out challenging positions for leadership.

The bowl of caramels just inside your office door invites teachers to drop in and chat and they do. You listen. Your sense of humour warms our days especially when an irreverent whoop of raucous laughter erupts from your office spilling out to lighten the repetitive stress of everyday life at school. After the laugh there is always a furtive look around and a covering up gesture to see if anyone has overheard this breach of principal propriety. We feel comforted by this humour. We know things are going well. We worry when it stops and for periods of time you assume a different persona, one designed to handle difficult problems. You become regal, queen like, taller and stern, your face set. You wear tailored navy blue suits and crisp white shirts. Sometimes red. Your office door is closed. The secretarial staff are protective and watchful. Access is limited to the few confidants acknowledged to be in the inner circle. The staff is tense. Then the door opens again. The candy bowl is replenished. The crisis is over.

You present yourself as a positive person, secure and confident, determinedly optimistic. You see positive fragments in negative situations which you call "silver linings." Many situations merit the response "How wonderful." Not everyone appreciates this characteristic. Your positive outlook confuses some who operate differently but for most of us your unfailing positive support is like a beacon, a lighthouse, that gives us courage and lights the way. I'm curious about how you sustain this positive presence. I understand there have been times of crisis that placed unreasonable demands on your leadership. The change from Halverston to Millside. The story that you have called "The Passion and The Pain". You have revealed that your confidence was badly shaken. In that difficult period you were called upon to defend not only a collaborative leadership style but also a misrepresented personal lifestyle.

I've noticed how you constantly seek feedback on how the school is running and reflect openly with others about what you call "situational leadership." Some of us are often surprised at your candour in sharing opinions and decision making processes. That's an area of your leadership style I'd like
to explore more with you. In our conversations I've listened as you verbalize your thinking processes to others. This metacognition seems to play a big role in your decision making. You are drawn enthusiastically to the wider conceptual issues in Education, admitting freely that you're not always clear on the details. You share your leadership and empower others to take risks and try new things. You'd rather not run the staff meetings and often invite others to take the chair. Although your leadership style appears low key you take immediate action when necessary. The physical plant changes initiated when we learned there was risk from asbestos. The immediate disciplinary action taken when a male staff member was involved in sexual harassment of a supply teacher. Because you are intolerant of racism, sexism, incompetence and poor teaching, you are not afraid of showing anger when these situations arise.

My story of you pictures you placing great importance on relationships in the school community, modelling the skills associated with interpersonal intelligence (Gardner, 1983), demonstrating the ability to understand and interact effectively with others. Within this story you entertain multiple perspectives. I am reminded of Nel Noddings (1991), who describes aspects of what she calls "interpersonal reasoning". Interpersonal reasoning is open flexible and responsive. It is guided by an attitude that values the relationship of the reasoners over any particular outcome and it is marked by attachment and connection rather than separation and abstraction." (p.157). I think that these words reflect your particular kind of leadership and decision making. I interpret this importance of relationship in your personal and professional life as a dominant theme in your narrative. My job as a researcher is to elicit these themes from the stories you have so freely shared with Rebecca and me and represent them in ways that resonate with their original tellings. By reading and responding to these reconstructed stories of experience we may understand the stories in a different way and respond to the issues with new insights. Sometimes I will construct alternate stories that offer different perspectives. Through this interaction, the next stage of the research process, we may both gain new understandings about our places on the Professional Knowledge Landscape.

Sincerely,

Fran
The Hillman Story: Early Memories of School

In reconstructing these stories from Lisa's past I have drawn on the interview transcripts to represent Lisa's voice authentically in the text, using as much as possible the exact language and structures in which she originally told the story.

My mother who is currently 80 years old was a rebel in her time. She left Brazil and went to the U.S.A. to get a science degree in her second language. Unheard of in that time! Back in Brazil she became a teacher and met my stiff upper lip British father who was working in communications. He had decided to learn Portuguese so off he went to Language classes and there was my mother. They married despite the 12-year age difference and I was born 9 months later in New York, actually New Jersey. My mother had joined my father on a three month American trip deciding that an American birthright would be an advantage for me. A series of moves took us back to Brazil for 3 years, then Montreal and finally to Paris for 5 years. So my first 8 years in terms of education were directed by my mother, like a home schooling, alternative model with a small group of us at the embassy. We arrived here in Canada when I was 8. That's where the story really begins.

I remember coming to my first public school, a big school, a monumental school from my point of view, I'm at the very back of the Grade 3/4 classroom, being tall, always tall, the big girl. And the teacher seemed miles away. I didn't even know what she looked like. Nor did I pay any attention to her. If I focussed on my own space I would be safe. Everything I did was near point copying with my head down. I didn't hear anything. I had no idea what was happening.

And then, the thing called recess. Recess that everyone adored. Everyone thought recess was wonderful. Could hardly wait for recess. It was traumatizing. Masses of children rushing through the school pouring out this door and milling madly in the yard. I hated it.

At Hillman. They're probably still there. Two grey pillars by the entrances and exits. I remember those pillars because I would go and stand beside one of them and practically hug it and wait unendingly for the moment we could go back in. It was just the most horrible, horrible thing.
And then I had to walk home......It seemed like miles to walk home. I needed to go home because I refused to go to the bathroom at school. The public washrooms were appalling to me. That all those masses of people would go into these washrooms and they would look underneath at each other and over the top and laugh and yell. Everybody together. I thought it was horrifying. So you're holding yourself and trying to wait until you're home. Once I didn't make it home. A big nine year old girl. I just kept on walking hoping nobody would notice.

That's all I can remember about grade 3 and 4. I don't have clear memories until grade 7. I hated school until I got to fly in my teacher's airplane for getting a certain number of red perfect stars in spelling. All I ever did that year was study words. I loved that teacher and remember him vividly. As life would have it I ended up teaching his daughter in Special Ed years later. It was the teacher that made the difference. I thought he was just wonderful. He made me feel ......I'm not sure.......feel somehow special......whatever it was that he did, it worked.

The positive feelings about school were short lived. I was terrified of my grade 8 teacher. Absolutely terrified. I can still feel the shame, the public humiliation. Especially if you were female and not sitting properly in your seat. You know how kids kind of slouch down in their seats. In those days the cool thing to do was to have your coat flipped over the back of your chair and slouch. He would say "Well, I think Lisa has pink underwear on today. I can see it. Does everybody know that?" Or he'd say things like," So you're from Brazil ....You're one of those nuts from Brazil." In Music class he made people stand up and sing. If you couldn't hold a tune like me, you'd be embarrassed in front of the other 35 students. When he'd ask me to sing I'd say no. He would get mad and his forehead would turn red and the vein would pop out. It almost became a joke to see if it would happen and it was easy for me to say no.

As Lisa and I reflected on these school experiences she spoke about memories as emotion. When she calls up these memories she feels the physical sensation of a kind of anguish. "Oh my God! Is he going to ask me something? Am I going to have to go through this again today?" She recalls the bitter sense of unfairness and the realization of the absolute power of the adult. Lisa explains: "That was the whole point, that there was this power, the power of the adult to do almost anything
with no recourse. In those days complaining to one's parents (which of course I did not do) there was no recourse to that either. The school was the authority structure. Once you stepped over that line and through the door you were in someone else's territory. There was definitely a sense of, this is not the place I want to be." (Interview, August 1994)

Lisa's stories of early school experience reveal much about her emerging philosophy as an educator. These stories focus on several key narrative threads which link Lisa's past experience to her current leadership practises. I see four interrelated strands that connect her present practise to early formative experience: The beginnings of a rebel, school as a place kids want to be, the power of the adult and glimmers of hope.

Lisa begins her story by proudly stating that her 80-year mother was a rebel in her time. Great respect for her mother surfaces again and again in Lisa's family stories. She later speaks about her mother, the vice principal, "pushing the envelope" during her career. In her tentative negative responses to the authoritarian music teacher we see the beginnings of similar rebellion simmering. As Lisa grew into her teens this rebellion was to find its own expression in outward defiance of the school system and family structures. This sense of herself as a rebel, a loner, one who sees herself differently, outside of the regular system (interview 9) is expressed clearly in later conversations with comments such as, "I'm just the old hippy crusader" and "I'm a cat person. I don't need the pack." When she first began working at the Autism unit she was proud of her team's offbeat reputation as "Lisa and the Supremes." Taking on an alternative school principalship was yet another way to see herself "as different from the system".

Lisa's image of school "as a place kids want to be" grew out of an alternate understanding of school as a place she did not want to be. Her experience as a nine-year-old student facing the culture shock of Canadian schools left her alienated and marginalized, outside of the system. Clinging daily to those steady pillars at the entrance to the school watching the others play, watching from the periphery, became a way to survive the unintentional cruelties of life in a school. This powerful childhood image has directed her work with children and teachers. In Lisa's words, "It's a wonderful experience regarding a child's perception... for me as a principal... It's so vivid in my mind still." As
a teacher researcher working actively with Lisa in two school settings, I have come to recognize this image as implicit in Lisa's understanding of her role. Never will a child in her care experience these feelings. Never will a child in her care experience the humiliation that she suffered at the hands of her Grade 8 teacher. Never will a teacher on her staff treat children in such disrespectful and demeaning ways.

The issue of power structures within a school community is voiced by Lisa in her intermediate years. As a young adolescent she recognizes bitterly the power of the adult and the powerlessness of children who have no recourse. This understanding stayed with her as she reached adulthood herself. It clung like a prickly burr, persistently irritating and scratching the surface when Lisa decided to go into teaching herself. It led her to explore alternative ways of being with children in a school setting. In her career as a teacher and principal she has tried to eradicate traditional lines of authority and power, to blur the hierarchical structures within classrooms and schools. Her first principalship at the board's flagship alternative school was an extension of this powerfully held image of a crusader for children’s rights.

Through these early stories filters a glimmer of hope and idealism about what teaching and schools can be about. Lisa's Grade 7 teacher stands out as someone who cared, someone who motivated her for the first time, someone who was wonderful, for reasons which are now lost in memory. The important thing was that teachers could make a difference. That fundamental understanding is revealed powerfully years later in her own practice as a principal supporting staff as they in turn struggle with the notion of making a difference in their students lives. In Chapter seven I tell about one such confirming experience with Lisa, an account entitled "Jason's Story."

The concept of a teacher's influence was first brought dramatically into play when Lisa's son was in elementary school. Coping with a learning disability, he also found school a place he didn't want to be. As a Special Education teacher Lisa was in a position to recognize his needs and advocate for his best interests with school personnel. The following story describes a critical incident for Lisa as she came into conflict with the school over her son's education and how this incident precipitated a major shift in her own career.
A Song from the Heart

It always comes back to my son. A heart felt connection, like a song from the heart which becomes the motivation to move to the principalship. You see, Peter had a learning disability, not with reading, but with expression of ideas, his vocal and written expression. Just at the time he was moving into the intermediate division I received unexpected encouragement to train for a principalship. I had been teaching Special Education courses at summer school and I guess people thought I had something to offer. My first reaction was, "A Principal? Who wants to be a principal?"

At this point a critical experience concerning the education of my son became a catalyst for change.

I remember the incident this way:

The Parent: My son has been diagnosed as having certain learning disabilities. How can we work together to help him learn?
The Teacher: I cannot be expected to adjust my program to fit any individual child. Peter must adjust to my program.
The Parent: I have spent my entire summer teaching teachers to do exactly that, to modify their programs.
The Teacher: No response.
The Parent rises cobra like from her chair becoming as tall as she can be. With seething composure she stalks from the room, glaring, with fire in her eyes. "You will hear from me again", she said. She meets with the principal.
The Parent: I am not pleased with this teacher's response. The 1978 Ministry memorandum on Learning Disabilities state that schools are expected to work with outside agencies and parents to help these students maximize their potential.
The Principal: There are so many memorandums. I don't read them.
The Parent: Well, I want you to read this one because it's my child!
The Principal: He is a good teacher. I'll just write on the O.S.R. that the mother has unrealistic expectations for her child.

And I left, shaking and bitterly angry.....I can remember every second of it. I remember what I was wearing. I could tell you everything, where he was sitting, what his desk looked like. It's one of those
moments that are etched, you never forget. I can flash back to the emotion in seconds. And the teacher...

I wanted his heart
torn from his chest
and delivered to me
to serve sliced
at the banquet of his wake!

I did contact a lawyer and I was ready to sue my own employer! However it was suggested that I first contact the Psychology Department of the board and the superintendent involved. These people took action and Peter's program was indeed modified. But it didn't end there. It never ends there.

I learned later from Peter that the teacher embarrassed him in class on a regular basis after the incident "Oh well, Peter's mother can get him out of anything."

So that became one of the key motivators in my move to become a principal. I thought, this is outrageous behavior on the part of the people who call themselves professionals. This is abuse. You just don't do this to people!

This story can be revisited from many perspectives. It gives insights into the way in which Lisa fell into her role as an administrator. It illustrates the validation of the child centered philosophy that drives Lisa's subsequent actions as a principal. The story highlights the feeling of anger and frustration experienced by a parent/teacher caught between defending her child's rights and criticizing her professional colleagues. It provides a view of conflicts on the professional knowledge landscape as Lisa struggles with her parental and professional responsibilities.

Lisa did not plan to become a principal. In a recent review of the literature on women in Canadian educational administration, Young (1994) suggests that this attitude is not atypical. Chance remarks, unexpected job openings and unsought role redefinitions were more likely to have precipitated the move to a principalship than a goal oriented quest for leadership. Young cites "the readiness to recognize and capitalize on unexpected opportunities was more characteristic than career planning." (p.359). Lisa had not storiied herself as an administrator and was quite content working in her field of Special Education until the chance remarks of respected colleagues at summer school and the
unexpected incident concerning her son. Suddenly the story changed and she began to actively pursue the leadership qualifications as a way of combatting what she saw as incompetent and unprofessional behavior. She knew she could do a better job for kids like her son. She knew she could do a better job for parents like herself. What might have remained a festering memory, a miseducative experience in Dewey's (1938) terms, became instead an opportunity for growth and change, an educative experience which nurtured curiosity and intellectual growth. This ability to turn negatives into positive challenges for change becomes a signature quality of Lisa's leadership as she continues to meet potentially negative situations in future years with resilience and flexibility.

Through Lisa's story of her own education and that of her son she articulates clearly the feelings of the child who is different, an outsider who is not understood or accepted by teachers or peers. We feel her anger and frustration as a parent whose needs for herself and her son are not being heard. We begin to understand the roots of her strong feelings of fairness and equality for all members of a school community. As a teacher herself Lisa was comfortable with these concepts in her classroom but the telling incident with school administration crystallized the realization that she could do something about it at a school wide level. She could provide an educational climate in which all children would be respected. She could ensure that the diverse needs of all students be met. No one would ever be treated like her son. She could construct an environment in which parent's voices were heard and respected. No parent would ever be dismissed as she had been.

This goal was to be easily accomplished in her first appointment at a small cohesive alternate school where the mission statement emphasizing child-centred learning had been mutually constructed by parents and staff previous to her arrival. It was in this environment that Lisa and Rebecca began to work together in 1991/92 and Lisa's image of what a school community could be was to powerfully shape Rebecca's first years as a new teacher. The goal of children first-curriculum second, was not as easily accomplished in her second placement at Millside School where the school story embraced a philosophy of set curriculum materials and grade expectations into which children were to fit. As Rebecca and Lisa moved to Millside School together in 1993/94, they will both experience a kind of culture shock as they face the moral dilemma of reconciling their child centered philosophy with a school story in which teachers and curriculum were the central characters. The
subsequent shifts in their professional knowledge landscapes and the new stories they created and lived out on that landscape are described in chapter four.

If we examine this story from the perspective of conflict on the professional knowledge landscape we understand how closely the the landscapes of personal and professional life are interwoven. Lisa was called to respond to a situation which placed her in juxtaposing positions on the landscape. As a parent who was also a teacher she addressed the problem of her son's program from an informed special education background. She knew intellectually and morally what needed to be done for her son. When this request was summarily dismissed she was caught in the dilemma of competing professional loyalties. As a parent she stood on the boundaries of the professional knowledge landscape, her voice not heard. As a teacher within the landscape she was dismayed by the lack of knowledge and understanding demonstrated by her colleagues. If she acted as a "professional" she would not make trouble for her peers upholding the long held attitude of closed union ranks and protectionism. On the other hand, as a parent she could make her voice heard by calling superintendents, board members and even the media. A parent who takes these extreme measures can be labelled a trouble maker and carries that school story with them as they move through the system. Lisa's decision to make trouble, to break ranks, demonstrates her advocacy not only for her son but for all children. She didn't care about making waves in the system. She didn't care about hierarchies or the socially appropriate thing to do. She sought legal advice and was fully prepared to sue the board, her own employer. Through her actions Lisa was in a sense shaping the professional knowledge landscape of that school in a new way. She was establishing a new school story by refusing to accept the way things had been done in the past.

Lisa would not have described her position as one of conflicting positions on the landscape but rather a case of, what is best for the child? She chose her solution based on what was best for Peter, not for herself, not for the reputation of her colleagues. As she and I reflected on the experience I recognized how often similar dilemmas occur for those of us who are in the dual role of parent and teacher often at the same school. Because of Lisa's experience with this conflict of personal and professional responsibility she can empathize with the adult concerns while pointing directly to the needs of the child. Emerging from the critical incident regarding her son are important narrative strands in Lisa's
professional story. We see how a potentially negative experience is transformed into a new beginning. We understand the roots of Lisa's fiercely held belief about children first and see it played out in her actions at Peter's school.

**The Age of Innocence: The Halverston Story**

When Lisa speaks about her move to her first principalship at a small Alternative School, her face lights up and she radiates the excitement of her first school. She views that time as couched in special beginnings which held a kind of innocence and wonder. The next story, The Age of Innocence, is written from the perspective of a parent at the school, myself, followed by Lisa's impressions of that first year.

At the time Lisa was promoted to a vice-principalship she was still firmly entrenched in the world of Special Education and had gained administrative experience by being a program supervisor. She comments that her route to administration was atypical in that she was a vice principal for only a year when she saw the advertisement for the principalship at Halverston Primary Alternative School. Again a series of chance events led her to believe she should jump into this challenging opportunity. She had heard competing stories of the alternative school from both parents and teachers who happened to be friends. She understood the possibilities of an alternative school environment and thought it was something she'd like to know more about. Many of Lisa's colleagues were wary of entering the alternative school milieu because of the strong parental involvement in all areas of school life. Lisa understood that she was an outsider coming to the principalship through Special Education rather than the regular system. In fact when she received the appointment another vice-principal who had not been promoted expressed wonder at how Lisa would have the experience to manage an alternative school. Lisa ruefully recalls being considered "a flake" because she sought the position.

**Reflections from a Parent**

*To understand Lisa's experience in the professional knowledge landscape of Halverston, one must*
gain a feel for the sense of place and time the school reflects. To portray this sense of place, I evoke sensory recollections of my reactions as a new parent within the school community. The images are clear in my mind. It was Lisa's second year as a principal when my son began four year old kindergarten. The school bus dropped him off at a small two story red brick building just off a busy thoroughfare in an older residential section of the city. The building hugged the sidewalk with a tiny brown patch of playground edging the street. The quiet faded bricks and rundown appearance of the ninety-year-old structure give few clues as to the vibrant happenings inside. I recall visiting the school often that year, feeling an immediate quality of warmth and comfort in the building. As a resource teacher with access to many schools I had the opportunity to compare and distinguish between those intangible qualities that give a school its peculiar identity. At Halverston a positive energy permeates the building. This energy is made visible by halls filled with childrens' art work and stories, murals and charts which actually change weekly. The downstairs hall opens up to three bright kindergarten classrooms, a tiny office and library. Upstairs four more multi-aged classrooms cluster on the second floor. Children spill out of the rooms sprawled in the hallways with parent volunteers supervising their busy group activities. One group is carefully tracing life-sized figures of their friends on the floor amid much hilarity. Another boisterous pair is striding down the hall measuring the distance of their steps. A team of senior students, Gr.3's, carefully balance a tray full of freshly baked pretzels on their way downstairs to the custodian's office. Here the traditional school story of punishment by standing in the hall takes on an alternative twist. The hall becomes an extension of the class room to push the boundaries of four walls to the limitless space of the whole building. The traditional school story of segregated closed door classrooms is incongruous in this openness. Through the eyes of a four year old it was a wonderful place to be. I recall my son's look of proud accomplishment when he explained how he and a friend had taken a message all the way up the big stairs to the second floor "all by their selves."

The classrooms all look like kindergarten rooms brimming with activity centres, carpets and play areas. Reading centres curl up in corners with worn sofas and huge stuffed floor pillows. And children everywhere. Moving comfortably, with confidence, through their school. And adults everywhere, parents, co-op students, student teachers, teaching assistants, community senior volunteers. Interacting with children, helping, listening, mediating. And somewhere, rarely at the
centre, the teachers, orchestrating this organized chaos of multiple activity. The teachers, most within their first years of teaching. The only teachers who wanted to work in this alternative school setting.

Lisa's office is like a cave, a small cramped space that overflows with books and paper. Its darkness is softly illuminated by a single table lamp set amid the clutter. Letters and pictures from students haphazardly placed, dominate the bulletin board, obscuring what look like official board memos. My image of Lisa at that time however is not situated in this office but in the halls and classrooms of the school. As she walks the halls her presence is strongly felt. It is a large presence, calm and flowing. She wears softly draped exuberant fabrics that move rhythmically as she strolls with measured steps, her tall frame exaggerating the floating quality of her fluid movement. I hear her laughter and the warmth in her voice as she stops to talk to students and parents. I feel the ready touch of her arm around a child's shoulder or a focussing hand cupped under a child's chin. Ms. Stone was an important person the children each knew. Once when I was in the front hall a small boy pointed proudly to a faded 19th century photograph of Lady Halverston gracing the foyer and announced, "That's a picture of Ms. Stone when she was young!" There was a positive aura about this principal that intrigued me even then from my position as a parent. There was something quite different about this school and I was glad our family was part of it.

A New Principal's Reflections

"My first year as a principal was pure joy. Pure heaven. It was like a love affair that you'll always remember, a first love affair. Halverston was a coming together of many things in my own career path. It was like coming home, like being a hippie again in the 60's. It was working with people, parents I understood and who understood me. We were the same generation. Some of the parents I had actually double dated with. It was just unbelievable that these people who I had known so well for so long had finally had their own children and I was the one to look after their children. We had all grown up and they had families, different families and here I was and I was responsible for their kids during the day. It was an honour. It was a privilege. It was wonderful. We joked about how I had changed my looks; that I dressed in a costume every day to look like a principal and that on
Hallowe'en, in my flowered jeans and beaded vest, I looked like Lisa!

You see, when the personality of the community and the personality of the principal is congruent, then you have a like-minded culture. A congruency exists that is powerful. Because I've known and experienced that joy, it was a beginning and an ending all in one. It will never ever be the same kind of beginning again. It will always be different, not less powerful, just different.

(Interviews, November & December, 1994)

Lisa's image of her first principalship is one of joy. Her first six months are like a love affair. Her excitement and satisfaction stem from a perceived congruence between herself and the community. In these reflections there is no talk of alternative school policy or curriculum implementation but rather the importance of relationship. There is a sense of responsibility for children, a maternal ownership of her first school. It is interesting that Lisa's memories of the school lie first with the parents. We see here the threads of continuity reaching back to the incident with her son where the voices of parents were silenced by the school bureaucracy. Lisa understood that parents formed an integral part of her concept of the ideal school community. Within the small school setting at Halverston, Lisa was able to establish the kind of relationships embedded in her vision of school as "a place kids wanted to be," as a place where parents' voices could be heard, as a place where teachers shared her joy in working with children. For that magical first year Lisa's professional knowledge landscape was filled with people who shared her vision and purpose. She marvelled at how comfortable she felt in her new role, how easily embraced was this beginning. It was an age of innocence, the rosy blush of a first love affair. The harsh reality of incongruence and discordant expectations typical of so many first year experiences was delayed until Lisa moved away from the alternate school environment four years later, to the established conservatism of Millside where within a few short months she was closed off in her spacious well-appointed office, "slowly dying inside."

As Lisa and I reconstructed the beginnings and endings embedded in the first years at Halverston and explored the contrasts encountered at her second school, she described her experience through an artistic metaphor, suggesting that Halverston was a painting by Monet while Millside was
embodied by the imagery of an Escher. Fascinated, I asked her to say more but the image had faded and words were inadequate to express her tentative thoughts. Months later she hesitantly presented me with a piece of writing which she felt captured the essence of the metaphor.

_Monet_.....
_Escher_.....

*Monet is soft, gentle, blended*
*blue*
*green*
*peaceful*

*Escher is sharp angular*
*black*
*white*
*mystifying*

*With Monet, there are dreams, sighs, warm hugs*
*Escher jolts, shocks, startles*
*Monet floats, erases the edges*
*soothes the pain*
*Escher's bite attracts, repels, pushes and pulls*
*both are bold*
*deep*
*draw in the mind*
*both have passion*

*and now..... today.......*
*it is like having two lovers*
*Monet and Escher*
*both wonderful.......*

I include this reflection because it reveals Lisa's attempt to frame the conflicting experiences in a way that ultimately reconciles their differences by recognizing, respecting and comparing the particular qualities of each situation. Deriving meaning from experience through a visual metaphor, Lisa creates images that invite us to enter into her experience from an intensely personal and sensory perspective. She invites us to understand the emotional context of each school by leading us into the dichotomous landscapes of Monet and Escher, landscapes shared by Rebecca and me as we explored our endings and beginnings at the two schools.
Rebecca's stories of experience are also filled with metaphor and imagery as she recounts both her challenges and successes as a new teacher. To place myself in relation to Rebecca I introduce her by again composing a personal letter which pulls together the strands of our shared experience. I select and present several key stories, "gesture drawings" through which the reader may catch a glimpse of Rebecca's perception of her world.

September 1995

Dear Rebecca,

Sorting out the strands of our relationship over the past six years has confirmed that certain lives are indeed interwoven with the potential of many serendipitous connections. My stories of you situate you variously in the role of a student teacher at the education faculty, a new teacher in the teacher induction program, my son's grade two teacher, a substitute teacher colleague, a teacher colleague and most recently as a collaborative research participant. Your new role as a parent adds yet another chapter as we share stories of our own children.

The year I taught you at the faculty was 1990-1991. I was back at university doing my Master's full time and had been asked to teach part-time in the teacher education program. Because I taught Visual Arts to all the Primary Junior students, I didn't really know names, just faces. The interesting thing is that I have a clear recollection of you in those classes. It wasn't that you were any more artistic, in fact you later said that the material I was teaching was brand new for you. It was the quality of your attention and focus that made you stand out. You had an ability to be completely in the situation and through some intangible means made yourself more real than just an anonymous student. I recall your visual presence being equally striking with your jeans jacket uniform and long red hair.

When I first met you I had an intuitive sense that our paths would cross again, that you would become a character in my stories and I in yours. I have experienced this feeling of premonition with others. It's like a sense of clarity, a heightened reality, a signal that demands my attention to this new person. So it was with a sense of natural familiarity I learned that you would be Matthew's Grade Two teacher. My memories of that year surface within several different contexts, first the
stories from Matthew who of course, thought you were wonderful. As I recall he engaged you in some extremely personal conversations about the facts of life which you handled with great wisdom and sensitivity. He loved your class. The split grade 1-2 allowed him to take on leadership roles and school was a new adventure every day. The stories a child tells at home can be quite revealing. Two years after he had been in your class Matthew spontaneously told a teacher story of you that captures much of your way of being with children. Matthew told it this way when we were at a bookstore in Toronto looking at a display of Big Books for Primary children.

We made Big books like these in Grade Two with Miss Sorento. The funniest thing happened. Karina made a big book but she didn't want to write the whole story so she put one letter on each page instead of writing the story. When it was her turn to share her book Miss Sorento didn't know what to do. Then Tyler said,"well that's just stupid. Karina didn't do it right" and Miss Sorento said,"It's just wonderful what you've done Karina. Look at all those big letters. Maybe next time you could make a whole word on each page." That's just like Miss Sorento. She was always, always nice.

Matthew's recollection speaks directly to qualities that you possessed as a new teacher. Respecting each child's effort was important. Seeing positive qualities in a potentially negative situation seemed to be a natural response. This quality of niceness perceived by Matthew was to cause conflicts for you as you struggled that first year with classroom management strategies, caught in the dilemma between your student's individual rights and group responsibilities.

That year I coordinated the new teacher induction program and had a chance to see you interact with your peers in workshop situations. Knowing now about the utter desperation you felt during your first four months of teaching, I wonder at the calm confident persona you presented publicly at that time. Nobody recognized the "out of control feelings" you were experiencing. My sense is that you had created cover stories for yourself to protect your new professional image and those of us who might have gotten beneath those stories and offered support did not understand what was happening. These kinds of cover stories are not uncommon for teachers, especially new teachers, as high expectations and reality collide. You name this significant story of your first year "The Empty Vessel." Through this collaborative research we will reconstruct that story to gain a more
meaningful understanding of that time and what roles Lisa and I might have played.

After Christmas that year things fell into place for you and the classroom became comfortably yours. Just as you were gaining a sense of identity as a competent teacher, you and 100 others were laid off by the board. Just as "the puzzle pieces were beginning to come together" a change forced you to reconsider your career options. Unlike some of your peers you took the crisis in stride and attempted to make the lay off a positive opportunity rather than an ending. Becoming an active substitute teacher that second year, you welcomed the new learning situations you faced each day. Your professional knowledge landscape expanded and diversified as you worked in many different schools. That year, 1992-93, I was back in the alternative school at the intermediate level and we worked together on several occasions as you filled in for various team members. You were interested in finding out about grade 7 and 8's and they responded well to your easy non-confrontational style. You observed with surprise that they were just like grade 2's in big bodies! The stories from this time describe how your professional learning was enriched through this interim year.

When we met again in 1994-95 at Millside School, I was the newcomer. You had been recalled by the board a year earlier to a special education position within the Autistic unit at Millside. Your job was highly specialized, teaching five primary children with autism and your unit was quite self contained and somewhat isolated within the larger school. Through our collaborative research we maintained our contact and I learned about autism by observing your class, sitting in on team meetings and listening to you and Lisa share your experiences as teachers of children with Autism. Although, Lisa, you and I all hold different positions on our current landscape our mutually constructed stories of experience reveal connections on that landscape and give meaning to the complex matrix of relationships that constitute a school environment. We have each broadened our own professional horizons by learning about another's place on the landscape. We have learned more about beginnings and endings on those landscapes. The original focus of the study was to be your beginnings as a new teacher and how those repeated beginnings and the acquisition of professional knowledge were influenced by Lisa. By exploring those issues we also discovered the interconnections between our personal histories, our current practises, the particular school workplace and the role of others in understanding our professional knowledge landscapes. My
daunting task is to represent authentically the stories we have told and retold together as part of this research, in a compelling way that allows our telling voices to be heard. My job at another level is to re-present our voices. As the researcher, I interpret what has been spoken and reframe it within the educational context. As I write up our narrative accounts I will share them with you and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Fran

While expecting to work with children in some capacity Rebecca had not immediately thought of teaching as a career. No one in her family had been to university and it was not a family expectation. College seemed a more likely goal so she applied for the Early Childhood Education Program and was accepted the second time round in 1981-82. The whole time she was in the program she "felt like a puzzle piece out of place" because of the different culture of those who were in day care settings. She was aware of a "whole history of the day care lingo and structure" that she was not a part of. As a requirement for the program she had a two-month kindergarten placement at Halverston Primary Alternative School where she felt an immediate sense of team and professionalism. This placement, ten years prior to her first teaching assignment at the same school, was to open the doors of opportunity several months later.

Hired at a local day care center that fall, she felt that it was an "O.K. job, but just a job." The job unfortunately stretched from 7:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. on several days a week when there were evening meetings. Two weeks into her new position Rebecca quit her job at the day care in what she described as a most unlikely decision. She had been offered a position as a teaching assistant at Halverston and although she felt some surprise at "going back on a commitment" she was immediately comfortable in her new field and "loved being there every day." Working in a team-teaching situation with two very experienced teachers she was responsible for the special needs of a hearing impaired child. For three years Rebecca assisted this team, officially working and being paid for a five-hour work day. In fact she loved the job so much she began to work the team's normal hours of 7:30 A.M. - 5:30 P.M. "just to be there, to get ready for the day". This position was to play a significant role in Rebecca's story of teacher development. I recount the following story in
Rebecca's words, spoken over time through several interview sessions in which issues of name and identity became inextricably entwined with this first school assignment. I call this story "Mrs Sorento."

Mrs. Sorento

I can remember some very clear beginnings associated with my new name, Mrs. Sorento. When I took the job as a teaching assistant, I was newly married and wondering whether or not I should be feeling different because I had a new name. Was I a different person? I had to keep checking to make sure. Getting married was easy because we'd been together since high-school but changing my name....that was significant. At the day care I was just Rebecca but from the first day I worked as a teaching assistant I was introduced to the class as Mrs. Sorento. Gillian and Gerry made me feel a part of their team that first day just by doing that. "Boys and Girls, this is Mrs. Sorento." It had such a wonderful sound. Using my last name showed a degree of respect, a kind of formality. It became empowering. The teachers could have maximized their hierarchical position to minimize mine, to make me feel like an underling. Instead, all notions of power were eliminated in that situation by simply calling me Mrs. Sorento. Our status was equalized. They made me feel like a team player in the staff office by bringing in another desk. My own desk, with my name Mrs. Sorento. Three desks, three on the team. I was as much a part of them, a part of the team as I could imagine. When we planned it was always," What do you think Rebecca? What ideas do you have?"

Joan in particular was the key motivator for my getting into teaching. In my second year with them, she began to make comments about my going back to school to get my university degree so that I could qualify for teaching. And my name... Well, right from day one, thirty little children and two staff members called me Mrs. Sorento. I heard it all day long and it became a part of me.

Because this story is important to Rebecca, I have attempted to understand and interpret it within the context of her ongoing professional narrative. The story, while simple on the surface, holds symbolic meaning for Rebecca and it is through her telling that these meanings are shared. Rebecca's story of naming gives insights into her strong belief in a sense of team and professional identity. In the E.C.E. program and day care placements she did not feel valued as part of a team and found the
culture unfamiliar. At Halverston she found a situation and colleagues who valued her contributions and encouraged her to enter teaching as a profession. While Rebecca was exploring a new stage of adult development as a new wife who had chosen to take her husband's name, her sense of professional identity was enhanced by the attitude of her co-workers. Her name became a symbol for the growth and development in both her personal and professional life. The third desk acted as a physical reflection of a team while the naming issue, in Rebecca's words, "laid the groundwork for our relationship" and was an emotional marker, a small yet significant event in Rebecca's development as a teacher. When Rebecca arrives at her crucial first year of teaching this sense of team will not be present in the same way. Losing her hard won sense of identity she finds herself isolated in insecurity for the first four months. Interestingly it is the image of Gillian, her first true mentor which provides "a yardstick of what a teacher should be." This image keeps her going while "the puzzle pieces are out of place."

This notion of puzzle pieces being in and out of place helps Rebecca to articulate how she sees herself coping with the task of becoming a teacher. During our research Rebecca often spoke in terms of this puzzle metaphor stating that she "found it an easy metaphor to grasp when things were going haywire." She visualized herself "being like a puzzle, all mixed up." Another time she referred to "the pieces gradually fitting together." She often used a puzzle analogy to bring "some semblance of organization and control to a situation where (she) could say, remember it's just like a puzzle not yet put together. It will come together eventually." When she saw the metaphor surfacing in the stories and transcripts, she positioned it within the context of childhood memory recalling that puzzles had always fascinated her, especially difficult ones. As a small child she had loved putting together the mixed up pieces of Winnie-the-Pooh and Jungle Book. She remembers a sense of significance, accomplishment and pride in completing the most challenging puzzles. When I asked in which stage of a puzzle she would feel most comfortable, however, it was not the final action of fitting in the last connecting piece but that pivotal moment when she could see things beginning to come together, when she could visualize the whole.

My favourite spot in life or a puzzle is right when I finally realize that something is just out of sorts now but it will come back together. The middle state is best. The beginning can be a scary stage but
it always goes from unorganized to organized, from out of control to control. When the pieces are all together it is comfortable but I usually realize that it won't be that way for long.

(Conversation, May 1995)

As our triad reflected on Rebecca's naming story later, we agreed that the issue of names did mirror the perceived hierarchy in schools. Teaching assistants, care staff and lunch room assistants are often called by their first names by students, a gesture which on the surface seems comfortably informal but what messages are we really sending? Teachers and administration are rarely addressed by first names. Status is conferred to those who use their surnames. In Rebecca's case this equal status as an integral part of the school team was an important determinant framing her sense of self. She was to draw upon this experience when she was responsible for teaching assistants in her special education classroom.

This story also highlights the way in which place influences Rebecca's experience as a teacher. A two-month random placement at Halverston provides the opportunity for a three-year teaching assistant position which in turn several years later opens the door for her first teaching contract at the same school. The stories of Rebecca's first years of teaching are linked by threads of continuity to her past history at Halverston School. This recycling of relationships, all part of what Bateson calls, "composing our lives", becomes a central theme in Rebecca's professional and personal growth. People surface, drift away and resurface in new contexts weaving their way through Rebecca's stories of experience yet she has a strong inner sense of continuity and stability. A story, told by Rebecca about a vividly recalled incident from her adolescence reveals this quality of strength. The story was told to Lisa and me as an example of a significant beginning.

