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Re-professionalizing teachers: earning a seat and a voice at the table

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RE-PROFESSIONALIZING TEACHERS: EARNING A SEAT AND A VOICE AT THE TABLE

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by
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SIGNATURE PAGE

I hereby affirm that the following project meets the high academic standards for original scholarship and creative work established by my discipline, college, and the Graduate College of Marshall University. With my signature, I approve the manuscript for publication.

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the perceptions of teachers, the current culture of teaching, and ways to regain influence within the teaching profession. Some scholarly researchers have begun to analyze and critique this current culture of deprofessionalization of teachers (Barantovich, 2006; Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004; Bolton and Muzio, 2008; Boote, 2006; Duncan, 2009; Goldstein, 2014; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Ingersoll and Perda, 2012; Ingersoll and Perda, 2008, Kuhn, 2014; Labaree, 1992; Lee, 1995; Lortie, 1975; Milner, 2013; Ravitch, 2011; Rooney, 2015; Sachs, 2001; Wills and Haymore Sandholtz, 2009). Very little is known, however, about how teachers themselves are experiencing this phenomenon of deprofessionalization in their daily work lives. This qualitative study featured the authentic voice of seven public school teachers in West Virginia, who, during a ten-week period, responded to five open-ended questions. In the framework of Photovoice, a Participatory Action Research method that employs image and narrative to involve participants in data collection and interpretation, each participant submitted three images and captions per prompt and attended two focus group sessions. Findings indicated: Teachers are disempowered and disheartened; parents and teachers are disillusioned equally with their relations; opinions of teacher quality are deprecated; and rates of teacher burnout are pronounced. Practices connected to the study offered examples of participatory methods associated with Photovoice as well as critical reflection and dialogue to stimulate collaboration, reflection, understanding, and encouragement among teachers who seek a professional identity. In essence, the emergent themes identified in the study indicate that teachers negotiate themselves into an identity that is based upon forces from outside

of the profession that deprofessionalize in regard to construction of educational policy, instructional design, and professional identity.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING THE PROBLEM

In the United States, teaching has been an embattled profession for centuries, as evidenced by public attacks from many policymakers, business leaders, parent groups, and society at large. Within the last 30 years, however, those attacks have escalated and, it seems, become a permanent aspect of the profession. The teaching profession today is confronted with prescribed standards, dictated curricula, and pre-packaged units and lessons that presume users are not well trained teaching professionals. Accountability and merit pay schemes place the responsibility for learning squarely on the shoulders of teachers, shifting it away from students, parents, communities, and the larger society. Their autonomy under attack and their expertise disregarded, today's teachers confront a systematic deprofessionalization, which is diminishing their abilities to reach the broad range of learners in their classrooms, to democratically structure the aims and fundamentals of their profession, and to define and regulate their profession in ways that are taken for granted in other professions.

Although teachers have long been alternately adored and condemned, contemporary perceptions of both teachers and teaching are becoming increasingly negative. Rhetoric around teacher incompetence is at an all-time high, and teacher morale is at an all-time low. Both scholarly research and the popular press report that teachers are incompetent (Corcoran, Evans and Schwab, 2004; Goldstein, 2014; Gonen, 2012; Greenhouse and Dillion, 2010; Ingersoll and May, 2011a; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Ingersoll, Merrill, and Stuckey, 2014; Maxwell, 2010; Song, 2010); both also report that teacher morale is at all-time low (Byrd-Blake, Afolayan, Hunt, Fabunmi, Pryor, and Leander, 2010; Freedberg, 2013; Ingersoll, 2002; Ingersoll and Merrill,

2012; Johnson, Berg, and Donaldson, 2005; Kuhn, 2014; Labrana, 2007; Luekens, Lyter, and Fox, 2004; Lynch, 2014; Sawchuck, 2012; MetLife, 2013, 2012).

Many of the studies and surveys that examine how teachers themselves think of their profession link the current crisis to a trend of deprofessionalization, evidence for which can be found in the rise of "teacher proof" curricula; the conflation of test scores with learning and accompanying pressure to teach to the test; current alternative certification movements that disregard or denigrate teacher education; and moves to privatize schools and sever the link between experience and compensation. Some scholars and teacher advocates have begun to analyze and critique this current culture of deprofessionalization (Barantovich, 2006; Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004; Bolton and Muzio, 2008; Boote, 2006; Duncan, 2009; Goldstein, 2014; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Ingersoll and Perda, 2012; Ingersoll and Perda, 2008; Kuhn, 2014; Labaree, 1992; Lee, 1995; Lortie, 1975; Milner, 2013; Ravitch, 2011; Rooney, 2015; Sachs, 2001; Wills and Haymore Sandholtz, 2009). Very little is known, however, about how teachers themselves experience this phenomenon. It is my belief that teachers know more about how and why they are deprofessionalized than anyone else; ironically, as is often the case with this profession, they are rarely given the opportunity to contribute their ideas and expertise. This dissertation examines how seven currently employed teachers are experiencing the contemporary culture of deprofessionalization. Using visual and narrative methods, participants explore the many facets of their teacher identities, document the manifestations and effects of deprofessionalization in their daily work lives, and propose possible ways for teachers to regain some measure of influence and control in their profession.