Beginnings of Self

I remember very clearly sitting alone somewhere. I don't know where...It's more a feeling than an event. But I was saying to myself "I'm as mature today as I'm ever going to be." And there's a sense that has stuck with me about that understanding. Not that I didn't have a long way to go after that
point but there was a sense inside of me that I had acquired a new understanding and life was.... I was almost putting something away and stepping into another realm. I knew I was young, probably 13 or 14 at the time so I knew I wasn't an adult but I also had this other sense that I've got some kind of new understanding somehow. And that's going to be with me from now on. And when I look back, maybe I haven't changed much since then, in my thinking about people, how I would treat them, how I would view them.....It was an empowering feeling because I felt comfortable with it. It was a little weird I thought, to have that idea come into my mind, but it was O.K. at the same time. It was... well then... this is where I start. This is me, as mature as I'm ever going to be. This is a very odd thing for a teenager to think but there it is. When I think back I realize that the way I began to deal with things then is the same way I deal with things now. There was nothing traumatic in my teen years to handle just the everyday routine...but I clearly remember thinking that if this is all life is going to throw at me, I can handle it! (Constructed from transcript notes, interview 8, November 1994)

Rebecca will draw on this strength as she assumes her first position at Halverston and finds herself dealing with unexpected stories of teaching. As she moves through her first few erratic years of teaching we will see how she creates her unique professional knowledge landscape in response to her present situation drawing on her stories of the past to establish her professional sense of self. We will become aware of a quiet rhythm of experience which Rebecca describes so well in her analogy of life as a puzzle, a rhythm which allows her to deal with times of uncertainty, knowing she will eventually understand the whole picture. I am reminded of Dewey's (1934) words:

Life grows when a temporary falling out is a transition to a more extensive balance of the energies of the organism with those of the conditions under which it lives... For only when an organism shares in the ordered relations of its environment does it secure the stability essential to living. And when the participation comes after a phase of disruption and conflict it bears within itself the germs of a consummation akin to the esthetic. (p.14,15)

Through Rebecca's stories of experience we will begin to understand how she seeks to find a balance within the context of her teaching life. We will share in her times of disruption and discord and learn how she establishes harmony within her particular and changing professional landscape. Like Lisa, she conceptualises metaphorical images of the various educational landscapes in which she began.
her career. Comparing Halverston and Millside she describes the warmth of antiques in contrast to the coldness of modern design. She explains her analogy:

*I love antiques and that's how I think of Halverston, as an antique. The brick building itself, the architecture and the warmth that comes with it. The history, the familiarity. When you look at an antique you imagine. This was someone's aunt who slept in this bed or who opened these dresser drawers all the time; there's a story behind it, the touch, the feel of an antique. There's something about it. I feel there is a warmth like this that is part of my history at Halverston. I see Millside as ugly and modern, ugly tiles in the front lobby, that dated mural that no one looks at, no history, no touch.* (Transcript notes, April 1996.)

I found it intriguing that both women describe the two schools using aesthetic metaphorical language; Lisa compares the contrasting settings to a Monet set against the drawings of Escher while Rebecca defines the sites in terms of her sensory responses to antique and modern artifacts. I have a sense that it is not merely the physical characteristics of a particular building which are revealed through these analogies but rather it is the total context of the experience which is encapsulated in a few key phrases. It is the meaning of that experience which the research seeks to unravel and make accessible for other educators.

In this chapter I have introduced the participants through letters and stories of experience. I have tried to give a beginning sense of my relationship with Lisa and Rebecca within the school contexts we have shared. I now move to a more detailed account of Rebecca's first year of teaching, 1991/92. It is in this year that the professional lives of Lisa, Rebecca and I intersect for the first time and the stories of those connections are told in the next chapter.
Chapter Four

Connections on the Professional Knowledge Landscape

At the edge of every experience is the refracted light of recollection, snagged there like an image in a beveled mirror.

(The Stone Diaries, Carol Shields, 1993, p.175)

In this chapter the stories of Rebecca, Lisa and me come together as Rebecca begins her first year of teaching in 1991/92. The chapter is the story of a novice teacher coming to understand and know herself and others within the school community and is constructed from Rebecca's stories of that difficult first year and our connections within those accounts. I attempt to build a sense of Rebecca's emerging professional knowledge landscape by allowing her teaching stories to shape the flow of events as she examines the year in retrospect through her journals, conversation and story telling. As a picture of Rebecca's unique landscape is created, it interacts with the landscapes of Lisa and me as our professional paths converge. Lisa was Rebecca's first principal while I was the co-coordinator of a New Teacher Induction program for our Board as well as the mother of a child in Rebecca's class. I describe and interpret how Lisa and I were involved with Rebecca's professional growth and development by exploring the perspectives of all three research participants.

The data which provided the basis for the story of chapter five is presented in a variety of ways: narrative explanations of the chronology of events, direct quotations, stories constructed by me from interview transcripts and observations, stories and letters composed by Rebecca and Lisa, and my letters of response to participant accounts. Each narrative strategy seeks to portray in its particular and unique way, an element of Rebecca's experience, congruent with its form. As Eisner (1991) explains:

Any report of the world has to take some form and be carried by some symbol system... within a single symbol system there are unique constraints and unique possibilities. Because any symbol system both reveals and conceals, its use provides of necessity a partial view of the reality it is intended to describe or depict. In fact the form we select is constitutive of the understanding we acquire: the medium is a part of the message. (p.46)
In making the writing decisions about the representation of Rebecca and Lisa's experience, I am guided in the selection of material and choice of form by a constructivist approach to meaning making. Meaning is not given to an individual directly through experience or textual forms but is rather constructed by the reader as he/she interacts with the text. The reader brings to the text a wealth of prior experience; personal history, ideas, practices and contextual situation will all influence the interpretation and understanding of the various text forms. By purposely varying the ways in which the participants' experience is represented in the text, I offer alternate routes into the process of coming to understand the meaning of the first year experience for a new teacher and her administrator. The narrative elements selected as stories, accounts or letters with their emphasis on the particular detailed accounts of experience are connected by my researcher's commentary in which I elicit themes, patterns and images relating to the landscape metaphor, building a sense of narrative coherence. Using Eisner's terms, I seek, while recognizing the unique constraints of a symbol system of language, to explore its unique possibilities in making visible the experience of another.

I begin by setting the context for Rebecca's arrival at Halverston, describing our first professional encounters. I then move to a series of stories which contrast Rebecca's position on the professional knowledge landscape with my system-wide perspective. Of central importance in the chapter is Rebecca's story of the Director's visit which becomes a symbol of the first year experience. From Rebecca's accounts, I trace the notion of "stories of expectation" and how through her first year experience, those stories were changed and revised. The chapter goes on to explore the concept of cover stories told by Rebecca to her students, her colleagues, her principal and herself as she negotiates her place on the professional landscape.

**Beginning at Halverston**

Rebecca was hired as a primary teacher at Halverston in June of 1991 when the story of the old building was reaching its final chapter. During the month of June she worked as a supply teacher helping staff organize students and supplies for the move across town to an empty vocational high school. Halverston was to be torn down and an elegant new building was to be constructed on the
original site. The staff had mixed feelings about the move. The building held special first year memories for most of them, yet they recognized the benefits the new structure would eventually present. Because most of the staff were first year teachers, they were flexible about the move, anxious to clear out the old classrooms with their years of anonymous accumulated clutter and get on with arranging their own space in the temporary building. Their emotional investment in the building was not as strong as that of their administrator and the practicalities of the move predominated their attention. For Lisa, the move from the old building was invested with deeper significance; it was the end of an age of innocence, the end of an era. She recollects her feelings at the time:

_Endings are profound for me. It was a difficult ending, when the school was to be torn down. I loved that little school and it had been a big beginning for me. When it was being torn down I couldn't watch, couldn't even drive by. Fortunately some people took pictures, Rebecca among them and I remember seeing the pictures later on when I was ready. Some of the families understood. We were practically weeping on each other's shoulders about it. We understood the loss and it was a really strong dynamic. But for me it was so much more than the love of an old building. It had been a major beginning, the achievement of a goal which was to become a principal and now it was a major ending. It was you know, the 60's are over, for me, finally. Now we're getting into the conservative big-time._

Lisa anticipated that the move to the downtown site would herald the end of the rather isolated, special existence the Primary Alternative School had enjoyed for the first five years of its history. The school population was to be larger in the temporary building with the addition of a Junior Division and fifty intermediates who were to pilot the alternative intermediate school, housed at Halverston. The teachers also realized that the idyllic days of intimacy and comfort in the familiar surroundings of Halverston would be radically changed at the new site that was located on a main thoroughfare next to a Macdonald's in a commercial section of the downtown core. The building, originally designed for teenagers pursuing vocational training, was a large cavern lined with bleak, rectangular sub-size classrooms and huge technical shop facilities. Not only would their physical surroundings present a major challenge but the intimacy of staff contact would be altered with the
addition of new staff and new programs. As teachers dealt with the anxiety these anticipated changes precipitated for themselves, they also calmed the fears of the children and parents who had become so used to their familiar environment. The change meant bussing for many students and some parents were apprehensive about the busy commercial location of the temporary site. Rebecca recalls the awkward feeling of being connected with the newly hired teachers, being considered a part of what she called "the new, bad, BIG" school environment. Rebecca was joining a staff in the process of changing a school story and she would become a part of the new chapter.

In the midst of this tension and flurry of activity in June, an outbreak of lice occurred, an epidemic of sorts into which Rebecca arrived as a prospective new teacher. I arrived as well, as a volunteer parent, a teacher who could spell off the exhausted staff for an art lesson or two while they dealt with the lice, the upset parents or just packed boxes. Having just completed a year of leave for my Master's in Education, I was supply teaching, to augment my year of no income. No one ever talks about lice in academic papers yet at both schools in which Rebecca was to begin her career, the story of lice takes on significance. At Halverston the lice situation and its resolution drew the staff together while at Millside lice became a tense, divisive issue.

At Halverston the outbreak was widespread with distraught parents being called to pick up lice-infected children, collect appropriate health advisories and take the students home for treatment. As one of those parents I must admit the anticipation of delousing my Grade one son and daughter in kindergarten was not an appealing prospect. Parents, normally congenial and supportive, whisked their children away with glares of accusation for both staff and other parents. The young, energetic staff, new to this side of teaching not covered in Faculty curricula, took the role of Lice Brigade in stride, somewhat bemused at the stress it was causing parents. Being alternative teachers they were soon integrating lice into the program, joking about lice being a part of the enrolment package. The primary staff designed a whole math project based on the multiplication of lice. But the pressure was taking its inevitable toll set amidst the physical disruptions of moving. Rebecca and I were both called in by Lisa to support the staff in whatever ways we could.

Rebecca and I reintroduced ourselves. I had taught her at the faculty earlier that year and was
delighted that she had been hired so quickly. We worked as a team for several days moving from class to class giving the teachers time to deal with the exigencies of the move and lice. Rebecca knew the children as she had been volunteering and supply teaching for several months to get herself known at the school. Acting in a supporting role as I led the art activities, Rebecca quietly and confidently assisted individual children, redirecting their attention and effectively keeping them on task. We were drawing huge clown faces, each child trying out different expressions and clown makeup in their own work. I was surprised at how well we worked as a team considering our brief hierarchical professor/student relationship. Rebecca read the situation well and knew intuitively what needed to be done. She seemed to be in tune with the children and my way of teaching them. I recall our lively discussion at the lunch break as we shared the strengths and weaknesses of the program at the Faculty.

My story of Rebecca at that time was of a beginning teacher who was confident and prepared to start her career. My son Matthew was to be in her age six-seven class and I had no reservations about his placement. Because Rebecca had a history at the school through her work as a teaching assistant and later as a supply teacher, she seemed to embrace and understand the particular school story of Halverston. Little did Rebecca or I know how her story of herself was to be shaken when she assumed the responsibility of her own class, how her imagined stones of success were to be shattered by the experience of that first term.

I begin Rebecca's story by presenting an account of her Grandfather's death, an event which has become inextricably linked with her difficult first term. I have composed the written version of the story from Rebecca's oral telling (Interview, September 1994) and have attempted to retain her voice and cadence of language throughout my interpretation.

**Grandfather: Rebecca's Story of Term One**

*My grandfather was ill all during that first fall. We knew he would probably die. I was full of anxiety. I won't know what to do if he dies. How do I ask for time off? How do I get time off? I couldn't even imagine the shape of my next day until minutes before. How could I plan for a supply*
teacher to be there? How could I arrange my day and not be there? I can still feel the weight of that stress and uncertainty. He died in November. I loved my grandfather and we were very close. The funeral was on November 23, which happened to be a P.D. day. I remember being overwhelmed with relief that I could go to the funeral and not worry about planning for my class. Grief and relief, all muddled up in my head. It was an awakening for me to realize how desperate I was. Here I was talking about my grandfather, somebody dear to my heart, my life and I didn't know how to be away!

It was at this point that I recognized this was not the way I wanted to live the year. I knew I had to get my act in gear. But I didn't know how. It was the legalities of it all. What exactly must you write down for a supply teacher? I mean, I think I had a supply teacher package from Lisa at that point but it didn't help. My day was taking me three days to plan. It was taking me three whole days to plan just one day, so how could I write that down for someone? It wasn't organized enough to write on paper. When I say, "it's circle time", I know in my head what needs to be organized, where to seat each child, this one here, that one over there, all for a reason. I know who to ask to give things out, who to direct, who to encourage. But that isn't easy to write down. I simply didn't know how to go about giving all that information. How much detail should I include? Was this problem exclusive to my alternative class or was it just me? I simply didn't know. So I was never away. I kept pushing myself. I lost twenty pounds. I felt my body was dying inside but I was never away. I felt I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown but I was never away.

Rebecca's story of the dilemma surrounding her grandfather's death provides telling insights into the way in which a novice teacher coped with a personal crisis attempting to balance her personal and professional responsibilities. The story reveals important details about the basic needs of new teachers and how they receive and process information. The emotional isolation, pain and uncertainty experienced by Rebecca paint a bleak professional knowledge landscape full of questions and unresolved tensions. Rebecca's situation also raises uncomfortable questions about the existing support systems in place for her at that time, systems that both Lisa and I were officially facilitating at the school and system level.

When Rebecca told her story to Lisa and me last year, I was deeply saddened and angry at the same
time. The poignant simplicity of her dilemma of what to do in the case of her grandfather's death heightened my awareness of the entirely different landscapes in which new and experienced teachers work. There should have been no question about what she could do. There should have been no choice to make. What might have happened if her grandfather's funeral had been on a school day? Why did she have to carry this burden of uncertainty all during the first term? The easy response would be to say it was her responsibility to get answers and yes, that is partially true. But it is also important to realize that what we, as experienced teachers and administrators consider basic common knowledge, is held tenuously at best by new teachers.

Two facts emerge from Rebecca's account. First, that for whatever reason, she did not understand how to translate her program into supply teacher language. She did not understand how to be away. Second, that simply planning each day was a constant and overwhelming challenge. I found myself asking at one level some very pragmatic questions emerging from my position as Induction Officer. How could we account for these critical gaps in Rebecca's knowledge of teaching? Were these topics not covered at the Faculty? Were these topics not addressed at the school level orientation? What about the new teacher induction program or the school-based supporter program? Who could have provided support? How did Rebecca find herself in a situation so different from her expectations? On another level as I think now about Rebecca's uncertainty in terms of visual metaphor I imagine two distinct landscapes of experience. I visualize the landscapes of seasoned teachers as rich composites with subtle layers of background experience, a middle ground solidly replete with internalized policies and procedures and a foreground filled with ever changing images of present practice. As subjects in our own landscapes we know where we fit and can move comfortably from plane to plane. I visualize Rebecca's landscape at this time as being filled with tilting, ambiguous images, floating in empty space rather akin to a Chagall dreamscape in which characters hang precariously upside down and buildings drift aimlessly in a vacuum. My anger surfaces when I recognize how little of this I understood at the time it was happening.
Fran's Story: Perspectives from the System Wide Landscape

Comfortably ensconced in my position as the New Teacher Induction Officer, I observed the struggles of the new teachers from the safe distance of my office and concerned myself with the logistics of planning large scale workshops and presentations for the new teachers. The monthly sessions were well-received, politely accepted and evaluated by the new staff as a necessary part of the socialization process. I realize now that the needs of many individual teachers were not met or even acknowledged by the system-wide program. As coordinator of the program I wanted to hear success stories. I didn't build in enough valuable time for the new teachers to voice their problems or concerns. I didn't create an atmosphere in which "silly" questions, like "how do I prepare for a supply teacher" were safely accepted. I was not ready to take on the role of problem solver or to give up my ownership of the program agenda. The material presented, whether it was classroom management issues or parent teacher conferencing skills, was probably helpful to some and quite irrelevant for others who had more pressing questions that were rarely addressed. Experienced and confident as a presenter of my prepared material, I probably lacked the courage to open things up. So when a teacher like Rebecca would respond brightly to my query about how everything was going, I was pleased and quickly moved on to work the room and check with someone else. I didn't take the time to listen to the tentative nature of the "Just Fine" response. I didn't recognize the subtle nuances of the cover stories. I was not aware that Rebecca's expectations of and assumptions about teaching had been vigorously challenged in her first teaching position. It was not until last year when Rebecca shared her experiences with Lisa and me that I began to understand more about her story of being a new teacher in the 1990's. With the prompting of her candid perspectives I have been able to restory my position as an Induction co-coordinator and view it in terms of the professional landscape metaphor.

When I was positioned in an out-of-school situation, I quickly assumed the formal trappings of non-classroom personnel, an office complete with its own phone and .5 secretary, business cards, a coffee machine and most of all a sense of freedom from the bells and defined time slots of a school day. I could leave my desk at any time and walk about the building to contact other people, a luxury not available to teachers responsible for students. Arranging my own agenda, I had ample time to work
out programs, prepare workshops and send memos to school people whose daily experience was fast fading into memory. It took no time at all to forget the crush of time pressure that accompanied my life as a classroom teacher. I am now beginning to understand how the use and appropriation of time can be seen as a major determinant in shaping the professional landscape of a teacher. Life inside classrooms and without is profoundly different and I see much of that difference resting in the rhythms of time. I think of that contrast when I visualize the exhausted new teachers in the induction program who at the end of a full day managed to extend their commitment for several additional hours to attend a polished presentation by a fellow teacher who had the luxury of time alone to think, reflect and plan.

Working with Rebecca in our collaborative research last year heightened my awareness of the temporal and relational differences in positions on the professional knowledge landscape and reminded me how little we ever really know about another person’s life in schools until we slow down and take the time to listen. When I listened to Rebecca, I learned about her expectations and how they played themselves out in unanticipated ways. I also learned more about myself. I have named this next section *A Landscape of Crumbling Expectations*. The title emerged as I listened carefully to Rebecca's stories and began to understand how, in trying to meet her high professional expectations, she continually told herself and others cover stories (Crites, 1979, Clandinin and Connelly, 1995) to try and narrow the gap between the events she encountered and the stories she had created for herself.

*Rebecca's List of Bombardments: A Landscape of Crumbling Expectations*

When I asked Rebecca to think back to her first year of teaching, she responded by organizing a list in her research journal, a list of what she called "bombardments." She reflected on her notes somewhat humorously, "Looking back at any one of these factors in my first year would make me think it was a troublesome time but with the combination, I have to laugh or I would cry." The bombardments are listed here as Rebecca wrote them in her research journal. (Fall, 1994)

1) *The idea of bombardments came with Mr. Brown's visit. Mr. Brown, the director of education*
visiting in the first two months of school. He and Lisa just walking in. Fortunately I knew who he was because he'd been at the school where I had been practise teaching the year before. So here they were walking right over to me. It was not just that event. It was on top of nine or ten others. Luckily no one was hanging from the rafters. Nobody was screaming. He was polite but not in his element and the conversation was made up of token questions and short answers. It was after he left I thought of all the bombardments one after the other, his visit being the last straw.

2) I had to deal with parents who were authority figures in my career, for example the Squire/Bloggs who were the University Professor, the Induction person, the principal and co-workers, all wrapped up into these two people and their child. The Adams. I had worked for Mr. Adams so he had been my boss. And now I'm their child's teacher. There was Mark, my co-worker. His step-son was in my class. And Barb Halder, another seasoned teacher. Her son was in my room. So those were the sorts of parental authority figures that come to mind. And they all had expectations.

3) Then there were the parents who demanded the world because it was an alternative school. That wasn't so unusual but I had one set demanding gymnastics and I'm thinking, "I don't even know how I'm getting these children from my room to the gym yet! Why are you asking me about gymnastics?" I had to ask Lisa. I had no idea what the Phys. Ed curriculum was to be. There was no course of study or guide at all. She gave me the authority I needed to just say no.

4) My next challenge was a beautiful little girl I called my wolf child. She was unschooled, uncared for, very low functioning. The first day she just crawled on the floor and ate the carpet. I didn't know what my role could be. I had no idea how to adjust or modify any of her education. I knew there was a special education class in the school but I didn't know what the procedures were for asking for help. With 28 others in the room I was overwhelmed. Lisa became aware of Daniela from her informal visits to the room and seeing her in the halls. She stepped in and got a case conference organized and so Daniela eventually got the special program she needed outside of my classroom. I felt very inexperienced not knowing the life cycle of a year, not understanding whether this behaviour was a normal kind of beginning, not having any special education background to fall back on.

5) Maggie and James, two more challenging students. The interesting thing about Maggie was that by the time I could focus in on her, I had the time the energy and the understanding to call on the resource people. But still that first year, I would have said, "No I can't meet all her needs." What
I really would have been saying was "Because I don't know them." I couldn't have known what she was all about. Now, at this stage of my career, I might say I know what the needs are but I also know I can't meet them. There is a big difference. And James, whose step father was shot in his own house. Nothing could have prepared me for these children.

6) Deaths: my own Grandfather and two of the children's grandparents and a staff member. Nothing in my teacher training prepared me for deaths, how to cope with the students' grief or my own. These were the bombardments. Things which locked safely in their own compartments would have been manageable but all coming together accompanied by fatigue and embarrassment were just like bombardments falling into this dark vacuum of not knowing. (Interview, September 1994)

Examining this list of situations, people, feelings and events which constituted problem areas for Rebecca, we see that each one could be storied by her as a way of making sense of her classroom experience. Carter (1993) suggests that novices who lack the rich store of situated knowledge accumulated by experienced teachers, often struggle to make sense of classroom events and through this struggle their stories are formed and their knowledge is shaped. Thus, according to Carter, the recording of what events are storied by novices over time should provide "insights into what they know, how their knowledge is organized and how their knowledge changes with additional experiences of watching and doing teaching" (p.7). The first event to be storied by Rebecca concerned the Director of Education visiting in her second month of teaching. Rebecca has chosen to elaborate on this story herself because it was an experience that she felt was important to explore more deeply in retrospect, to set the story within a broader context. I had asked her if she would like to write up one of her first year teaching stories and there was no doubt that this was the one she wanted to explore. She wasn't sure why the story had such significance but as she revealed to Lisa and me, "it just wouldn't go away." When Rebecca first reflected on the list of bombardments in the fall of 1994, her explanation of this event was brief and had a negative spin to it. She had first perceived the experience as yet another confirmation that things were not going well, in fact she called it "the last straw." She recalled "biting her tongue, to keep from saying what she really felt" when the director asked politely how she liked teaching. Yet something undiscovered in the story compelled her to write it down and examine it more closely. The story played in her mind for over a year while she was at home with her new baby and finally, in December of 1995, she called to say...
she had written about the experience and was ready to share her narrative account.

When I listened to and read the reconstructed story I was curious about possible reflections that had prefaced the writing. For one thing the ending had changed significantly. The story had been transformed from a negative experience to one of possibility and promise for the future. In addition, the individual bombardments detailed above, were woven into the text of the story and given life in the dynamic context of an actual situation. In composing the introduction to the story Rebecca used a desert metaphor to describe her search for an "oasis of knowledge" in a "hot vast emptiness." I was fascinated by this landscape metaphor and asked Rebecca whether it was purposeful, given the thesis title. She was surprised and said there was no theoretical intent, that "it had just been a natural way to express how she felt." Here then is Rebecca's story of the Director's visit, exactly as she wrote it in December 1995.

Mr. Director

In the midst of struggle and strife, particularly an ongoing state of this turmoil, it is difficult to get a perspective or an overall picture of the true state of things. It is easy in retrospect however, for hours and days to melt into one, for experiences and mishaps, trials and tribulations to culminate and be summed up in one or two words or even for one experience to dominate and become the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. I have a story of one such straw in which I am the labouring camel searching to quench the thirst of my desperate need to know each day what to do to be the best teacher I could be. In retrospect I can laugh at events that at the time were huge and unreal, like the mirage of an oasis in the desert, there, just out of grasp, nourishment just beyond reach. I was existing, just barely, in a hot vast emptiness that had little in it to calm the turmoil of my anxiety.

This day was just like any other really, brimming with the day to day worries of all my other first few days and weeks as a first year teacher at Halverston. I might have been at peace if I had felt at all sure of my programming which I did not. I was grappling to get a sense of what curriculum was all about. I did not have a full understanding of what the twenty-eight grade one and two students
were to achieve by the end of the year (never mind what they should accomplish by the end of the day). Perhaps if I had felt more in control of the children or if I felt more a part of the staff team I would have had some semblance of order and comfort. The worst part was being painfully aware of all the things I didn't know. I knew there had to be a beginning, a middle and an end to the year and I felt intuitively that programming should go from simple to complex and that the children should come to a point where they could be evaluated on their learning. But with each day that passed I was becoming more cognizant of the fact that knowledge can be a dangerous thing. In this case knowing what I didn't know was destroying my confidence daily.

So to say that this one particular day was like any other is more clear knowing what each day consisted of. Now it also begs to be told that as a first year teacher I was also dealing with some slightly unusual circumstances that added to my personal sense of inadequacy. First I was teaching a colleague's son. He taught next door and I knew that everything and anything, good or bad that went on within the confines of my classroom would be fair game for scrutiny over the dinner table in that home each night. Not only did I have two sets of parents to deal with in that case but it was my first time dealing with a child with diabetes. Snack time was more than just a line in my day book. Secondly I was teaching a group of children amongst whom many were considered to be a real handful on their own merit never mind what happened when such individuals were grouped together. Thirdly I had a parent, a former teacher herself, fairly aggressively challenging my program daily for just about everything including not providing a gymnastics program to this group of children (who could very well be seen attempting to hang from the doorframes and bookcases when my back was turned.) I had the mixed blessing of having Fran and Ken's son in my class: Fran whose relationship to me has been well versed in this thesis and Ken, a principal within the same board (and we all know how fast Good news can travel ). They tried to put me at ease early in the year, but I knew that if their standards were anything like my own I was up for more honest and tough scrutiny. Their son Matthew was the welcome blessing in that situation, a true pleasure to have in the classroom. I had another not so pleasant situation, a very difficult child who was unschooled previous to her being placed on my roster. She possessed some very obvious behavioral conditions even to my untrained eye. The special education teacher and her four assistants found her almost unbearable when they would take her into their room to relieve me on occasion. And to add some
spice to life on a daily basis Halverston was housed temporarily in a high school built to accommodate older students. I had the oddly shaped Family Studies room.

This is all to set the scene for my story, the day Mr. Director popped in. I was busy scooting from one table to another as my class was involved in a variety of table top activities. I could see Lisa walking into the classroom which fortunately was always a welcome thing. Unlike many teachers who feel uneasy or even threatened by a principal's visit, particularly unannounced, surprise visitors were one thing that I had become comfortably accustomed to during my years as an E.C.E. student, then a teaching assistant at Halverston during those early "fish bowl" years. But when I caught a glimpse of who was following her through the door I have to say my heart sank, probably missed a beat and my eyes took a quick desperate scan of the room. I had a small sense of relief immediately as I took in a group of busy moving talking children who were actually all engaged in some activity at the moment. My immediate horror was relieved. But all of this preceded my attempt at a welcoming hello. It must have been as I moved toward the pair in greeting that I was struck with the reality of the situation. My principal and the DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION had just entered my classroom. My classroom! Gasp. What was James really doing in that corner? Where was Santino? I couldn't catch Danny's eye to have him quiet that voice that was suddenly rising in an ear piercing giggle. Maggie was running, again. Carlie and Anna were about to start a fight which had laid dormant for most of the morning. And where was Jon? Going out the door without checking with me and right past Mr. Director. Yes, I looked for an escape plan. a window, a hole in the floor, a magic wiggle of my nose.

"Mr. Brown, this is Rebecca, a new teacher in her first year." Lisa was actually saying it with some amount of pride in her voice. Who did she think she was kidding? Handshake, hopefully not too shaky.

"Well hello Rebecca, how are you enjoying having your own classroom?"

Ugh. An attempt to chat. Does he really want to know what I'm feeling? Does my face reveal the truth? I'm smiling I think. But how to answer? He's making small talk, he wants to know that the
board has done the right thing in hiring me. How could I possibly respond? I wanted to die. I wanted to quit teaching, face the fact that this was not for me, that I would pack my bags and be gone. Mr. Director was looking at me smiling seemingly waiting for an answer, but his eyes were wandering, searching for something and I got a sense that he was ready to turn away and leave the room. Yes, he wants to get out of my classroom. Suddenly I felt a little better. Mr. Director in his suit and dress shoes, in the middle of his work day, was not comfortable in my classroom. He was not going to crouch down and talk to some nameless, grimy, possibly obnoxious children who were eyeing him with a certain wild abandon. His stance and his quick chat was revealing his desire to get out, to move on with the important matters he had come to the school for. Relief. He was walking out. This was not his realm but I realized thankfully that it was mine. I had another look around the room and saw that Rachel and Christie were reading together beautifully and that Jon and Matthew were not. Mr. Director didn't see or care. But I did. I was proud for that moment that I knew something. I knew what was going on inside the walls of my room. I knew that it was a stretch for Rachel to be sitting and actually reading for that amount of time. I was glad to see Danny finishing his task despite his momentary distraction and I could see Jon sheepishly standing in the doorway waiting to catch my eye to get permission to leave. Some of the right stuff was definitely happening in my classroom. I knew it and for that moment it didn't matter if Mr. Director didn't.

January 1996

Dear Rebecca

What a wonderful picture you drew of your experience with Mr. Director. I could feel your dismay as he walked into your room and you quickly carried out a status check on the condition of your students, your room and your position in it. Your description of what the children were up to swiftly transports the reader to your particular school setting and its unpredictable but thoroughly authentic characters. I could see Jon darting out the door past the illustrious visitor and hear Danny's loud shrieks of glee. I've been there too. We all have at one point or other, trying to manage a group of students as a prestigious guest surveys the scene, hovering on the edge of the classroom landscape. After 32 years of teaching I still feel compelled to explain to a visitor, any visitor why certain things are happening or not happening! I think a principal can have similar feelings when the director arrives at their school. Remember the wonderful image Lisa created when she told us
about being caught with a mouthful of dry crackers when Mr. Brown appeared. She had been invited to snack time with the Special Education class and was just in the process of brushing the excess crumbs from her face and suit when the visitor was announced. Principals can scramble too.

Your story about Mr. Director resonated with my own experience on several other levels. I understood your notion of different professional realms and how you came to see through this experience that your classroom was indeed your realm and how comfortable you were with that realization. Perhaps because Mr. Director was so uncomfortable in your world, the contrast with your own feelings was clear. You seemed to feel for the first time that you did have knowledge of your students, their program and their environment. You had in a sense constructed your own knowledge. You were "proud that you knew something ....that the right stuff was happening in your classroom." Before Mr. Director's visit you had been painfully aware of how much you didn't know and this realization was "destroying your confidence daily." I think it's important for you as a new teacher to understand how experienced teachers and even administrators can share these kinds of feelings as they move through periods of transition in their careers. Many of the stories of uncertainty which Lisa and I tell elsewhere in this thesis will confirm this notion.

When you first told this story to Lisa and me, it was couched in a negative framework, an experience that might be considered as miseducative (Dewey 1938). For Dewey "any experience is miseducative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience" (p.15). What you seem to have done in the interim is reconstructed the story in light of your present understanding, reconsidering the event as educative, (ibid.) an awakening of sorts to new possibilities of yourself as a professional.

I was drawn to your landscape metaphor of the desert in which you set the story. You have positioned yourself in that hot, vast emptiness, barely existing, like a labouring camel searching for an oasis to quench your thirst. That thirst was the desperate need to know what to do to become the best teacher you could be. You felt the answers were huge and unreal, like a mirage, just out of reach. Yet by the end of the account you have come to the realization that the answers are not beyond your grasp but are actually within you; that you are in the process of constructing your own
knowledge about teaching. You don’t really need to wait for answers from others outside your realm. It is your experience, your students, your classroom, that will constitute your knowledge of teaching. My sense is that in the act of composing this story you have come to see that first term somewhat differently. You have reconstructed the landscape with yourself as the knower.

Fran

Lisa also composed a response to Rebecca’s Mr. Director story, independently of mine. It is interesting to compare our ways of responding from different positions on the professional knowledge landscape. Lisa wrote this letter in March of 1996 and discussed it with Rebecca at our concluding triad session in April 1996.

Dear Rebecca,

How powerful your story is; it took me back to the scene with vivid recollection. But my experience was vastly different! I took Mr. Director into your class in order to calm my own anxiety and impress him with excellence in education. I wanted him to love Halverston as I did.

I realized he knew precious little about our school. I knew that he most definitely did have preconceived negative notions about alternative schools, the related parental involvement and had no doubt heard the ridiculous stories of children leaping about and carrying on all manner of wild fashion. I wanted him to learn few new things and walk away with fresh perspective.

For me too the day was just like any other, brimming with the day to day issues of facilitating a smoothly functioning school. I was indeed proud, honoured in fact to be working with such a dedicated committed and knowledgable group of teachers who adored the parental involvement and the enthusiasm of our children. I wanted our director to experience that joy of learning that he so often referred to.

When he appeared out of the blue I too felt that gasp inside my heart and my eyes took a quick scan of the environment. I wanted to immediately drag him into your room because I knew what was there. I knew it was stressful time for you but such wonderful things were happening. I had no idea
that you felt inadequate. Neither did I realize that your confidence was being shaken to the extreme that your story implies. I am sorry I did not talk more with you during that time. My own consciousness has been raised as a result of reading about your experience. I hope I am more sensitive to such issues in the future, but I was so confident in you myself and certain that your intelligent awareness of child centredness would win out every time, which it did. I knew that the right stuff was definitely happening in your classroom and I needed the director to see it, feel it and discover the reality of joyful learning. I wonder if he did?

The important thing is that you realized your strength...realized the extent of your knowledge about what was going on in your classroom and that you felt proud to be a teacher. I shall always hold those lovely Halverston days close to my heart.

Lisa

Although Lisa and I compose our responses to Rebecca from different professional contexts we concurrently highlight several key issues. The first is the recognition of Rebecca's new found understanding of her place on the professional knowledge landscape, an understanding which emerges as she senses the director's discomfort in her world and contrasts this image with a new awareness of her knowledge of her students and her program. Through her written version of the story Rebecca conveys the isolation and tenuous nature of a new teacher's landscape and Lisa and I respond to that description from our particular positions within that landscape. Lisa expresses her surprise that Rebecca felt inadequate. As Rebecca's administrator she perceived that the "joy of learning" was happening in her room. Because she was proud of the job Rebecca was doing and had confidence in her child-centred approach, she had selected her class for the director's visit. By sharing the fact that her own consciousness has been raised and changed through Rebecca's writing, she breaks down the traditional hierarchies between teachers and administrators, positioning herself as a learner as well. I too try to bridge the knowledge landscapes of an experienced and novice teacher by relating my experience with visitors with that of Rebecca's. I acknowledge a growing understanding of Rebecca's interacting landscape "realms" and try to make connections between her desert landscape metaphor and her emerging sense of herself as a professional. I invite Rebecca to listen to similar stories of uncertainty told by Lisa and me throughout the thesis.
Rebecca's story ties us together in what Craig (1992) terms "a knowledge community", a space where reflections may be shared over time to provide a sense of growth and continuity. Bateson (1989) writes "The landscape through which we move is in constant flux" (p.6). By attending to the quiet nuances of Rebecca's story and responding to her in letter form, Lisa and I come to a deeper understanding of our own landscapes and those of others by taking a moment to pause, to hold time steady, to stay the flux and focus on the meaning of one experience. Through our story and letter interchange we understand ourselves and Rebecca to be constructors of narrative meaning. In his discussion of narrative discourse Polkinghorne (1988) notes:

When we are in the role of hearers or readers of the narrative experiences - the creations of others, we understand the stories through the linguistic processes we use in constructing our own narratives. We call this kind of understanding of hearing the meaning of a story hermeneutic understanding. (p.160)

Within our research triad Lisa, Rebecca and I have established a form of knowledge community in which we attempt to hear the meanings of our stories. Following Dewey (1938) we have come to realize that "discord is the occasion that induces reflection" (p.15) and accordingly we have tried to select stories in which reside a dilemma, a struggle, an opportunity for growth. Times of discord have often been the subject matter chosen by Rebecca to recreate her depiction of a first year teacher and the following set of stories concerning the expectations of a beginning teacher are no exception.

Before Rebecca wrote her Mr. Director story in December 1995, I had been exploring the relationship of conflicted stories and unmet expectations arising from the transcript conversations. The following letter describes my tentative reactions to Rebecca's list of bombardments, her grandfather's story and Mr. Director's story. I discovered that these and other accounts contained many references to projected stories of teaching that were not experienced as she had predicted during those first four months. In fact there had been a whole series of "reality shocks" which placed Rebecca within a professional landscape both unfamiliar and disappointing.
Dear Rebecca:

As we listened to your list of bombardments and your stories about your grandfather and the director's visit, I sensed that the issue of "expectations" was important to you. The word surfaces again and again as you describe the challenges, disappointments, joys and frustrations of that first year. It seems to play a shaping role in your image of yourself as a teacher. I think the importance you have placed on what you call unmet expectations warrants a closer look at their significance in your development as a teacher. How can we situate the idea of expectations within a narrative framework? How were your stories of yourself created? Where did they come from? How did they change? How did your sense of self change as you restoried your professional image that fall? What is there in the present that reaffirms the story? What sense can we make of it now? You say that Lisa also played a significant role in your adjustment of expectations. How can we as a research triad add to our understanding of Lisa's influence on your growth as a professional by collectively restorying your experience? In the next stage of the research process I will try to sort out these intriguing issues.

Fran

As I returned to the transcripts in order to explore these questions and the theme of expectations I began to think about expectations as stories whose plot lines we have imagined in a certain prescribed way. When events do not follow our anticipated and mentally rehearsed scenarios, dissonance occurs as we try to realign our projections of the future with our stories of the present. Crites' (1986) work on futurity and possibility is illustrative on this point. Crites contends that although we cannot know the future because it is not available for recollection, "the horizon of possibility is patient of imaginative project, images, lyrical effusions, stories from the most mundane to the most horrific to the most ideal." He goes on to explain:

Still there is a crucial formal difference between images and stories recollected and those projected. Those recollected are capable of high definition, a large measure of completeness. An image of the future is vague and sketchy, a story incomplete and thin... The effort to narrate the future in the same detail as the past commits the formal
error of treating it as if it were the past. A story that is projected rather than recollective is properly more like a loose scenario without a script on which a group of actors improvises. (p.164)

It is my belief that new teachers carry with them such projected stories or scenarios of teaching derived from their personal experience as students or student teachers, their university pre-service training and the myths that are created from media images of the teacher. Many university teachers and researchers including Craig (1992), Diamond (1991), Knowles and Holt-Reynolds (1991), and Knowles and Cole (1995), recognize the powerful influence that personal history and prior experience in and of schools plays in shaping the new teacher's images of self. Some scenarios of teaching are self-constructed while others are created for the new teachers by their peers, professors, administrators and parents and may indeed be treated with the completeness and certainty of past recollections. Thus when these preconceived stories unfold in unexpected ways, dilemmas and disillusionment can often accompany the new plotline. These tensions between the personal self image and the wider social context of teaching can be powerful turning points for beginning teachers or they can be debilitating setbacks as the ideals associated with teaching meet the current story.

Interpreting Rebecca's experience through the framework of stories of expectation led to an enriched understanding of why she considered her first year to be so challenging. In Rebecca's stories many of the anticipated plot lines, settings and characters took on their own idiosyncratic directions, leaving her to struggle with the dichotomy between her images of teaching and those she was forced to reconstruct. Exploring Rebecca's stories through this lens I discovered new insights into how Rebecca was interpreting and making sense of her teaching experience. The events on which she focussed in our discussions were often framed within the context of her personal background involving her thoughts and feelings about how she was coming to know her practice and her place on the professional knowledge landscape.

The following section presents selected examples of these stories written in Rebecca's and Lisa's words, drawn from interview sessions during the fall of 1994 and my subsequent researcher reflections. The stories chosen demonstrate how Rebecca comes to understand the changes in her
anticipated stories of teaching. Through this set of stories we see that before beginning to teach, Rebecca has constructed mental scenarios about the hiring process, before school preparations, her classroom and her students. She imagines herself as a fully qualified teacher, receiving ample support from the Board in beginning her new career. She creates positive images of Lisa's active role as a principal. In each of these areas Rebecca finds herself encountering and living a different story than she had anticipated. Not only did Rebecca confront surprises in these areas. She was also concerned about the teacher stories told about her by others. The imagined expectations of parents, Lisa, her peers on staff and her mentor Gillian all figured significantly in Rebecca's first term struggle to narrow the gap between stories lived and stories imagined.

I present these detailed accounts of Rebecca's perceptions because they point clearly to the unique professional knowledge landscape on which a new teacher begins to define her own space. It is easy to forget what it's like to be so new, so vulnerable, so unaware of the political and socialization processes at work in a school. Rebecca's stories allow us a fresh glimpse of our system and ourselves, glimpses which are often discomforting. Guiding our reading of Rebecca's accounts are the questions about stories of expectation. Where do the stories originate? How are they changed as Rebecca begins to understand her first year experience? Understanding the stories requires a stepping back to the time when we all were novices. Understanding these stories invites us to visualize the landscapes we once created as traditional "paint-by-number" canvasses where artistic decisions were not left to the individual but metered out step by step through precise written instructions. The landscapes that Rebecca and her colleagues were called upon to create are not so ordered in their origins.

**Crumbling Expectations: Stories Lived and Stories Imagined**

Rebecca recollects being very ignorant of the hiring process after graduating from the Faculty in April, although she understood from Gillian's advice that she should get back into Halverston to get herself known as a supply teacher. She reintroduced herself to Lisa and was somewhat surprised when Lisa quickly began to officially discuss a teaching position. She felt that she might be receiving special treatment or status due to her close relationship with Gillian, who was Lisa's
friend.

It felt natural to be considered at Halverston because she had a past connection with the school. She was surprised nonetheless, at the professional courtesy afforded her by Lisa, who very openly discussed various possibilities for class arrangements, inviting Rebecca's opinions. Rebecca felt that the discussion "mattered", that Lisa was talking to her as if it mattered to her that Rebecca was hired. Still, in the back of Rebecca's mind, lingered a niggling feeling that this was not normal, that Lisa's openness and candour about possible job opportunities was somehow not what she had expected. Her story of what a principal would be like were being changed by Lisa's easy informality. Like many student teachers she had based her notion of the principal on what she had experienced herself as a student, "a person of authority, who had all the answers."

When the research triad was reconstructing this event, Lisa confirmed Rebecca's thoughts at that time and asked, "You thought you were getting preferential treatment?" Rebecca answered "Yes, that's right" to which Lisa shot back," Well, all principals choose who they prefer!" Lisa's humorous statement provided a new understanding for Rebecca in her growing perception of the principal's role in the staffing process. She began to understand some of the political contexts that guide administrator's actions in building a staff for their school. She began to see the webs of connection that make things happen in a school system and how personal networks influence decision making processes. She realized that it was not because of her personal relationship with Gillian that she had received the position but because Lisa had used her connection to Gillian advantageously to discover a promising new teacher for her growing alternative staff. Becoming more aware of the "educational game", Rebecca learned from this experience that principals often rely on the personal judgments of respected peers rather than depersonalized resumes in hiring new staff. Her perception of the professional knowledge landscape in which Lisa operated was becoming more focussed. Her story of the principalship was changing. Here again was an opportunity within the research context for all participants to gain deeper understandings of the meanings behind actions. Rebecca gradually learned more about the person behind the principalship while Lisa and I were reminded by Rebecca's responses that our knowledge of the system had been assimilated over years of experience and could not easily be comprehended by a newcomer merely in the telling.
Because Rebecca was hired in June she had the advantage of summer planning and meeting the existing staff in the Spring. She recalls that she felt confident because of her history at the school. She knew what alternative was all about. She felt as though it was natural that she teach at Halverston. This confidence and history at the school also had a downside in that it caused some tension with the existing staff, most of whom were just completing their own challenging first year. Rebecca was joining the staff with a story of competence and experience preceding her. She remembers feeling a distance and caution from others on staff:

Gillian was ranting and raving about how wonderful I was and Lisa passed that information along. I felt as if the staff was saying, Who is this person anyhow? It was a feeling that I had to live up to. What does this staff expect of me? I really know nothing. It was a hurdle I had to jump over immediately, before day one. All these expectations! It was a unique situation because of my closeness to Gillian and Gillian's closeness to Lisa - that kind of circle of friendship. It won't ever happen that way again. I felt burdened by a highlighted sort of reputation. You want to live up to it yet it may not be realistic to where you are at the time.

Rebecca was not comfortable with the story that preceded her, the story she called a highlighted reputation. She began to doubt that she could live up to the projected stories and this caused pressures that were not a part of her anticipated script. From an administrator's perspective Lisa was aware of the possible problems connected with Rebecca's entry to Halverston. As the three of us discussed stories of expectation and beginnings, revisiting Rebecca's experience, Lisa spoke frankly to Rebecca about her recollections:

I had a sense, my imagination maybe, but a sense that you were potentially threatening to the staff because you did have a history at Halverston ...because you had worked with Gillian and some of the folks were a little taken aback that year by Gillian because I had called her in as the curriculum resource teacher to help them set up their classes with boundaries and parameters. And of course, people knew that Gillian and I were friends. So that can be very scary...and I wondered how it was going to be (for you). I thought, Well these are all good people. They're all talented people. They all have incredible strengths. How can it go wrong? ...I knew you would be fine but I worried about
the perceptions. I felt in the long run I just had to have faith that it would all work out. If I started meddling in my role as principal it could mess it up. So I just thought, I'll keep my antennae out and I'll watch.

When Rebecca and I listened to Lisa's explanation we were curious about what it meant to have "your antennae out." We asked Lisa for specific examples. She described how she was aware of "the minute details that go on between people, eye contact, language, interactions, how people speak to each other. Is it spontaneous? Is it loving? Is it fake?"

She recalled one incident early in the year:

*I have one very vivid memory where I thought, this is the way it should be. We were at the new site and I was in the office with the door open so I could hear what was going on in the outer office. There you all were, four or five of you milling around. People were talking about primary printing, how to teach it, when to teach it, whether to teach it at all. Ideas were floating around until someone said,' But we don't have the right paper'. And you said,' Wait a minute. I've got some of that paper. I'll get it'. And you zipped off down the hall and somebody said,' Oh this is great.' Someone else said,' Yes! We can all share Rebecca's paper'."

*And I smiled and thought," It's done. I can go back in my office now. Life is going on."

As Lisa spoke about her impressions Rebecca was visibly amused and recalled the incident as being a turning point in her relationship with the others on staff. I detail this incident because it reveals how seemingly simple exchanges between staff can be of lasting importance and how for Rebecca, this commonplace event changed the nature of the landscape at the school with other staff. Rebecca had felt a distance from the staff, a kind of tentative wariness, a polite but cool welcome. Despite the fact that she was the inexperienced newcomer, she was perceived as the "very knowledgable" newcomer because of her built up background associations with the school. The teachers from the old building had shared in the creation of the current school story of Halverston. They were linked by the shared experience of surviving their first year together, closing a school and moving to a temporary one amid the outbreak of lice! For Rebecca, this closely knit landscape of others constituted "a clique" that she 'felt she had to break into." She understood there was a firmly
established bond between the existing staff in which she had no part of.

Because she was, however, a participant in the frequent philosophical discussions about alternative education and its inherent practical teaching dilemmas, she knew that she possessed knowledge that might be helpful to her new staff. These "tibits of vital information" had been recently acquired through Gillian, her friend who was also the Primary consultant, while they were setting up Rebecca's room before school and in subsequent classroom visits. Rebecca had shared her struggle in balancing alternative and regular curriculum expectations and Gillian had given her solid "non-alternative" advice regarding the teaching of primary printing and the use of specific teaching times for math and Language Arts as opposed to a totally open day. They had decided that none of the exercise books was the relevant tool for beginning printers so Rebecca enlisted her husband's help in designing paper with customized guidelines. Armed with these practical ideas, Rebecca wanted to pass them onto others but she held back, reticent about how and when to come forward. The conversation in the front office gave her "the opportunity to break new ground" and after that day there was a growing sense of team, a sense of being in the same new school situation together. She, with the staff, was beginning to form new school stories that encompassed her as a contributing character.

Rebecca thought about her "empty vessel" metaphor as she revisited this event later in our research; 

*I realize I was just the vessel. (The knowledge) was coming through me for everybody to have. I was sharing Gillian with everyone so that it wasn't just me. There was some expertise coming from someone outside who was interested and it's there for all of us.*

Rebecca's projected scenarios of herself as a competent teacher at an alternative school changed as she began to actually teach her grade one/two class. She hadn't been anxious in the summer, relying instead on a level of confidence built on the fact that she'd "been doing alternative since 1985". She thought she knew what to do when school began. She felt good about her room set up and had visualized how her activity centres would operate and engage the students. Gillian had helped her organize her first week in some detail. When that week was over the illusion of confidence was shattered. The following story, constructed from excerpts of three different interview sessions,
represents Rebecca's feelings of confusion and dismay as she stumbled through the month of September. It sketches in details of the disillusionment stemming from a host of unmet expectations and unwelcome diversions in her anticipated story of practice. It provides images of what it means to be a new teacher from an insider's perspective.

Not Knowing ... The Empty Vessel

I was so excited to begin, so confident. Here I was with experience in Alternative education, experience with Gillian and Gerry, two outstanding teachers. I had no worries about how I would do. I really thought I knew what to do. But I didn't. Once that first week was over I had no idea what to do with these children. No idea how to plan for a day, a week or a month. It wasn't just inexperience in running a classroom. That I could deal with. I simply didn't know what I didn't know. I did not even know what I knew. It was absolutely bewildering to realize that I had no idea what I was doing. I didn't know anything in terms of the flow of the year, what I now understand as rhythms of the year. I didn't know what to cover since there were no guidelines, nothing written down. Gillian gave me a few bits, units to try. Lisa handed me a few old documents but basically there was no program support. I understood from Lisa, in a vague sort of way, that new board documents were being prepared but that didn't help me. There was a deep disappointment that the system, this board, was not providing for me.

I felt like an empty vessel for those first long weeks. I tried to draw every once in a while on some of the natural skills that I have with children. I knew at some basic level that my strength lay in my understanding of children, but still, as a teacher, a primary teacher, I felt like this hollow, empty vessel. Because of my own feelings of inadequacy, my behaviour was controlled by the students. I was almost afraid of this group of children. For example we'd be sitting in a group and someone would interrupt and say something totally out of context like, "Mrs. Sorento, the lights are on" and I would feel compelled to respond to that child rather than going on with the others. Or several children would talk over someone who was reading aloud, that sort of thing. I didn't really lay down the law and the kids picked up on that. I had the sense of being run ragged by them, always taking their lead, caught up in trying to be everything to every child. I had a strong vision of Gillian
catering to the needs of every child and I wanted to do the same. I wanted to know everything about each child, all at once, and of course that wasn't really possible. They would ask questions that I hadn't thought about answering. When will we learn to read? When are we going to do real math? Or Matthew's question about where sperm come from! They were coming up with things I didn't know how to deal with particularly in a school situation. I didn't know what the rules of the school were for specific situations. I didn't even realize at that time that there were different rules for different schools. All the pieces of the puzzle that you don't know.

My anxiety level was sky rocketing and in a matter of weeks I had reached the point where I had no idea how to carry out my responsibilities for the year. Here I was, entirely responsible for a whole group of children for the whole year, not knowing the plan. It was the scariest experience I've ever had because my confidence level plummeted but my expectations of myself stayed away up there. My expectations for myself didn't change from September to December but I wasn't getting anywhere near those expectations. My confidence level was dropping, my energy level was dropping, everything was dropping. I lost twenty pounds in four months. I felt on the verge of a nervous breakdown. I don't know because I've never had one but I'm saying I was as out of control as I ever have been. Even in September I was saying to myself I'll quit in December if it doesn't get any better. If I don't feel different, I'm not coming back. Because I can't. Because my body is dying inside.

I couldn't share these inner feelings with anyone, not my husband or my closest friends and certainly not anyone at school. Not Lisa. Not Janet, my official mentor. Most of all the kids. They didn't know. My anxiety did not manifest itself in the classroom or in the staff room but it would always be there at the end of every day following me home. I would ask people simple questions about small, specific frustrations but nobody knew the whole picture. I remember the Parent Teacher night in late September being a turning point that helped somewhat.

Parent teacher night next week! Anxiety sky-rocketing!

I have to know what I'm doing. I have to at least LOOK like I know what I'm doing!

But I don't know

What to do?
I'll put some things on paper. Make some sense of this to present to the parents. Create some targets.
O.K. This looks good. Maybe I know more than I thought.
Anxiety level coming down, for a time, for a time.

When I look back now I can scarcely believe I stood in front of the parents with so little real sense of what the year was going to be. I never want to feel that way again. Did they suspect I was just an empty vessel?
What kept me going through the rest of the fall was the thought of the Christmas break. I had teacher friends in other boards who kept saying "It gets better in December. Trust me." Somehow those messages kept me going. The expectation was set. And sure enough after the holiday I returned rejuvenated to MY classroom with clear visions of how to proceed.

Rebecca gives us valuable insights into the world of a first year teacher. These insights are constructed in retrospect, freeing Rebecca from the necessity of telling cover stories to protect her first fragile image as a teacher. She is quite sure that had the research been conducted during that first year she would not have spoken so openly about her experience. She is now able to laugh about her frantic preparation for Meet the Teacher night and her efforts to cover up her inexperience, to at least look as if she knew what she was doing. From her story of The Empty Vessel, we hear again the echoes of inexperience raised in other stories, the problems with long term planning and the immediate classroom management issues, the growing anxiety that won't go away. We see her positioned on a landscape that is precariously balanced in terms of professional knowledge. She is caught between her idealistic stories of life as a teacher and the lived stories of exhaustion and perceived failure. She envisions herself as an empty vessel, a container that should hold knowledge but in her eyes does not. This sense of "should" underlies the moral dimensions of her struggle to adjust her expectations to her image of "the best teacher she could be." To enable her to function within the horizons of her particular, bewildering landscape she reached ahead for landmarks identified by others which could give the year a shape and form. Parent teacher night in September was a positive marker of first month survival. Christmas break was held out with anticipation as a turning point, a crossroads of sorts which would determine Rebecca's future. Quite simply she knew she could quit if things did not get better. Advice from friends already in teaching allowed her to
wait until Christmas, to be a little easier on herself, to understand that many people experience that first term sense of failure.

Another important feature of Rebecca's story is her growing understanding that the teaching year has a set of rhythms all its own which are internalized only through experience. She acknowledges that she didn't know anything about "the flow of the year", that indeed she had no sense of planning for a day, a week or a month. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) discuss how the personal experience of school time for students, teachers and administrators is affected by the array of temporal cycles which constitute school time. They have identified ten school cycles according to temporal duration: annual, holiday, monthly, weekly, daily and so on. Student teachers gain some sense of the nature of school cycles from their limited practicum experience but it is not until these cycles are fully experienced for the first time by a beginner that an understanding of their own rhythm of teaching begins to emerge. As Connelly and Clandinin (1986) discovered in their work with novice teachers:

Novice teachers have we find, a sense of the cyclic nature of schools and of the tick and tock of teaching. What they do not have and what develops over the first years of teaching is their own sense of rhythm in teaching their personal sense of "knowing" the classroom and teaching. (p.383)

Rebecca's story of "sky rocketing anxiety" in planning the whole year indicates this lack of "knowing" in a narrative sense, the rhythms of the year. Unlike an experienced teacher, for whom the multiple cycles of the school year are experienced rhythmically in a familiar context of meaning, the days and months blurred together in a disorganized confusion. In Connelly and Clandinin's terms, her narrative as a teacher had not yet been experienced cyclically. She felt "out of control, unable to put the puzzle pieces back in place." Her physical body rhythms echoed the dissonance of fragmented school rhythms as she lost 20 pounds and felt as if "her body was dying inside." In later accounts she speaks of "having to live through the experience to understand it." She understands in retrospect that internalizing the rhythms of school life is something that could not have been taught to her at the faculty, by Lisa or by others on staff. What she did do in her first term was hang onto the notion of the "holiday cycle", having heard from others that Christmas would be a time of respite, a temporal goal to reach for, a time when she knew she could make the decision to resign. In the story's ending we recognize Rebecca's tentative understanding of the personal rhythms of
teaching as she makes her decision to keep teaching and returns rejuvenated after the break. While constructing her own frameworks of narrative knowledge she has trusted the experience of others who understood and remembered the frantic pace and uncertainty of the September to December first year cycle.

From Rebecca's story of the Empty Vessel we see how her projected stories of successful teaching were lived out, often unexpectedly, in a context of school rhythms not yet understood and experienced. She does not yet "know" her classroom experience in a narrative sense. One striking point of contrast between experienced and novice teachers is this temporal sense of place on the professional knowledge landscape. For example, Lisa and I know our school situations, even new situations, in significantly different ways than does Rebecca because we can draw from our narratives of experience which have been reconstructed with an understanding of cycles and rhythms. Put simply, we do not conceptualize time in the same ways. Further, Lisa's understanding of the rhythms of school time as an administrator differs from my teacher's perceptions. These points of comparison will be extended in Chapter Seven as the landscapes of Lisa, Rebecca and I are set in the context of our commonly held experience at Millside School.

As I thought about Rebecca's stories of expectation and their links to the rhythms of classroom life, I became curious about her belief that her projected story of accomplished teacher held firm even as her confidence dropped. How did she reconcile her "confidence level plummeting" with her "expectations of self staying away up there?" This dilemma is addressed in the following section in which I introduce the notion of cover stories.

**Cover Stories: Stories Told to Others**

From Rebecca's stories set beside my own recollections, I believe that two different stories were coexisting within Rebecca's professional knowledge landscape. One was the inner story of uncertainty and disillusionment carried secretly by Rebecca; the other was the outer story of confidence and success she created for others. Crites (1979) elaborates on the notion of cover stories in his essay on self deception:
Two different renderings of experience can coexist in a single consciousness; let us call this the double storied type of self deception. A person has two images or scenarios in mind, the one so unacceptable - so unflattering or heart breaking or even on the other hand so liberating - that the other image or scenario is artfully fabricated in order to suppress it. The story that cannot be faced is the real story in the sense that it continues to assert itself in motivating one's course of action with the more acceptable scenario constantly being put forward as a cover story to rationalize the course of action however awkwardly it may be made to fit. (p.126)

Crites goes on to explain that the two stories do not simply stand side by side but that the real story is the one which is actually believed and acted upon. If we follow Crite's reasoning we can speculate that Rebecca was driven by her inner story of despair to fabricate a cover story of competence to present to those who expected her to succeed, her peers, her principal, her students and perhaps most significantly, herself. There is a moral sense of living up to the images of success prescribed by others, the "shoulds and oughts" of professional practice when what she really wanted was "the freedom in (her) head to let it all come in" (Interview, September 1994).

Clandinin and Connelly (1996) relate the idea of cover stories to their concept of "stories of teachers," stories a teacher projects to others about themselves. They believe that many teacher stories told in the out-of-classroom places would be cover stories particularly when individual teacher stories conflict with their story of the school story the principal wants told. Translating this notion to Lisa and Rebecca it would play out this way. Rebecca believed Lisa's story of the school to be one of collaborative relationships with the individual needs of each child accommodated for. She believed Lisa would want well run, child-centred, alternative classrooms with many theme-based activity centres inviting childrens' learning. Rebecca's own story was one of not meeting individual needs, in fact not even meeting group needs, so it would be natural for her to create cover stories to match her story to the story she felt was held by Lisa. In contrast to the personal in-classroom stories of children and the rhythms of classroom activities are these cover stories, "in the out-of-classroom professional knowledge landscape, stories in which (teachers) portray themselves as characters who are certain, expert people" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1996, p.25).

As a new teacher Rebecca struggled to bridge the gap between what she perceived happening in her
classroom and her story of a competent teacher. Through her stories I have come to see how she created a "certain, expert" persona for her public self whether it was with parents, principal or students in order to reconcile the conflicting stories. In her case, cover stories flourished in the classroom as well, stories constructed to convince herself and her young students that she was a "real" teacher. I believe these cover stories function as a bridge between the stories of expectation and her understanding of her classroom experience. The cover stories gave her protection to carry on through the day and it was only away from school she could let down her guard and let the real (in Polkinghorne's sense) story live. The interesting point here is that as the year progressed the plot lines of the cover stories became the real story as Rebecca gradually became convinced that she "belonged in teaching and was ready to learn what she didn't know" (interview, September 1994, transcript notes). This transition from cover story to real story will be explored in Chapter Six as Rebecca's story of teaching moves beyond her first four months at Halverston. To understand this transitional stage, we must first understand the nature of the cover stories and how they were perceived by others in the school community.

Rebecca knew that people in the school community expected a great deal of her. At Halverston Lisa had publicly articulated and demonstrated faith in Rebecca's ability to work effectively on the alternative team. She believed in Rebecca and had high expectations for her success and quick integration into the world of teaching. Rebecca felt the force of these expectations and carefully read the unwritten culture of Halverston and adjusted her cover story accordingly to match the school story. In establishing her relationships with parents and resource personnel she also fabricated cover stories to suppress the inner story of failure. Cover stories were created for her students who saw a calm, organized teacher rather than someone on the brink of resignation. In the following narrative accounts I trace the detailed backgrounds of these cover stories by presenting the stories told to the induction officer, her principal, a parent and a student.

Fran's Stories of Rebecca

As the Induction coordinator and as a parent I was unaware of Rebecca's stress level during her first term. At our Induction workshops she presented as a confident professional who was experiencing,
with others, the normal minor frustrations of a first year teacher. Considering the fact that I was also the parent of a child in her class it is unlikely that she would have publicly shared any real concerns. I recall her joking with the group one night in October when we were dealing with upcoming parent teacher interviews. She commented that her practice role play had to be extra good because the parent was actually watching. I believe that I was sensitive to the possible conflict of interest in our roles and made a conscious decision not to volunteer, for example, in the classroom. I would often drop in, however, at the end of the day when I picked up Matthew and comment on the interesting activity centres or the children's work displayed in the hall. When asked how things were going she always responded enthusiastically, in positive ways. Over the course of our research Rebecca mentioned several times how grateful she was for this informal non-intrusive approach. She stated that she would have felt tremendous pressure with me in the room as the Induction coordinator and parent and would have had difficulty separating the roles. Just as she felt with Lisa, she didn't want the pressure of having to answer to someone for her actions. Recognizing Rebecca's attempts to cover up her insecurity by presenting a confident public persona, we can speculate that perhaps cover stories provide a new teacher with the space and time to work out their own dilemmas, to construct their own solutions outside of public purview. As I have suggested elsewhere, "Not all support for new teachers has to be public; teachers need privacy too" (Cole, Squire and Cathers 1995, p.24).

Although I was not aware of the depth of Rebecca's feelings about her first term, I was certainly conscious of her position as a new teacher. I recall one incident in the classroom when the children were presenting their research projects, a few at a time to the class and their parents. The incident confirms from another perspective how Rebecca was feeling about her classroom management skills in her story of "The Empty Vessel." As Matthew was presenting his research on icebergs, most of the class was listening attentively grouped in a circle on the floor. Several girls, however, were huddled together, oblivious to the presenter, talking, giggling and poking others around them. Observing from my parent role I had to curb my conditioned teacher's response to quiet the group. Rebecca was obviously uncomfortable with the situation. I could see that her attention was being divided between Matthew and the girls yet she did not intervene until the girls actually got up and started to wander away. I remember thinking how pleased I was with the positive feedback Matthew received for his
presentation while recognizing at another level that Rebecca was still a "rookie" in terms of managing group behaviour. There was no criticism in the thought, just a recognition of her place on the landscape, a place where I once had been as well.

As Matthew's parent I recognized Rebecca's inexperience but remained completely unaware of the level of her uncertainty and stress. She and the children seemed very happy. In November I was impressed by the professional, well-written anecdotal report card that we received. From my point of view Rebecca had a good understanding of my son's strengths and weaknesses and as a teacher myself I was well aware of the time and effort that lay behind the page of detailed observations and comments. I shared my impressions with her during our first interview session:

You wrote the most articulate and sensitive report card in November. I mean if you were down on yourself then that must have been a tremendous hurdle. You saw things in Matthew that he could reach towards that we as parents had not seen. For example you said he exhibited a particular kind of leadership in the group. The other children listened to his opinions, especially the younger ones. You had away of picking up things that you had found and observed after only a few months. In fact your comments influenced our decision this year to place Matt in a split 4/5 where he could again be in the older group. (Interview, September 1994, transcript notes)

From our conversations I discovered that like many new teachers, Rebecca found her first set of report cards to be an incredible amount of work but an empowering experience in confidence building. She realized as she worked through the reporting process that she knew a fair amount about each student and because she loved to write, she felt great confidence in communicating this knowledge to the parents. Somehow getting the experience on paper was easier than dealing with it in real life. At the subsequent parent teacher interviews Rebecca arranged a welcoming space for conversation using a round table set out with juice and cookies as well as portfolios of student work samples. My story of Rebecca at this time was one of a new teacher fully confident in her role with parents and I recall admiring the context of warmth and informality she had established. Taking my cue from her initiative I decided to serve cookies at my own upcoming interviews. Rebecca's story of this occasion differs in its telling as she in fact was very apprehensive about the interviews. She
recalls:

*You see, there too I was grasping at straws. Someone had said, "serve cookies." O.K. good idea Gotta do that!*

Once again I shared my reflections with Rebecca:

*The interview was so welcoming. Instead of this formal thing it was neat because you said right away, I'm really nervous about having you guys in for an interview and we said that's O.K. we're nervous too. And so the ice was broken and it was all right. I remember you visually retrieving some questions, looking up as if you were saying, "O.K. how am I going to answer this" I mean they weren't tough on purpose. They were just things you hadn't thought through. I think particularly about the reading program.* (Interview September, 1994, transcript notes)

My positive recollections of the interviews and report cards were interesting for Rebecca to hear. Our conversations gave her a different frame of reference from which to view her story of that first term struggle. It was important for her to realize that her words and actions had made a difference and influenced my subsequent parental/teacher behaviour. Our discussions allowed both of us to discover the cover stories Rebecca had created and portrayed publicly to suppress her deep feelings of uncertainty. We reflected that perhaps living the cover story was a kind of rehearsal for the story of competence becoming integrated into her professional sense of self.

*Matthew's stories of Rebecca: A Student's Perspective*

Many researchers commenting on educational research programs have noted that the voices of students are missing from accounts of classroom experience (Erickson and Schultz, 1992, Knowles and Cole 1995). Within this research inquiry a unique opportunity presented itself for student experience to be part of the evolving narrative describing Rebecca's first year of teaching. My son Matthew was in her first class when he was seven years old. As a parent I hold particular memories of that time. As a student Matthew carries his own set of recalled experience, his own collection of stories of his year with Rebecca. As soon as Rebecca had agreed to be my new teacher participant in the research study, (February 1994) I tapped that resource by recording Matthew's stories of
Rebecca. In February of 1994 he was nine years old in grade four so he had been away from her class for about a year and a half. An intuitive sense directed this activity in that I had not at that point shaped the study but I had a strong feeling that Matthew’s perceptions might add another dimension of meaning to our exploration. During our conversation there were long pauses as Matthew unravelled his memories. His eyes would search upwards as if he was visualizing the details of what he was speaking about and often one memory would trigger a flood of others which would tumble out in quick succession. I recount the content of this conversation exactly as it occurred in order to retain the integrity of the nine year old's perceptions. Recalling Rebecca's unhappiness during her first term it is interesting to picture her through the eyes of a child.

Fran: Tell me what you remember about grade two, Matthew.

Matthew: Hm......Was that Ms Dunlop or Mrs. Sorento? Is this going to take long?

Fran: No, it won't take long. I'm interested in what you can remember about being in Mrs. Sorento's class and I'm recording your ideas on my tape recorder.

Matthew: Well, the saddest part of grade two was when Mademoiselle died, but when she was my French teacher. She was really funny like if you weren't behaving she would say "you'd better behave or I'll cry big alligator tears" and she'd take a cardboard tear and put it up to her eye... I remember our classroom really well. It had three sinks, two stoves and a microwave, so we could do lots of cooking. Oh yeah and we strung up dried apples during the fall, dried apples in the corners of the room. They got all dry and crispy and then in two weeks we ate them and they were really good. Another time Mrs. Sorento brought in her Dalmatian and we counted the spots when it was sleeping. I think there were 120 spots, mostly black. I remember math. It was easy. Two plus two. .....Oh yeah and I remember that every day in the morning Ms Sorento had a big blue chart with a big pile of papers and on each paper was a word and we went around the classroom and she would say, Anne, spell this word. And, um, that was at the beginning of the year. She would hold it up for two or five seconds and then we would spell it. Near the end of the year she'd just say the words without the cards. She'd say" Matt, spell because". That was the hardest word but I really
loved to spell that word and it was the easiest word I could ever spell. Near the end of the year I got it down B.E.C.A.U.S.E. really quick and now when I'm writing it I just go B.E.C.A.U.S.E and I get it.

Fran: What do you remember about Mrs. Sorento?

Matthew: She was really nice and good sense of humour and she was friendly.

Fran: What was it that made her nice?

Matthew: Well, I don't know ... she let us do a lot of fun things like write in our journals and then draw in them. If we were working well we could write in our journals . . . If we were working really well we could draw a picture in them. If we were working really, really, REALLY well then we could do this huge poster. You could either colour a picture that was already drawn or you could draw your own and colour it.

Fran: When you say you were working well or really well, what was the difference?

Matthew: Well would be working quietly and getting some work done....really well would be getting like enough work done and asking some questions...really, really well means a lot of work done really quietly and don't ask any questions (Matthew's emphasis).

Fran: Do you remember doing the research project?

Matthew: Oh yeah, I remember doing research on icebergs. Daniel H. did volcanoes and Daniel B. did hurricanes. No..... it was the other way round. I found out that only 10% of the iceberg is up! Remember you drew the iceberg for me and I coloured it and I made a big model.

Fran: What did you do with the poster and model when you were finished?
Matthew: Hmm..... I presented it?

Fran: Yes, do you remember that? Mom and Dad came to school. And you did an oral speech for the first time?

Matthew: No I can't remember. Wait, I remember Daniel's speech on volcanoes, that's all.

Fran: What was your favourite time of day?

Matthew: Well we didn't really have a recess like now. We got a longer lunch hour. We went outside for gym sometimes. If we were good we could play out for a long time. We played this game called Pip Squeak Chip. Do you know how to play that? That was really fun.

Fran: Did the kids listen to Mrs Sorento?

Matthew: Most of them yeah. But there were some kids like, sometimes not Jesse. Sometimes he would just read a book while she was talking. Can we have supper now?

(Conversation February 1994, Transcript Notes.)

Matthew’s reflections afford us a rare glimpse of a primary classroom from the student’s point of view. From Matthew’s perspective Rebecca’s classroom seems to be an inviting place where the grade ones and twos do "fun things." As a student he is aware of the complex often unspoken rules and behavioral parameters of his classroom. He understands what happens when the class works well and is equally as sure about the rewards of the big poster when things go REALLY well. He can explain easily the minute differences between the nuances of well, really well and really, really well done work. He remembers special occasions, like eating the dried apples and counting spots on a sleeping Dalmatian as well as day to day routines like the big blue spelling chart. He will always be able to spell the word "because"! Mrs Sorento is remembered as friendly, funny and most of all nice. Matthew is unaware of the stress Rebecca is feeling. His story of his teacher reveals her to be capable and in charge. His spontaneous comments indicate evidence of the planning and structure that Rebecca was so worried about. Her warmth and caring for her students is reflected in Matthew’s
observations of a comfortable classroom, a classroom in which he wants to be. Matthew's text allows us to share a vicarious moment of participation in Rebecca's classroom, to visit for a moment her in-classroom place on the landscape, to imagine Rebecca from the child's point of view. From his perspective Rebecca's cover story appears to be the "real" story of Ms Sorento.

Lisa's Stories of Rebecca

I was curious to know how much Lisa knew about Rebecca's state of mind in those first months and what kind of support strategies she offered. Was she aware that Rebecca was constructing cover stories to suppress her uncertainty? What did she come to learn about cover stories through the research process? First I looked back on Rebecca's stories to see in what ways Lisa figured as a significant character. I also explored the issue directly with Lisa and Rebecca, both separately and together. Rebecca discussed the relationship from her perspective during several individual interviews and also shared her thoughts with Lisa quite freely in later triad conversations.

To set Rebecca's first few months with Lisa in context, I first present Lisa's general notions of support for new staff and then move on to specifics concerning Rebecca. That fall of 1991, Lisa had a total of twelve "new" teachers on staff, a few designated new because they were new to the board and the rest beginning their first year. In the past Lisa had facilitated partnerships with experienced teachers for new staff and this year was no exception. The process was formalized somewhat by the system wide induction program which encouraged the selection of an official "school-based supporter" for each new teacher. At Halverston these support systems were put into place by Lisa early in September. Rebecca's supporter was Janet, an experienced special Education teacher whose room was two doors down the hall. When Lisa realized that she was to have so many new teachers on staff she had prepared herself by "doing some professional reading over the summer on the needs of new teachers." She was positive about the fledgling induction program believing it would be of great benefit to her staff both for new and experienced teachers. I recall Lisa's enthusiasm for the new initiative evidenced in her being one of the first principals to respond to my invitation to our first induction session.
It was Lisa's understanding "that new teachers experience intensely." She was also aware that this intense experience would manifest itself differently with each new teacher. Because she realized that in her role as principal she would not be tuned into the nuances of teachers' day to day experience she depended on her designated school-based supporters to let her know if her help was needed. For example, she might ask Janet how Rebecca was doing. How might she as principal help? Understanding that each response was a judgement call on the mentor's part, she nonetheless depended on her network for feedback and was keenly aware of her role as the new teachers' first principal. She felt this was an important relationship, one she hoped they would always remember positively. If help was warranted, it was usually offered informally, quick drop in visits, chats after school, simply "keeping an eye out for how things were going" Lisa believed that this sense of informality was congruent with the alternative philosophy of the school. When setting up the partnerships however, Lisa presented a clear expectation for the new teachers and supporters that "they had to talk to each other, that communication be honest and natural." It was important for Lisa that her new teachers understand what she called the reality of school life and realize that in gaining this understanding there would inevitably be some pain and disillusionment. According to Lisa, these discordant feelings could be ameliorated by the support systems in place but were all part of the natural, intense experience, necessary for growth. As Lisa explained, "Most new teachers come in with stars in their eyes. You don't want the stars to go out but somehow you also have to help them deal with reality."

Realizing she had twelve new staff to integrate into Halverston that year, Lisa had made several assumptions about Rebecca (a teacher she already knew); assumptions that were to be qualified as the term progressed. In Lisa's words:

I knew Rebecca had strong links with Gillian, her friend and mentor from curriculum services. I assumed that she was receiving support from Gillian. I knew that Rebecca was a very resourceful, intelligent, dedicated person with a great sense of inner strength. She understood alternative education and had worked previously at Halverston. I discovered that she clicked with Janet and knowing Janet's sensibilities I set her up as Rebecca's school-based supporter. With all her history at the school I knew she had a strong foundation and loads of skills. I thought she would need some
boundaries as well and I wasn't sure exactly how to help. And so I thought I would take it from her and I basically said, "How can I help." A number of times.....I thought everything was fine when she said it was. I had no idea of the despair and exhaustion she was feeling until we talked this year. Although I had complete faith in her, I must admit that my sense of expectation was that Rebecca would do better, that she would have known more in terms of classroom strategies. For example I was surprised when I would go in and Rebecca would be talking when the children just weren't listening. The minute but crucial details of classroom management. We who went through Teachers' College or the Faculty years ago practised and honed those practical skills and now they seem to be missing. But I did not realize that these things were bothering her as deeply. I thought it was just where she was.

I think the important thing in all of this is my attitude now. After this year of working with Rebecca in the research study and hearing her perspective I won't take new teachers so for granted again. I honestly did not realize until our research conversations that things had been so bad for Rebecca. I did not recognize her deep feelings of distress. Because of this awareness, I find I am now taking more responsibility for our student teachers here at the school, taking the opportunity to talk with first year supply teachers to help them understand more about the way the school runs. Just today, I spent some time with a new supply teacher on the politics of the photocopier! (Conversation, February 1996; interview March 1995)

From Lisa's reflections about Rebecca as a new teacher we can sense a growth of understanding in the way Lisa perceives this beginning stage of professional life. While she still feels that much of the adjustment a new teacher must experience is a natural part of the story of learning how to be a teacher, she recognizes that a principal cannot make assumptions about a new teacher's emotional well being or their preparedness to assume full teaching responsibilities. Based on her past history with the school and the recognition of inherent personal qualities, assumptions were made by Lisa about Rebecca's ability to teach in an alternative school. Lisa's first story of Rebecca was one of a novice teacher who was dealing competently with the normal problems of managing a class, a teacher who was enjoying her new status. She had enough confidence in Rebecca to present her classroom proudly to the Director of Education. When Lisa's story of Rebecca changed through the
research process, she came to understand that the confident persona presented by Rebecca to her administrator and peers was in part a cover story that she had accepted, unquestioned, at face value. Rebecca was in fact hanging on precariously waiting for Christmas so she could quit!

From the inquiry into Rebecca’s experience, Lisa believes that she will be more sensitive in future to new teachers on her staff, taking more responsibility for their growth as beginning teachers. Later, in Chapter Seven, we will see how this intent to be personally involved in the life of new staff was not so easily accomplished at Millside, a larger school embracing a culture of teaching quite different from that of Halverston. The entry stories of Susan, a first year teacher at Millside are set in contrast to Rebecca’s experience at Halverston and the significance of cover stories is once again felt.