Teaching: A Profession in Crisis

In the United States, the teaching profession is in a state of crisis. Forty percent of those

who obtain undergraduate degrees in teaching never enter a classroom at all (Riggs, 2013). Of those who do take up teaching, nearly 16 percent leave every year (Riggs, 2013). In fact, turnover among teachers is higher than many other professions, with anywhere from 40 to 50 percent of teachers departing the profession entirely within the first five years (Goldstein, 2014; Ingersoll and May, 2011b; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Ingersoll, et al., 2014; Miller, 2006; Riggs, 2013).

Today's teachers are regularly denigrated and demonized. Recent examples of such treatment include a kind of public shaming, where standardized test scores and school data by teacher name are posted in newspapers, without any further information about the challenges a particular teacher or her students might face. Public attacks on educators and their unions by politicians such as Governor Chris Christie during the campaign and Republican National Convention, Governor John Kasich during his campaign for President of the United States, or President Barack Obama during his 2015 State of the Union Address are increasingly the norm (Christie, 2012; Isherwood, 2013; LoBianco, 2015; Obama, 2015; Strauss, 2016). US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, who served in that position from 2009 to 2016, praised Hurricane Katrina for "wiping out" bad teachers in Louisiana (Anderson, 2010). The rapid increase of alternative teaching programs in state legislatures is usually couched in terms of shortages but is often framed by the idea that content area specialists—mid or late career engineers, for example—will be better able to teach math to middle-schoolers than those who trained in traditional teacher education programs. In the popular media, teachers are portrayed in increasingly problematic ways, as evidenced by teachers who turn tricks in "Hung," deal drugs in "Breaking Bad," bully overweight students in "The Big C," or womanize and do drugs in "Eastbound and Down"; this is a far cry from past portrayals of the teachers such as Anne

Sullivan, Jaime Escalante, or Mr. Holland. Further, persistent attacks on social media walls, entitled "Complaints About [X] School System" are daily reminders of teachers' heavily scrutinized work (Antush, 2014; Alsop, 2012; Braverman, 1998; Duncan, 2009; Goldstein, 2014; Gonen, 2012; Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996; Harvey, 2014; Kuhn, 2014; Lynch, 2014; Maxwell, 2010; Miller, 2006; Obama, 2011; Sawchuck, 2012; Song, 2010; Thomas, 2010).

These kinds of attacks on teachers are not new. Although teachers are often sentimentalized, they have historically been objects of heightened scrutiny and criticism; the profession itself has long been both admired and attacked. In the 1800s, when 90 percent of the teaching workforce was male, teachers were ridiculed as "sadistic, lash-wielding drunks" (Goldstein, 2014, p. 4). Teaching became the professional domain of women for nearly 200 years; in fact, during the mid to late 1800s it was redefined as women's work. Teaching was reframed as low-paying, temporary work for inexperienced young women prior to starting the "real" career of child rearing (Leach, 2007). Teaching was thought of as a natural pursuit for women, who were domesticated, morally virtuous, and less likely to question political practices or economic injustices. The dominant social influences of the day pressured women to remain passive, obedient, and unquestioning (Leach, 2007; Shea, 1992). This early and persistent feminization of teaching is directly linked to how the field is valued and rewarded today, and how it continues to be seen as a "second rate profession" (Goldstein, 2014; Hoffman, 1981, p. 15; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Labrana, 2007; Lortie, 1975; Shea, 1992; Strober and Tyack, 1980; Tyack, 1974).

Advocates for universal public schooling touted teaching as appropriate missionary work for middle-class women in the 19th century, but attacked working-class females who entered the nation's classrooms during the Progressive Era (Goldstein, 2014). Teachers have also borne the

brunt of social change: thousands of black teachers were fired during the civil rights and school integration era (Goldstein, 2014). Indeed, teachers have been consistently held responsible for society's problems and inequities. In the 1960s and 1970s, urban white teachers were condemned for failing to endorse parental control of schools and Afrocentric teaching theories (Goldstein, 2014). In the 2000s, teachers in states with high immigrant populations faced outrage from immigrant communities who connected "Americanization" to a kind of "subtractive schooling," which led to high drop out rates, lack of opportunities, and decreased student achievement (Valenzuela, 1999).

Under the guise of "educational reform," today's policymakers systematically whittle away Horace Mann's vision of "the great equalizer" (Mann and Cremin, 1957; Shea, 1992). Mann's vision, which rests on a moral obligation to educate all for the benefit of the greater good of society, has been turned into a "franchise operation" (Marshall, 2009), led by government and corporate and philanthropic interests, that separates teachers from the possibility of expertise and results in deprofessionalization.

In the 1980s, Ronald Reagan initiated educational policies that were deeply influenced by free market ideas. Those policies included increasingly standardized and prescriptive curricula, compulsory testing, and school ratings systems (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009; Sachs, 2001; Teleshaliyev, 2013). As it had been in the 1920s and 1960s, merit pay was again proposed as a way to improve teacher performance and address deficits that had been identified in *A Nation at Risk* (Goldstein, 2014; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Fast track teacher certification programs that minimized the importance of pedagogical training and expertise were popularized; collective bargaining, tenure, and unions were regularly attacked, often posed as the sole or primary factors in underperforming schools (Goldstein, 2014). In

recent years, President Obama, Governor Chris Christie and a host of other political figures have fed into the hasty generalization that *most* teachers are bad, vowing to "stop making excuses" for bad teachers; these attacks further deprofessionalize the entire profession and contribute to the increasingly negative stereotype (Goldstein, 2014; Obama, 2011). In the 2000s, issues like salary incentives, voucher systems, standardization, collective bargaining, and unions continued to unfavorably shape the perception of the teaching profession among the public. Although increased student achievement has not resulted from the "reforms" of the last several decades, several other phenomena have: mistrust between parents and teachers, increased student drop-out rates, declining perceptions of teacher quality, disempowered and demoralized teachers, and growing concerns about increasingly dismal rates of teacher retention (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009; Schrag, 2004; Teleshaliyev, 2013).

Defining Professionalism

According to Hargreaves and Shirley (2009), three criteria must exist for real professionalism: high-quality teachers, powerful professional associations, and professional learning communities. A "highly qualified teacher" has, as defined in the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), obtained a bachelor's degree and state certification or licensure and demonstrated competency through coursework, a state-developed test, advanced certification, or a graduate degree. Williams (2013) indicates professionalism is distinguished by the attainment of a bachelor's or master's degree, rigorous accreditation structures, and a specialized body of knowledge conferred in higher education and affirmed by a professional organization. In many states, teaching still makes use of the criteria, but the profession is increasingly subjected to the pressures of standardization and marketization in an attempt to define the profession by the standards of others.

There is a long history of the defining of the profession. Society and policymakers have historically created a "wish list" for what teaching should embody. Evans (2008) describes this as "demanded professionalism," where a wish list of attributes and roles are defined for an occupational group. The legislated mandates and sanctions to support this "wish list" become what Evans (2008) describes as the "enacted professionalism" of today. The unattainable results and constraints from outside of the profession (e.g. socioeconomic status of students) have led to what Evans describes as the "impracticable rhetoric" (p. 11) for teachers. Instead of redefining the criteria of the profession or considering the constraint, those outside of teaching imposed more unrealistic expectations, through enacting educational standards and policies without the input of teachers or consideration of socioeconomic standard (Evans, 2008; Whitty, 2006).

If teachers want to be recognized as professionals, as defined by teachers themselves instead of policymakers and profiteers, "activist professionalism" or "activist identity" (Bangs and Frost, 2012; Hoyle and Wallace, 2007; Sachs, 2001) must become the principle way to unify teachers and to improve teaching. The activist professional utilizes collaborations, networks and alliances across groups within and outside the school (associations, professional bodies, unions) in order to resist the tidal wave of "managerialism" (Sachs, 2001, p. 151; Whitty, 2002). This is quite different from the passive, obedient, and unquestioning embodiment of a teacher in the 1800s. And, I would add, in vast contrast to the increasingly semi-skilled and standardized ideal for teachers today.

Accountability and Deprofessionalization

The top-down approaches in education reform of the late 1990s exacerbated the tug-of-war between teacher autonomy and accountability (Teleshaliyev, 2013). Teaching struggled to be recognized as a profession because of "centralized controls" that demand targets and

measurement and imposed standards (Teleshaliyev, 2013). Any ground gained to define teaching as a profession with autonomous identities has been lost during the era of "managerialism" dominated educational reform (Sachs, 2001, p. 151). As urgently as teachers advocated for professional status, policymakers implemented initiatives, with the help of outside agencies and businesses, to increasingly deprofessionalize teachers and the work of teaching. Salary incentives and standardized tests were suggested as ways to improve teacher performance; standardized tests, voucher systems, and punitive accountability were put forward as ways to improve schools (De Siquerira, 2012; Steiner-Khamsi, 2012). These measures, which tend to both highlight the individual and downplay social structures, are just some of the measures associated with neoliberal education reforms over the past three decades. These reforms established "market and bureaucratization" models aimed at lessening teacher autonomy and stripping professionalism (Hoyle and Wallace, 2007). In this accountability movement and marketization of education, teachers become accountable to the state (Apple, 1978; Evans, 2008; Rosenberg, 2003), instead of to their profession.

Deprofessionalization and the State

The possibility for teacher professionalism falters when teachers relinquish control to private entities, non-profit and for-profit alike, which have vested interests in classroom content and practice. In the current environment, the contemporary state has effectively centralized power over education and created markets for these private entities. The educational policy priorities of the 1990s, combined with the role of enacted professionalism and the social capital of schools, weakened teacher professionalism (Race, 2002). Surveillance and the prescribed work of teachers in the increasingly scrutinized spaces of schools exerted increasing control over teachers' labor (Smyth, Dow, Hattam, Reid, and Shacklock, 2000), contributing to their

deprofessionalization. Reminiscent of Fordism of the 1920s, teachers become more like assembly line workers than professionals. The system itself depends not on teachers' engagement in reflective practice, but on controls that prescribe pre-determined outcomes. In the Foucauldian sense, socially constructed elements define curriculum, supervise and evaluate teachers, engineer compliance and consent, and control disciplinary power (Race, 2002; Rosenberg, 2003; Smyth, et. al, 2000). Content, curricular and increasingly pedagogical decisions move out of the hands of teachers and into the hand of policymakers, who, in turn, sway the opinions of society through political campaigns and legislation. For teachers, deprofessionalization and deskilling have become inextricably linked (Race, 2002).