**Rebecca’s Story of Lisa**

From a new teacher’s perspective, Rebecca also made assumptions about the role of the principal in creating her story of Lisa in much the same way that Lisa had made assumptions about her new teachers. The following accounts trace the origins of these assumptions and projected stories about the characterization of her first principal. By first revisiting Rebecca’s stories through the lens of the principal/new teacher relationship, we see from her Grandfather’s story that she was not comfortable enough in her new teacher’s role to ask Lisa directly about supply teacher procedures. She did not understand how to translate the logistics of her day into comprehensible instructions for someone else. She had been given a package by Lisa but that package was not helpful and it got buried in a sea of paper. Rebecca’s *List of Bombardments* point out that again the troublesome problems were not shared with the principal; rather they remained hidden by cover stories designed to present a confident persona especially in front of Lisa. We learned that she was surprised by Lisa’s informality during the hiring process, having anticipated a more hierarchical, formal relationship with her principal. In her story of *The Empty Vessel* she reveals her deep disappointment in system support structures and in Lisa’s role as a provider of resources. Yet she does not share her inner feelings with anyone, particularly her principal. Woven through the set of Rebecca’s stories in this chapter are words and phrases such as these which begin, strand by strand, to build a picture of Rebecca’s
understanding of and assumptions about her first principal.

In addition to the written accounts, I also gathered a great deal of information more directly about Rebecca's perceptions during our triad interview sessions. Last year, comfortable in her secure position of a fourth year veteran, Rebecca was able to reveal her feelings and attitudes about administrative support during an earlier time of emotional and professional insecurity. She explained that she would not have felt as open to such discussions during her first year of teaching and would not have been ready to examine the issues in such an honest and straightforward manner. This is an important methodological point because the insights gained from Rebecca's reconstructed stories are filtered through her accumulated experience of the intervening three years. We are not privy to the immediate reactions, thoughts and feelings surrounding events that happened three years ago. I recognize that as Bateson (1989) suggests, "We also edit the past to make it more intelligible in cultural terms. As memories blur we supply details from a pool of general knowledge" (p.32). As Rebecca sorts out and edits her memories in order to story her relationship with Lisa, she draws upon the store of images she has absorbed from her "general knowledge" of school stories about principals and teachers. She subtly shifts her focus from recollections of the past to reflections on that reconstructed past embuing the story with a depth of meaning not possible, in her words, at its time of occurrence.

The following account is created from Rebecca's impressions of Lisa's leadership. It describes her preliminary story of what a principal should be and her growing understanding of how that story changed through experience and the collaborative research process. I trace her ideas and impressions using her own words culled from four separate interview sessions. Two of the interviews were held at the beginning of the research process in September 1994 and two occurred after Rebecca had left the school on maternity leave, in the spring and fall of 1995. At this later stage in the research she was reflecting back from a different landscape, that of a new mother.

**The First Principal: Expectations and Reality**

Lisa was definitely not aware that I was feeling so insecure. She was always supportive but I
purposely never told her. I didn't want to appear as if I didn't know. I'd never tell her that I didn't know what I was doing. What I would do is go to her and say, "Lisa I don't know what to do about this," something specific. It's kind of like everybody was saying "I really mean it Lisa, I don't know what to do, but when I said it, I REALLY meant it. She seemed to understand that and would, you know, pat me on the back and point me in the direction of someone who knew the answer." Talk to L.J. about that. Talk to Mark. He'll know what to say about that. "But I'd never share that deeper feeling. She'd always say, "Well it looks good Rebecca. Don't worry about it. I have no expectations. Don't worry Rebecca." So she would step away from it and it seemed to take the pressure off. The good thing was I never felt pressured. I felt more pressure to measure up from Gillian than from Lisa.

I guess it wasn't really her fault that there was no program to give me. Even if there had been, I would have wanted the distance that she kept. I think that the one saving grace that kept me alive during that time, kept me from going over the deep end, was that I didn't have to answer to someone at the end of each day. Like officially answer to somebody. I mean I still had to answer to parents and most of all I had to answer to myself. That was tough enough, as much as I could have handled. To have had an authority looking over me and asking me to account for my actions would have been just too much in those first few weeks.

I realize now since we've been talking about it that my expectations of a principal's role were so very different from Lisa's actions. On the one hand, I felt a bit robbed in that first year of the hierarchical kind of principal I expected. A principal who would have everything laid out for you. You just pick up the plans and implement the strategies. A principal who has an answer for everything, in fact has the final word on everything. I remember assuming, again in a passive way, that here I am in teaching. What do I do now? And expecting her to have all the answers.

On the other hand, I remember being surprised at her style, especially with the staff. She had an interesting rapport with them, very friendly. It seemed to be very much a "go out after school for coffee" kind of relationship which most principals don't have with their staffs.
You asked me to think about where these expectations about principals came from. I think first of all from my own experience with teachers and principals who always had the answers. Secondly I’d have to say from the faculty. We heard from our professors all the time, "the principal will do this, the principal will do that." There was never any inkling that SOME principals would do this and some others do that! An image took shape of every principal having one book to follow with no questions. They would all follow the same policies to a tee. I was totally unprepared for the natural differences that would of course emerge. It was certainly a naive impression on my part. I understood that teachers could be different but not principals. I think the faculty confirmed this idea. I remember hearing the message, in our texts, in our lectures, in simple terminology, however subtle it was, "When you get to your school your principal will be telling you what to do. You’ll receive your program package." That was a clear expectation. So when I arrived at Halverston there was Lisa saying instead, "What do you think? You know what to do. You’ll be fine." She’d come to the door and offer me another unit like 'Fur and Feathers' and what I was waiting for was a plan for the year. I needed to know what a normal year looked like so I could teach in an alternative way.

This account describes the process of Rebecca’s gradual awakening to a new story of the principalship. She began, through the research process, to understand the human face and individual differences behind the administrative position. Initially frustrated with what she interpreted as a lack of administrative direction, she began to understand that Lisa was not going to give her the answers. Instead Lisa would challenge her to work it out independently within the framework of a supportive peer group. Important to this understanding was Rebecca’s realization that Lisa’s style of leadership support was very similar to that of her parents. When we discussed Rebecca’s perceptions of the principal’s role, she reflected back to words she remembered her parents using when she was a teenager. They too would challenge Rebecca asking, "How is it going? What do you think you should do? Always keep your options open. Never give up." As Rebecca sorted out these sound bites of memory she wondered about their effect on her coming to understand and be comfortable with Lisa’s style. The same kinds of phrases spoken by another authority figure in another time and place, pulling together the landscapes of past and present. She believed that her parents had instilled in her "a no-quitter attitude" a stubborness and determination, a belief in her own independence which was to carry her into the easier waters of second term.
Rebecca's growing understanding of the complexity of the principal's role and its influence on her development will be documented in subsequent chapters as we follow Lisa and Rebecca to their next school. In this chapter I have focussed on the first four months of Rebecca's career. I have described her attempts to find her place on the professional knowledge landscape by highlighting stories which present the dilemmas she faced as her projected idealistic stories of teaching collided with the unexpected stories of uncertainty being lived in the present. I have suggested that the creation of cover stories allowed Rebecca to bridge this gap and maintain a public image of competence during first term. Interspersed with Rebecca's stories are the stories of Lisa and I set in relational context to Rebecca's experience. Although at this early stage of her career, Rebecca's professional landscape was dominated by in-classroom priorities, it was also shaped significantly by the moral landscape of the school, the people within that landscape and her own individual history. By creating a picture of Rebecca's first term in relation to these factors I have attempted to show how personal and professional settings "weave a matrix of storied influence over one another" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995, p.27).
Chapter Five

Interim: Landscapes of Learning and Possibility

The purpose of this chapter is to create a bridge between Rebecca's first term of teaching and her third year when she again works with Lisa as her administrator. The second part of her first year is storied by Rebecca in ways quite different from the accounts of her first months which are documented in the previous chapter. We understand further from the following section the importance of the supply teaching experience acquired by Rebecca during her second year layoff in establishing her position on the professional knowledge landscape.

My purpose in tracing the chronology of Rebecca's first years of teaching is to provide an underlying temporal structure for her narrative of experience. The chronicles or storied events are presented in an order more or less sequential, to bring to light Rebecca's teaching and life experience over time: however, this string of events from the past would not give us the whole picture. Through the process of collaborative research, the narrative inquiry, further meaning and purpose are elicited from the succession of individual stories by linking the past, present and future. Further, the stories of Lisa and me are set in relation to those of Rebecca as we engage in restorying our experience to construct an ongoing narrative which conveys a sense of unity and coherence over time. Drawing on the work of Carr, (1986) who relates the three part structure of time to significance, value and intention, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) suggest that narrative meaning consists of these three qualities. If the past conveys significance, the present conveys value and the future reveals intention, then the interplay of these three temporal dimensions will figure significantly in structuring the written narrative. This interim chapter describes and interprets the chronology of events between December of 1991 and June of 1993, connecting the past events, as told by Rebecca in the present, to her ongoing narrative of teaching.

As recorded at the conclusion of Chapter Four, Christmas Break functioned as a crucial turning point in Rebecca's story of her first year. Up to the holiday she saw herself being caught in a relentless uneasy rhythm of "not knowing what she didn't know". Despite a few glimmers of ownership for her
students and program stemming from the director's visit and her November report cards, she frequently felt like a stranger on the professional landscape. I understand her story of herself as a teacher as changing from the images of success she had visualized as a student teacher to one of an imposter in the classroom who managed her insecurity through a succession of cover stories. Those cover stories included the one which described successfully reaching Christmas break as a symbolic marker of survival. Rebecca compares the value of her experience of the long awaited Christmas Break to the significance of getting her driver's license.

I kept giving myself the message that after Christmas it would be better. Just that time away. that rest was like it was when I was sixteen and it was just understood that I would get my driver's license. I turned sixteen. I got my license. It turned Christmas. It's going to get better. I didn't question it. I made it to here. It's going to get better. That was it. The expectation was set. And sure enough over the break I felt rejuvenated and I got these visions about how to progress with the year and I went back feeling confident. I came back to my classroom after a time away, whereas coming into teaching, I was just going into this other school where it seemed that everybody was together as a team. They'd all been teaching a year or two. They'd been through that hurdle. So this was my first chance to be on top; you know, to go back with a little bit of confidence because I was walking into my classroom again. From September to December there was no break away from it so it was just constant every day. (Transcript notes, interview, September 1994)

Rebecca's words reveal much about the power of story to influence our actions and attitudes. She tells herself repeatedly the story of "Christmas as a turning point," the story she has heard from colleagues and from her grandmother, who was herself a first year teacher in 1923. The repeated story becomes something she can believe in; in a sense she wills it to happen. She projects a new story for herself and her students as the time away from school allows her to construct "visions of how to progress." When she returns to school it is with a renewed sense of confidence and ownership that she steps back into her classroom, her first chance to be part of the team of experienced teachers rather than a beginner. We begin to understand how the concept of ownership relates to beginnings; how the more ownership is felt in a situation, the less one feels a beginner. Rebecca's stories of herself as a more experienced teacher are lived out successfully in her eyes, as she moves through
term two with a renewed intentional purpose.

**Knowing What I Didn't Know**

I went back in January thinking 'Well, I totally screwed up the first half of the year but now I know where I'm going'. I felt I had some pretty good ideas to offer to the programming. I felt confident in following them through. Like in September to December it was sort of, try this, I mean, grab this math program, try it for a while, grab that math program, try it for a while. You know, what was I really trying to do in reading? Then, after the break, I began to use a novel study program in language arts which became a highlight for many of the students and got us through our days. I picked up a physical education program from another board and I felt I was finally addressing the students' physical needs in a progressive way and not just haphazardly in games and stuff.

And then the other magical thing that happened was that once I went back in January these children were different. Someone who hadn't been reading all of a sudden picked up a book and brought it to me and wanted to read. And so I thought, there's something happening here too! So that was enough of a little spark and wood on the fire to keep me going, to rejuvenate me instantly because from January on it was all uphill. I felt at that point I could see the whole picture and see what was missing from the picture. I could see what I would need to know in my future teaching to make it a complete year package and knowing that I still didn't know some of it but there was a difference. Like in that first four months I didn't know what I didn't know. Now I knew what I didn't know. And that was O.K. I'd just have to go around and find out! Which was a totally different feeling? I mean you can still not know it, but it's a totally different feeling to know what you don't know and to not know what you don't know.

And then I sort of understood a little more about the school..... what do you call that, not the environment, but sort of a global idea, the way the board works, the way individual schools work in the board. More of the puzzle pieces were filtering in because I had the freedom in my head to let it come in. (Transcript notes, September 1994).
As Rebecca describes her situation after Christmas I can envision her staking out new ground on the professional knowledge landscape. She is relating to the landscape in a new way. The two-week break has given her time and space to create new stories of how she will construct the learning environment she wants for herself and her students. She looks back on the first four frenzied months and begins to understand more about the rhythms and cycles of a school year realizing that both curriculum ideas and student growth and learning need time to follow through. She feels that she has gained the confidence to let them happen in their own time, that the school year will have a rhythm of its own. The "whole picture" is visualized for the first time. She understands that she has not yet experienced this full year rhythm but she knows it exists and can "see what is missing from the picture." This new understanding about recognizing what she does not yet know marks an exciting time for Rebecca. She recalls feeling enthusiastic about teaching again, ready to learn what she doesn't know and loving it! The horizons of her professional landscape expand as she takes the opportunity to look beyond her own classroom and begins to realize the structure of the school and its place in the system. She draws again on the analogy of "puzzle pieces fitting into place" to describe her tentative understandings of "more global ideas". It appears that Rebecca is gradually finding her place on the educational landscape, feeling more secure in reaching out from her classroom base to discover the broader dimensions of the out-of-classroom knowledge landscape. The progression of her focus from classroom to school to system is congruent with what we know about stages of new teacher development (Cole, Squire and Cathes, 1995) yet often overlook in the initial flood of orientation information about the system disseminated to new staff. Only now in her second term, is Rebecca ready to absorb information and construct new understandings about herself and the wider political horizons of teaching that were impossible in her first term.

The system perspective was soon to become more visible than Rebecca had anticipated. Just as things were beginning to make sense the rumours of layoffs raced through the system. The dreaded pink letters were distributed to over one hundred new teachers in early April and of course Rebecca was among them. When Rebecca shared the stories of her first year, I had anticipated that the layoffs would constitute a significant, distressing chapter of her narrative. I was surprised when the story did not surface until our sixth triad session and was in fact presented in a positive context. The layoff situation constituted another mutually experienced event on the professional landscape; however,
the event experienced by Rebecca, Lisa and me from our respective vantage points held different meanings for each of us. The following account first describes Rebecca’s reactions to the layoffs as shared with us in session six. (November, 1994)

I guess I was very philosophical about being laid off. After all it was only my first year and I felt lucky enough to have that job. I wasn’t at the same point other people were who had supply taught for years trying to get on. I was fresh out of teachers’ college (sic) so I felt very fortunate just to have one full year under my belt. There were other people new on staff who were very bitter and angry but I guess I thought it was par for the course. It affected me but what could I do? It wasn’t personal. I was just the bottom of the heap. I was getting very strong messages from experienced teachers who were saying, "I spent the first seven years of my career doing this every year, the same thing." So I really think that’s what helped me take the situation in stride. Those messages held positive interactions for me. I understood everything would eventually be O.K. But for others the message was interpreted less positively because they didn’t feel the support of experienced staff.

Rebecca’s response is consistent with her understanding of the rhythms of experience. We recall her analogy to life as a puzzle where events were alternately in and out of place. Rebecca’s ability to sense an ebb and flow of experience brings to mind the words of Dewey (1934):

> Life itself consists of phases in which the organism falls out of step with the march of surrounding things and then recovers unison with it - either through effort or some happy chance. (p.14)

Although she was obviously disappointed she believes that she took the change in stride trying to make the best of a difficult situation, "recovering union" in her situation.

From my position on the landscape the layoffs were significant. I was the new teacher induction officer who now became the new teacher "reduction" officer, trying to communicate board policy to the teachers at our sessions, scrambling to make the program relevant as the story of the new teachers first year took an unexpected twist. The day the pink layoff letters arrived I felt helpless and frustrated knowing how much pain the notices would bring and there was absolutely nothing
I could do. Despite any words of empathy I could muster, the story was that I had a job and they didn't. Although my concern encompassed all the new teachers in a general way, I was particularly connected with a small group I had come to know personally. A few of the new teachers at Halverston and the five new teachers at a neighbouring school who were the participants in my research project on mentoring had all become individual characters in my story that year as I had come to know more about their first year experience. Needing to make some kind of symbolic statement that would ameliorate the official distance of those pink letters I delivered bouquets of spring flowers to teachers at the two schools. Recognizing that I was fulfilling a need of my own "to make things right" I still hoped the gesture would show that someone at the system level cared. Rebecca was standing in the yard with her children lined up in front of her, the wind sweeping across the yard on that cold April day. It was dismissal time and the children were bouncing and cavorting in their places as they waited for the school buses to arrive. Rebecca stood quietly at the front of the line braced against the wind looking still and sad as she leaned over to listen to yet another child's story. For a few minutes I stood back and watched, fighting waves of anger, guilt and regret directed towards a situation over which the new teachers and I had no control. I walked over to Rebecca and gave her a hug and the flowers and we were joined for a moment of silent understanding.

Later in June several parent volunteers helped Rebecca pack up the room she had so carefully designed for the children. I was working with Rebecca one afternoon when the two teachers from another school who were replacing her and another primary teacher came sweeping into the room, ignoring Rebecca and me, they busied themselves with measuring classroom space and furniture, planning for their next team teaching assignment. When Rebecca and I recalled this event we storied it in ways congruent with our positions on the landscape. I was incensed. As an experienced teacher who was also joining the Halverston staff and also replacing a new teacher, I found this juxtaposition of beginnings and endings awkward and uncaring. With all my moves from school to school I had witnessed and been part of many productive transition experiences; I felt Rebecca should have been allowed the time and space to bring closure to her first year. The new teachers were claiming ownership of the room before Rebecca had relinquished it. I wanted to tell them to move along, to leave, that she wasn't ready but I was caught between my roles as the induction officer, a parent volunteer and a future colleague of the teachers who were barging about Rebecca's room. Not
knowing in which voice to speak, I said nothing. Rebecca on the other hand recollects the incident as one of minor emotional impact. She felt "so much at the mercy of the system anyway" that she thought "it was just par for the course," that this was the way things happened. Because this was a first ending of a first year teaching there was no familiar story on which to rely.

The day after the incident in Rebecca's room another colleague and I met with the team of four angry intermediate teachers who had been laid off. It was a painful experience for all of us. We as the experienced replacement teachers needed to find out about the new alternative program begun that year by the novice team. The team, while wanting to share their experience and offer suggestions, seemed to be interpreting the redundancy issues in an intensely personal way and directed some of the pent up hostility towards the board at us. My story of that meeting is that I in particular was seen as a central office teacher bouncing a colleague from his position. Because of Rebecca's experience I was acutely aware of invading their space so I suggested meeting in an neutral room across the hall. We avoided the silent classroom with its half packed boxes altogether and that decision eased some of the tension. (Constructed from transcript notes, December 1994.)

Lisa has authored her story of the layoffs from an administrator's perspective. For Lisa the time of the layoffs was also a significant part of her shared story with Rebecca. I have constructed her account from the transcript notes of our first interview, August 1994.

My first year in the temporary site at Halverston started on a real high. And then I had to fire 12 people. I mean we have nicer words for it. We say downsizing and transitioning and people are redundant and on and on. But the bottom line is here's your pink slip. Thank you very much. Goodbye. And I'm the one that gets to hand them out. Of course I would want to be the one to do that I would never want someone else to come and tell my dear sweet teachers because I treasured them. And that was very hard to do. But it was my job.

Although there was great bitterness in some staff, I did not ever sense a bitterness in Rebecca. I've talked many times of her deep strength and maturity and that well that she draws on. I mean maybe in her own environment where she can take off the armour and you know just be herself and let it
out maybe things are a lot different. We're all like that. But in terms of her presentation of self as a professional she never waivered.

Unlike many of her intermediate peers who became bitter and disillusioned about the teaching profession because of the layoffs, Rebecca storied herself as an optimistic survivor turning the situation into a learning opportunity. She spoke animatedly to Lisa and me about her second year as a supply teacher:

_The year was a positive time. Because I worked mainly at Halverston and a few other schools I had a comfort zone. I knew the children and they knew me, so stepping into the classroom to fill in was a real observation time for me, a chance for every beginning teacher to see a child the next year or two years later. It was a chance to see other classrooms and how they were set up and run. To see another day book. Sometimes someone would be away for a week or two and you could build up that sense of "O.K. we'll work through some things here without that onus of it being your class. It's almost like a fringe benefit to have had this extra time to see something through, to see if I could work through a problem to carry through a concept. It was basically all those little mini lesson times that I was able to benefit from within that comfort zone of knowing the children and knowing the school._

_The supply teaching really helped with managing the children. You know that's the time when I felt very able to establish techniques and systems because I had to and it was my only focus. It was very interesting too across the ages, like teaching in a kindergarten class up to a grade eight class to find that it was identical from one end to other end of that spectrum and to find out that what worked down here worked up there._

_I remember doing a Junior high out in a rural area. Well, I arrived on day one and I didn't know it but it happened to be dress up day. It was an area with a very Italian population out there and I had boys showing up in shiny suits and fedoras and I thought, "What an interesting school. So this is the way the grade seven and eights dress at this school. Good." I put my name on the board and I hear this from the back group. Hey Miss, you Italian? Of course my Italian name.... I had them..._
in the bag! Just a little thing like that. And they were used to being very structured so it was great.

Another time I recall being at Halverston in the intermediate section where there was a great deal of student movement between classes, a totally different situation and what was neat was knowing some of the children I'd had as five year olds when I was a teaching assistant. I still had these connections. You just backtrack to the same language you used with them all those years ago and it all connects.

Basically supply teaching was learning on my own because the teacher is not there to talk with. The principals were not there for me in that sense either. They were there for the structure and the system. The staffs were good about making sure you had everything you needed but it's not the same as. "how did your day go? Or what did you do?" Like it didn't matter what happened during the day, if you had everything you needed and you knew where to go for everything, that was enough, you'd been looked after. But in terms of running the day you were on your own. It's like there wasn't anybody there to see that things went as expected. So I really had to take the ball and run with it and that was learning on the job, on the spot. (Transcript notes, November 1994)

As Rebecca tells the story of her second year of teaching it becomes landscape of learning and possibility rather than a step backwards in her professional career. Her growing understanding of teaching and classroom management is contextualized in a variety of schools and classrooms. She expresses a sense of freedom from the overwhelming responsibility of her own class that allows her to focus on "working through problems...carrying through a concept" with someone else's children. Her personal landscape is enriched by the landscapes of others as she absorbs everything she sees in the classrooms and routines of other teachers, creating a store of mental images from which to draw as she constructs her story of herself as a supply teacher. She is able to construct new understandings about intermediate students by teaching "across the ages" and connecting her knowledge of primary children with her beginning intermediate experience. As Rebecca spoke about herself as a priveledged learner on the supply teaching landscape, I began to understand the excitement she felt about her second year. It was almost as if she felt she had been given a second chance, to catch her breath to "have some extra time to see something through."
When Rebecca and I looked over her stories of supply teaching during our last triad session in March 1996, she reflected further on the difference between the two years:

Supply teaching allows you to go in and be "mean", to outline the rules, to lay down the law, to say no! It doesn't matter if the kids don't like you. Law and order is more important for the day than an emotional bond. BUT in my first year I knew I needed the emotional bond, to be liked, so that we could successfully move to the end of the year. So, the dilemma! How to lay down the law, say no, in that situation. What supply teaching taught me was that even those teaching situations where I had to be firm could result in a positive relationship between the class and me.

(Rebecca's research journal, March 1996)

In this reflection Rebecca has articulated an important understanding of her continuing teaching story. The language she uses to describe her story of supply teaching stands in vivid contrast to the story of the relationships she wants to establish in her own classroom. In supply teaching the language of imperatives, of "law and order" dominates her professional landscape while in her classroom Rebecca's primary goal was to create an emotional bond, based on a language of relationship. In her first year she understood order and this emotional bond to be incompatible, thus causing the dilemma she faced with classroom management issues of control and pupil teacher rapport. The year of supply teaching afforded her the opportunity to construct new understandings of how these two apparently contradictory qualities could be reconciled.

In March of her second year Rebecca is recalled to a .7 teaching position filling in two term contracts between two different schools. She is elated and confirms with the board that she is again a permanent employee, for ever and ever! She is enthusiastic about her new teacher resource designation and works very hard to grasp the new program involved in this special support position. She quickly becomes a part of the staff at her afternoon school, feeling welcomed and valued. She is concurrently taking Special Education Part I to upgrade her qualifications.

At the end of May a letter arrives. "We've made a mistake, sorry. You're laid off again." No warning. Lots of letters. This layoff hurts. It is far more traumatic than the first time when she is a
first year rookie. This layoff is a slap in the face. Tons of effort on the new job and then this. Fired for the first time you take it. It happens. You take it. But to give it all you've got a second time!

(From transcript notes, November 1994)

At the end of June another official letter arrived. The recently fired teachers had been once again reinstated. Rebecca was called in for the position opening at Millside School, a special education class for primary children with Autism. Lisa was to begin her new position at Millside in September as well and so the circles of connection were renewed.
Chapter Six

Monet to Escher: Halverston to Millside

Monet......
Escher.....

Monet is soft, gentle, blended
blue
green
peaceful

Escher is sharp angular
black
white
mystifying

With Monet, there are dreams, sighs, warm hugs
Escher jolts, shocks, startles
Monet floats, erases the edges
soothes the pain
Escher's bite attracts, repels, pushes and pulls
both are bold
deep
draw in the mind
both have passion

and now...... today......
it is like having two lovers
Monet and Escher
both wonderful

The title of this chapter, Monet to Escher, reflects Lisa's poetic metaphor for the dramatic change from Halverston, a small collaborative alternative school to the much larger, more conservative environment of Millside. The poem alludes to the times of dissonance and resolution experienced by Lisa as she assumes her new assignment. The chapter continues the exploration of Rebecca's professional knowledge landscape as she moves into her third year of teaching taking on a special Education class at Millside School. She had been recalled by the Board in the previous spring and Lisa had hired her for a position in the children with autism unit as she was staffing her new school.
This chapter documents the stories of Rebecca's continuing development in yet another new situation and presents parallel accounts of Lisa's difficult entry to the new school. The professional knowledge landscapes of both participants are developed and compared within the context of their new workplace challenges. Lisa and Rebecca were at Millside for a full year before I arrived to join the staff and once again renew the webs of professional and personal connection.

Clandinin and Connelly (1995) remind us that "to properly understand the professional knowledge landscape it is necessary to understand it narratively as a changing landscape with a history of its own" (p.28). To investigate that history I tapped a variety of sources, historical records such as old newsletters and procedural manuals, listened carefully to solicited and unsolicited staff stories of the school when I arrived and facilitated a collaborative reconstruction of the entry stories of Lisa and Rebecca and myself. My emerging understanding of Millside was a narrative one, built on the fragments of school stories I was hearing and stories I was experiencing myself. I was drawn back to Polkinghorne's work on research and narrative (1988). He suggests that:

researchers seeking to describe the operating narratives for groups are confronted by a continuum from complete consensus on a single group story to no agreement at all on any. The researcher first tries to discern if there is a single overriding story that gives a unity and wholeness to the events of that organization. If none can be identified the group is without a single direction and must operate by making use of various stories drawn from a common stock of organizational narratives... If instead of no commitment to a narrative scheme there is a strong commitment by different members of an organization to stories with different themes... misunderstanding arises and there will likely be lack of agreement on the meaning of the same events, and periods of conflict, crisis and disruption. (p.166)

At Millside two of these notions come into play. It is my understanding that before Lisa arrived the story of the school was one of stability and conservatism, a "single, overriding " story shared by most of the staff. Teachers were seemingly content with the hierarchical nature of the patriarchal administrative structure and its emphasis on a strong teacher-centred curriculum, quiet, orderly classes and firm discipline based on a written code of rules and regulations. School divisions operated separately. Staff was also physically divided at breaks and lunch hours because there were three separate staffrooms plus the custodians room, traditionally a haven for noon-hour smokers.
The school was characterized by many experienced staff who had been at the site for twenty years or more. I learned from several of these staff members that the prevailing story of the school was dominated by three female staff members who played key shaping roles as "negative influentials." The story related to me was that because these staff members were firm believers in the conservative school traditions they hindered opportunities for change or innovation while keeping the landscape as it always had been. It was as one staff member put it a "tight ship".

What happened when Lisa arrived constitutes the beginning of a new story, the beginning of different kinds of commitments held by different groups of teachers within the school community, the beginning of conflicting stories and misunderstandings. I have chosen to introduce Millside by presenting two stories that capture the narrative essence of those conflicting school stories. The stories are told through two symbols which represent the complex nature of the school's changing landscape. The first story, *The Staff Meeting as a Symbol of the School*, tells about an event which happened before I came to Millside, the second *The Mural, A Symbol of the School*, represents a situation from the next year, an event in which I was a character.

*The Staff Meeting as a Symbol of the School*

Key events at a school tell much about the school story that is lived out by the teachers and administration. Sometimes an event is singular in nature, other times events are regularly repeated in a rhythm that is known and understood by all participants. This is often the case with staff meetings which can take on symbolic meaning for the school. A staff meeting is a socially constructed event with the multiple perspectives of its meaning held differently by its various participants. A typical staff meeting might be held by an administrator who believes that the message she is communicating is being received in the same way by all staff. Staff members may assume that the information they are processing is being understood in the same way by the teacher sitting next to them. The interpretation and meaning of a mutually experienced event is not however so easily taken for granted. Under normal circumstances the various perspectives held by individuals would not be available for a reconstruction of meaning. People leave a meeting, turn their thoughts to what lies ahead in their homes or classrooms and life goes on.
A particular staff meeting, however, within this research situation, provided a unique opportunity to delve beneath the superficial structures of the event, to explore how this out of classroom landscape was perceived by teachers and administrators holding different positions on the communal landscape. Because it was independently highlighted by several people at the school as significant, I was curious as to how the event fit into teachers' and administration's stories of the school. What I discovered was similar to the phenomenon Polkinghorne had noted, in that there was a lack of agreement on the meaning of the same events.

Let me first sketch in the background and context of the meeting and then recreate the reactions of the various characters within the event. I base my accounts on data gathered from the participants' interviews and informal conversations as I was not a staff member at this time. I have reconstructed fictional accounts of the event based on interviews with Lisa, Rebecca, Kate, the guidance counsellor, Rick and Maggie, veteran intermediate teachers and several of the educational support staff. To set the meeting in context and retain a sense of relevance and immediacy I present the data in forms common to the school situation by creating letters, memos, stories and journal entries which represent the participant's recollections. As much as possible I have reconstructed the accounts using the words and language structures of the teachers involved and the written interpretations have been shared and edited with the key characters.

The staff meeting was Lisa's first introduction to the Millside staff. After being appointed to Millside she and the new female vice-principal discussed an entry plan for that first staff meeting to be held on June 30, 1993, the last day of the school term. I learned from conversations with several teachers that many of the staff at Millside were somewhat apprehensive of Lisa's appointment because "they had heard stories of the Alternative School." From their understanding of alternative education they were afraid that the new principal would bring a different, more laissez faire sense of discipline and hierarchical structure. Some teachers like Rick were, however, "willing to wait and see what happened, to make up their own minds." Staff meetings at Millside were traditionally rather formal events in which the principal delivered information which was duplicated on sheets to be filed in the Millside Procedural Manuals. Staff listened, made appropriate notes and sometimes filed the papers in the huge dusty green-pea binders stored back in their classrooms.
According to some staff, a hierarchical pattern of passive receptivity and order had been clearly established. Any subsequent reactions stemming from the meetings were not voiced publicly but shared behind the closed doors of individual classrooms. This kind of scripted staff meeting contrasted dramatically with Lisa's style of leadership. I recall that meetings at Halverston were informal social occasions with staff gathered around the centre lunch room table, amid much talk and laughter, food and drink. Often a staff member would assume responsibility for moving the group through the agenda items, navigating a circuitous route among the many interruptions occurring as people agreed to disagree on contentious issues. Lively stories of individual children or parents often dotted the landscape of the more formal system discourse which always seemed removed from everyone's reality of the school.

Lisa had also heard stories of Millside from her administrative colleagues, stories that presented the school as a place valuing individual teachers' autonomy coupled with a very directive administrative approach. She sensed that it would be important to deliver her own strong philosophical message in that first encounter. She wanted people to work together at Millside, to understand that collaboration could be the key to success. So when her vice-principal Ruth suggested a skilled outside facilitator to lead a session on collaborative goal setting she agreed. They invited Brian Fields, a principal colleague with years of workshop experience to direct the goal setting activity. What follows are the accounts of this commonly experienced event on the professional knowledge landscape of Millside, an event in the eyes of some "that went terribly wrong", an event seen as "perfect" by others. The often humorous stories paint a picture of a landscape perceived though personal frameworks secured through particular kinds of professional socialization (Eisner, 1988).

Lisa's Story.

One of the biggest mistakes I ever made was inviting Brian. It was absolutely ridiculous. Looking back in hindsight I never should have imposed anything on a new audience like that. His first activity was about animals, some cute little ice breaker and my heart sank. What a terrible mistake! The staff just sat there dumbfounded, arms crossed, grumpy faces, rolling eyes, sour looks. Icebreaker! This group wanted the ice. Like, don't break my ice. I love my ice. Go away. Ruth and I sat there immobile. Wooden dolls on a shelf. And then Maggie standing up and saying to Brian,
"Who do you think you are coming in here and telling us how to work together. We've been working together for 25 years."

Kate, the guidance counsellor, came to me at the break and let me know that there was a tremendous amount of negative reaction to Brian and the goal setting process. Her comments linked with my own dismayed observations prompted me to tell Brian to wrap it up. Before we adjourned I tried to get agreement on the date for a before school September staff meeting. I really knew I was in trouble when I suggested three dates and no one put up a hand for any of them. It was pretty obvious they didn't want a staff meeting at all but of course we had to have one. We voted again and September 1st was the day. Again it was the wrong thing to do. As much as I was used to having a meeting before school began, they were not!

Memo To: Brian Fields, Principal, Dunbar School
Memo From: Lisa Stone, Principal, Millside School
Date: June 31, 1993
Re: Ice Breaker

I apologize for breaking off your activity yesterday. I had to call a halt because there was just too much hostility from the staff. They weren't ready for the metaphor game, "If you were an animal what animal would you like to be?" I know you had planned this activity as an ice breaker but this group wanted to keep the ice in place! I'm sure you were aware of the negative reactions. I hope the teacher who spoke out and told you that you were not welcome did not upset you. Thank you again for your time. I take full responsibility for the lack of insight into what would be best for this staff.

Memo To: Ruth Janson, Vice-principal, Millside School
Memo From: Lisa Stone, Principal, Millside School
Date: June 31, 1993
Re: Staff Meeting

I've been reflecting about our introduction to the Millside staff yesterday. We really misread the situation badly. I think the staff resented our approach and that we didn't take the time to find out what their needs were. We just imposed our own. We probably should have had a quick introduction, found out what they liked about the school and what they wanted to see changed for the next year. End of story. Go back to your classrooms. Have a nice day. See you next year. We'll have to do some hard thinking about our first September meeting. Hopefully we'll be able to repair some lines of communication and learn from our mistakes. Our plans were formulated with integrity and good intent. I guess none of us were ready to play games. Seen from a lighthearted perspective, it really was quite a funny situation. I'm sure we'll joke about it some day. I'm just glad I wasn't the one.
standing up there.

This situation also reiterated my belief in running with my instincts in leadership issues. When we were planning I had an intuitive sense that having Brian might not work but I was caught up in the enthusiasm for planning something special and I didn't listen to that inner voice. I know from experience that I have to reflect on things and then listen very carefully to what my gut is telling me. I share these thoughts with you because as we work together this year as an admin. team, we will need to be aware of our own and each other's decision making processes.

Rebecca's Story

I remember thinking that the first staff meeting at Millside was just perfect. I had just been recalled to the board after a year's lay off and would be working with Lisa again at a new school. I wanted to be very anonymous. I wasn't sure whether or not it was a good idea to acknowledge my relationship with Lisa from Halverston. Some intuitive sense guided me to just pretend I was like everyone else. I was sitting with other members of the autistic unit who were new to me. The teaching assistants with us were new to the whole staff meeting milieu having been invited by Lisa to attend for the first time. The unit was all crammed together at one table, apart from the others. Compared to our noisy, informal meetings at Halverston, the room seemed full of silent strangers. When I realized Brian was to facilitate the meeting I felt an enormous sense of comfort because I knew him. He and my father are friends. I spoke positively about him to people around me. When Brian asked us questions about what animal we'd like to be I felt very safe. I recall thinking, "Thank goodness we're not talking about stuff I'm supposed to know about. This is a new assignment for everyone here. We're all playing these games together. O.K. This is safe."

Our table was having fun. The teaching assistants are a young crowd anyhow and they had no expectation of what a staff meeting would be. They looked around and said, "Well, so this is what happens here. We're going to be animals all year. This is going to be great fun."

I remember the physical sensation of safety. It seemed that I would not be introduced as a newcomer. I would not be pointed out as having worked with Lisa at the Alternative School or knowing Brian. Somehow at that moment I needed the safety of anonymity.

As we continued the activity I had no sense of the tension in the rest of the room, no sense of
premonition. I thought what Lisa and Ruth had organized was great. Two new female administrators who were following a patriarchal male principal, wanting to say "O.K. Things are going to be different now." But they didn't say it. They had someone else say it, a person who acted like an ice breaker. That's my vision of Brian, like a real icebreaker in an ocean full of ice flows. And I could imagine how some of the ice had formed. Part of that ice breaker feeling came from my brief interview experience with the former principal who emanated a formal coldness and distance in his communication style. So I thought, this is safe what they are doing, having a third person in front of them. This is like a coach getting his team together in a friendly pre-game huddle.

Then everything changed. In a single moment. One staff member got up and basically told Brian he had no right to be there. I was completely taken aback. I knew Brian was a lovely person and I had no idea others felt differently. The hair on my back actually went up as her words fell on a silent room. I looked around in amazement at the hostile faces. I had never heard people talk like that in a staff meeting. My inexperience and naivete rushed forward to meet the blunt reality of a different sort of workplace. The illusion of safety dissolved.

Rick's story

Rick, a teacher with 30 years experience, has been at Millside for eight years. He recalls the first staff meeting with the new female administrators as "a creative innovation" on their part. When Brian began his activity Rick thought "it was a hoot" and got into the spirit of the occasion. He remembers some people "who were set in their ways" being angry and very negative but he found the change in staff meeting procedure amusing and refreshing. He felt respect for Lisa when she openly admitted her mistake in front of the group. Because Rick had been on many different staffs he was accustomed to adapting to new situations. He was curious to see how Lisa and Ruth's leadership could change things at the school. From his position of experience he could foresee conflict brewing between the new administration and "the iron ladies", the term he had coined for the small group of women teachers who were showing the most resistance to the change in leadership.
Journal Entry....Lisa.

July 1, 1993

I keep remembering those faces.....the almost vicious looks ....... the rolling eyes. What have I got myself into? These thoughts are not productive. I need to let it go. There's no point in worrying about the past. September is a new year. I need to focus on a positive re-entry plan. I feel frustrated because theoretically I should have known better. I've read enough professional development literature to know you can't impose new ideas all at once. Three outsiders imposing their ideas. All wrong. I should have taken more time to get to know the staff on their terms.

Journal Entry ....Lisa

July 15, 1993

I've been thinking ahead to the September meeting. To make a connection to the kinds of routines the teachers have been used to in the past, I'll put everything on paper.... all in writing ... no surprises. Little packages for each person. That continuity may provide a comfort level. Getting together before school opens may give us time to get the year off to a more positive start.

Memorandum

TO: Lisa Stone, Principal Millside School
FROM: Don Jackson, Superintendent of Schools
DATE: August 31, 1993
RE: September 1 Staff Meeting

Lisa, I've received calls from our Federation presidents who have been fielding calls of complaint about your September 1st staff meeting. I fully support your concept of a pre-term meeting and I think you should go ahead with it despite the objections of a few who do not wish to work before the official opening day of school. Please submit to me a list of those teachers in attendance.

Postscript:

Lisa went ahead with her meeting and presented staff with colour coded file folders full of school policies and procedures. From her perspective she was rigidly following the routines of the former
principal, trying to build some bridges with the staff. They in turn responded positively. In fact one of the staff who had opposed the meeting told Lisa it was the best meeting she had ever attended. Several others chose not to attend at all.

As Rebecca, Lisa and I reconstructed the events and feelings of their entry to Millside. Rebecca made the observation that she too felt a more positive atmosphere in September. However she also added that Lisa was not herself, that she moved through a highly organized agenda with items labelled, "A-13 and A-14. I knew Lisa wasn't an A-13 type of person and yet here we were marching through A-13 and A-14. " Lisa reflected that from her vantage point at the front of the room, she sensed that people felt safe and comfortable with familiar ways of doing things.

Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) remind us that "for better or worse culture is a powerful force" (p.85). Lisa's attempt to change the format of the staff meeting could be seen as what some might call a well-intentioned mistake regarding the serious repercussions of trying to shape, change or fight the existing culture. Caught up in the enthusiasm of running this new school in a different way Lisa moved quickly to make a statement about collaboration before taking the time to ask those at the school about what they believed to be important, before appreciating the values they held as central to their understanding of themselves and their school. In addition, the traditional rhythm of the school year was altered by the subsequent before school meeting, again disturbing people's expectations, their understanding of the school landscape.

Rebecca's expectations of the landscape were not disturbed because they were not yet clearly formed. She remained watchful on the periphery, poised expectantly on the borders of her new school landscape. Her only expectations of what a school would be like had been formed at Halverston and several other small schools in which she had supply taught. As a new teacher on Millside's staff, one who had just been recalled to a full-time position, she was mindful of her tentative position on the landscape and wished to remain as anonymous as possible. And so she watched and waited. Her first sense was one of great relief when she understood the intent of Brian's ice breaker activity. Not only did she feel safe in knowing Brian but she also felt safe with the playful activity. Immensely relieved that there was to be no talk about program or sharing of knowledge that she had not yet
constructed about her new position, she had joined the game enthusiastically, unaware of the growing tension in the room.

Don't Move the Fridge: How Stories Get Around

As Lisa, Rebecca and I reconstructed these events I told them another story which has become a flag for caution for my husband, a principal with our board and one of his out of town colleagues, Carrie Douglas. The story was originally told to Ken by Carrie when he was an exchange vice principal at Carrie's school. The central message in the story is, "Don't move the fridge." How this apparently incongruous phrase directed their subsequent leadership actions is described in the following account:

While Carrie was a second year vice-principal, a new principal was appointed to her school at Christmas. Over the holiday break he came into the school, inspected the staffroom and decided to move the fridge from its original position in order to create more space in the small staffroom. He placed it at the end of the entrance hallway where it opened into the staffroom. Its new position made the entrance way much smaller and difficult to navigate. The first morning staff arrived back at the school, two women teachers approached the staffroom laughing and sharing Christmas stories and walked directly into the fridge. Annoyed and surprised at the immediate physical pain caused by the move, the teachers continued to experience increasing frustration with this change as the year progressed. The fridge was a continued annoyance for the whole staff as they daily navigated their way into the staffroom around this new obstacle. The staff never related to the new principal, who, from their perspective had unilaterally made a decision to change something that belonged to them. Any decisions he subsequently made were judged negatively by his first action of moving the fridge.

Ken reflected on the other side of the fridge story. As Carrie and Ken began working together at Carrie's first school their approach to making changes was influenced directly by this story from Carrie's past experience. With each move they initiated, they asked each other, "Are we moving the fridge here?" When Carrie wanted to make a change in the staffroom she proceeded in a much different way. The staffroom cupboards, which were full of mismatched dishes, chipped cups and
bent cutlery, needed a new look but Carrie involved the staff in even this small change. After ordering a whole new set of dishes she asked the staff to help unpack them and replace the old ones, to decide what should go and what should stay. Everyone pitched in and became physically involved in replacing old with new. The staff viewed Carrie's actions in a positive light, appreciating her concern for their space and their involvement.

The phrase "Don't move the fridge" has become a private codeword between Carrie and Ken for moving slowly along the uncharted roads of change. Although they now work for different boards, the message is still shared with humour via phone or E-mail when they are attempting to introduce change in their own schools. It cautions them to understand the traditions and culture of a new school, to experience the terrain, to know the landscape well before moving in and changing the status quo. It reminds them as administrators to understand the story of the school before attempting to dictate a new one. Although the communication between the two principals was originally private there is a sense in which this expression "Don't move the fridge" is becoming a catch phrase for gradual change among other principals who have been told the story by Carrie or Ken.

To continue the introduction to Millside I present a narrative account of another event centred on change which captured my interest during my first year at the school.

**The Mural: A Metaphor for Change**

*Sometimes stories of a school can be told through events that hold metaphorical meanings. Such was the case last year at Millside when a school landmark became a symbol for the complexities of change.*

*Dominating the front lobby is a mural depicting a Canadian historical scene. The painting, characterized by tones of dark green and murky brown is somewhat awkward and amateurish in style. A tall confident European explorer attired in a morning coat and a plumed hat strides across the painted tiles, rifle in hand, to meet a scantily clad representative of the First Nations who extends his hand in welcome. The mural speaks of a time past, rife with images and stereotypes of*
native peoples and the white man. An incongruous image of the current houses of Parliament floats above the figures.

No one looks at the mural anymore. Posters and art work from various classes often hang lopsidedly from the mural's dark surface. Parents and students waiting for office personnel often lean up against the mural, their bodies obliterating the images. The mural has become comfortably invisible, taken for granted, though its original narrative content speaks dramatically of settlers and Indians coexisting in harmony, contentious issues of our Canadian past. Our diverse student body representing forty-seven nationalities and living out a different sort of multiculturalism, walk by day after day ignoring this faded symbol of Canadian history.

During the month of February a group of parents from the Parent Teacher Association suggested that the mural be repainted to reflect more contemporary Canadian society. The idea was discussed at the P.T.A. meeting with teachers and parents exploring possibilities for change. As a participant in that discussion, I recall the talk being lighthearted, with many humorous suggestions for a new foyer painting. The Arts teacher was delegated with the responsibility for researching the mural's history and whether there was any significant political reason it could not be changed.

The next day a handwritten letter appeared in every teacher's mailbox, an impassioned plea from a long standing staff member to retain the mural just the way it was. It began, "It came to my attention Friday that a proposal is afoot to destroy a foyer mural." Miss Redfern's letter continued on for several pages citing artistic, cultural and historic reasons for the mural's survival. It concluded with the suggestion that another mural could be painted, if desired, in another free space in the school. At the day's end the letter was submitted to the monthly staff meeting. My field notes from that meeting suggest an attitude of bemusement on the part of many staff who wondered what all the fuss was about. Other staff joined with Miss Redfern in vocal exclamations of indignation that a school landmark might be changed.

The next day Miss Redfern canvassed the entire staff asking for signatures on a petition to save the foyer mural. Some agreed completely with Miss Redfern's arguments and gladly added their
signatures. Others reflected later that they felt pressured by the personal request and acquiesced out of a sense of duty. Yet another group of staff, more recently part of the school community, had no particular opinion and either signed or avoided Miss Redfern altogether. The petition was then placed in a prominent position in the front office with a further invitation for all teaching and support staff to consider the issue if they had not already done so. The petition garnered over half of the building personnel's support. The P.T. A. chairperson believing she had offended the staff, quickly withdrew the proposal for change. Administration kept carefully neutral during the proceedings. The proposal for change quickly became a non-issue.

As I observed the events unfolding around the mural dilemma, I wondered whether the mural was about art and culture or whether it spoke more eloquently of tradition versus change. Understanding the mural as a metaphor for the difficult process of change taking place in the school provides a different set of lenses through which to interpret the events.

Miss Redfern stood for the school's long history of traditional ways of teaching. She staunchly defended the mural, a piece of that school's conservative culture, a visual representation of values once held by the school community. She rallied her initial support from those teachers with similar long histories at the school, teachers who believed in a teacher-directed, structured way of doing things. Many of us new to the school, who welcomed a change in the foyer, were also teachers initiating changes in the way children at Millside were taught. Perhaps it was more than coincidence that we assumed polar positions on the mural issue.

Lisa and I reflected on the issues a few weeks later. Was the mural really about conserving art history or was it about the way we incorporate the old and the new? That question of change was a part of the school's current story, one causing stress for many teachers who were being asked by the new administration to change their traditional teaching strategies. Teachers at all levels were being asked to move from teacher-centred to child-centred strategies, to incorporate whole language and process writing, to develop cooperative learning groups in their classrooms. When Miss Redfern suggested another place for a new mural to coexist beside the old, I was struck by the notion that perhaps we were not talking about the mural at all. Perhaps we were trying to figure out a way to
implement change within a traditional program, creating some space for new ideas without destroying the old.

When I shared this reconstructed story with Lisa she was intrigued by the notion of the mural as a symbol for a changing school story. Because Lisa's philosophy seeks to understand the underlying reasons for people's actions it was natural that she would attempt to see the situation from Miss Redfern's perspective. She composed these words to reflect her feelings.

_Miss Redfern, a teacher with 30 years tenure, attached to one location, one school, one set of keys, one place to view_ THE MURAL.

_Was this her first experience with outspoken behaviour? Her first stand in a public sort of way. Her call for juxtaposition of old and new....an interesting wisdom without knowing it._

_Was she acknowledging that every journey begins with a first step or was she asking, "Please don't remove the cornerstone of my foundation."_

Postscript: Lisa continued to encourage Miss Redfern to modify her teaching strategies by sharing whole language materials from time to time and offering stories of what others were doing. Several months later she mentioned to me that the mural story "had a nice conclusion". According to Lisa the concluding dialogue went this way.

_Lisa: If I ever need anyone to write a petition I'll call on you. Wow.... you can really mobilize people.....but have you thought..... maybe not everyone felt the way you did? We should perhaps follow this up with an open discussion._

_Miss Redfern: Oh..... it's good to know that you feel we could actually do that._

Lisa felt that her remarks seemed to somehow "break the ice" in their relationship. She noted that there was "not so much presented tension" in Miss Redfern's interactions with her and that informal visits to the office became more frequent. Concurrent with the visits emerged a growing willingness to engage in conversations about change.
Both these stories attempt to paint a representation of Millside the school in which Lisa, Rebecca and I found ourselves once again connecting in 1994. Retracing the chronology, we recall that Lisa and Rebecca began working at the school in 1993 and I joined them in 1994. Rebecca had been laid off by the board after her first year and spent her second year in a variety of supply teaching situations. During that second year she was recalled by the board for two short term contracts and then was once again laid off in the Spring. The cycle continued when she was again recalled to a teaching position for the Fall of 1993, her third year of teaching. Despite this erratic roller coaster ride of hiring, lay off and recall she maintained her enthusiasm for teaching and considered her employment pattern as a normal function of the learning to teach continuum. I see Rebecca's attitude to change as embedded within her "life as a puzzle" metaphor in which the disparate pieces always get put back together.

Rebecca visualizes life as a puzzle in various stages of completion. Her favourite part is when she can imagine "a sense of the whole", what she calls "the middle state" which predictably follows a beginning level of uncertainty, "the scary stage". This middle, in between state is preferred by Rebecca because, "when all the pieces are together it is comfortable but I usually realize it's not going to be that way for long." Viewed through the puzzle metaphor, Rebecca's sense of the cyclical nature of change is understood to be deeply held. She realizes, that like the puzzle pieces, things will come together into a cohesive whole for a time; then, inevitably there will be a new puzzle to sort out. Although Rebecca articulates an understanding of these cycles of change, she is aware that they are not always easily experienced. She explains:

You'd think that after experience after experience, of the same pattern happening throughout your life, where its unorganized/organized, out of control/ in control, you would think you'd remember, but somehow I always get to that frantic stage.

When that happens Rebecca draws strength from her puzzle metaphor, believing that things will fit into place, eventually. Her faith in this notion had been somewhat shaken in her first year but looking back she realized that things had come together, albeit slowly and that the story of fortune / misfortune accompanying her subsequent career had been shaped by these patterns. She attributes
much of her attitude towards change to Gillian, "an important mentor, who began new all the time. Learning from Gillian, who threw everything out at the end of each year" was part of Rebecca's formative experience when she was a teaching assistant and this comfort level with change gave her confidence to deal with the many moves after her first year. Rebecca knew that after her first year "(she) had it in her to be new."

That knowledge and confidence was to be put to the test once again as she began her first year at Millside. Hired by Lisa to teach the primary class in the autistic unit, she had taken part one of her Special Education qualifications that summer. She wanted to join the staff anonymously in a very low key fashion, but instead experienced a similar pressure to that which she had felt at Halverston where stories about her competence preceded her. Lisa introduced her in glowing terms to her new program supervisor who then passed this information along to the staff of the autistic unit. Because Rebecca had no experience teaching children with autism she felt like a beginner all over again. She worried about the build up she was receiving and wondered how their expectations could be met. Little did she realize that the challenge would come from a particular set of parents who openly questioned her ability to teach their child. The following story presents Rebecca's struggle to maintain her professional image during the parental barrage of criticism, and is told in her words as related to Lisa's and me during interview seven, December 1994.

**A Beginner Again**

*I didn't really feel great about coming here to Millside. I knew I had to make it work because it was this job or nothing. I kept saying to myself, "This is going to work because I want it to. I'm ready for this challenge and I'll make it work." I knew I didn't know what I was doing in autistic programming but that was O.K. I could learn. I knew my supervisor was saying, "Now read this and read that because you don't know what you're doing." And that was O.K. I could learn. But to have a parent then say "You don't know what you're doing." That's different. That's harder to take on a day to day basis when at the same time. I knew I was learning more and more each day. I wasn't the empty vessel in November that I was on September 1. But on day one they wanted an expert, running a highly intensive data-based program supported by researchers. The special school their
son had attended in the States was like that, based on applied behavioral analysis, as my principal Lisa would say, a type A school. When they discovered I was new to autism and not providing that kind of program I was considered in their opinion as unqualified and too inexperienced to teach children with autism, especially their son.

The mother was in the room every day. She basically pushed her way in, insisted on being there with us wondering whether it was better to have her there or not. She came in too early so she didn't see things in place that later were a standard part of the program. The program was still in a non-existent state so it was day one kinds of activities that she saw. They were not unkind people. They said I was a nice person but they were never satisfied with what I was doing. Terry, my supervisor was right there through it all. We would work through the programming together, writing it up until 7.00 at night, developing the system that we were going to use to collect data, creating his individual program. This was all happening simultaneously to her being there in the room and seeing the program not quite there yet. I mean you can't write program one night and have it explained to all three support staff the next day, ready to go at 8:45. But we were getting there. I never felt on my own. I was part of a supportive team from Lisa, with her experience in autism, right up to the assistant Director level. I felt the system was supporting me as we worked out a game plan together. By early November I had a good grasp on what was going to be happening for the year not only for their child but the four others I came to realize I was responsible for.

Things got better but only because they withdrew the child from the program. I was disappointed that the family left because I really felt I had failed. Their stay was long enough to be an enormous drain on all of us but it was over before we had a chance to have things implemented the way they are now. I was very frustrated because we didn't get a real chance with him.

I know that frustration still lingers because I had a dream recently that the little boy was starting the program this year. I was excited and almost wanted to call them and say "Come back I feel good about this program I want you to see it now, to see how it could benefit your child." You see when they were questioning and challenging it was as if I had been made to feel like a beginner again, that I knew nothing all of a sudden, right back to square one.
When I look back on this situation now I realize how far I've come. I thought I had personally come a long way from that first September to November when he left but that progress was nothing compared to what I understand now. This growth of understanding is what Lisa calls my learning curve and I feel a comfort level in knowing that I'm a part of this evolving process of learning new things and changing.

Rebecca identifies her first months at Millside with an accelerated learning curve, a phrase she has adopted from Lisa. A particular set of parents who had high expectations for their son's program forced Rebecca to come to grips with the unfamiliar challenges of Special Education more quickly than she had anticipated. This parental pressure created a situation in which Rebecca could not move at her own pace. Her supervisor Terry and her principal stepped in to support her and quickly transmitted to her the specialized knowledge she required. Rebecca identifies this time with knowledge "coming at her". She had no time for "the freedom in my head to let it come in" a phrase she used in the second half of her first year when she began to construct her own knowledge of teaching.

Threads of continuity weave coherence and a sense of unity into a narrative inquiry. Up to this point in the narrative the continuity has been developed through the relationships among the characters and their interconnecting experience. But people are not the only inhabitants of schools. Lice now enter the school stories once again. As described in Chapter Five lice accompanied Rebecca's entry to Halverston. Rebecca's first year at Millside also reveals a chapter involving lice, a chapter more significant for Lisa than Rebecca. Lisa was reminded of the contrasts in the school stories of lice when she compared aspects of Rebecca's experience to her own. Upon hearing Rebecca's list of bombardments in her first term, Lisa responded by sharing an administrator story about Lice at Millside, a situation which had fostered in Lisa parallel feelings of frustration and futility. Because Lisa told this story directly and forcefully to Rebecca in what I interpreted as an attempt to bridge their experience, I have created an imaginary letter using Lisa's words to capture that sense of intensity. (Interview 4 October 1994) This then is my reconstruction of Lisa's remarks to Rebecca.
Dear Rebecca,

When I heard your Mr. Director story, I was immediately reminded of a situation which symbolized the last straw for me as well. For me, the arrival of lice at Millside was like the arrival of Mr Brown in your story, like one of your bombardments. Things had not been good from the beginning but then in February, well I thought, I just don't believe it. This is it!

Voices of teachers... ugly loud voices

Lice ...... line up the children ... shame them all

the children should be shot ... line them up in the front lobby

they should be drawn and quartered... dirty filthy lice

I do not allow children with lice in my classroom...... the shame

That's why I don't do group work because it spreads lice

Evil stuff in their hair!

Oh God, do you remember? It went on and on and on. It was nothing compared to Halverston, really only about six cases in students and two teachers. But it was serious business for the teachers. One who had the lice suffered nightmares about huge cocoons sucking blood out of her head. She was obsessed with the thought of a horrible deadly disease and these feelings were being passed on to the children and other staff. At Halverston lice were part of the enrolment package..... thousands of lice. The teachers did a whole math project on the multiplication of lice. They integrated lice into the program. Child-centred curriculum. If the children had lice then we taught about lice! Do you remember coming in to help out? We all just laughed and tried to make the best of it. Here some teachers wouldn't even allow the child in the door. They wanted children suspended because of lice. I tried to distribute the health department literature with lists of solutions to the problem, tried to allay some of the anxiety but the tension was escalating. Everyone was literally beginning to scratch their heads!

I thought this might be an opportunity for the staff to do some problem solving on their own so I suggested that they take the ideas and meet at noon to come up with some solutions and then let Ruth and me know their decisions. I asked Martha to chair the meeting. But as you well know Rebecca, that didn't work either. The negative leaders took charge. Several teachers left the
meeting shocked and dismayed at the hateful things that were being said about children. One teacher was crying in the hall because of things that were being said about students and administration in the meeting. I felt as if there was nothing I could do here, nothing I could do right. Everything that I was trying to do was falling into negativity, into a downward spiral. How was I ever going to get out of this? How was I going to turn it around?

Lisa

Dear Lisa,

I remember the lice situation although not as clearly as you do. I was so busy getting my program organized I didn't really pay much attention. It all seemed rather silly. Lice are just a fact of life. I didn't hear things among the staff because I was never in the staffroom at the same time as the others. What got my attention finally was the group staff meeting where we were to come up with some solutions to the problem. I was shocked once again at the negativity of many people towards not only the lice situation but the leadership of you and Ruth. They wanted you to make all the decisions. They wanted no part in the group process, seeing it as a way of you absolving your responsibility rather than shared decision making. I sat back in the meeting and just listened. I couldn't stay for all of it I was in and out because our noon hours were different. Maybe I should have said more but I still felt like a newcomer and didn't want to get involved. I just wanted to get on with my job and my children. Until we talked about the situation during the research I had no idea that it was a critical time for you as an administrator.

Rebecca

(Rebecca's response to Lisa's letter is based on her reflections on the time of the lice shared with me in December 1995.)

Lisa and Rebecca's recollections of a commonly experienced school event highlights the difference in positions on the professional knowledge landscape. As an administrator, Lisa weaves the various story strands into a landscape which reveals wide horizons replete with moral issues of leadership, schools, staffs and students. Seeing the big picture, she places herself as a central character in its framing. For Lisa the lice at Millside reified the sharp contrasts she had found between her first and
second school principalship. She was deeply distressed about the way many staff were handling the situation and compared that negativity to the positive experiences at Halverston where the staff had treated lice as a catalyst for innovative programming. Although she tries to understand the upset teachers' point of view, her philosophy of children first dominates her thinking. She is clearly outraged at the teacher's attitude and behaviour as evidenced in her intense recollection of their words and actions towards the lice infected children. My sense is that her outrage was not shared with the staff as a whole but only with select confidants. Because she was so angry she chose to let the staff come up with their own viable solutions hoping that the reasonable staff opinions would prevail. However, by sharing the decision making power with the staff she quickly perceived that she had inadvertently intensified the tensions that had been building all fall. The leadership issues surfaced in the open forum of a meeting in which administration were not present. When Lisa heard what had gone on at this meeting her sense of outrage diminished and was transformed into a downward spiral of despair. Her confidence in her ability to affect change was shaken.

The lice incident was significant for Lisa, her last straw. Her usual optimism and humour were bombarded by attitudes and actions she felt powerless to overcome at that moment in time. When we reconstructed the event during our triad interview and compared it to Rebecca's Mr. Director's story Lisa reflected on the meaning the story held for her. Just as the director's visit had been a turning point for Rebecca's sense of direction and purpose so the lice chapter clarified Lisa's determination to create a collaborative school environment. She voiced her feelings about her leadership role at the school:

Initially I felt caught in that downward spiral and just shut my door. Then I thought, I know I'm right. I know I'm on the right track in terms of my vision. I have seen the vision of collaboration. I had been at Halverston for six years. I have 100% support from my bosses so I just need to keep talking. (Interview, October 1994)

In contrast, for Rebecca it was just another school incident which was distracting her from her important work with her own class. As a teacher new to the school and relatively new to the profession she was not yet part of the ebb and flow of the complex social life of the school. Her
professional landscape was limited, comprising the autistic unit and its staff and she had established very little contact with the rest of the school. Thus the momentum of the lice touched her but lightly. She heard a few passing comments from her teaching assistants but she, by her own account, was entirely unaware of the rising tensions until the noon hour meeting. When she listened to Lisa's interpretations she expressed surprise that the events had sustained such an emotional impact for others. From these reactions and others which are similar my story of Rebecca unfolds as a new teacher who was comfortable with her in-classroom place on the landscape. That comfort level required a certain isolation from out-of-classroom school events and a measured distance from the informal school communication networks. She consciously steered away from what she considered school gossip, envisioning her job as one of intense personal contact with her own small group of special needs children rather than outside involvement with broader-based life at the school.

Because of their divergent places on the school landscape, the juxtaposition of Lisa and Rebecca's stories in the research context revealed new insights for both participants. Rebecca realized how completely absorbed she was in her own classroom and how little she knew of school wide concerns. Hearing Rebecca's interpretation of the lice incident, Lisa understood in a new way how differently staff members could hold perceptions of the same event. This understanding was brought strikingly into focus with a critical story for Lisa, a school story which set staff members against her before she ever arrived at the school.

School stories sometimes bear resemblance to urban myths, stories which circulate periodically in different cities, in different times taking on various forms of representation each claiming a morsel of truth for its own. School stories which create leadership mythologies from snatched anecdotes of rumour, experience and misinformation constitute a similar kind of school myth in which principals are particularly vulnerable as the main characters. It has been my experience that principals new to a school are cast in one stereotype or another by staff who are often eager to create an image to which they can relate, whether in positive or negative ways.

Administrators cross over an invisible barrier when they take on their leadership assignments. While, in Ontario at least, administrators remain part of the teachers' federation, they assume different roles
and responsibilities that separate them dramatically from their teacher colleagues. It would seem that, like politicians, their actions, words and even private lives are up for fierce scrutiny by teachers and parents alike. When an administrator changes schools the system networks buzz with information concerning the impending move. Who has worked with this person? Who knows somebody, who knows somebody, who worked with the new principal? Who has a story from years before? Stories cluster and flourish created from the flow of talk that begins to lay the mythological groundwork for the arrival of the very real principal. Some stories can be painful and destructive while others may hold promise for new beginnings. Lisa's story is a painful one, one which she had difficulty telling; however she knew its telling was important to an understanding of her experience at Millside.

*The Passion and the Pain*

The beginning of the story was touched with humour as Lisa and Ruth conducted their first staff meetings, recounted earlier in this chapter. They recognized immediately that their styles of participatory leadership were incongruent with staff expectations and the existing story of the school. Lisa was aware that she was considered "a bit of a flake" but she enjoyed that story and relished in the opportunity to bring in her collaborative philosophy to the school. The story that Lisa did not hear until later that spring was that she was considered to be a lesbian. The genesis of the story is unknown but it quickly spread among staff soon after Lisa's appointment had been announced and came to a head when one staff member publicly announced in the staffroom that there was no way she was going to work with a lesbian. Rumour spread that because Lisa and the Primary consultant, Gillian had purchased a home together, that they were declaring themselves in a lesbian relationship. While these stories circulated, being summarily dismissed by some staff and taken very seriously by others, Lisa remained ignorant of their existence. It was this fact above all, this silence, rather than the allegation, which caused her grief when she finally learned about the rumours a year later in the spring of her first year. At that time several teachers were being moved out of the school by Lisa in the transfer process due to teacher - principal philosophy differences in terms of child centred curriculum. Lisa had a strong sense that these teachers were impeding the way of others on staff who were ready to make changes in their program and so she had made staffing decisions based
on what she felt was best for the school. What Lisa realized as the transfer process continued was the fact that these same teachers had played a significant role in fuelling the stories about her and Gillian the year before. This information was shared with her somewhat reluctantly by several supportive teachers who felt she should know the whole story. As the difficult spring term evolved, the teachers who were to be transferred reached out to the community for support criticizing Lisa's leadership and reviving the sexuality issue. They also garnered the support of the long time secretarial and custodial staff. Lisa recalls that time of crisis:

Some of the teachers went into the community and I at that time did not have credibility with the community. It will be interesting to see if I ever do. But that is what hurt my soul because I thought, "This is just so unfair." When I found out about the rumours it was the most debilitating thing. I wondered how I could keep going when the talk had been all over the school. It really, really freaked me out. I thought I don't know if I ever want to come back here. (Interview, October 1994)

Later in the conversation she explained to Rebecca:

I didn't hear anything about the sexuality story until the spring. Not a breath. I knew nothing about that. So you see when I did hear about it, it was such a shock, such a slap and I was already dying inside because I was saying to myself, "Did I really do the right thing? Why did I want to be principal of this hell hole? ...It's impossible, how am I going to change anything at all?" Some teachers were refusing to implement new board curriculum guidelines, some wouldn't even unpack the new computers from their boxes. Oh my God, everybody hates everybody and nobody speaks to anybody and the teachers don't talk and the doors are still closed. It was like you Rebecca saying about the children in your first class who are all going berserk and everyone is fighting and they're all being so nasty and you don't feel as if you're helping them do anything. Well it seems to me every time I opened my mouth or tried to do anything it was the wrong thing. How was I going to survive this? I had no idea. (Interview, October 1994)

When Lisa first spoke to Rebecca and me about this difficult time it was in empathetic response to Rebecca's story of her first term. From her communication to Rebecca I interpreted an attempt to
bridge the experiential gap between them, to connect their stories of experience. Lisa continued to share her feelings with her younger colleague:

To me it's similar to saying your heart is sore, you're hurting on the inside. The situation is extremely difficult and so are the coping mechanisms. How do I manage? How do I get up and go to work the next day? Is it going to be more of the same? That's the kind of thing I related to in your story. I understand your saying you felt like you were dying inside because to me those are the words that explain the grief and the pain. I related to what you were saying because I had been a successful principal in my first six-year assignment.

It is interesting to consider where Rebecca was positioned in this landscape of conflict. From previous stories we have gained an understanding of how her teaching position in the autistic unit separated her from the informal staff networks. Rebecca revealed that she had heard just whispers of rumour, not really comprehending what it was about. It was during March Break, outside of school that she learned from her friend and mentor Gillian about the rumours concerning she and Lisa. Rebecca was nonetheless aware of a change in Lisa even if she was not fully aware of the background and she tried to be supportive. An incident recalled by Lisa gives expression to Rebecca's concern and also demonstrates the humour so strongly associated with Lisa's images of leadership.

Lisa: Do you remember the day, it was just before the May 3rd staff meeting? The word was out that there was to be a big meeting on staffing with the director and you Rebecca came into the office and for one awful minute I thought you were going to give me a hug. And I said sternly to you "sit down" because I thought, all I need is for Rebecca to hug me and someone to see it out there.

Rebecca: I probably said, You look like you need a hug Lisa!

Lisa: And I thought, God don't do that! (Interview, October 1994)

When I think back to our triad meetings I imagine the conversation as an entity with a form and a life of its own. The form differs from the shape and meaning of the written word captured on paper. Words spoken float effortlessly in the air, bending and shaping themselves to the context of
conversation and story telling. Words spoken can be taken back, changed, modified enriched by tone of voice, a gesture, a laugh, a sigh, a silence. Words spoken are rewarded with an immediate response, a smile of recognition, a confirmation or a frown, a tumbling of words that interrupt and continue the dialogue. Such is the ephemeral pattern of language that occurs in research based on conversation and the storying of experience.

To see the spoken word in print is to acquire yet another interpretation of experience, one which renders the experience more fixed, sometimes more stark. This was the case when Lisa read my written response to interview four in which the sexuality issue had been raised. Lisa "remembered distinctly seeing the sentence, the actual word Lesbian written on paper. You know it freaked me out all over again." She acknowledged her immediate reactions:

"I mulled over your question about whether I would handle things differently quite a bit. I'd almost forgotten about it and then you brought it all back. It's amazing how the anger just came rushing back. I know what I would like to do if I could live it again. I would have a meeting with the superintendent immediately and let the person know they were out of the school and that I was contemplating charges through federation because of what was said in a public forum... malicious, vicious lying, slanderous... The pain of it all just came rushing back.

But then in my own head I knew I had to get past that. And I am past that, sort of. Because I guess some of the frustration of being in the role of principal is that people can make you very angry and people can say things that are very painful and all you can do, in reality, is move them away from the school you're in. Whatever else you (could do) is not worth it... You know you don't want to win a battle and lose a war. (Interview, November 1994)

Postscript:
Lisa survived her difficult first spring term at Millside but not without a physical and mental cost similar to what Rebecca had experienced during her first term at Halverston. (However Lisa ruefully admits that she gained twenty pounds instead of losing it.) Once the decision to place three teachers on absolute transfer out of the school was made in April, the tensions mounted as the three teachers
took their case to the community and also garnered support from certain staff members about what they considered to be unfair treatment. Other teachers agreed with Lisa's decision to replace the teachers with people who were enthusiastic about child-centred, activity-based learning and publicly voiced their positive opinions about her leadership. Through the superintendent who fully supported Lisa's philosophy, the director heard of the staff unrest and arrived at the school to demonstrate solidarity with Lisa by clarifying board transfer policy and to officially voice his disapproval of what was happening to staff morale. During May and June Lisa kept a low profile, running the school from her office, finding it difficult to regain her usual optimism despite the support of a growing number of people on staff. The summer was a welcome respite just as the Christmas break had been for Rebecca, providing Lisa with the rest and time for reflection she needed to begin again in the fall.

The words of this chapter's introductory poem exemplify Lisa's experience as she compares her first year at Millside to an Escher painting: "Escher is sharp, angular, black, white, mystifying... Escher jolts, shocks, startles... Escher's bite attracts, repels, pushes and pulls..." It is not until her second year at Millside, storied in the next chapter that she is able to believe the later lines of her poem... And now today...it is like having two lovers... Monet and Escher... both wonderful.
Chapter Seven

Beginnings, Endings and Ownership: The Story Continues at Millside

The purpose of this chapter is to continue the stories of Millside into Lisa and Rebecca's second year at the school, the year I joined the staff. Within this year I focus on the evolving professional landscapes of the three research participants highlighting the relationship of ownership and place on the landscape. I introduce Susan, a new teacher on staff that year to add her perspective to the beginning teacher/administrator relationship. The stories of the three teachers are connected by our ties to Lisa and each other as we explore the notions of ownership, teacher learning and professional landscapes. The stories are theoretically linked by a discussion of memory and the narrative quality of experience. I conclude the chapter with the story of Helen, Rebecca's grandmother, a new teacher in 1924. Helen's story and its presence in the thesis are like a gift of time to be carefully unwrapped and set in the context of the surrounding accounts.

To set the characters in context of Millside in the fall of 1994, let me review the professional and personal situations each brings to the telling of this set of stories. Lisa, beginning her second year as principal at the school was feeling more comfortable with the staff and community. Several teachers had been transferred from the school at Lisa's request and replaced with people whose philosophies matched her expectations for a child-centred environment. Her intention was to put the trouble of the past year behind her and to work with staff, students and community to rebuild a positive learning climate for everyone at Millside. Rebecca was delighted to be teaching at the same school with the same assignment for the second year in a row. She was also looking forward to the birth of her first child expected in January. Her life seemed to have reached a stage of stability for which she was grateful. My assignment was core curriculum grade eight and although I had been told to expect a challenging class, I was excited about the dual role of teacher and researcher, not to mention the mornings spent teaching at the Faculty of Education. I hoped that all three parts of my professional life would interact and compliment each other. Susan, whose story follows shortly, was also happy to have her first job and anxious to establish her reputation quickly as her short term contract was for September to December only.
I begin the chapter with a story that prefaces the discussion of beginnings and endings on the professional knowledge landscape and sets the stage for an exploration of ownership. In chapter six we saw how symbols can direct our attention to a group story; in that case the mural represented the changing story of the school. Symbols can exist as markers for private stories as well as those shared by a group. The following story reflects Lisa's sense of her "real" beginning at Millside, a symbolic beginning that did not actually occur until September of her second year at the school. We recall the difficulties of Lisa's first year at Millside outlined in Chapter six when, by the third term "it was a struggle to get into school each day." This account compares that despair with "the joy of walking around" that Lisa feels this second year. I have recreated the story using Lisa's words from interview 9, December 1994.

Ownership

You asked us to think about beginnings and endings. As I was considering beginnings and endings here at Millside, I realized exactly when the beginning actually occurred. Last year was not a beginning. It was more like an ending. It still continued to be the ending from Halverston, which was almost like a religious experience. At Halverston I had seen the light, so as the old song goes, "don't try to lay no boogie woogie on this Queen of Rock and Roll!" That was essentially the story of last year. No time for beginnings. Too many endings. Too many bad vibes. The beginning was this September, the first time I came into the building by myself on a weekend. No caretaker. The process seemed overwhelming because machines are not my strength. I had to phone the security company to turn off the alarm and then manage the front door which I had not practised. I had to use a huge key to get in, then go down the big stairs to the boiler room and hooray, the fire alarm was the same as at Halverston. No problem. Turn it off. It may sound silly but it was the first time I came into my school by myself and no one else was here. And I walk in with my big key. I turn off my alarm by myself and I take ownership. That's what it was. Ownership.

Lisa's story illustrates the powerful notion of ownership and how it relates to a sense of place on the landscape. The previous year she had not experienced ownership of Millside feeling more like a barely tolerated guest, a guest who, by her own accounts, was constantly doing things wrong! When
the crisis of the sexuality issue combined with staffing dilemmas and community unrest, Lisa retreated to the safety of her office and found it difficult to carry out her usual responsibilities. Caught in the dilemma of being an outsider on the periphery of the school landscape she was simultaneously positioned at the centre as the school's leader. Because in many ways her heart was still at Halverston, she had not discovered a sense of ownership for Millside and she found it difficult to reconcile the conflicting positions that spring. From our conversations during the summer of that year I learned how the tension at the school had affected her deeply and how she needed the summer to rest, reflect and rejuvenate her spirits. The symbolic entry to the school early the next fall offered the promise of a real beginning, one associated with the belief that the school was now hers. The most negative teachers were not returning, new staff invited renewed possibilities for collaboration and she had entered the school by herself! She had resumed her place at the centre of the landscape.

As Lisa spoke about the concept of ownership and the accompanying feeling of comfort on the landscape, I was reminded of similar feelings Rebecca had experienced about her classroom when Mr. Director visited. She too felt a beginning sense of ownership in the situation as she set her knowledge and experience in the classroom in opposition to Mr. Director's unfamiliarity with young children. These glimmers of ownership burst into full realization after Christmas when Rebecca knew for the first time that the classroom was truly hers and that she would stay in teaching. Within the next two stories told by Susan and myself we hear echoes of the same theme of ownership and sense of place. Susan's story, which begins as Lisa was rejoicing in her new found confidence, is one of another new teacher finding her place on the professional knowledge landscape.