Deskilling, Fordism, and TFA

Under Fordist ideology, a semi-skilled labor force works beneath a very clear division of labor to mass-produce standardized goods (Race, 2002; Jessop, 2013). In many ways, the profession of teaching lends itself easily to being constructed as semi-skilled. Given the conception of teaching as a "semi-profession" intended for inexperienced women who would accept low wages and moral duty for payment, and the recent research that indicates a prevalence of academically disadvantaged teacher candidates among higher education teacher preparation programs, teachers struggle to define their professionalism against a long-standing reputation that sees teachers as a semi-skilled labor force (Bolton and Muzio, 2008; Goldstein, 2014; Hoffman, 1981, p. 15; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Lortie, 1975; Shea, 1992; Strober and Tyack, 1980; Tyack, 1974).

In keeping with Fordism and the standardization movement, today's teachers are expected to mass produce educated students in the same manner as standardized goods under the direction of a policymaker, or designer, who dictates and prescribes from a considerable distance

away from the classroom. The organizational forms and social networks that are prescribed by the establishment invariably trust in and rely upon regulation and capitalist social relations (Jessop, 2013; Race, 2002; Rosenberg, 2003). These processes aptly describe many of the current efforts to disconnect university-based teacher education programs from teacher certification. It is a methodical process that deskills teachers, suppresses professional identity, and disallows other forms of professionalism. Beyond the demoralization this Fordist deprofessionalization brings to the teaching profession, the ideology fails further when the labor force of teachers is dwindling due to decreasing retention rates attributed to poor job satisfaction (Riggs, 2013).

In many ways, programs such as Teach For America, founded by Wendy Kopp as part of President Bill Clinton's national service program, take teacher training out of the hands of professionals. Disconnected from the teaching degree, from rigorous accreditation structures, and from the specialized body of knowledge conferred in higher education and affirmed by a professional organization, programs like TFA contribute to the mass production of a labor force. With its reliance on the good will of morally driven young people, its reformulation of teacher training as a few weeks-worth of courses, and its very limited support in the areas of systematic curriculum, continuous faculty, guaranteed resources for student learning, mentoring, and program evaluation, TFA has fallen under increasing criticism (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Goldstein, 2014; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Ravitch, 2011). TEACH!, a sister organization of TFA, encourages similarly reductionist approaches to teaching that lack instruction in learning theory, child development, or instructional strategies (Darling-Hammond, 1994).

In a five to eight-week summer institute that includes one-hour workshops delivered in lounge areas of rented dormitories, a TFA recruit completes 30 hours of training, followed by 19

days in a "student teaching experience" in summer school classrooms. He is then released to the assembly line of teachers. TFA and TEACH! lend themselves well to Fordism as there are minimal or abbreviated professional standards to meet; moreover, their emphasis on teaching for a short time, and of using one's time as a teacher to move on to something better, further undermines the teaching profession. The arguable intention of TFA and TEACH! is to relieve the burden of quality control for states and school districts. But, instead of developing experience in child development and educational theory, applicants pursue "emergency routes to teaching," akin to the semi-skilled assembly line (Darling-Hammond, 1994). Although TFA proclaims that "teachers are made through experience," only 42 percent of their teachers were still teaching after two years – an attrition rate nearly twice that of other new teachers. Founder Kopp contributes further to the climate of teacher deprofessionalization by regularly asserting that teacher education students are among the least academically able, in terms of ACT and SAT scores and undergraduate institutions, to teach (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Goldstein, 2014). When similar physician shortages emerged and became serious, future doctors received Congressional incentives to fully prepare for their profession (Darling-Hammond, 1994). Teacher shortages, conversely, are met with faster routes to certification that present inadequate and ineffectual preparation for the profession and, in the long run, do nothing to alleviate our nation's chronic teacher shortages. This "solution" increasingly exacerbates the deprofessionalized conditions of teachers.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This dissertation examines how currently employed teachers are experiencing this deprofessionalization. Using visual and narrative methods, participants explore the many facets of their teacher identities, document the manifestations and effects of deprofessionalization in

their daily work lives, and propose possible ways for teachers to regain some measure of influence and control in their profession.

Participatory Action Research and Phenomenology underlie this research project, as does an emphasis on Paulo Freire's practices, particularly the utilization of dialogue in order to deepen reflection and understanding among the teaching community. Freire's work foregrounds the desire to drive change through "informed action," and prompts me to dialogically engage those who are living the experience of teaching today. Participatory Action Research (PAR), as used in this study inviteed a community of teachers to collaboratively reflect upon and collectively inquire into lived experience in order to elicit change. It is significant to this research project. Photovoice, a PAR method that utilizes both image and story, was used to involve educators (whose experiences and voices are, ironically, too often missing from discussions of the profession today) in the data collection and dialogue. The community of teachers, with their rich, lived experiences, used narratives and photographs to reflect upon and inquire into their experiences of deprofessionalization. This collective action, I believe, enabled participants to think more powerfully about their chosen profession. The study itself contributed to research on the experience of deprofessionalization among teachers; it was my hope that exploring teacher deprofessionalization from the perspectives of the teachers themselves could prompt others to conduct similar research and lead to larger conversations around how teachers might regain some measure of influence and control over their classrooms, their curricula, and their profession. The central concepts for this study include notions of what defines a teacher from the perspective of self and others, how the culture of deprofessionalization manifests itself in teachers' work lives, and how participation in the research study affect the teacher's experience.