**Susan's Story: Contrasting Landscapes of Beginning Teachers**

With the research participants I have traced the development of Rebecca's first four years of teaching and made connections to Lisa's place in her professional landscape. I now contrast that story with one of another new teacher, this time at Millside. The story unfolds characterized by two different teachers with the same principal in two contrasting school situations. Lisa is the common factor but as the story reveals, she plays a much different role for a new teacher in a large school which is caught in the throes of a changing school story. We recall that Lisa is just beginning to feel
that Millside is her school and is very involved in her mission to repair the school's sense of purpose and identity. To set the story in context I first reconstruct my understanding of Lisa's influence on Rebecca's unfolding professional knowledge landscape and then move to Susan's story.

Rebecca's story of Lisa at Halverston is one of a principal who offered much in the way of emotional support while leaving the specifics of program and classroom management for Rebecca to learn on her own with the help of her peers. The landscape of Halverston itself contributed to this sense of emotional support as Lisa's leadership style and the physical qualities of the building combined to forge a cohesive school community. At Halverston, Lisa was a strong physical presence in the school visiting classrooms, albeit briefly, at least once a day. "Making the rounds" was the term we as teachers used for these encounters and we were always pleased to make contact with Lisa in the halls as students entered the school or while classes were in session. Visitors were a way of life at Halverston and both teachers and students were accustomed to having extra adults in the room. Because there was no public address system Lisa would often come around to each class personally to deliver messages and announcements. The main office was located directly across from the staffroom which facilitated Lisa's ready access to staff on breaks or lunch hour. The reverse situation was also evident as teachers on a break would often grab a coffee and walk across to the office to meet Lisa or office staff informally over the office counter. This meant that for Rebecca, in her first year, the principal was a visible presence never more than a few doors down the hall.

Rebecca was aware of Lisa's impact in shaping the collegial landscape of the school. Her image of Lisa as a principal is reflected in her response journal for a Primary Education course taken in the summer of 1994, before we had begun the research study. She wrote at that time:

_I have had the benefit of teaching in a school in which the whole school, under the leadership of a very able principal, strove towards a vision that was new, updated, innovative, contemporary and workable. After living in the environment for a year, I had the opportunity to experience the same principal as a leader in a different, much more traditional setting. The principal had quite a struggle initially with staff who were accustomed to being dictated to. My first experience was the community school atmosphere of an alternative school. The alternative system within our board was initiated_
as a plan to bring teachers, parents, children and administrators together with common goals and common purpose and to pursue what was best for the individual child. Staff were well supported by administrators and were recognized as the key, front line people working with the best interests of the child as the primary goal. As a teacher in the alternative school I felt well respected by the principal. I felt empowered (even as a fumbling first year teacher) to strive for knowledge, insight, confidence and simply to get my feet wet. I was encouraged to take my place in the front line talking to parents and addressing my program. I was supported emotionally and intellectually through difficult times. Mental health days were promoted as valid professional times for rejuvenating, balancing etc.

In composing this journal account Rebecca summarizes her first year experience at Halverston acknowledging the kind of support she received from Lisa within that particular setting. Rebecca stories herself growing as a professional, building her professional image guided by Lisa's collaborative leadership. In the context of her course work during the summer of 1994, she has highlighted the positive qualities of Lisa's leadership, not mentioning the practical day to day frustrations she revealed later in our research conversations.

To add another dimension to the new teacher/principal connection and to contrast the beginning stories of two teachers who had Lisa as their first principal, I introduce Susan, who was a first year teacher at Millside in 1994, the year I arrived. I believe that the inclusion of Susan's story is significant because of its relationship to the stories of Rebecca and Lisa and also the questions it raises about the particular qualities of the landscape in differing schools. Susan had taken a four-month term position for the Core French Music teacher who was on maternity leave. Susan's situation is an interesting reversal of Rebecca's in that she began at Millside and moved to Halverston at Christmas. Rebecca began at Halverston, moving to Millside. Newly graduated from the Faculty Susan was excited about her first job and knew how important it was in terms of future employment. Because she taught my grade eight class their core French every day we had a fair amount of contact, particularly over the noon hour transition time. Susan would be gathering up her materials and helping individual students as I was setting up the room for my afternoon classes and we often shared stories of our students in common as we worked and grabbed a bite of lunch at the
same time. I share this background to set Susan's story in the context of my own experience. My sense of her comes not only from a lengthy formal interview (April 1995) after she had left her position at Millside but also from the details of our daily interactions.

As we listen to Susan's story we are drawn back to Rebecca's accounts of being brand new. We hear the same uncertainties about hiring practices and social interactions with staff, the common frustrating complexities of planning, anchored by a deep sense of responsibility for students learning. We witness the same desire for ownership of a new situation. Yet their experience is vastly different in terms of administrative interaction and support. It is this difference which makes Susan's account an integral part of Lisa and Rebecca's story, setting one teacher's experience in juxtaposition to another. Here then is Susan's story of her first four months reconstructed from the April 1995 Interview and my first term field notes.

**Susan's Story**

As soon as I graduated I began to supply teach. This wasn't an option for everyone financially but for me it worked. I worked mostly at the school in which I had been a noon hour monitor and volunteer for two years waiting to get into the Faculty. My sister was a teacher at the school so that was my way in. Ruth, the vice principal at Millside now, was the vice principal there so that became an important connection for the future. I remember meeting Lisa for the first time at the summer interview. I was nervous and had no idea what my chances were, no idea what to expect from the interview. I felt a great sense of being on my own! It was comfortable knowing Ruth however I was completely unprepared when half way through the interview Lisa offered me the job. I thought she was joking until they brought out the papers for me to sign! A quick tour of the school followed. I remember thinking it was enormous, wondering how I'd ever find my way around, carrying my core French materials from room to room. The funniest thing was that I was impressed with the size of the yard, a true noon hour monitor observation.

I also remember their honesty about the tensions in staff, mentioning that there were two distinct staff rooms, that even supply teachers had a difficult time with many teachers. They were confident
that many of these problems were being resolved. On that first day in the summer they gave me curriculum stuff to take home. I don't think I realized what a heavy work load it was to be. I couldn't figure out which classes I was to teach and whether they were music or French. The timetable made no sense to me. I was caught in a panic for a while until later in the summer I met with the teacher whose position I was taking and that helped a bit. I ended up throwing out 3/4 of the Core French material I had planned over the summer anyhow!

The first staff meeting in September stands out in my mind. I didn't want to be considered new but when I got to the library there were no seats left at the tables so I sat on the edge of a corner table feeling rather awkward and conspicuous. It was quite odd. I remember when Lisa started the meeting and introduced the three new people, suddenly a space appeared for me and several people acknowledged me. You were new at that meeting too, Fran. I remember noticing that you were taking a lot of notes and I was worried that I was missing something (Later when we met you explained that you were observing the staff interactions from a research perspective and scribbling field notes.) The meeting was very organized, colour coded packages of office and information materials, sign up sheets for extra curricular duties, schedules, policies. It was overwhelming but at least I knew I had a package. People were talking heatedly about a binder, a green binder that evidently they had used for years and now there was talk of throwing it out. It was quite odd. I remember thinking "Could I have a condensed version of this binder so I would know something!" Despite the presentation of heavy work loads by administration there was no pressure on us as teachers, just positive encouragement. I had a sense that this first staff meeting would be indicative of the way the year would be; organized, independent, busy and lots of work.

When I think back to the first few weeks two things stand out clearly above the other feelings of general confusion. Two particularly difficult classes, one grade 8, one grade 6 and one really angry student. She had a very angry, rude personality. She was rude to me, rude to her homeroom teacher, rude and angry with everyone, like she really owned her attitude and was proud of it. When I had her come in to talk she explained that she felt that everyone picked on her. We talked and I guess she started to trust me a bit and then she told me about her mom having cancer and being in chemo therapy. She really, really stands out in my mind because it's a situation that really changed by
talking. I was only there for a few months but there was a positive change in her attitude. The two tough classes changed too and it made it all worthwhile. Certain things happen with students that make you realize you can make a difference.

I think you just have to struggle that first tough time. You have to learn how to get better at doing things faster, more efficiently, a lot of basic time management. I remember in that first month wondering if I would have gone into teaching if I had realized how difficult it was. But I've always wanted to teach ever since I was six years old. I really wanted to do it and I still want to do it. That's what kept me going... I felt the positive energy coming back from changes and that kept me going. The kids themselves and my desire to be a teacher kept me going. I did get some support from a few teachers, one who kept insisting I come to the staffroom which I never had time to do. Another junior teacher worked with me as a team to deal with her class and always backed me up. A grade eight teacher who was always at school really early like I was and we'd talk over ideas for managing her class. She'd encourage me and support me in my approaches. But most of the time I felt like I was drowning. I felt like everybody was busy doing their own thing and I understood that. If I'd had my own room I'd be in it too, getting set up with centres and activities. Because everyone else was in that space, no one was available to help.

There was very little administrative contact that first month. There were times I'd go into the office and think O.K., if I can just grab one of them then I can get someone's help. But I never could. Everyone was so busy and I was truly lost. Ruth popped in and out a couple of times but never stayed. I invited Lisa up later in the fall to see the French presentations but that was all. I didn't know if I was to be evaluated officially or not. I should have asked more directly about it but that would have been just one more thing. There were times I went home just drowning in work and it was all I could do to just gather my stuff together, do what I had to do at school and then take it home and work again late into the night. I would sit there after school, in a cloud, when everyone else had gone so tired, so hungry and wonder how other people managed. When report card time came and I was desperately trying to finish them on time a good friend was going through a crisis, I had to say I'm so sorry I can't be there right now...
Susan's first month, like Rebecca's, was overwhelming. The work load seemed impossible as she tried to adjust her program expectations to individual student needs. Particular students stand out as memorable, the gradual changes in their behaviour fuelling her motivation to make a difference in their lives, to keep going despite her exhaustion. Several teachers provided informal support, teachers who "just happened to be there," assessable to Susan at the right time and place, however no specific support program was organized for new staff. She felt isolated from others on staff and realized she had no time to initiate professional contacts other than with those of us she saw briefly in passing. Susan also expressed a lack of basic procedural knowledge about the school that she wished had been available in a concise form.

Despite these concerns I detect a sense of determination throughout her story, an underlying optimism about her chosen profession which is not dampened by the stories of teaching she had not anticipated. The silent story not heard in her account is one of relationship with administration. From Susan's perspective, administration was simply not available to help her as a new teacher. She might see Lisa or Ruth briefly in the hall but in her sense of the school story they were not available for before or after school chats. The important point here is her perception of the situation, that because of the size and complexity of the school she did not feel she had access to administration time. From my observations in the office area and field notes of last year, I am aware that teachers did in fact have relatively easy access to Lisa and Ruth, and much of their time was spent interacting informally with staff. This access however was limited primarily in Lisa's case to the administrator's office space rather than the communal spaces of the school. Susan did not know how to negotiate that time and space or initiate such encounters. In her retelling of the story neither Lisa nor Ruth initiated specific discussions about her teaching. Because she had no expectation of particular administrative support, this observation was not a criticism, but rather a statement of what she believed was typical. Her school story of administrative distance was the story she had anticipated. She expressed surprise when at Halverston her next assignment the principal sat down with her to go over her career goals. According to Susan, "It had never dawned on her that administration would sit down and take that kind of time with a teacher."

Susan's new teacher story is put into the broader context of the school story of Millside as we
discover the ways in which Lisa and I perceived Susan as she found her place on the school landscape. My field notes from that first September staff meeting indicate that I spotted Susan as new teacher and that I should "get to her right away," a true researcher's response! I remember seeing her isolated from the staff at an outside table but as soon as she was introduced people made a space for her. I felt uncomfortable that no one had brought her into a group until that point but I was busy sorting out my own newness trying to absorb all the undercurrents running through the room. When we spoke after the meeting about my research, she seemed keen on talking any time about her new job. I tried to support her in any way I could when our paths crossed at noon hour, but my own schedule was hectic as I flew in from the faculty at noon changing gears to teach my grade eights in the afternoon. I listened, but probably not well enough.

My first story of Susan was one of an exceptionally confident new teacher who had established a very positive rapport with my less than easy grade eight class. Core French tends to be one of the most difficult subjects for intermediate students and it is a class where students often fall apart in terms of behavior. Because I was in and out of the class while she was teaching, I had the opportunity to observe her skilful interactions with students. I could see the smiles on my students faces when they spoke with her and watched with some amazement the quality group work being created and displayed with obvious pride. I recall feeling that there were things here I could learn from Susan, not just the other way around. Susan's calm outer presence belied the fatigue and uncertainties she was experiencing.

It was not until November that I realized the pressure Susan had been under all fall and recognized the cover stories she had been living. My understanding stemmed from the crisis of report card time in an intermediate school where office deadlines must be met and many teachers share the responsibility of completing the form for each class. What became apparent in Susan's case was that we had not shared the process with our new staff member who did not know the procedures for signing out sets of report cards, did not know you had to write in black pen only, did not realize how soon into the term you had to begin collating marks to meet the deadlines. How could she know the unwritten rule about homeroom teachers having the reports the last weekend to do the summary comments? When she discovered that she could not use that time in the last weekend to complete
her task the cover stories broke down and she "told it like it was" expressing how anxious and tired she really was, how alone she felt, how unsupported. I happened to be the listener when things fell apart that noon hour. We talked things over, planned a strategy to complete her reports and I think she felt better just letting her feelings out. My sense is that because I held the dual role of a researcher/teacher I was a safe sounding board. The confidence may have been predicated on the fact that I was also a newcomer although an experienced teacher and so had not yet built up loyalties to the school or staff. Susan felt she could speak freely.

In the April interview I described my feelings about this time to Susan.

The report card time was the time I remember you being very stressed and I think it was the first time I recognized that you truly were a first year teacher. I felt really badly because I had done the Induction job and should have remembered. Part of it was that you gave an exterior impression of dealing confidently with things. And I think what it did was it almost lulled us into forgetting that you were a first year teacher. There were a lot of things you didn't know, a lot of information that you just didn't have and that we could have given you and it was almost as if, oh well, she must know that. She's so capable. Because everything on the surface seemed to be under control. The first cracks appeared at report card time. (Transcript notes, April 1995.)

Like Rebecca, Susan established cover stories to present the outward impression of an experienced professional. Like Rebecca, she did not wish to be seen or considered as a newcomer.

I don't like people to know that I'm new and I never mention it. I would never say this is my first year. I would never say it to the students or the staff or parents. If they ask I'd say yes but I'm afraid the first thing they'll think about is that she doesn't know what she's doing, she doesn't know what she's talking about. (Transcript notes, April 1995)

Susan met her deadline for reports and like Rebecca felt a great sense of accomplishment and ownership in reporting to parents. She recalled,
The report cards were a very difficult time, but when I actually finished them I remember thinking, I wrote a report card and its going home to parents and these are my comments and I worked hard on them. I\'ve done the best job that I could do and it\'s done!

Just as Rebecca had taken ownership of her classroom after the director\'s visit, just as Lisa had taken ownership of the school, Susan felt a pride of ownership in accomplishing the report card task. With no classroom space to call her own this her sense of ownership focussed on an abstract image of professional identity and confidence.

At our April 1995 interview, Susan reflected on the role of administration during her first four months. In our conversations she described feeling a sense of neutral, distanced guidance and support. Unlike Rebecca\'s anticipated scenario of a very involved role for principals in a new teacher\'s entry to a school, Susan had no preconceived ideas about such a professional relationship. She had no particular story of what a principal might do. Direct administrative support did not appear to play an important shaping role in Susan\'s development. Her own determination and the help of a few other teachers carried her through. Acknowledging that Lisa and Ruth were always friendly and encouraging when she connected with them, she nonetheless felt a minimal impact from their presence. She did make several concrete suggestions about support strategies:

Looking back on the beginning experience at Millside from the perspective here at Halverston I recognize now that Millside was such a big place that it was easy to get lost. It would have been very helpful if administration could have set up a specific mentor for me especially for the first month; someone I could go to about school routines and someone who could have pointed me in the direction of other people who were knowldgable, someone who could have coached me about report cards. A new teacher should also have a school handbook full of practical information like fire drills, rules for yard duty all the day to day things. It needs to be written down.

What was Lisa\'s perception of Susan\'s entry into Millside? From our conversations and interviews I understood that she felt Susan was suddenly gone before specific new teacher support strategies were put into place. A new teacher in and out in four months. A supply teacher on a short term
contract. Curious to hear what Susan had to say about her beginning at Millside. Lisa had a sense that people at Millside, including herself, had been friendly but distant, and that the school had not provided for her needs. She compared Millside to Halverston recognizing somewhat ruefully how much more personal had been the contact with new teachers there. When these points were confirmed by reading Susan's stories, Lisa reconsidered her role with some regret. When she read Susan's accounts she was startled to realize how alone Susan had felt. She felt badly that she had not considered Susan as a full-fledged staff member but only as a supply teacher:

After I read your write-ups about Susan, I worried about my relationship with her. How could I have left her on her own to sink or swim for four months? From my perspective it was a small bit of time. From her perspective it was a lifetime. It has made me realize that there are a myriad of perspectives for every issue. For me it was a blip in time. For her everyday was a lifetime! I remember saying to Susan, 'Come in any time', just the way I offered the invitation to Rebecca and all the new teachers. But when she came to see me a couple of times, I was never available and I never got back to her. I meant to go back but I didn't do it. Perhaps the layout of the building prevented the physical proximity of staff and administration that existed at Halverston but that's no excuse. I'm not going to ever let a crummy building dictate my behaviour and affect someone else again. (Transcript notes, April 1996)

As Lisa reconstructed her story of her relationship with Susan during the research process, she came to several new understandings about her role with novices. She thought about the problem of two administrators trying to perform the same function and how someone like Susan could fall through the cracks very easily unless a formal program was established with designated responsibilities for the principal and vice principal. She recognized that she and Ruth had each assumed the other person was doing the job and because of this assumption Susan was basically on her own. She wondered why the philosophy and practice of new teacher peer support she had fostered so carefully at Halverston had slipped out of focus at Millside, admitting she often "didn't know who needed her" at the larger, more complex school. As a result of Lisa's reflections she has formulated new intentions for future work with novice teachers, resolving to pay more attention to their development and well being.
From my perspective as a teacher on both staffs, I would concur with Lisa's interpretation of the difference in support for new staff at each school. I see the quality of support perceived by the novices as connected to administrative visibility. When Lisa's visibility was high at Halverston, new teachers like Rebecca had a general sense of being emotionally and physically supported, even if the specifics of support were left for the teachers themselves to work out. Because Lisa's visibility was considerably lower at Millside, a new teacher like Susan did not have the opportunities to know her in the same informal way. Interactions were more formal and infrequent. In comparing Lisa's presence at Halverston with her image at Millside, I have noted her reduced presence in the halls and classrooms of the latter school. At Millside, a teacher seeks out the principal in her office domain, at Halverston, the principal sought out the teachers in their classroom and communal staffroom domains. From the perspective of a new teacher the distinction is important, because as we saw in Susan's case, novices often feel reticent to initiate contact with their administrators. At Millside, Lisa appears to run the school from her office, rarely making her way up to the staffroom. I can only remember seeing her there on one social lunch occasion but I could also understand why, when instead of being allowed to socialize, she was deluged by the rapid fire questions and problems of persistent teachers! (As I recall she made a hasty retreat). Despite her desire to "walk the halls" this is not the administrator story at Millside. When I asked Lisa about this change she explained that she was simply not as able to get out of her office at Millside even though it had been a clear second year goal to do so. She felt that although the school was running more smoothly she was often overwhelmed with the paperwork associated with a large school principalship.

One interesting postscript to Susan's story relates to the research story. When Lisa, Rebecca and I read over Susan's account of her fall term at Millside we were faced with an uncomfortable truth. While we were busy investigating and understanding more about Rebecca's first year experience, and implying through that understanding that we intended to act differently in the future, a new teacher had slipped between the cracks of support at our school. Despite the fact that our research focus was on support for new teachers we ignored the very signs we were discussing in our inquiry.

Rebecca had noticed Lisa's reduced presence at Millside but because of her teaching circumstance and the personal contact afforded her by the research project she did not feel its impact. She received
necessary administrative support from Terry, her unit coordinator and saw Lisa regularly in the triad sessions. Lisa's direct influence in Rebecca's teaching life was lessened at Millside particularly in their second year. Because the special education teachers worked so closely with Terry, the coordinator of the Autistic unit, the principal was not directly concerned with the day to day events of the unit. When we talked as a triad about Rebecca's work however, Lisa could listen knowledgably adding to the conversation from her considerable background in the area of Autism. Rebecca was particularly pleased with the team effort within the unit, feeling a sense of professional community. Rebecca's year was moving along smoothly and she was relieved to be doing the same job two years in a row. She was however discovering how easy it was to become "set in your ways" just repeating things a second year. There was also a strong sense that the second half of this year would again be a journey into the unknown as she was beginning her maternity leave in January. She reflected back on her second fall at Millside in our triad session of December 1994.

It's been a great fall for confidence and learning. I really felt good about things. I felt especially confident about the kinds of programming we were establishing and the progress we were making within a short time frame with the group of children we have. The two assistants and I have formed a team this year and have bonded well. It's hard to believe the term is almost over because some things are still just getting off the ground. That understanding in itself is profound for me, to realize that learning is ongoing, that just because October comes everything is set. No. It's a continual turn over, a real whirlwind. As my supervisor Terry says, Try the next thing. Try the next thing. I often think about that family who were so disappointed with us last year. I'd like to haul them in and say O.K. I want you to be here I want you to see what we can do for your little guy. The other positive factor about this term has been the conscious preparation for January, getting the program on paper for someone else to take over. You have to say it and put it on paper and really establish your ideas.

In describing her interactions with her five primary children with Autism, Rebecca often used the term programming. This term and others intrigued me. Unlike Lisa I had no background in this area and wished to understand more about her specialized assignment. I observed Rebecca and her children on several occasions and attended several team clinical meetings where the weekly progress and programming of each child was discussed by teachers, teaching assistants, psychologist, speech
pathologists and integration specialists. After one observation session in which Rebecca interacted one on one with a little boy named Paul for about an hour, I was struck by the amount of patience and calmness needed by the adult in responding to the often unpredictable behaviours. Paul, a beautiful little boy, communicates through repetitive sounds and motions often rocking rhythmically, hugging himself tightly in a world of his own. He seems comfortable with Rebecca, responding at times to her constant gentle but firm verbal and non verbal cues. He did not react to me when we were introduced and appeared to be unaware of my presence. When Rebecca was with Paul integrating him into the regular kindergarten program she was in close physical contact with him, gently sitting him up in the story circle, time and time again when he would lie across other children. Pauls hands move compulsively always waving in the air or snapping or turning in and out. While they are listening to the kindergarten teacher tell the story Rebecca strokes his back and Paul seems to respond positively to this "deep touch". When the story is over and a transition time occurs Paul becomes visibly unsettled and begins to moan and then howl as he rocks himself in a tight ball over the carpet. Rebecca quietly reminds him of appropriate behaviour and leads him firmly back to their own room. As I follow them up the hall, Paul is now yelling in rhythmic bursts and stomping his feet, Rebecca walking patiently beside him. Fifteen minutes later Rebecca and Paul are calmly working with picture blocks munching on apple slices and Paul seems at ease momentarily with his environment. Rebecca records on his chart the behaviors of the last hour. I am ready to return upstairs to my suddenly understandable grade eights, armed with a new respect for my colleagues in the Autism unit.

Rebecca says she has enjoyed the challenge of working with children with autism but she is not sure what she wants to do after her leave. She is doing a lot of thinking about change:

*I'm in the middle of being forced to think about change without knowing what I want to be or can be thinking. People are saying, What are your plans? Well I haven't even had the baby yet! I don't know. I don't know what I'm going to be. There will be another new beginning. Talk about beginnings! ...And it's also an ending. You know the romantic in me has never let myself look at endings. Maybe it's my own coping mechanism. But I've never looked at endings as endings. I've always looked ahead to new beginnings. And I think there's always something in me that's packed*
that (experience) "in the bag." Whatever it is I've just left, I keep it with me somehow.

(Interview, November 1994)

While Lisa and Rebecca were living out their new stories at Millside, I too was involved in establishing a new stage in my teaching career, balancing my thesis research with teaching at the Faculty of Education in the mornings and coming back to my grade eights in the afternoons. After my year of residence course work I knew it was important to integrate the new insights gained into the practice of my teaching at both levels. My goal was to consider the student more sensitively within the context of each situation and adapt program in relevant ways, to concentrate on attending and listening more carefully to individual voices and to allow those voices to find a space and purpose for their own learning. To do this I had to relinquish some of the control I exerted over my students and make a conscious effort to work more comfortably within learning partnerships. I knew I must get off centre stage and let the students write the scripts (Paley 1990). Unexpectedly turning fifty in the midst of these changes heightened my sense of reflection about my teaching practices and how my teaching life was integrated with my life outside of schools with my own children, my husband, colleagues and friends. Stepping back from my usual confidence and positive framework, I was momentarily troubled by questions of meaning and purpose in my career, wondering where the years had gone. The questions were precipitated by a symbolic event, the publication of a board document which lists all teachers in order of seniority. This ongoing inquiry continues by presenting my story of one student who symbolizes my search for meaning in my teaching life, while at the same time offering insights into my relationship with my administrator, Lisa. I tell the following story constructed from field notes and journal entries made over the period of my two years at Millside.

The Seniority List

The seniority list is open to view on the teachers' counter. I am on page one, number 25 in years of seniority with the board. If my name started with A, I would be 13th. My name on the list, page one. What does that mean, thirty two years of teaching? How can that many years have passed when I still don't know what I want to do when I grow up? I dare not count the children and adults with
whom I have worked. The impossibility of relationship would be too painful to bear. A tumult of faces, names, classrooms and schools bounce erratically through my memory as I stand at the counter staring at the words. I am dismayed and proud at the same time. I want to laugh and cry at these marks on a page which declare the official status of my career. More immediately, I want to share my discovery, this marker of significance, with someone else. I need at this moment validation for those years of my professional life. The wrong person stands beside me at the counter and my news falls on disinterested ears, the only response a barely audible grunt. Seeing the humour in the situation, I smile inwardly and boldly circle my name, scribbling in the word "wow!" with a yellow highlighter. I will validate myself. I am once again reminded of the mellow joys of being fifty, a time when one's emotions can sustain such rebukes of professional empathy.

Later that evening I was caught up in sorting out memories of years spent and gone and suddenly the exact chronology became important, a need to fix the memories definitively in a temporal sequence. Because I had recently struggled with dates and time lines in a graduate course in which we constructed personal and professional narratives, my anxiety at forgetting whole chunks of my career was allayed. As I let the chronicle of memories drift to consciousness through a succession of temporal images I became aware that people shaped the emerging stories being recollected from individual images, people linked with certain contexts and emotions. It wasn't curriculum content I remembered, all the lessons and documents, the integrated units, or the marking, but the people. Sometimes it was a particular student who represented a year, other times another teacher or principal dominated the shifting scenario. Sometimes the thought was hazily elusive and all that remained within the grasp of memory was the feeling tone of a particular school or place, a single incident with a student. Other memories were sharp and clear with amazing precision in the small insignificant details of clothing or food, weather or the landscape passed on the way to work. A prized blue suede suit worn thirty two years ago in my grade one class with a little boy tracing letters on the skirt as we sat in circle time. A proudly delivered lopsided muffin baked by a grade eight student. A view from an art room of my own on the top floor of a beautiful old downtown school watching with delight the seasons impose their own character on the changing landscape. The same passing of time etched painfully in a half hour drive to a school where I didn't want to be. And yet much of the content taught to those students is gone.
My understanding of this experience was enlightened by reaching back to Crite's work on memory and the narrative quality of experience. Crites (1971) suggests:

But remembering is not yet knowing. Its chronicle is too elemental too fixed to be illuminating. Experience is illuminated only by the more subtle process of recollection. At least in this sense all knowledge is recollection. So is all art, including the art of story telling. (p.300)

Crites goes on to explain that images exist as "transient episodes in an image stream." From this stream a particular image can be abstracted. "The most direct and obvious way of recollecting it is by telling a story, though the story is never simply the tedious and unilluminating recital of the chronicle of memory itself" (p.300). Crites refers to manipulating the image stream, abstracting it for purposes of theory, suspending it to draw a picture or splicing episodes to give them new significance.

By reconstructing my memories through the shaping power of story I begin to know in a way qualitatively different from a simple remembering of a sequence of events. This reconstruction according to Crites (1986) is an aesthetic act of "recollecting" complex visual images or aural cues in a manner "analogous to the way a painter collects the harmonious ensemble of items in a still life... or a similar act of composition analogous to that of a musical work. (p.158, 159) The "I" that now exists in the present actively gathers its continuity of experience from the stream of memory using narrative structure to retain a sense of self over time.

I was drawn back to the early work of Dewey (1887) who argues that:

Memory is not a passive process in which experiences thrust themselves upon the mind any more than perception is one where present experiences impress themselves. It is a process of construction. In fact it involves more of constructive activity than perception. In perception the objects at all events do exist before the perception construes them. In memory they do not. Our past experiences are gone just as much as the time in which they occurred. They have no existence until the mind reconstructs them. (p.155)
Dewey and Crites reminded me that as the author of my narrative reconstruction of memory, I engage in the conscious aesthetic and cognitive process of selecting which stories will surface and take shape emerging from the subjective frameworks I currently employ. "The remembered past is situated in relation to the present in which it is recollected" (Crites, 1986, p.158).

As I continued to think about the interpretations of past experience we create and draw upon through an active construction of memory, I began to see that how our narrative understanding of self could be under constant revision as we encounter a new present from which to view the past. From my position as teacher/researcher I sifted through the memories of my career looking for what I was able to say. As Eisner (1990) points out, "What we come to see depends on what we seek and what we seek depends... on what we know how to say" (p.46). It would have been interesting to read back over a journal of those years had I kept one. What other memories could be triggered from words on a page into stories of experience? A journal entry from my first year at Millside, a year in which I was consciously keeping a research/teaching journal, inspired the following reflective piece which ties together the ways memory and experience are reconstructed through the form of story.

Rainy Day Noon

April 21 .....Rain today at noon .......students inside, those who stayed for lunch, little groups. Huddled, working, talking, laughing ..... rain today at noon...... streaking the glass....long grey diagonals, outside dark and chill....... inside warm and vibrant .....not depressing this rain, a healing rain, a heightened focus. That all was well ..... experienced clearly, physically .... rain today at noon....... fostering an optimism about these kids ....about this room..... a feeling of warmth and safety for them and me .... an understanding that invitations to learning work... a good feeling in this room ... tangible ...Jason sits at the centre table, his huge frame uneasily perched on his chair. He is struggling with "fight or flight" response, an issue in his reading assignment. Jason, tensely eager, hand trembling as he grasps his pencil and manages the words, tongue stuck between his teeth, focussed like a primary child on his work. Jason who should have been hanging out at the mall picking fights, bull-dozing his way through lunch hour. Who would have thought of Jason, here in this peaceful space, working during his free time. He turns around and his broad defiant face opens
with an easy grin. He gives me the thumbs up sign, triumphant, "I'm almost done Miss, I'm almost done!"

Laughter bubbles up from a group of girls working on a history poster. Two E.S. L. students from Somalia are engaged in a heated discussion about the Simpson trial and the language of communication is English! Amanda is listening intently to Ruth's poem as she haltingly reads her work aloud. She is delighted when Amanda applauds. They give each other a hug.

Rainy day lunch ...... Invitations for learning work ...... I am calm and emotionally ready for the rest of my students to come back to our room. The students and I own this magic day.

This story is written from a journal entry made the evening of the rain. It captures the emotions that washed over me as I observed these young teenagers, happy and easy with themselves, all of us sharing a special moment of equilibrium. It returned to me the sense of classroom as home that had disappeared from my repertoire of images. I felt an ownership of my teaching world. So often there is a hard edge of tension in our classrooms, an attentiveness, sharp and watchful. We wait for something to happen, an expectant pause. A mood which lies heavy in which the words are never quite right. But not this year of the Rainy Day Noon. This year is working.

I have a heightened awareness of what is going on in my classroom with me and with my students. Because I am in the role of a learner, a novice academic creating a thesis, I seem to have extended that quality of reflection and curiosity to my role as a teacher. The thesis research is wonderfully congruent with my life here in this classroom and reaches out to embrace my teaching life at the Faculty with my pre-service students. My students both teenagers and adults, my principal husband and my own children ground me in the crowded reality and relational dayliness of teaching while the articles I read at night let my mind soar independently to establish new connections to my research task. My research participants, Lisa and Rebecca, stubbornly establish a life of their own in my head and carry on an ongoing dialogue that clarifies and directs my understanding of what it means to be in this particular knowledge landscape. For a time I live that delicate gift of wholeness. A sense of coherence and harmony is created as all parts of my professional life interact,
influence and speak to each other in new ways.

One student stands out as a symbol for this year. Jason, who has been introduced in the previous journal excerpt, was a difficult student who by the end of grade eight had achieved a fair measure of success. Because his story and mine are intertwined with that of Lisa, Jason's story provides a way of presenting Lisa's connections with an experienced teacher. These connections provide a further context for understanding her influence on a new teacher's development.

**Jason's Story**

It's six o'clock. I'm not waiting much longer. I guess it was too much to expect that they would show up. I began to gather up the files and portfolios set up on the round table for parent teacher interviews. It was the end of a long but productive day in which the grade eight students led their parents in a discussion about their work while I listened and helped out when the pauses got too long. Jason had assured me that his father would come at 5:30 but since he had never come to the school before in Jason's nine years as a student, I was sceptical. Jason's family background was challenging at best. His mother suffered from mental illness and was in and out of institutions during most of Jason's life. His unemployed alcoholic father had experienced problems with the law and had been in jail on several occasions. The story of Jason that I received as his teacher that year was not to call home under any circumstances because there could be severe repercussions for him. The city housing project where Jason lived carried the burden of its own story of community struggles with drugs, aggression and abuse. My bus route to the school took me into the project each day and I began to understand more clearly the context of Jason's life away from school.

Jason had a great start in my core grade eight class. I think because I was new to the school he realized he could try to establish a new beginning with someone who had not absorbed the school stories surrounding him. Although I had scanned the school records of suspensions, poor academic attitude and progress, I tried to ignore these ties to the past and to allow our relationship to develop a new plot line built on small cumulative successes and positive experience. His determination coupled with my advocacy for his success began to effect a ripple of change in his behaviour and
academic results. The other students had watched our beginning relationship carefully and now were participating in Jason's slow discovery of himself as a capable student. The teacher/student daily journals provided a private way for Jason and me to communicate what was happening each day. The journals gave me the time and space to share the straightforward feedback he needed to build his new image and for him to tentatively explore new concepts about himself. There was no magic here, no mythical transformation, just a lot of ordinary but tough relational work. Fights still erupted on the school yard and occasionally in the halls. Phys Ed and the Arts were problems in terms of power struggles with staff, but in Core Jason's afternoons were calm and productive.

They arrived at the door, Jason nervously pulling his father towards me. "This is my Dad" he muttered gruffly and we began. I watched with wonder as Jason shared his work patiently with his Dad who seemed to be having trouble focussing on his son's words, his eyes drifting around the room. Jason's hands were shaking as he persistently pushed his stories and geography maps in front of his father and his voice quavered not a few times as he tried to explain our way of doing integrated units. He was fulfilling his side of the partnership just as we had practised in the preparatory role plays. Through the rough intensity of his voice and manner he willed his Dad to respond and slowly he did. He relaxed and responded, albeit briefly, to Jason's work, asking some questions and showing a faint pride in several excellent computer assignments. It was all Jason. It was his interview. I felt a quiet sense of privilege to be sharing a very special experience as I watched father and son discuss Jason's work for what may well have been the first time.

"Time to go," his Dad announced, brusquely scraping the chair back from the table. The interview was over. Jason threw a triumphant grin back at me as he clumped out of the room in step with his father.

I sat at the table by myself for a while looking out at the November early evening darkness and let the feelings wash over me in the bright silence of the room. Suddenly I wanted to share the experience with Lisa. She too had been an advocate for Jason when others had labelled him a lost cause and had supported my non-confrontational way of working with him. When conflict had occurred with other staff she had initiated mediation between Jason and the staff member, a strategy
which left Jason's dignity intact. She and Jason had regular informal conversations about his progress and we initiated many positive office visits to counteract his former negative story of administration. Jason began to understand that Lisa was behind him all the way and that she was proud of the work ethic and social skills he was developing.

She was still in the building, a strong visible presence for any staff needing administrative support during their interview times. I caught her walking the halls and spilled out the details of the event I had witnessed. My emotions caught me by surprise as tears became a part of my communication. Lisa understood immediately and a huge smile lit up her face and a comforting arm encircled my shoulder. She needed no explanation as to why this was a significant event. I felt a deep sense of gratitude to be working with an administrator who was comfortable showing emotion herself and was respectful of its presence in others. She shared my joy in Jason's success and the meaning of the event was enhanced for me by her spontaneous, empathetic response.

Lisa continued to take a personal interest in Jason's continuing development and as graduation approached she again supported a decision I wished to make concerning Jason and the graduation awards. Traditionally each subject awarded medals to the student with the highest academic achievement in that area. Often the awards ceremony involved the same elite group of students receiving awards in many areas while the others watched. It was my belief that Jason should win the English award because of the tremendous improvement and potential he had demonstrated over his grade eight year. I persuaded the other intermediate staff, some reluctantly, that this award had the possibility of creating a new sense of self-worth in Jason giving him tangible evidence of our support and recognition. At the awards ceremony, I prefaced the presentation by noting that success could be measured in how far we had come, could be determined by the distance travelled rather than the arrival at a point of fixed achievement. There was a slight stirring of expectancy, a rustle of sideways questioning looks among the students who sensed that the awards story was changing as I spoke. When I announced Jason's name, he looked bewildered, uncomprehending as his friends pushed him out of his chair towards the stage. My class erupted into wild cheering applause, swept to their feet in a spontaneous tribute to their classmate. The rest of the audience, catching the spirit of the moment, joined in the response. Jason, resplendent in his crisp new white shirt and tie,
received his award from Lisa and me as if he accomplished such feats every day, his broad sheepish grin revealing his pride and surprise. I knew the decision had been right.

In September, 1995, Jason came back to Millside with a group of students to visit. I barely recognized his new look, blue and white button down shirt, slicked back hair and a confidence of manner I had not seen before. He assured me that things were going well, that he was on the right track in high school and the girls with him confirmed his story. Unbeknownst to Jason I had already contacted the guidance counsellor at the high school to keep an eye out for him. I felt he was a student who could go either way depending on the quality of relationships established with students and staff. He had come so far at Millside. Now it was up to him to make good decisions about his high school life. When he left that September day I felt a growing confidence that he would make it.

Postscript
March 20, 1996.
I learned today that Jason is up in court on five counts of car theft. He has been suspended from his high school while the issue is being resolved.
I spoke to Lisa. I felt a great sadness that things had gone wrong for Jason. I truly felt we had made a difference for him but it was not enough .......It was not enough. What had it meant? For Jason, for me, for the others? Why had I expected Jason's life could change? Later that day I discovered a note from Lisa in my mailbox. It followed up our conversation and I quote it here exactly as written.

March 22, 1996.

Dear, dear Fran,
Please try not to allow yourself to even begin to feel discouraged about our children....Jason will remember! As will the vast numbers of others whose lives you have touched....You have an amazing ability to inspire human beings of any age.....Yes. Jason and all the others will remember, reflect and will probably try to find you again to tell you about it. Thank you so much for caring about the difference you make!

With respect, Lisa.
I include this very personal correspondence because I think it exemplifies the particular relational quality of Lisa's leadership. She took the time to care and, more important, recognized that care was needed. This notion of caring and the expression of positive regard for her staff was evident to Rebecca during her first year and to me in my thirty-second year, grounding us both in our particular landscapes. A troubling issue for Lisa is the fact that not all staff have been reached in the same way. Just as students in our classes fall between the cracks so, Lisa believes, can teachers slip out of her grasp. Teachers like Susan. Teachers like the three she had to transfer from the school. Teachers whom she does not yet know.

The qualities of regard and caring held so strongly by Lisa were to surface in another connected educational milieu. Rebecca's grandmother, Helen, had on several occasions appeared as a supportive character in her stories of teaching. Rebecca thought that I might like to meet her grandmother who, at age 96, still held vivid memories of her first year of teaching in 1924. Rebecca was particularly intrigued by her grandmother's recollections of her first two principals comparing the two experiences that spanned three quarters of century. We agreed to meet and so the four of us, Rebecca, her year old daughter, her grandmother and I spent a morning in Helen's tiny apartment sharing our teaching stories.

I include Helen's story in the thesis because it seemed to be important for Rebecca to connect family stories from the past to the exploration of herself as teacher, to the inquiry into the relationships established with her own principals. I saw it as a way of integrating the past with the present and future, exploring landscapes of the past to more clearly understand our own. As Rebecca spoke with enthusiasm and admiration about the possibility of her grandmother contributing to the thesis, I was reminded of Bateson's words, "We need to look at multiple lives to test and shape our own" (Bateson, 1989, p.16). Including her grandmother was also a symbol of respect. As Witherall and Noddings (1991) suggest, "Telling and listening to stories can be powerful signs of regard - of caring - for one another" (p.280). Witnessing the exchange of stories between generations I felt the regard and caring generated within the room as the two women listened to and appreciated the experiences of each other. Here then is Helen's story of her first two principals in 1924 and 1925, constructed from the transcripts of that conversation. (January, 1996)
My beginning as a teacher started in 1924 in Charleston, Ohio where I'd gone to University to study music. I guess in some ways it was unusual for a girl to attend university and so far away but I really never thought anything of it. My family who lived in St. Catharines supported my idea but had no money so I had to do housework at the place where I had room and board. When I graduated, I really wanted a job at a private mission school in Quebec, but they had no place for me, so I took a job a friend of mine had been offered, then turned down. It was an elementary school and high school all in one and I taught music to the young ones and French, which I couldn't speak, to the high school students. The principal was a lovely man, very supportive, very nice but he had his standards. I remember the demerit incident. He was trying to stop note passing in the classes so we were to report any note exchanges and the offenders would receive a demerit. Well, there were two girls in my class vying for top honours and they both had a crush on the same boy and one passed a note to him. It was very hard. Should I report it? I knew I had to but the girls didn't understand and the young man was angry. So I told the principal and that was that.

Later that year while I was walking in town some boys from school came and put a live mouse down my back. I didn't react very much, just went into a store and said, "Can you help me? I have a mouse down my back" The boys seemed disappointed perhaps because I didn't scream and carry on. I don't know to this day what that all meant.

The next year I went up to Quebec to a mission school, a private boarding school. I met my husband there. Mr. Finnigan, the principal, was a friend of my fiancee's family but he certainly didn't think much of me. He wasn't supportive at all, thought I was trouble. He thought I wasn't even capable of teaching music. I had that feeling because I had started a choir. The school had never had a choir and at our first concert they went flat on a high note. So that was that. He said I couldn't even keep a choir in tune. The other problem with him was the history class. You see, there was just one class for the whole school. I had them all together, all the grades. I didn't know how to teach that class because of the age gap. I couldn't. I don't know. It's beyond me. What would interest the older ones would not affect the younger students. So the class had no discipline and I asked the principal if he could move his desk beside us. His answer was firm. "We hired you as a teacher, if you cannot teach them, it's your problem. No, I won't help; it's up to you to deal with it." I got no support or
understanding whatsoever. So my fiance at that time came and took over the class for me. My other classes went well, the music and the gym. I enjoyed the gym classes with the girls immensely.

As Rebecca and I continued listening to Helen's stories we wondered aloud whether the principal's refusal to help may have had to do with a story of administrative insecurity. Here was a young woman with a university degree which he did not have, coming from a teaching position in the United States. It may have been that he felt his authority might be questioned and so was quick to emphasize Helen's inexperience. In fact Helen believes that she was likely the most qualified on staff, still earning however, the 30 dollars a month paid to those with just a high school diploma. She recalls that many teachers were hired right after high school with no teacher training. When Helen began teaching at the private school she was left entirely on her own to discover the school rules and traditions. There were no staff meetings or directives from the office just admonishments when things went wrong. Her actions seemed to be constantly out of step with the story of the school. For example she and another young teacher received harsh words from Mr Finnigan for skating alone five miles down the frozen river. On another occasion she accepted a senior male student's invitation for a stroll in the woods and was immediately reminded such interactions were not acceptable. She received criticism for allowing boys and girls to skate together on the outdoor rink in physical education classes. In her words, "everything I tried to do was wrong and I was surprised because I had been so successful my first year." When I asked Helen if the other teachers were supportive in helping new staff understand the story of the school she recalled that the other teachers had been there so long they knew everything. They expected Helen to assimilate school routines by herself and were quick to reprimand her, "to bawl her out" when she made mistakes. Helen's integration into the life of the school was helped by her romantic relationship with one of the male teachers, a young man she subsequently married at the end of her first year at the school. She lost one new friend however in the process, a young woman who had first set her sights on Helen's young man and who lost out when Helen came on the scene!

Several issues come to light if we examine Helen's experience through the landscape metaphor. Like her granddaughter seventy years later, she is faced with ethical dilemmas within the landscape, trying to balance classroom management for the group and the needs of the individual student.
Should she report an excellent student for passing a note and thus follow the principal's directives or should she ignore the behaviour that she knows will affect the student's place on the honour role? She decides in favour of the school and she reports the incident, but not without misgivings. She recalls the first principal's role as one of support and encouragement even with subjects in which she did not have proficiency. In terms of the matrix of relationships that form the professional landscape, Helen's personal and professional life became closely entwined when she moved to the private school. Boarding at the school, she had responsibilities for female students that extended far beyond regular school hours and her social life revolved around people at the school. She established close personal relationships with many of the female students, relationships that in some cases extended for decades. Helen proudly pointed out a cranberry glass vase set with care on the top of a bookcase explaining that it had been a special gift from a student in 1925. She showed us a card from another student who still corresponds with her regularly. She spoke of Ethel, another student who had remained a close family friend until her death several years ago. Although she recalls her students warmly, she expressed feeling a distinct lack of support from her second principal who did not appear to appreciate her youthful enthusiasm.

Comparing the professional knowledge landscapes of Helen and Rebecca, I was struck by the many similarities despite the intervening years. Both young women had to learn and experience not only the story of their particular classrooms but also try to understand the more complex stories of the school. In Helen's case, her understanding of the private school story was structured by the rather negative feedback she received from peers and the principal which was in contrast to the positive experience of her first year. There was a sense that she should quickly assimilate the norms and routines that comprised the school story and mold her behaviour appropriately. For Rebecca, the school story was easier to grasp because she had worked at the school as a teaching assistant. Her understanding of the school story was structured by the positive feedback she received, feedback that was however not always useful for her task of establishing a successful classroom story. While she appreciated at an emotional level the encouragement from Lisa and her supporter, Janet, she experienced frustration on a practical level, what she called her "day to day reality." Supportive comments about how "good everything looked" contrasted with Rebecca's own story of not meeting her expectations.
Setting Helen's school stories beside our school stories creates a landscape of wonderful congruence and contrast separated by three quarters of a century. Listening to Helen's humorous recollections we hear echoes of themes resonating through the stories of Rebecca and Susan; the common concerns of a new teacher, relationships with students, relationships with staff and administration, the concept of ownership and stories of expectation. We wonder from our 1996 perspective at the "problem" of note passing or boys and girls skating together on an outdoor rink. We see beginnings through the eyes of a grandmother and granddaughter each sharing and rethinking their experience, appreciating those qualities of relationship and connection buried in layers of commonplace everyday events. All the stories in this chapter are characterized by those qualities and are in a sense a rediscovery of what we already have and already know in terms of our professional knowledge. The characters in these connected stories, Lisa, Rebecca, Susan, Fran and Helen, share their beginnings and endings across multiple educational landscapes and in doing so invite us to recognize the complex professional landscapes they have created.
Chapter Eight

Landmarks

Writing a story...is one way of discovering sequence of experience. Connections slowly emerge... like distant landmarks... Experiences too indefinite of outline in themselves to be recognized in themselves connect and are identified as a larger shape. And suddenly a light is thrown back as when your train makes a curve showing that there has been a mountain of meaning rising behind you on the way you've come, is rising there still, proven now through retrospect.

(Welty 1984, p.90)

Rebecca: Your first year is one of isolation, of not knowing the way, yet moving inexorably along the track. You're on the train and you don't know where you're going.
Lisa: Yes... and the difference is that an experienced teacher moving through the landscape recognizes that mountain or that valley but you, as the new teacher, are on the train, staring out the window and not recognizing anything...

(Interview, April, 1996.)

In chapter eight I attempt to pull together the strands of inquiry interwoven through the body of the thesis. Through the process of talking about and writing Rebecca's story of beginning experience, connections akin to Welty's distant landmarks have emerged as the story unfolded. I began this inquiry by asking how school administrators were involved in the professional knowledge context of beginning teachers as they moved through their first few years of teaching. To investigate that question I chose a narrative methodology to highlight one specific new teacher /administrator relationship set in the particular context of two schools over a three year period. One purpose of this final chapter is to present what can be said about this relationship and what it means for future consideration of teacher development issues. Areas of inquiry stemming from this central question included an exploration of the professional knowledge landscapes of three educators situated in various positions on the educational landscape. Central questions linked the multi-layered stories of practice emerging from our collaborative research. How did we come to understand the professional
landscapes of ourselves and each other? What have we learned about beginning teachers? What have we learned about the practice of administration? What can be said about beginnings? What can we do better in the future? Each of these issues is addressed in this concluding set of stories and interpretations not just in my researcher voice but through the voices of the participants as they make sense of the research experience.

The second critical purpose of the chapter is to elaborate on the significance of narrative inquiry in educational research. What has been learned about story as a research methodology as a result of our collaborative endeavour? How has the triad format contributed to our understanding of narrative research issues? What is the conclusion of the research story?

With these guiding questions in mind, I decided to construct the chapter by "turning" the culminating stories looking at them from different perspectives allowing the readers to compose their own sense of the ending. For example there are various ways of examining the issue of the administrator's involvement in Rebecca's development as a teacher. I could look back at Rebecca's written and spoken stories and summarize the relevant data. Rebecca could be questioned directly on issues of support. Lisa's opinions and stories could be taken into account. Conversations between Lisa and Rebecca could be analysed. My observations could come into play. Accordingly, I have described the emergent understandings through a range of multiple sources rather than from one fixed-point researcher perspective. As the researcher, I can offer generalizations about lessons to be learned from the research; however, it is ultimately the readers who will decide whether or not the research findings have any relevance to their own practise and particular situation. My intent is to share the insights that Lisa, Rebecca and I have gained from the research process and to place these new understandings in the context of my own work. In contrast to statistical studies in educational research where generalizations are constructed from random samples through conventional procedures and presented as logical inferences for a larger population, case studies such as this focus on the particular and invite the reader to make comparisons with their own experience, to determine differences and transfer what has been learned from the experience of others to their own situation. I ask the readers to engage with the material presented and decide from the basis of their own expertise what can be learned from the stories of Lisa, Rebecca and others in
The school community.

**The New Teacher / Administrator Relationship:**

I begin by summarizing what we, as a research triad, discovered about the new teacher/administrator experience from Rebecca's position on the landscape. I was curious about how Rebecca perceived the usefulness of various administrative approaches to support and development for new teachers from the perspective of her first years of experience. Because I wanted her initial stories of experience to be told in her own voice rather than reflect or be influenced by the formal language of new teacher development writing, I delayed this directed inquiry until the end of the first year of the research process. As a focus for discussion we reviewed a document which suggested twelve different kinds of support strategies ranging from orientation procedures to the facilitation of reflective practice and professional development (Cole, Squire and Cathers, 1995 pg. 25). The categories reflect the main areas in which new teachers have typically needed support. I asked Rebecca to think about the people who addressed her needs as a beginning teacher, utilizing the various support approaches while I attended carefully to the particulars of the new teacher/administrator interactions to which she alluded directly or indirectly. I present here a brief summary of her impressions and reactions as another way of understanding and connecting Rebecca's experience to her previous narrative accounts. As Eisner (1990) suggests, we gain insight secured by multiple views of experience. Rebecca's comments in response to specific questions corroborate her stories of experience by adding another layer of meaning to her understanding of herself as a professional in relation to others. As she thoughtfully responded to my questions, she was stretched out on the floor of my living room on a beautiful June afternoon in 1995, balancing not only her ideas but her five-month-old daughter.

Rebecca felt that Lisa had "an incredible grasp" of **orientation** strategies; that she "knew who was who and how to get the right information." She had provided clear expectations of what was required of a Halverston staff member. The fact that Rebecca had worked at the school in the spring helped basic orientation procedures go smoothly. In terms of **resources** she thought the system had let her down since very few guidelines or hands on resources seemed to be available for her. Lisa
helped a bit but we have already discerned from Rebecca’s stories that she learned quickly that Lisa was not going to obtain resources for her. Her mentor Gillian was the main source for the acquisition of resources. Holding the role of the Primary consultant, Gillian had access to materials she could share with Rebecca. Assistance with setting up the classroom environment also fell into Gillian’s domain. She offered many practical suggestions about the way the room might be organized to maximize learning centres.

Lisa’s presence, however, was strongly felt in fostering the professional identity of her new teachers. Rebecca noted that, "Lisa was big on that. She assumed I had a professional identity in the midst of all the uncertainty. She had faith in me. She always treated me with great respect as an equal." Rebecca also believed that her peers played a shaping role in identity building because "they were all doing it together." She predicted that her peers would not be as important later on in her career but that at the beginning, "it was good to hear positives and to be given leeway to try my own ideas." Emotional support came from several sources. Her ninety-six year old grandmother who had been a teacher in Quebec constantly encouraged her, assuring her that it would get better. According to Rebecca, her grandmother had been a rebel of sorts in her day and expressed genuine curiosity about Rebecca’s teaching stories. Rebecca’s story of Lisa was that she was readily available for moral support often stopping into the classroom for informal visits accompanied by positive words of encouragement. Colleagues were important for "the day to day reality" because they knew the parents and children Rebecca was teaching and could empathize with her difficulties. Janet, her official school-based supporter, acted as "my mom that first year, giving lots of hugs and tangible support." However she questioned Janet’s unfailing positiveness when she knew inside things were not the way she wanted them." Janet would always say, it looks like you’re doing alright. Whereas I knew I wasn’t. I wasn’t meeting my expectations. I knew what I didn’t know and so it wasn’t realistic help." As far as out of school support was concerned, she recalled that her husband and non-teaching friends were sympathetic but that "they couldn’t understand" her life at school.

The section of the chart involving classroom management stimulated a lively discussion since in retrospect, this seemed to be Rebecca’s strongest area of concern. She wanted desperately "to get it right." Caught in a dilemma during her first few months, she recognized the importance of
classroom management but she "couldn't figure it out in alternative terms." A constant question arose. "What does classroom management mean in Alternative?" Her story of an orderly classroom was not unfolding as she had predicted. She reached back to her past experience as a teaching assistant in Gillian's room and "through the conscious memory of Gillian's teaching strategies" began to make adaptations that might work for her situation. So in this case it wasn't Gillian's current presence as a mentor but rather the echoes of mentorship reaching forward from the past that guided Rebecca's practice. Rebecca also spoke about "learning by myself, by trial and error, learning from my own experience." She continually absorbed new information about management strategies. "If I read anything at all it would be on classroom management. I watched other teachers all the time, taking it in. I tried to keep up on everything concerning discipline and then adapt it to alternative." She acknowledged that classroom management became a lesser concern as the years progressed but that it was "still always there."

**Scheduling and planning** her program was an additional area of stress for Rebecca. Discovering belatedly that she was quite unprepared to assume full responsibility for planning her year, she relied on Gillian's advice for the immediate September organization. Then, when no specific help was forthcoming from her own principal or other board personnel, she turned to teacher colleagues in neighbouring boards, boards which were labelled "the binder boards" because of their well organized curriculum resource materials. Rebecca depended largely on these outside step-by-step resources during her first year. Rebecca acknowledged that a great deal of her subsequent learning about planning came from Ministry courses she took during her first two summers of teaching. Special Education and Primary method's courses provided her with the necessary practical and theoretical background to feel confident about planning different kinds of programs for her students.

Another common approach to supporting new teachers involves setting up opportunities for **observation** in other teacher's classrooms in and out of the school. Such opportunities were available within the board's new teachers' induction program. Lisa actively supported Rebecca's involvement in the program and had initiated the matching of Janet and Rebecca as school-based supporter and novice partners. Within the alternative school, inter-classroom visits were a way of life, strongly encouraged by Lisa for all staff, so this form of support was seen by Rebecca to be the
norm. When Lisa also organized a visit for Rebecca with another primary teacher outside of the school, she found this learning experience "helpful but scary." Admitting that it was "overwhelming to see it all in action" she had to rationalize the fact that the teacher had eighteen years of experience to get her program to that stage. Despite the challenges to her self concept inherent in seeing an excellent program in action, she appreciated the opportunities for growth afforded by the induction program and implemented by her principal Lisa.

The last category referred to by Rebecca was the one concerning professional development, the encouragement and support of ongoing self-assessment, career planning and lifelong learning. She indicated that "Lisa was good at this," always suggesting workshops she might like or pointing out articles of interest. Rebecca valued Lisa's respect for her as a developing professional, "updating and sharing new information with me." She and other new teachers were empowered by Lisa to consider self evaluation as a key learning experience, taking their lead from Lisa who had entered into an exploratory process of self-assessment with her own superintendent. Rebecca found Lisa supportive of her career decisions, understanding for example her desire for an extended maternity leave with her daughter rather than coming right back to full time teaching.

As I reviewed Rebecca's responses to the chart categories, I found many connections to her stories of teaching. Viewed through the metaphor of the professional knowledge landscape, Rebecca's experience can be understood through her growing relationships with others in the school community. By examining the chart of approaches to new teacher support she was able to look back in a different way to determine how particular individuals offered certain kinds of support strategies which helped to shape her professional knowledge context. From these reflections we can see how Lisa's influence made itself felt most strongly in the areas of professional identity and teacher development. Lisa's support could be storied as relational, manifesting itself through a belief in Rebecca's capability to be a fully fledged professional. This belief and faith in Rebecca was articulated in many tangible ways recognizable to Rebecca. She remembers Lisa's visits to the classroom, her encouragement to try her own ideas, her sharing of professional resources and her support in making career decisions. Rebecca realized that Lisa's strategy of "matching people up" encouraged the collaboration that she wanted to flourish at her school. She understood that Lisa
wanted her to learn through this collaboration with her peers and had initiated many connections for her to do so. We understand from Rebecca that the practical exigencies of obtaining curriculum materials, planning and classroom management were not seen to be Lisa's primary concern. Accordingly, Rebecca turned to other colleagues like Gillian or friends in other school boards for support in these areas.

Integrating Rebecca's stories of her first experiences and her subsequent exploration of the approaches to support and development chart, I began to see how Rebecca storied Lisa as her first administrator. From Rebecca's perspective Lisa did not play a shaping role in the practicalities of learning to teach and manage a classroom but focussed instead on the interrelated personal process of learning to be a teacher. This distinction is suggested by Knowles and Cole, (1995) in their discussion of knowledge for teaching. From their perspective, learning how to teach involves developing an understanding of self, students, subject matter, pedagogy, curriculum development and the facilitation of student learning. Learning how to be a teacher on the other hand, involves understanding the roles, responsibilities and ways of acting and thinking as emerging professionals, roles associated with out-of-classroom contexts. To further this notion using Clandinin and Connelly's (1995) terms, learning to teach focusses on "in-classroom landscapes" while learning how to be a teacher occurs in the "out-of-classroom places" on the professional landscape. The story of Lisa's approach to new teacher support at Halverston seemed to be one of nurturing the growing professional identity of her new teachers outside the classroom rather than being directly involved with the day to day acquisition of teaching skills in the classroom. Her support was global in nature based on an intuitive faith in the people she had hired.

When I broached this notion to Lisa during our last collaborative session she thought about it carefully saying that was probably her intent although she had never thought about it exactly that way. She firmly stated, "I'm confident about who I'm confident about!" She agreed that she had left the details of practise to Rebecca, suggesting that she, as a principal with a special education background, did not have competence enough to give a teacher specific directions in the area of curriculum when she did not have knowledge of the particular children. She expressed her belief that the teacher knows the children best and that her own strength as a principal came from inter-
relational skills, not curriculum expertise. Rebecca came to understand this distinction as the three of us discussed the transcript of the various support strategies during our last triad session. Rebecca noted that Lisa's philosophy also spoke volumes about her self confidence in her staff and she reiterated once again the significance of empowerment associated with professional self direction. Earlier in the research Rebecca had observed the puzzling phenomena of Lisa "being there... yet not being there." Now, as we talked, she began to realize what that split presence had meant to her growing self confidence and how the strategy had been purposeful on Lisa's part.

During that last triad session (April 96) Rebecca summed up many of her thoughts and feelings about the research process, her reflections of her first year and her relationship to Lisa. For Rebecca, the significant part of the research had been the opportunity to reflect, individually and collaboratively, on her experience of beginning to teach, to reassess her initial experience after talking and writing about it in depth. Combining these culminating thoughts with several related earlier reflections, I have created an imaginary letter to Lisa from Rebecca using Rebecca's words elicited from the transcripts to convey the sense of her position at the closure of the research. I have chosen a letter format to present this material because I believe the personal context of relationship is heightened by a letter's first person signature. The reader is invited to discern the ways in which Rebecca makes sense of her relationship to Lisa as she speaks about the research process and her first year. The themes remain intertwined, overlapping and connected just as they were when Rebecca spoke the words in conversation.

June 1996

Dear Lisa,

It's interesting that at the end of this research I still consider my first year teaching to be so significant. It really did hit hard and was the real beginning, the big one. Nothing in my memory is weighted as heavily, nothing in my recollections, or my caring of them, is as important as that first year. I'm a teacher and that's why it's significant to me. I can't think of any other experience that now might seem in retrospect so equally devastating or simply overwhelming... even something like a car accident. It would have been devastating at the time but it would be over and done with, not with me now. First year is still a part of me. It's still with me even though its in memory now, not
only because of the learning that's come from it. There is a powerful feeling that I could share this experience with someone else and make them feel better. It's still alive and probably always will be because I'm still a teacher.

This research has been a wonderful opportunity to reflect on my beginning experience. It was like looking in a mirror so that the beginning teacher experience could be seen more clearly by myself and others too. I think it's an experience that is not understood enough. I liked doing some writing myself. Rewriting a story makes you rethink the script. When I wrote my own stories the feelings came right back. I enjoyed reading the writing that you and Fran did. It's a nice reflection on how things were. As much as I can remember, it's accurate. I may have been worried at first about anything that could be seen as negative. But I trusted you and I trusted our relationship and I didn't worry about the things that might come across negatively. I particularly respect your honesty and I presumed you wanted to hear it in others. For example I thought you might be upset about the fact that I said you didn't give me a "list of ten things to do to begin my year." But you just laughed and said you saw that as a positive not a negative. After this research experience I think I understand more about your way of supporting me, your philosophy of professional development.

I now picture myself talking to other colleagues from other boards saying, sure I wish I had everything laid out from the principal! But what I do get is my principal telling me to take mental health days. So... I don't get this but I do get that! If I were to give a principal advice now I'd say, Don't give a list... give the new teacher space and above all, be accessible! I've learned these things from going through the experience with you, Lisa. I've learned that each principal has a unique sense of leadership. I think you are particularly special in that there is a strong personal element to your leadership, a human side. I've discovered through you that principals live through their own battles. They are not removed from it. Like the situation at Halverston when the teachers were on strike. You were caught in the middle. Or the lice crisis at Millside. The lesbian issue. Problems are not just pencil and paper issues or not just black and white the way I thought. Not that I didn't know this at one level going in but I discovered it anew through our conversations.

You reaffirmed my belief that my first year experience was mine. In the last session when we were
talking about that experience you compared it to childbirth by saying, "You can have read everything. You can be completely prepared but when you go in there to have your baby it's a different space. There are many ways to do it but it's your experience." That analogy meant a great deal to me. I would never have thought about it that way before having a child. You have a helpful way of making things understandable through comparisons.

I could never go back now to the way it was in that first year. I have learned so much. In one sense I think of myself then as "a smiley", letting on nothing. To everyone, things were fine. I couldn't have been any different because I thought that was also part of the first year. You had to be fine. So I wouldn't have been any different with any other administrator. Life... it will never be like that first year. No matter how many firsts I have, no matter what kids, what classrooms, what schools, what staffs that I encounter from here on, it will never be like that first year... It is an exquisite experience. An incredibly exquisite experience because you've never lived through it all the way from September to June. It's a different world. It's a different rhythm. I talk to people who have holidays booked for two weeks. How can they live like that? As a teacher I know now that my mental state is September to June and then you rest and then you go back and begin again. My first year was my last, first time. I couldn't envision the whole year. I'd never been there. I didn't know about learning the rhythms.

I was thinking about the analogy of a teacher to a professional designer like my husband. A designer begins each different job with new clients and innovative ideas. It's expected that each designer be original. What a contrast to a teaching where everyone seems to know the way, albeit in their own way. Even though everyone is different there is a way to do it and I did not know what it was.

I wonder if that first year is the same for everybody or was I just extra sensitive to feel the situations so dramatically? But then, when I think about the situations you've had to face, you've reacted pretty dramatically too! I realize now that principals are people! I'm glad in retrospect that you gave me the space and distance I needed to find my own way. Empowering others is something you do well.

Rebecca
Rebecca's personal reflections in the letter stem from our informal triad conversations and reveal a sense of growth in her understanding of how Lisa was involved in her first year. Initially feeling a sense of frustration with Lisa's "hands off" policies of teacher development, she has reconsidered her opinion in retrospect, now understanding Lisa's philosophy of living the beginning experience intensely and personally. She gives principals hypothetical advice about their relationships with new teachers emphasizing the need for independence, a sense of space balanced with accessibility. She acknowledges that she has come to this realization through her experience with Lisa. The interesting point here is her additional growth of understanding about Lisa's role through the retrospective research process. She has discovered through the triad reflections more about the reasons behind Lisa's actions as a school administrator, recognizing the "human side" of leadership. Through hearing Lisa's stories she has restored her original story of the principalship. The story is now understood as closer to her own with pain, uncertainty and isolation a part of the erratic rhythms of beginnings. As a new teacher Rebecca originally felt marginalized and vulnerable by her experience of beginning. She now understands those feelings can be experienced by others within the school community, even the principal.

My sense is that Rebecca discovered these understandings not only by having the experience of working with Lisa and reflecting on that experience but also by receiving Lisa's stories, stories which in many instances were revelations to her. The stories Lisa so freely shared about herself about other teachers and her dreams and hopes for her schools revealed the human side of the principalship to Rebecca. The mutual exchange of professional and personal stories placed her for a time in a non hierarchical triad through which ideas flowed in a circular motion rather than from principal down to teacher.

From Rebecca's letter we gain further a sense of the lasting significance of the first year experience, the experience Rebecca describes as "exquisite". For me, the meaning emanating from that expression connotes a heightened level of emotional and physical response, a sense of being fully within a situation and feeling passionately all its events and rhythms even if the meaning of such events is not fully understood. Rebecca felt more than she understood in that first year and she
recognizes that those feelings will remain an important landmark characterizing her professional knowledge landscape. She expresses a desire to share her experience with other new teachers, to share her learning so that it will stay alive. This idea prompts me to reconsider our traditional notion of matching expert teachers with novices for support and mentorship. Perhaps it would be more advantageous for a new teacher to work closely with someone closer to the beginning experience, someone still living the new teacher story herself.

I was interested in what experience Rebecca considered as beginning experience. Even though she had multiple starts during her first three years, moving from primary alternative to supply teaching, to short term contracts as a resource teacher and then to the autism unit, her focus in our discussions remained with that very first teaching position. The other beginnings were taken in stride even when she was challenged by the demanding parents of a child with autism when she arrived at Millside. Lisa and her other principals during those two years seemed to play a supportive but minor role in her teacher development story. My feeling is that the empowerment encouraged by Lisa during Rebecca's first year strengthened her sense of confidence in knowing she could handle any new situation. Lisa's firm belief in her ability combined with Rebecca's own sense of "puzzle pieces always falling into place" allowed her to use her first year experience in a positive way as she continued to construct new stories of self and establish herself in various professional landscapes.

From Rebecca's letter we can begin to see what is important to her about her beginning experience and how she has restored some of her ideas through the research process. Let us now turn the story to view it from Lisa's perspective. How did Lisa see the research process effecting a change in her beliefs about new teacher support? As we summarized our thoughts that April evening it was clear that for Lisa the most significant outcome of the research endeavour was her heightened awareness of the importance of clear communication within the school community as a whole. Living out her role as principal she felt she needed to be more in touch with the pulse of her school by establishing and maintaining open lines of communication with all of her staff, new and experienced. Lisa expressed our common conclusion about the complex issue of communication in her own direct style. "When you really think about differences on the professional landscape, it's a wonder anyone can communicate at all! I mean, here we are with no communication disorders per se, spending all
this time together and we still have to really listen to understand each other. It's amazing life goes on. It's amazing the school runs."

During our last conversation I asked her what advice she would give to a beginning administrator who was involved with new staff. It is interesting to note that her suggestions extend to all staff not just new people. Her advice was first to "Listen, listen with your antenna. Watch. Absorb as much as you can about the whole staff. Know your people. Teachers know their students, are able to write about them, and discuss their progress with parents. In the same way principals must know their teachers." She then considered new teachers specifically as she reflected further about this knowledge in terms of her relationship with Rebecca and Susan.

"I think I was O.K. with Rebecca because although I didn't realize the extent of her distress, there was an underlying knowledge and faith in her ability to pull through. However when I think of Susan I am completely taken aback by her perception of my inaccessibility. You see, to make an analogy to the classroom, at Halverston I had a "class size" of 22. I knew my people, whereas at Millside I had a class size of 45! Just as for a teacher, there is an incredible difference. I didn't know Susan at all. And I was obviously not visible. Saying you'll be supportive and doing it are two different things. I don't even know who needs me in this school! I knew that at Halverston. At Halverston my office became an extension of the staff room and vice versa. Here at Millside I hate the staff room. I still get bad vibes from it because of my first year. And in terms of staff coming to the office...... the old guard is still distant." (Transcript notes, April 1996)

As Lisa compared her visibility in the two schools, I reminded her of a recent humorous incident which pointed out clearly her distance from and unfamiliarity with staffroom territory. While delivering an important staffing document to the staff room, Lisa was called over the P.A. to pick up the intercom phone. But when she went to look for it she couldn't find it! Although she laughed at herself, the moment told its own story. The broader issue concerns a principal's ability to know her staff. Lisa clearly expressed the problem of facilitating relationships within a large school due both to the sheer number of teachers on staff and the increased paperwork associated with a diverse and complex school site. Lisa is aware of the difference in her visibility and accessibility at the two
schools but as yet has not found a way to regain the spirit of closeness and intimacy evident at Halverston. Part of this rests in the numbers and the physical landscape of the school with its separation of office, classroom and staffroom areas; part of the dilemma rests in Lisa's residual sense of distance with some long-time staff members. At Millside she doesn't know who needs her. She realizes that this lack of knowledge has consequences for principal-staff relationships, especially new teacher relationships in which a novice teacher might lack the confidence to seek out the principal.

My story of Lisa portrays her as a fundamentally caring person whose leadership practises tend to fall into what Young (1994) suggests in her analysis of the literature on Canadian women in administration, are women's ways of administrating. Reflecting on Lisa's stories of practise and her interactions with new teachers we can see that an emphasis on "communication and caring interpersonal relationships" (p.361) and a focus on building a child-centered community are an integral part of her philosophy lived out through practise. Lisa however actively resists any feminist stereotyping believing that these qualities of leadership are found in both men and women. With her wry, self-deprecating sense of humour she wonders how a former Playboy bunny girl (herself) could ever be a serious feminist. She concurs with Young's caution that such emphasis on women's ways may develop into a new orthodoxy which may elide individual differences within women's administrative styles. Lisa, sketched as a character in my story, can be both collaborative and full of outrage! She can be alternately democratic and authoritarian during the same meeting. She can demonstrate tolerance and just as swiftly meet out justice to those not doing the same! To Lisa leadership is leadership, not a gender issue. Lisa believes and lives out the story in her own relationships that men and women "must demonstrate to our children in schools how we solve any problems together. And if we disagree, then let's do it honestly. People are people. Talking the talk is easy, walking the talk is not! My focus is let's be honest about it." (Interview, April 1995)

**Insights about Beginnings**

And what of my teacher/researcher story of Rebecca's beginnings and her relationship with Lisa? What have I learned about new teachers from setting Susan's stories beside those of Rebecca? What can be said about beginnings? What insights have I gained about working with new teachers? In
attempting to respond to such questions, I am reminded of Bateson's explanation of her choice of main characters for her book, *Composing a Life*. "These are not representative lives. They do not constitute a statistical sample - only I hope an interesting one" (Bateson 1990, p.16). Recognizing that my participants and I do not represent a statistical sample which can be generalized to a wider population, our stories are nonetheless instrumental in continuing and extending the dialogue about teacher development issues. In his discussion of generalizability in qualitative research, Eisner (1991) reminds us that "generalizing can be regarded not only as going beyond the information given (Bruner 1973) but also as transferring what has been learned from one situation or task to another" (p.198). Eisner suggests that one important source of learning through generalization is by images constructed from our transaction with empirical qualities which can occur, for example in paintings, melodies, photographs and words. In my work it has been my intent to generate vivid and recognizable images of teaching and administration through the use of words in narrative and metaphorical forms which move away from literal language and interpretations. I invite the readers to draw upon the generalizing capability of these images to relate and connect to their own experience, to consider the images in context as focus points for further discussion and reflection of practise. This reflection may generate insights focussed on intentions for the future or may, on the other hand, allow for a new understanding of past experience through a reconstruction, a reconsideration, of that experience. My intention is to share the insights gained from the research suggesting the ways in which they are meaningful to me while allowing the readers to build their personal connections to the work through comparison and analogy.

Looking back over all the stories which create a composite image of Rebecca's professional knowledge landscape, I am drawn first to the interrelated notions of expectations and cover stories. Rebecca's stories reveal again and again the dilemma of being caught between her imagined projections of life as a teacher and the lived stories of uncertainty, vulnerability and unwelcome surprises! She is surprised by many things: her lack of knowledge about planning, the range of ability in her students, her doubts about her ability to manage her classroom, her physical stamina and her principal's role in her story of her first year. She is surprised by her lack of understanding of the cycles and rhythms of the school year. A landscape she had anticipated to be familiar and positive was in her eyes alternately and erratically bleak, lonely, funny and awesome. To deal with
her surprise, uncertainty and disappointment she creates cover stories to protect her image, projecting an exterior persona of certainty and confidence. The physical and emotional energy needed to sustain these cover stories takes its toll and she becomes physically and mentally exhausted by the Christmas Break.

Susan's pattern of coping with her first term at Millside is similar except that she is isolated from the emotional support systems available to Rebecca. She, however, does not bring with her the stories of expectation that were so much a part of Rebecca's preparation for teaching. Her principal Lisa and other experienced staff assume all is well because of Susan's exterior guise of confidence which hides her fatigue, insecurity and loneliness. Both new teachers begin to gain an inner sense of certainty and belonging only when they feel a sense of "ownership" for their teaching situations. What I mean by ownership involves establishing a grounded place on the professional landscape, a place of safety comfort and familiarity, a knowledgeable place, a place of one's own. For Susan this sense of ownership grew steadily after her survival of the difficult reporting time in November. With Rebecca the seeds of ownership were sown in the director's visit early in the fall term and emerged full blown after the Christmas break when she returned with new certainty to her classroom. This concept of ownership needed to be renewed and reestablished as each new professional opportunity presented itself over the next three years of change and multiple fresh starts. Eliciting these themes of expectation, cover stories and ownership from my work with Rebecca, Lisa, and Susan, invited further consideration of the ways we support and induct novice teachers into our system. I wondered if the cover stories established by new teachers might create barriers to seeing things in new ways, might act as blocks to constructing new stories of self and the task of reconciling conflicting images of schools and teaching. Although the cover stories appear to serve a necessary purpose in allowing the new teacher to function within their protective frameworks, they also may hinder the story of reflective practice on the part of the novice. That is, the effort needed to sustain an externally determined, polished image of certainty may detract from the very real task of living the experience in all its fullness, may prevent the active construction of personal knowledge, may limit the possibility for individual growth and development.

From a Faculty perspective, I can see myself introducing my student teachers to the concept of cover
stories in conjunction with the philosophy of teaching as a continuum of learning in order to foster a greater understanding of the developmental nature of the task of becoming a teacher. Recognizing that there would be many occasions in which cover stories could play a role, for example parent teacher interviews, we might frankly acknowledge their function in composing a first year story. On the other hand I will encourage the students to face the underlying stories, to proactively seek out people within the school community with whom they can comfortably enter into a dialogue about their first experiences of teaching. Reflective teaching is based on inquiry, inquiry of self, inquiry into students, subject matter and pedagogy, inquiry into the social and political context of teaching. Explorations into these areas to reveal the stories beneath the cover stories may be supported and facilitated by significant others in a new teacher's professional landscape. First year teachers and their colleagues in schools can then understand the developmental nature of becoming a teacher. I have come to understand that although there is core knowledge about teaching mastered in the Teacher Education program, that knowledge is general and often quite theoretical in the eyes of the students. In contrast, their first teaching situations, whether in a classroom or as a supply teacher, are specific and grounded in a particular contextual landscape.