The original ideas of the empowerment education theory, proposed by Freire, encourage individuals to become vocal and critically conscious about the needs of the community through collection of concerns that elicit dialogue with individuals in that community. This collection facilitated meaningful discussions where, through group dialogue, individuals built upon their shared concerns to shape identified needs of the community. In turn, community members became more passionate about improving their conditions, which eventually leads to changes in individual self-image, pursuit of advocacy, and initiation for policy change (Kuratani and Lai, 2011; Wang and Burris, 1994). The Freirean-based process engages people in observing and dialoguing about their communities so that they may create safe environments for critical reflection. Once communities consider why current realities exist, they are moved to increase levels of critical consciousness so that they address social power structures and initiate community change (Strack, Lovelace, Jordan, and Holmes, 2010).

Vulnerable populations can utilize the participatory, dialogic, and reflective aspects of Freire's philosophies as a venue for their stories and views. Photovoice is one such venue that allows the oppressed to develop a voice that speaks to decision makers in order to drive policy change (Kuratani and Lai, 2011; Wang and Burris, 1994). Photovoice expands forms of representation and brings in a diversity of voices that can better define and improve our social and political realities (Wang, Morrei-Samuels, Hutchison, Bell, and Pestronk, 2004).

METHODS

With these theoretical frameworks in mind, this study deploys visual methods that aim to generate awareness of conditions, improve self-confidence, empower participants, and effect change. Visual methods also encourage collaboration, mutual trust, and respect (Pain, 2012). Friere used pictures or codes to represent community concerns and stimulate dialogue and

analysis in his studies (Strack et al., 2010). This particular study uses Photovoice; other examples of visual methods include drawings or photo-elicitation (Harper, 2002, 1984; Heisley and Levy, 1991). Participants provide "primary texts," which include photos to generate reflection and facilitate discussion, and "production texts" as they engage in the research process during follow-up interviews with me (Mitchell, 2008).

The literature on Photovoice indicates that it has been used in noteworthy projects to create awareness for the homeless, health issues, and oppression of women and children (Ewald, 2011, 1996, 1992, 1985; Hubbard, 1994; Lykes, 2001; Wang and Burris, 1994, Wang, 1999). In essence, the research method emphasizes the "voice" of participants who identify and represent issues of importance in order to help others gain greater understanding of the issues (Nykiforuk, Valliantatos, and Nieuwendyk, 2011).

I believe this method is particularly promising as a way of studying teachers who are experiencing deprofessionalization and have a vested interest in developing their voices for change. Photovoice is an overlap of three theoretical frameworks, which emphasize community participation for social action: empowerment education, feminist theory, and documentary photography (Kuratani and Lai, 2011; Wang and Burris, 1994). As a community development tool for engagement of stakeholders, Photovoice utilizes these theoretical frameworks to develop long-term involvement of these stakeholders in social action to bring about real social change in the root problems (Webb, 2004). Several components of the Photovoice process are linked to Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR), where whole communities are empowered to collaborate and learn alongside other community members and researchers and shared decisions with mutually owned outcomes are created in order to drive change (Strack et al., 2010).

This study operates from the assumption that an exploration of the lived experiences of teachers can provide meaningful insight into the perceptions of teachers. Photovoice is a participatory-action research methodology that asks participants to build upon deep, historical foundations in the community to express culture, problems, and needs in order to initiate change (Nykiforuk, et al., 2011). Wang and Burris (1994) proposed Photovoice in the early 1990s as an approach to blend narrative and photography to explore community issues (Nykiforuk et. al, 2011; Wang and Burris, 1994). This study assumes that the participants would have experiences that they can share through photography and narratives. Further, it assumes that the participants believe that teacher deprofessionalization is an issue that deserves attention and study.

Seven K-12 educators who are currently employed in public education took part in this participatory study; they collected information on how the identities of educators are defined by society and how teachers negotiate pressures from outside the profession (policymakers, parents, social media, etc.) to maintain a professional identity. Participants made digital collections over a two-week period for each of the five identified themes: 1) how participants define themselves as teachers; 2) how participants believe others define them as teachers; 3) how the current culture of deprofessionalization manifests itself in teachers' work lives; 4) how participation in this project affects a teacher's experience; and 5) how teachers regain some measure of influence and control over their profession. Participants sent their self-selected top three images and brief narrative electronically to the me at the end of each two-week cycle. As the project's primary researcher, I reviewed the photos and identified themes that emerged in the participants' digital collections. I assembled these artifacts, according to the theme(s) identified, in a presentation to the participants during scheduled focus groups. Two focus groups, one scheduled at the end of the four-week period and one at the end of the ten-week period, were conducted. The format of the

group interview included framing questions and activities that I assembled. Participants were to identify and comment on the emerging themes; their input helped to shape and reshape the evolving interpretations.