Through my teaching I can help new teachers understand that their first story of themselves as teacher may not evolve in accordance with some predetermined script, that the feelings of uncertainty and vulnerability that occur when they begin to teach are common. Somehow we need to make it clear in the educational community that this process of centering in on specific programs and specific children is a complex task requiring the often difficult reconstruction of previous understandings. I believe that this personal reconstruction can be facilitated by others through the creation of a climate of trust, support and acceptance and a modelling of reflective practice. New teachers need to understand above all, that teaching can be construed as a lifelong learning endeavour and that those of us who have more experience are also being thrust into new and challenging situations each year. Learning is not limited to first year. They may benefit from hearing experienced teachers and administrators tell stories of their own rocky beginnings modelling their particular learning experiences. They need to see us experiencing frustration and disappointment when a projected story of student success fails to be written in the way we expected. Closely related to this notion is its corollary, that we as experienced teachers recognize and acknowledge the
expertise and life experience our newest colleagues already possess. By sharing our successes and disappointments we can build more honest and equitable relationships across the educational community.

While our newest teachers are still in the teacher education program we might emphasize the importance of telling stories of experience to uncover their often idealized stories of expectation. By generating and sharing diverse stories about schools, teachers, students and principals, the variety of interpretations may help prepare the students for the multiple stories of schools they will encounter. Rebecca, for example, came away from her faculty experience holding a very narrow view of the principalship, one based on her own experience in conjunction with the faculty teachings. Her anticipated stories of an "all knowing" hierarchical expert were composed in entirely different ways because of her experience with Lisa. Learning from Rebecca, I intend to encourage discussions with my own Faculty classes about change, flexibility and a willingness to embrace novel experiences with an open mind. I intend to emphasize being ready for the unexpected and receptive to new possibilities for practice rather than focusing on professor-defined proven strategies. My message will be that the task of first year is to begin to construct a personal knowledge base for teaching that will continually be adapted and modified over time.

Further, we can do a much better job preparing our students for the erratic course their teaching careers may take in the current climate of financial cutbacks to education. Generating multiple stories of teaching careers interrupted by the political realities of cutbacks and recalls may be more helpful than the traditional story of a planned career lived out comfortably in one board. We can prepare our students to be excellent supply teachers while they wait for the long anticipated turn over in our province's teaching staff by focusing on the development of qualities like adaptability to change, flexibility and "doing beginnings" well. This preparation might include inviting former students, newly qualified teachers who are supply teaching for their first year, to share their stories of substitute teaching. I have facilitated such sessions over the past few years and watching the wide eyes of my students listening intently to the often hilarious adventures (or misadventures) of a new substitute teacher, I have come to believe in the value of these bridging experiences. For a similar purpose I have welcomed principals into my seminar group to facilitate a greater understanding of
the administrative professional landscape. The ensuing dialogue, best held informally over breakfast, often generates new stories of a principal's role in the school and their place in the lives of new teachers. As our triad learned from the research experience, we need to create spaces for conversation that cross the multiple landscapes of teaching. We need to communicate!

Stories of expectation and the related concept of ownership are not limited to new teachers. Recalling the stories told by Lisa and me about beginnings, we can trace similar themes of abruptly changing story lines when we faced challenging new situations. Witness the contrast in Lisa's entry into the school communities of Halverston and Millside. Because of her positive experience at the alternative school she launched into her new school enthusiastically, ready to be an agent of change, unaware of the school story with its undercurrents of resentment and misinformation that preceded her arrival. Invisible barriers were erected by a particular group of staff who for their own sound reasons wished to maintain the school as it always had been, to resist Lisa's invitations for change, to block her collaborative initiatives, her desire for a child-centered curriculum. We heard throughout the thesis the ways in which Lisa readjusted her story of herself as principal leader of Millside by making mistakes, by listening and learning. A common landmark of ownership signified a turning point in the story just as it did in the accounts of Rebecca and Susan. Her comical story of entering the building by herself for the first time at the beginning of year two, marked the first glimmers of ownership on Millside's complex landscape. Accompanying that ownership came a deeper understanding of the school story and how she, as a leading character in that story had a shaping role in its evolution.

In a similar manner, I was confronted by a new story line in my narrative of competent teacher when I faced that grade eight chanting class at Acres School. In the story I call "Cracks in the Metaphor" I learn that not all schools' contexts are the same and that in some educational landscapes newcomers are treated unfairly both by students and other staff. Interestingly, the ownership of that teaching situation came only when I made the decision to leave it and pursue graduate studies in Education. Only then was I able to assess the situation calmly and rationally placing it into its broader contextual framework. My reaction reminds me of Rebecca's dependence on the fact that she could quit at Christmas if necessary. We both needed to know there was a way out even as we
initiated steps towards ownership.

Although Rebecca, Lisa and I observed similarities in the ways we handled new experiences, we also noticed differences based on our novice and experienced teacher status. As Pinnegar (1995) points out, beginners tend to display a concern with surface structures not yet understanding what details are salient. When novice teachers like Rebecca or Susan are confronted by new situations it is often difficult for them to know what is important and what is not because the terrain is so unfamiliar. They have not yet built interpretive frameworks to allow them to travel confidently within the landscape. When faced with new situations in teaching or administration Lisa and I could draw on familiar patterns of past experience. Because we understood at a deeper level of meaning what was happening and what actions were probably necessary to bring the situation into a state of equilibrium, we knew what we did not know. We were able to bring our expertise and previous knowledge of similar scenarios from our personal narratives to bear on the current dilemma. Our understanding was embedded in the internal rhythms of many years of experience in schools. Rebecca, on the other hand, stated on many occasions that she did not know what she didn't know. That subtle yet compelling contrast in the two statements about knowledge separates the new teacher's beginning from an experienced teacher beginning in a new context.

**Connections: First Year / First Thesis**

What can be said about the experience of a teacher's first year in schools and the experience of writing a thesis? As I was gathering the material for the last chapter, I became aware of strong connections between the two experiences. I recalled Pinnegar's (1995) work on (Re-) experiencing beginnings in which she suggests, "In order to really learn, some things simply need to be experienced." Rebecca, for example, entered her first year armed with theories about teaching, formal knowledge codified in her teacher education texts augmented by a limited amount of practice teaching experience. Her first year was a journey through the often bewildering landscape of school life as she tried to make sense of what she knew, to sort out what was important and what was not and attempted to integrate that knowledge with the barrage of new experiences presented to her each day. As she has asserted on many occasions, she has come to realize that the beginning teacher
experience must be lived through to be understood. No one else can tell you how your experience will happen or prescribe how you will feel or construct a meaning of the experience for you. You are the author of your own life experience. I wondered if the rhythms of teaching discovered by Rebecca by living through that first year might be compared with the rhythms of writing a thesis. In much the same way I spent a year of theoretical preparation immersing myself in the literature while embarking on several pilot projects to gain practical experience. Just as in the pre-service program, we heard stories of those students who didn't make it, those who completed course work and a proposal but never submitted the finished thesis. The comprehensive exams loomed with the same fear and trepidation as did the practicum experiences for many student teachers. When I was finally out on my own conducting my research in my own way I was like Rebecca at the doorway of her new classroom eager, expectant, not yet knowing what I didn't know. Like Rebecca I had to live the experience fully in its temporal dimensions to understand what it meant to be engaged in writing a thesis.

It was almost as if the stories I was gathering were like Rebecca's students, individually unique yet needing to be blended into a cohesive group. How could I attend to the detail and nuance in each story and still retain a sense of the whole? How could I plan for the end when I had no idea what the end might be? Just as Rebecca had no internal sense of the rhythms of the school year I had no sense of the process of actually writing a narrative thesis. Guidelines and mentors were invaluable for setting the stage and elaborating the various components of the task but the real work was mine. Because Rebecca's beginning was open to public scrutiny with her journey observed by students, parents, peers or administrators, her role was infinitely more difficult. She was in a sense, on stage from day one, whereas the thesis work could take place in the wings, could be rehearsed backstage until the performance was perfected.

Reflecting on the Research

What can be said about the research process itself? How did the triad configuration add to our understanding of the professional landscapes of the new teacher, an experienced teacher/researcher and their administrator? To explore the answers to that question I begin by reconstructing the story
of the research relationships focussing on the growth of the trust, mutual respect and sense of equality evident at the conclusion of our two-year investigation.

In deciding to work with me, both Lisa and Rebecca took a risk, a tentative step into unknown territory. Although we knew each other professionally and felt an intuitive sense of compatibility with each others personalities and ways of communicating, we knew little of each other's personal lives or past professional experience and none of us could have anticipated where our stories of experience would lead. I think that our common, fundamental, positive attitude towards life and more particularly, towards schools and the people within them, provided a foundation for our relationship. We shared a background of common experience at Halverston where Lisa had been Rebecca's first principal, Rebecca had been my son's grade two teacher and I had been Rebecca's Induction resource person. Those positive, first, encounters in which we recognized each other's belief in children and the importance of teacher student relationships enabled us to engage in the risk taking of collaborative inquiry. The initial webs of connection were strengthened by our association as teaching colleagues and research partners at Millside. There is no question in my mind that had those beginning interactions been ambiguous or negative between any combination of the triad members, the first level of trust could not have been established. The research design necessitated a previous relationship between the novice teacher and the principal but did not specify former experience with the researcher. In this case I feel strongly that our shared background contributed to the ease with which the first stories were exchanged and the research rapport established. Because I was known and I believe, trusted, by the participants, we established our particular group dynamic quickly, skipping over those awkward first steps of personal relationship to focus on the evolving research relationship. Through the exchange of stories we were invited to enter into each others professional landscapes in order to define our own. Often, we knew the storied landscape well and had shared connections of time and place with the narrator of the story. These stories were understood as contextually authentic as the listener heard the children's voices, visualized the details of the setting or smelled the characteristic odour of a familiar building. We had been characters in some of these stories yet now the story was told in a way strange and unfamiliar, from a different vantage point, in another voice.
The triad sessions were like an oasis at the end of the day. We have, at different times, described our sessions as a sounding board, a knowledge community (Craig 1992), a calm retreat and a professional breathing space. Our usual meeting place was Lisa's office although we also met at various times in our homes and at restaurants. Typically, I would preface each session by recapping the content and flow of ideas from the previous session either orally or as a written response. Often these summaries would precipitate further discussion; at other times I would initiate an exploration into new areas while other sessions were predicated on current issues of interest introduced by Lisa or Rebecca. As I described in some detail in chapter two, I became aware of a subtle interchangeable leadership within each session, some interviews being clearly Lisa's, others dominated by Rebecca's accounts and others being directed in shape and form by my questions.

The first individual interviews I held with Lisa and Rebecca prior to the triad meetings yielded diverse stories from their past experience, compelling stories which surprised me with their frankness and intensity. I was struck by how much could be learned and tentatively understood about a person in a few hours of focussed one on one conversation. (If this simple yet profound measure could be integrated into our school curriculum, into our professional development initiatives, what beneficial results might occur?) The beginning triad interviews were invigorating and exhausting for me as I attempted to balance my familiar teacher/participant voice and my novice researcher presence. Knowing when to probe, knowing when to be a silent listener, knowing when it was appropriate to jump in (reverting to my usual style! ) became an integral part of my learning process. Sometimes when I read the transcripts I was annoyed and frustrated at my interruptions of others, yet as I reflected on the sessions as a whole, I recognized we were all interjecting, finishing each other's sentences, spinning one idea off another in often erratic, yet comprehensible patterns. The informal, natural flow of conversation with all its transgressions, loops and spirals became an identifying signature of our collaborative time together.

Through her honest, open and self disclosing speech patterns, Lisa was instrumental in setting the climate of equality for our conversations. In terms of professional status she was not our equal but our administrator and evaluator. In terms of the research triad she presented herself as a fellow teacher holding a different job on the professional knowledge landscape, a principal/teacher who
was genuinely interested in discovering more about herself and others within the school community. The following comment, spoken with humour early in the research reveals her attitude. "I'm just the principal. What do I know? You're the ones who are doing the really important work." Directly and indirectly Lisa divulged a great deal of information to us about her role as an administrator through her conversations and stories. She openly revealed her thoughts and feelings about both professional and personal issues, keeping ethics and confidentiality firmly in mind. Both Rebecca and I felt that we were, at times, privy to information not known by other staff and we also tried to be sensitive to issues of confidentiality. Lisa's modelling of professional equality fostered an atmosphere of trust and respect among the three of us. Her deliberate shift from the traditional hierarchy of principal/teacher status reminded me once again of Bateson's work describing how women compose their lives through relationship. Bateson argues that women often create relationships that are "asymmetrical" in terms of knowledge or experience but at the same time are "symmetrical" in the ways they interact with one another through collaboration and "mutual discovery", enriched by "the many dimensions of difference" (Bateson 1990, p.102). Viewing our triad from Bateson's perspective, I see our relationship as asymmetrical in terms of our place on the landscape but symmetrical in our collaborative endeavour to understand those landscapes.

The asymmetrical quality of the relationship was more evident in the beginning when Lisa and I tended to dominate the first conversations unless Rebecca was telling a specific story. Rebecca listened a lot and asked questions, particularly to clarify her knowledge of system or policy issues. By our last session I became aware of subtle shifts in the group process as Rebecca's voice is clearly a major portion of the final transcript. She has much to say about her reflections on her professional beginnings and she says it in a newly assertive manner. Rebecca's voice, now speaking from four years of experience, is heard strongly in her candid letter to Lisa (p.212). Although our original intention was to come together as a group of equals, there existed nonetheless some natural experiential and hierarchical barriers. By the end of the research many of those barriers had dissolved through the increased knowledge we gained about each other and the contexts within which we worked. Having shared the intense personal stories of experience which have irrevocably shaped our professional lives, we can never again see the other person in the same light. We cannot fix the person firmly in one professional landscape or another. Stories sweep away illusions. Stories build
life-filled characters rather than designate roles. Lisa is not just a principal. Rebecca is not cast only in the role of the novice teacher. I am more than just a teacher four years away from retirement. We are people, with passions and foibles, certainties and misgivings, successes and failures. We have all become an integral part of each others stories, characters both in the stories of the past and present and the yet unwritten stories that will carry us into the future. The triad structure of this collaborative inquiry offered and provided a space for the creation of an egalitarian relationship which was characterized by trust, respect, humour and a growing sense of equality.

In order to turn the story of our relationship and view it from another perspective I thought about possible areas of tension, conflict or misunderstanding. Because we were not engaged in collaborative joint work that related directly to our classroom or office lives, we never infringed on what might be termed professional territory. Although we observed each other carrying out various aspects of our jobs and were characters in commonly experienced Millside stories, our primary task was collaborative reflection through talking and writing about our experience. There were few opportunities for conflict to arise because the nature of our task was centred in reflection rather than in action. When opinions differed it was a cause for genuine interest and curiosity as to the reasons that explained the varying perspectives. We recognized that identifying and trying to understand the differences in our individual landscapes was in effect the purpose of our relationship. What did happen was a subtle shift in our notions of each other.

The triad relationship can be compared on one level with the evolving relationship of husband and wife, partners or roommates, who begin with a certain image or story of the other. In living out the relationship we give up the original stories and ideal images we first held, replacing them with new stories that describe the present experience. I think each of us gave up idealized stories of the other and forged new relationships that were more forgiving of human weaknesses while celebrating the strengths of otherness. Friedman, (1983) in his discussion of Martin Buber's explorations of relationships, describes a similar process he calls the "confirmation of otherness." I was intrigued by the way in which his explanation of existential trust resonated with the development of relationship within our triad.
The person of existential trust is able to accept the unique which is present in each new situation, despite all resemblance to the past. Real presentness means presence---being open to what the present brings by bringing oneself to the present allowing the future to come as it comes rather than attempting to turn it into a predictable replica of the past. The life of dialogue realizes the unity of the contraries in meeting others and in holding one's ground when one meets them. Real uncurtailed personal existence begins not when one says to the other, 'I am you', but when one says, 'I accept you as you are in your otherness and uniqueness'. (p.18)

Friedman's description reflects my understanding of what happened within our triad. Through our exchange of stories of experience we were able to bring the past into the present, to bring ourselves to a greater understanding of our own "presence" and the present experience of the other. Through dialogue we discovered that our professional landscapes were similar yet different, experiencing in a very tangible sense the "unity of the contraries." The trust that grew manifested itself in a sense of confidentiality about the stories we were sharing. There was a tacit agreement that the stories, like gifts, would be carefully handled and not shared with others unless permission was given. In the triad sessions there existed a trust which allowed us to confirm our otherness by telling stories not only of success, constructed to build our cover stories of professionalism but stories, humorous and poignant, telling of failure and disappointment.

An example of asymmetry/symmetry and a recognition of "otherness" emerged from the changed relationship over time between Lisa and me. From the beginning of our association back in 1990/91 when my son Matthew was in grade one, I had always found Lisa to be warm, professional and friendly. As the new teacher induction officer the next year, I discovered in Lisa a firm supporter for the program. She, unlike some administrators, encouraged her staff to participate and was always ready to pass along positive feedback about the initiatives I was promoting. When all the new teachers were laid off at the end of that year she was sensitive not only to the affected teachers but also to my personal disappointment in losing a program and a challenging career change. The next year, working in a job sharing position at the Alternative intermediate school associated with Halverston, confirmed my initial story of Lisa as a caring, compassionate school leader. Our year was fraught with many challenging intermediate students and parents who were disillusioned with the system and for whom the alternative school was a last resort. Since it was just Lisa's second year
as an intermediate principal and I was the most experienced teacher on staff, she began to confer
with me on many student, parent and staff development issues. I think that my year as a system wide
resource person and my university teaching background allowed me to bring a different perspective
to these discussions and I sensed that my contributions were valued. Perhaps it was also the
coincidence of similar (middle) age encroaching on our perceptions of ourselves as professionals
that drew us together!

Over the two years of active research at Millside this sounding board quality has continued and
increased within our relationship. There have been frequent occasions when Lisa has ushered me into
her office and expressed her fury or indignation about a troubling situation, utilizing my researcher's
role to vent some anger she could not display publicly. At other times she has simply asked for
advice or talked through complex problems always bringing the purpose of her disclosures back to
the research agenda believing that I should know and understand the inside stories of the
principalship. In a staff meeting a glance across the room or a raised eyebrow is a landmark of
shared understanding that bridges the hierarchy. Unlike most other staff members, I have had the
opportunity to discover "the figure under the carpet," to catch a glimpse of the private mythology
which lies beneath the public persona (Edel, 1984). I believe our open communication may be
further enhanced by my unique professional landscape which is shaped in part by my husband's
position as a principal in the same system. Although I am not in a position of added responsibility,
I understand, in a vicarious sense, the joys and frustrations of the job through my husband's
experience. Because we talk about our work, I am aware of the inner workings of system wide
politics that constrain our endeavours as teachers and administrators, aware of the hours of personal
time that preface a staff development activity or changes in school staffing, aware of the stress
involved in difficult decision making. Knowing that I am immersed in this out-of-classroom
background probably allows Lisa to be as honest and frank with me as she is. Because I am privy
to much inside information does not however always mean I routinely agree with Lisa's expression
of her philosophy in practise. The nigglng doubts I may have are part of the natural tensions of any
relationship and are more than offset by my respect for her integrity and passion for her work.
Sometimes I question a decision and we'll talk. Other times it doesn't seem important.
I have laughingly told Lisa that I know more about her than I ever wanted to know! One day last spring when I was very involved with the writing, Lisa poked her head out of the office door to say "Where have you been? I haven't seen you for days." Confused for a moment I responded, "Don't be silly. I've been in to see you every day!" Suddenly I realized that Lisa and Rebecca had been living in my head for weeks, carrying on an imaginary continuous dialogue and that's where I had been talking to her. The mental images and voices crowding my brain were more real than the physical presence! Humour aside, I have become aware of the research risks entailed by our close relationship. Because one of the purposes of the triad format was to reveal a more personal image of the principalship than is usually depicted in leadership research. I was determined to capture my sense of Lisa as a very real person not just a role. Recalling my pre-research task of determining my relationship to administration in general I was clearly sympathetic to the principal's task of running a school due largely to the influence of my father, my husband and several close friends who have chosen administration. My friendship with Lisa, coupled with this predisposition for administrative support and understanding, may have invited a research relationship biased towards Lisa's point of view. I have, however, attempted to maintain the researcher third person voice when reflecting on and analyzing our stories. Establishing trust and rapport while keeping a distance becomes a delicate balance in narrative inquiry. If I have achieved that balance, the researcher voice will have shared the text in equal measure with the voices of the participants.

My research relationship with Rebecca has been less intimate and thus less problematic due to her leaving the school at the end of January 1995 for her maternity leave. Her stories, like Lisa's continued to take on their own presence in my head as I was writing. Because she was not available for immediate feedback there were natural delays, however, in the writing and responding process. We worked around the situation effectively, arranging times to meet with Rebecca outside of the school context for the next year and a half to complete the research project. A quick phone call would often help to clarify an ambiguous reference as I worked from the transcripts. If Rebecca had been at the school longer I would have initiated opportunities for her to visit my classroom to balance the asymmetrical relationship of me observing her teach without inviting her to do likewise. In retrospect I believe this exchange would not only have enhanced Rebecca's understanding of my Millside stories but would have given credence to our desire for a relationship between equals.
Similarly, if Rebecca and I had officially job-shadowed Lisa for a day or two, absorbing firsthand the rhythms of her administrative day, perhaps her stories would have been more clearly understood in a broader educational context. Reflections such as these have become a significant part of the research process, not in a negative sense but rather as positive considerations for future interactive narratives. One of the joys of narrative research lies in its ability to spawn new possibilities for inquiry emerging from the text.

**Insights about Story and Landscape**

The triad relationship allowed access into the storied landscape of the other and facilitated our coming to understand more fully the various professional contexts within which we worked. Many stories told of situations unfamiliar to the other triad members and as we listened to and read the stories we could vicariously experience their meanings through the narrator's interpretations. We learned about our individual professional knowledge landscapes while exchanging stories from our separate pasts. Of greater significance to this study, many stories were shared of the same event, experienced simultaneously by the others within the common landscape of a particular school or time frame. By exploring our recollections of the same events and discovering that our stories of them were often substantially different, we reached new levels of understanding about the contexts of our teaching. Our first interactions at Halverston before Rebecca was hired, Rebecca's first year stories in which Lisa and I and my son were characters, the lay off stories, the cover stories, the first staff meeting at Millside, lice, the second year Millside stories, with Susan bringing another perspective on the new teacher administrator relationship, all of these events are told in multiple ways with alternating narrators, from different locations on the professional knowledge landscape. This collection of stories forms the heart of the thesis.

We have learned that although we can physically occupy the same place and time, our individual landscapes are unique, constructed through our interactions with the people, places, objects and ideas which comprise the knowledge landscape. Although a school can be said to have an evolving landscape of its own with a unique set of historical stories forming its character, the people who dwell within that landscape reflect their singular interpretations and continuation of the school
stories as they create the specific professional landscape they call their own. Creating a place on the knowledge landscape is an ongoing endeavour in collaboration with those who inhabit the landscape. Each person, however, experiences the landscape differently. No one can tell you how your landscape will be shaped or how you will shape the landscape but as we learned from the research, you can understand how landscapes share similarities and differences. By setting the triad stories in relationship we have come to see how beginnings and endings on any landscape can engender feelings of uncertainty, vulnerability and instability as we establish or change our positions. Shock preceded the hasty rewriting of my competent teacher story as I was extending my professional knowledge landscape at Acres School. Lisa's entry to Halverston was a joyous event in contrast to the cool reception she received at Millside where her story of herself as a collaborative administrator did not fit with the staff's story of the school. Rebecca's tenuous beginnings at Halverston prompted a substantial reconstruction of her successful teacher story which was again rewritten at Millside. We have come to understand how feelings of ownership are linked with the establishment of place on a new landscape. We have come to see and understand our experience as a series of professional landscapes each to be explored as we move through our careers.

Through our stories we have come to understand how experience counts in our ability to tap into the deeply internalized rhythms of teaching and schools in order to cope with our setbacks and unmet expectations with the certainty of repeated experience. That is, Lisa and I dealt with our beginnings on new landscapes in ways different from Rebecca or Susan. We could project into a future which, because of our pasts, assumed a recognizable, if undefined shape. Like the metaphorical train ride cited in the introduction of this chapter, experienced teachers moving through the landscape recognize "that mountain or that valley" while the new teacher is being propelled by the train through a landscape which is virtually unrecognizable. While acknowledging a new teacher's innate capabilities and valuable life experience it is important to remember that they see and comprehend the landscape of teaching in ways qualitatively different from one who has been through the first year experience. Conversations which bridge professional landscapes can foster communication between new teachers and others in the school and help to establish exactly where and how a new teacher may need support. Perhaps by focussing on the positive concept of qualitatively different landscapes rather than the negative idea of identifying and correcting deficits associated with new
teachers, we can celebrate and honour the notion of teaching as a continuum of experience. Perhaps by being aware of the qualitatively different landscapes of principals and teachers rather than emphasizing bureaucratic hierarchical separation we can celebrate and honour new ways of working together in schools for the needs of our students. In our research triad we learned that growth and change are continuous whether one is an administrator, a novice, or a thirty-year veteran. Simply by taking the time and space to engage in conversations of practice which crossed professional landscapes we enhanced our knowledge of other contexts of teaching within our schools. That knowledge, that new awareness can lead to enriched professional relationships based on empathy and understanding, an understanding that each person in the school community has their own set of stories waiting to be told.

The terrains of our various landscapes were made visible and comprehensible through the process of narrative inquiry which depends on and celebrates story as a mode of knowing. I have come to understand how story is inherent in our "keeping the experience" (Six Degrees of Separation, Chapter Two) constructing and reconstructing our fleeting experiences as meaningful experience and making it recognizable to others. Telling and writing our stories of experience is a viable way of making public what it is that we feel we know about our lives as teachers. By working with the individual stories, by contextualizing them within their wider social/political or personal background milieu, by setting them within the broader storied landscape of schools, I have in effect "turned" the stories as if turning a lump of clay in my hands to discover what forms of possibility lie waiting to emerge. By examining the stories from different perspectives we were constantly engaged in a process of reconstructing or restorying our experience with a wider lens, having the remarkable experience of seeing ourselves more clearly through the eyes of another. Knowing and understanding our professional knowledge landscapes and those of the other was made possible through the stories we told and retold in our own voices as teachers, researchers and administrators. I wanted those voices to ring clear, authentic and strong within the narrative inquiry. I wanted the stories to stand by themselves aesthetically, to represent in the best ways possible through language, the experience of being a teacher. It is my hope that our stories will evoke in readers the aesthetic qualities of the experience my colleagues and I seek to describe and provide through plausible interpretations, recognizable analogy and a sense of vicarious presence an authentic glimpse of
the lives of three ordinary teachers engaged in the day-to-day task of living in schools.

Having validated my belief in story as a viable and significant research methodology, I have also extended the storying concept into the everyday life of teaching at the university and my school. I am more comfortable using stories in teaching now, inviting the narratives of my intermediate students to become an important way in which they can make sense of their adolescent worlds and share their diverse cultural backgrounds. I share stories of myself so that they can begin to see me as a persona who, like them, is engaged in the challenging and exciting process of writing a life. I am consciously trying to move from being a presenter to a facilitator of learning through the inclusion of narrative in the classroom.

A recent example from my university class connected with the writing of this chapter. Because research on student teaching has directed our attention to the influence of previous educational experience, what Lortie (1975) calls "an apprenticeship of observation," I invited my Art specialist students to reflect back on positive and negative experiences from their primary, intermediate and high school days. I wanted them to think carefully about their backgrounds in and assumptions about art education as a prerequisite to framing their current orientations as student teachers. In triads they shared their stories, awkwardly and tentatively at first. They were not expecting this kind of first class. When they came together as a large group, one young woman haltingly told her story of having a prized piece of art work criticized and ridiculed publicly by her grade six teacher. She spoke of her humiliation and shame and how she didn't draw again for five years. She refused to participate in her intermediate art classes and it was not until grade eleven, when a caring teacher caught a glimpse of her private sketch book in a History class and encouraged her to try again, that she blossomed as the talented artist she has become. The class heard the bitterness in her voice change to tears as she voiced the story for the first time and in telling it, realized how close she had come to not being there in the teacher education program majoring in Art. As I watched the intent faces of her fellow students and listened to their thoughtful responses to her account, I recognized again the impact of sharing and reevaluating personal experience as a powerful teaching and learning strategy. Both the listener and the teller learn through stories, in this case how the careless throwaway words of a teacher can influence the direction of a person's life. This student's story
influenced and touched her peers far more than a lecture from me about the importance of positive feedback in art class.

Research as Professional Development

Another significant outcome of the research was its function as a worthwhile and exciting professional development endeavour. At the conclusion of her collaborative teacher/consultant study, Beattie (1995) describes coming to "new understandings of the importance and value of the creation of a literature of teacher stories and stories of teacher development, where through the telling of our stories we can create landscapes for ourselves and our colleagues to live in" (p.137). When I revisited Beattie's work while I was designing this last chapter I recalled the initial impact those words had made at the beginning of the writing. I knew that I wanted to contribute to this body of literature by recording our teacher administrator stories and exploring our professional relationships as we travelled through each other's landscapes. When this project began the triad had talked about the concept of research as professional development. Both Lisa and Rebecca became involved in the research believing that they would learn more about not only the process of narrative inquiry but about themselves in relation to others within the school community. The way they felt about the narrative research in terms of a learning experience can best be described by listening in on a conversation held in April 1996 at the concluding triad session.

Discovering a Voice: The Retelling of Stories

Rebecca and Lisa were both able to write up some of their own material for presentation in the thesis. As they did so they discovered new ways of saying what they felt and experienced. I present the following conversation as it was taped and transcribed in April 1996 to illustrate what the writing process meant first for Rebecca.

Rebecca: Rewriting makes you rethink. When I write (the story) the feelings come right back to the surface. With oral language the details can disappear. It's like a process. If you're writing by hand or speaking, a flashing thought can disappear. Writing on a computer captures the speed of
thinking. I get it down quickly on the computer and expand on it later.

Fran: How does it feel looking at the stories in which you were a main character?

Rebecca: It feels alright. I guess I don't often allow myself to see the positive side to a story when I tell it. If it all comes in a context with all the other negative things, you can't see the positives in a story usually. Like the Mr. Director story.

Fran: So the process of writing it down made you look at constructing the story in a different way.

Rebecca: Yes. When you're telling the story you just end it. When you're writing you have to figure out, where did this end? What happened? Where did he go and why? When I tried to figure it out I discovered how I talked, how I made sense of it. Let me explain... I found another journal, the one from the summer after you first asked me to be in the project. The language of the director, that is recorded there...... is different than I recalled.

Fran: Is the recollection of the actual words important? What's important in memory?

Rebecca: Which is real? Three possible sentences about having your own classroom and being a teacher. The words in my journal? the spoken words? or the recalled words?

Lisa: We remember how we're treated.

R. and F. Definitely.

Lisa: Think of the links to children. What did they learn in Grade3, Grade 8? They probably can't recall but they remember how they were treated. I guess the remembering is more feelings and emotions as opposed to exact quotes.

Fran: Sometimes we remember word for word........
Rebecca: There are some memories that dig backwards. Emotions so strong that they bring words back to mind.

Fran: Our minds can fill in the gaps. Often the feeling is there first and then we say, "This is what I think happened."

This excerpt illustrates the interplay of professional and personal dialogue which characterized our exchanges and cast the research in its professional development milieu. It describes the significance for Rebecca of participating in the writing process; how she was able to restructure her stories in a more positive light through the act of composing on a computer. She cites the Mr. Director story found in Chapter Four in which, we recall, she realizes for the first time that the "right stuff is happening in her classroom." By the end of the research she has come to recognize that the first telling of a story is not the story she must live out, that indeed there are many interpretive possibilities. As a triad we touch on the salience of memory in our accounts and in doing so continue the dialogue central to narrativists regarding the epistemological status of memory claims. It appears to me that Rebecca has an innate sense of the constructed quality of memory as she ponders which set of words from her director are "real". In a fundamental way she understands that it doesn't really matter if the exact words are recorded accurately. What does matter is her emotional and intellectual response to the event and how the expressive act of "figuring it out" and writing the story prompted her to think about her teaching situation in a different way, a way of inherent possibility. As Rebecca states so eloquently, "There are some memories that dig backwards... emotions so strong they bring words back to mind."

Metaphorical language became a powerful vehicle for professional development during our sessions as we often constructed metaphors collaboratively building on the ideas of the other as we created new ways of considering familiar situations. We were intrigued by the number of times we reverted to analogy or metaphor to communicate our ideas. Were we consciously setting aside our professional objective educational language to get at the heart of some important issues? The abundance of metaphor in the stories and transcripts reified the beliefs of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) who claim that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought
and action... human thought processes are largely metaphorical" (p.3,6). One striking example comes to mind from our last session. When Rebecca spoke about her first year teaching she described the feeling of isolation, of not knowing the way, yet moving inexorably along the track. "You're on the train and you don't know where you're going."

Excitedly, Lisa picked up this strand of thought and connected it to landscapes. "An experienced teacher moving through the landscape recognizes that mountain or that valley but you, as the new teacher are on the train, staring out the window and not recognizing anything!"

Rebecca agreed. "Right. An experienced teacher could say, 'We've been there. We've seen that.' They could place it in the landscape."

Lisa continued,"The interesting thing is if you're always on the same route you might not notice the different kinds of trees. They're so familiar you don't see them. So in the same way, teaching in the same class, the same grade, year after year, you could be just going through the motions of the program."

I could see where Lisa was going: "I think there are some teachers who need to foresee what is at the next stop. They need that security."

Lisa concluded,"Well, that's where the principal needs to be a conductor and put the train on a different track. Move people, move rooms, move grades."

This exchange during our last session illustrates the kind of dialogue that characterized our triad discussions. It shows how Lisa and Rebecca were constantly examining the idea of teacher development in ways meaningful to them. When Rebecca first thought about the train analogy, she saw the new teacher as deficient, lacking in the ability to recognize the elements of landscape familiar to others more experienced. When Lisa pointed out that the perception of the repeat traveler (the experienced teacher) might be dulled by endless journeys, Rebecca was able to consider her novice status in a more positive way. Because she was new she could possibly see and understand
things that her more experienced colleagues had lost the capacity to perceive. Lisa's adamant stand on change being a positive thrust for teacher development was once again impressed upon Rebecca through the train conductor metaphor.

As I thought about the notion of research as professional development I was drawn back to Eisner's (1991) discussion of educational criticism and the principalship. He believes that because of their isolated position in schools, principals as well as teachers could benefit from feedback that is both supportive and critical. By critical he means the kind of criticism that leads to growth and constructive, rather than destructive, results. Eisner suggests: "Without a critical assessment there is no growth, without support there is no acceptance" (p.116). Lisa often commented on the valuable feedback she received directly from our conversations or indirectly through our exchange of stories. As the leader of the school she recognized the importance of our teacher perceptions of her interactions within the school community and how her intended philosophy, her story of self, was being lived out or not lived out through specific practice. For Lisa the triad configuration provided an alternate way to engage in professional development meaningful to her and thus ultimately to the teachers and students for whom she is responsible.

In this last chapter I have drawn together the themes which constitute the heart of the narrative inquiry. I have described the landmarks which define the individual professional knowledge landscapes of three teachers who came together in a research endeavour in order to learn more about the new teacher administrator relationship and in doing so learned more about their own practice. I began the thesis with a story of the first triad session in September of 1994, a story called simply Beginnings. By way of closing the circle of continuity, I end the thesis with a companion piece that describes our last session in April of 1996.

Continuation

The three of us sat comfortably in the booth at the Italian restaurant sipping white wine and reading each other's writing. It was April of 1996 and the last official session of our collaborative research endeavour. We were mentally and emotionally shifting gears, nudging sick babies, difficult students
and administrative agendas into the background for a few hours of adult talk and reflection. As I watched Lisa and Rebecca read the latest chapters of the thesis and exchange letters of response to each other, I was drawn back to our first meeting in September 1994, remembering our exchange of stories as a fledgling research triad. I recalled Weber's words, "that like all stories freely shared, the short stories told to me are gifts." (Weber, 1992, p.94). I visualized each story told over the twenty-month period as a package to be carefully unwrapped from its coverings of ribbon and paper representing the layers of contextual meaning, enveloping each account. As givers and receivers of these gifts of stories we had all become aware of the potential for growth and the parallel potential for misunderstanding the exchange of stories created. We sensed that growth occurred when new realizations were discovered in the stories' unravelling. Growth occurred when past experiences were put into perspective, set into a context of social, personal and historical meaning through our mutual discussions and interpretive writings. We could see growth occurring as we formulated intentions for the future based on our new understandings. On the other hand we could see the potential for misunderstanding that existed when we listened superficially, listened only from our own position on the landscape instead of trying to create bridges of communication, to view the world from the perspective of another. We could see the potential for misunderstanding when we kept people fixed in their roles by reifying rather than "turning" their stories.

As we took away the final layers of wrapping from our stories that evening we recognized that as visitors in each other's worlds we had learned much about each other's professional knowledge landscapes. Rebecca and Lisa shared the changes in their understandings about principals and new teachers. Our conversation gravitated towards what the research process had meant for each of us and how we understood research as professional development in a different more complex way. The warmth and intensity of the conversation renewed our belief in finding time and spaces for professional personal dialogue about our life and work. As I thought back to our first meeting and set it in memory beside our Italian dinner, I was aware of a new sense of unspoken equality between us. When we began, we were two teachers at different points on the professional continuum, engaging in collaborative research with our principal. This night there seemed to be a subtle change as we interacted as colleagues each newly respectful of the other's place on the educational landscape. Rebecca, for example, seemed more vocal within the triad, stating her ideas confidently.
with a growing sense of her place and role as a teacher. Lisa listened carefully to our teacher interpretations, trying to ground herself in a classroom perspective. I listened to both of them intently with respect and affection, feeling a sense of satisfaction in what we had accomplished mixed with a sense of loss, knowing that this part of our relationship was ending. As the evening drew to a close I realized that the closure to the research was entirely arbitrary. Our stories would continue be told and retold. We were revising our stories even as we gathered up our belongings, leaving the restaurant, reflecting on our latest dinner conversation and thinking about the future.
References


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