At the conclusion of the research project, I shared a written report of the findings with participants. I will also make an oral presentation during a county's teacher mentor training and ask for opportunities to make oral presentations at the board of education meetings of participating counties. These presentations are an integral aspect of a research project with Photovoice, and so I will do my utmost to assemble influential people as an audience in order to emphasize individual and community action (Wang, 1999). I assume that additional people will be interested in the research findings as this project empowers participants to uncover root causes and collectively address them as change agents (Strack, et al., 2010).

I have some general expectations for this qualitative study. First, I do not expect to have difficulties locating teachers to participate in this research project. Harrison County Schools and Taylor County Schools have a rich pool of applicants. Having taught 11 years in Taylor County and now residing in that county, I have maintained numerous connections with the school system and the teacher community. Likewise, I have been employed by Harrison County Schools for seven years, and I have access and established relationships with teachers who would consider this project worthwhile. Harrison County Schools, the seventh largest district in the state, employs over 700 teachers. Taylor County Schools, though considerably smaller than Harrison County, employs nearly 200 teachers; thus, their experiences in a rural, small county contributed noteworthy contrasts to the perspectives of a larger and more diverse system. Second, I assumed that the participants would want to increase awareness of the social constraints on teachers.

Third, I assumed that the participants would want to initiate a change within the teaching community.

Finally, I expected that the research process would be quite time-consuming. Field notes were written and reviewed, photographs and narratives were examined and interpreted, interview sessions were conducted, and recordings of participant responses were examined. Responses and photographs were organized for themes, and follow up questions from this process were written to address later with participants. Participants were asked to reflect on the emerging themes and interpretations I identified. I conveyed the results of this project in writing and illustrated it with participant photographs.

Problem Statement

In what now sometimes feels like the dim, distant past, teachers were thought of as "social saviors"; the teaching profession was one of high status and relative selectivity (Lovat and McLeod, 2006). Horace Mann (1957) and Henry Barnard (1937) believed teaching was a calling, a career (Jenkins, 1937; Mann and Cremin, 1957; Schneider, 2012). Public education, Mann (1957) wrote, was to be "the great equalizer." Historically, teachers were asked to be the vehicle to equalize all in society and close social gaps between religious groups, between natives and new immigrants, blacks and whites, and the poor and rich (Goldstein, 2014).

Teachers no longer occupy these positions of hope or esteem; indeed, they are increasingly defined by tropes of incompetence. The teaching profession is becoming increasingly embattled; within the last several decades, attacks upon the profession's competence and worth have escalated. Today's teachers face a systematic deprofessionalization, which is diminishing their abilities to reach the broad range of learners in their classrooms, their power to democratically structure the aims and fundamentals of their profession, and to define and

regulate their profession in ways that are assumed in other professions. Although teachers are more likely to know how and why they are deprofessionalized than anyone else is, as is often the case with this profession, they are rarely given the opportunity to contribute their ideas and expertise. This dissertation sought to engage teachers in a participatory action research project that took up the current culture of deprofessionalization. Using visual and narrative methods, participants explored the many facets of their teacher identities, documented the manifestations and effects of deprofessionalization in their daily work lives, and proposed possible ways for teachers to regain some measure of influence and control in their profession.

Research Questions

The following research questions were investigated:

1. How do participants see themselves as teachers?
2. How do participants believe others see them as teachers?
3. How does the current culture of deprofessionalization express itself in teachers' daily work lives?
4. How can participating in this project affect that experience?
5. How might teachers regain some measure of influence and control over their profession?

Definitions

Deprofessionalization – an attempt to minimize the voice or empowerment of teachers, teacher-voice groups, and networks as it relates to creation of policy, instructional design, professional learning communities, and professional identity

Deskilling – acts or products that standardized and mass-market instructional delivery, teaching degrees, and higher education teacher preparation programs

Photovoice – the use of visual media and narrative in research to incite critical reflection, dialogue, awareness, and change

Teacher Identity – the labels, perceptions, and limitations assigned to teachers, as determined by others and reflective of the sociopolitical context, social practices, and social settings

Significance of the Study

How members of a profession perceive themselves is significant: These perceptions influence how problems in the profession are perceived, why these problems exist, and how they can be addressed. Policymakers, administrators, parents, researchers, and other educators benefit from the study because it contributes to the information on the experience of educational reform, create awareness for the profession, and open dialogue among others about the deprofessionalization – unrivaled in perhaps any other profession (save law enforcement in recent months) -- of educators.

Delimitations

The study was limited to ten weeks and seven participants, who have teaching experience within two counties in West Virginia. While the strength of the study is that it has the potential to assemble authentic and rich photographs and narratives from the perspective of those who are often and ironically voiceless in the field of education, the collection is limited to these participants. The perspectives of these participants were generalized for the purposes of this study. It was assumed that the limited time period of the study may present problems, as the timing was considered; ten weeks encapsulating the opening of school is much different than the ten weeks surrounding standardized testing, the close of school, and graduation plans. The study was expected to be time-consuming for the participants and myself.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Versus Professional

In the middle of the twentieth century, a discourse began to emerge that recognized teaching as a "profession" (Hoyle, 1969; Lieberman, 1956; Lortie, 1975). The fact that there was no universal list of criteria to define it as such (MacBeath, 2012), coupled with the historical perception that teaching was a "communal pursuit" (Golden, 2012) to be shared by all in a community instead of designated to an identified group, caused teaching to be labeled a "semi-profession," or a job, rather than a profession in its own right (Bolton and Muzio, 2008; Collay, 2006; Goldstein, 2014; Pescosolido, 2006). In some ways, this was a continuation of long held beliefs about whether or not teaching required specific skills, training, or credentials. In primitive societies, the curriculum was based on life experiences; there were no teachers or formalized education and everyone in the community was expected to be a "teacher" (Houston, 2009; Hoyle, 1969; Lortie, 1975). Today, because nearly all citizens have had at least 12 years of experience in education, many parents believe that they can, in fact, do the job of teaching better than the teacher.

Teachers have long been devoid of the identity of "professional" (Beijaard et al., 2004). This is partly because, as Beijaard, et al. (2004) argue, identity, in general, is often determined by others, unstable, and reflective of the sociopolitical context. The actions of society and many policymakers toward teachers have constructed a semi-professional identity. Today, teacher identity is controlled by standardization, negative professional identity, and a host of limitations imposed by society and policymakers upon professional practices. Teachers' personal views, pedagogical awareness, and political participation contribute to their identity formations

(Hoffman-Kipp, 2008), but over the last several decades, their own voices in these matters have been muted or replaced. When considering negative interactions between society and teachers, it is important to note that interaction with others and the environment shapes professional identity (Beijaard, et. al, 2004). One cannot ignore that social settings and social practices in these contexts affect teacher identity (Izadinia, 2013; Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson and Fry, 2004), therefore professionalism is a socially constructed concept that is characterized as a list of attributes and roles imposed by society and practiced by the professional (Beijaard, et al., 2004; Evans, 2008; Pescosolido, 2006; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Tozer and Miretzky, 2000). The fact that so many contemporary social interactions with or about educators are characterized as negative (Antush, 2014; Alsop, 2012; Braverman, 1998; Duncan, 2009; Goldstein, 2014; Gonen, 2012; Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996; Harvey, 2014; Kuhn, 2014; Lynch, 2014; Maxwell, 2010; Miller, 2006; Obama, 2011; Sawchuck, 2012; Song, 2010; Thomas, 2010) goes some way toward explaining why teachers' professional identities are under siege.

Identity: Teaching Versus Other Professions

In almost every century since the 1800s, teachers – whether male or female, black or white, insider or outsider – have been heavily scrutinized, but recently they have come under regular and systematic attacks from many policymakers and the public (Antush, 2014; Alsop, 2012; Braverman, 1998; Duncan, 2009; Goldstein, 2014; Gonen, 2012; Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996; Harvey, 2014; Kuhn, 2014; Lynch, 2014; Mann and Cremin, 1957; Maxwell, 2010; Miller, 2006; Murphy and Beck, 1995; Obama, 2011; Race, 2002; Sawchuck, 2012; Shea, 1992; Smyth, et al., 2000; Song, 2010; Thomas, 2010). Moreover, the professional identity towards which teachers have long worked—which relied on high levels of education, training, certification, experience, and autonomy, and on compensation schemes that reflected those high

levels—is also under attack; social and policy trends (i.e. standardized assessments, packaged curricula, alternative certification schemes, merit pay, charter schools, and so on) continue to undermine the knowledge, experience, and autonomy of teachers.

This has not been the case for many other contemporary professions. After World War II, professionalization advanced across fields at a rate faster than any other point in the past (Williams, 2013). In identity and numbers, the professional ranks of physicians and surgeons, for example, have increased at a faster rate than that of the general population (260,000 in 1960 to 691,000 in 2010) (Williams, 2013). Nurses have increased at double the rate of doctors, from 600,000 in 1960 to 2,737,000 in 2010 (Williams, 2013). Medicine, like education, has evolved into a more managed profession in terms of regulations, legislation, and preparation programs. However, the medical field has become more professional and specialized; the increasingly rigorous credentialing of nurse practitioners and physicians' assistants exemplifies the rise of additional and distinct professional specializations within the medical field (Williams, 2013; Pescosolido, 2006).

Teaching, on the other hand, is becoming less professional and less specialized. In a number of states including West Virginia, for example, legislatures have passed laws that mandate less education and training for prospective teachers, even as the areas of expertise that teachers must master to be effective have advanced beyond content areas. It is no longer enough to know only math, science, or English. Today's teachers must also be experts on data analysis, parental involvement, student health and wellness, special needs populations, evolving technologies, and so on. As policymakers have sought to open up teaching, the ranks of teachers themselves have decreased, and teacher shortages have become endemic throughout the nation, especially in urban and rural areas. The increased management through standardization persists

in education. The autonomy, salary, and respect in society – despite professional organizations and unionization similar to the medical profession – continue to decrease.

Ravitch (2011) predicted that this loss of professional autonomy would continue to push women and men out of teaching. Teacher evaluations and "value added systems," based on student test-score growth and the related stress associated with these processes, have increased teachers' desires to abandon the field (Schrag, 2000; Sullo, 2011). In December 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) and purported to eliminate the "cookie-cutter federal solutions" by lessening the role of standardization and testing in education (Executive Office of the President, 2015; The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2015). Unfortunately, ESSA did not eliminate standardized assessments or the rankings of schools or teachers based on them; instead, it proposed a state-created "smart and balanced approach" that relies on standardized tests of students every year in grades three through eight and once in high school, as well as multiple, but "streamlined," measurements of progress to indicate school accountability (Executive Office of the President, 2015; The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2015). Student performance targets, rankings of schools, and identifications and interventions for struggling schools remain a part of the educational system. Going forward, it does not seem that much will be different from past decades; the tradition of tying teacher "effectiveness" to student performance that took hold after *A Nation at Risk* (1983) and solidified under No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and Race to the Top (2009), will continue to provoke negative outcries about the mediocrity of the school system (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Toppo, 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2009; The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2015).

As Rothenstein (2008) indicated, the presumably well-intentioned report "burned into Americans' consciousness a conviction that, evidence notwithstanding, our schools are failures" (Kuhn, 2014, Kindle Location 817-819; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The report's "evidence" armed policymakers whose agendas included the abandonment of public goods and services, and led to years of backlash against those who held teaching as a "patriotic service-oriented profession," those who chose the profession out of duty or because they believed in education's power as "the great equalizer" (Kuhn, 2014, Kindle Locations 1889-1890; Mann, 1957). Policymakers and business leaders seemingly bonded together for a campaign against educator autonomy, and against public education itself, offering solutions that would lead to a free market educational system (Kuhn, 2014). As political rhetoric increasingly conflated public goods like education with ideas of inefficiency and monopoly, public school teachers became defined in those terms as well – a notion that accelerated with the Tea Party movement and Ron Paul-style libertarian populism (Carey, 2013; Kuhn, 2014; SpeakOut Foundation, 2015).

Constructing Teachers' Professional Identities

Literature suggests that the identity of teachers is dynamic and alters with the internal and external factors represented in life experiences and contexts. Defining the concept of teacher identity, is thus a difficult endeavor (Beijaard et al., 2004; Flores and Day, 2006; Rodgers and Scott, 2008; Sachs, 2001). Gee (2001), however, identifies four ways that teacher identity may be perceived in a multifaceted nature that is shaped by external influences: nature identity (from one's natural state); institution identity (derived from a position recognized by authority); discourse identity (resulting from the discourse of others about oneself); and affinity identity (determined by one's practices in relation to external groups). From a sociocultural perspective

(Olson, 2008b; Sfard and Prusak, 2005), teacher identity is a product of influences on the teacher and the interactive processes that occur during professional development. These influences prompt a teacher to make negotiations that other professions are not forced to make: social positioning, meaning systems, and self concepts (Olson, 2008b).

This negotiated identity is particularly important because, as Sfard and Prusak (2005) indicate, a teacher's professional identity defines his personal world as well as how an individual voice within a community and on behalf of a community is expressed. Sachs (2001) tells us that teacher identity is at the core of the teaching profession, defining one's work and station in society: "Importantly, teacher identity is not something that is fixed nor is it imposed; rather it is negotiated through experience and the sense that is made of that experience" (p. 15). Lauriala and Kukkonen (2005) expand on this to note in their models that identity is composed of three dimensions: the actual self, the ought self (recognized by society as the goal), and the ideal self (set by the teacher as a target for achievement). Wenger (1998) further indicates that teachers negotiate their professional identities around five characteristics: negotiated experience, community membership, learning trajectory, memberships, and involvement in local and global contexts.

The power of policymakers and business leaders and their ability to fuel negative social interactions with teachers and contribute to deprofessionalization is apparent in decisions that favor the privatization and standardization of public education; these decisions disregard professional identity, dialogue, memberships, or involvement of teachers – essentially stripping teachers of opportunities to define their professionalism, internally and externally (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Berliner and Glass, 2014; Ravitch, 2011). Beyond external influences of policymakers and public scrutiny, teachers and higher education can own some of these

influences because of the lack of focus on professionalism in the curriculum of teacher preparation programs as well as lowered criteria for admittance into such programs (Tozer and Miretzky, 2000). For example, "professionalism" for physicians, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges and jointly endorsed by the American Board of Internal Medicine and American College, is characterized by altruism, honor and integrity, caring and compassion, respect, responsibility, accountability, excellence, and scholarship and leadership (Inui, 2003). Professionalism is one of the seven competences taught in medical schools and assessed in residence programs. With a belief that physicians define and reform the concept of professionalism throughout their education, the ideas are taught in courses on medical professionalism and ethics, modeled, and institutionalized throughout the course of their instructional program (Glicken and Merenstein, 2007; Inui, 2003; Makoul and Curry, 1998). Conversely, a 1992 study by the US Department of Education noted that professionalism among educators is a critical issue in education reform (Darling-Hammond and Goodwin, 1993; Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996); teachers lack professionalism because they are not given the opportunities and forums to embody it in training and in the field.

As Schultz and Ravitch (2013) point out, "people construct professional identities in relation to context and experience and in relation to one another" (p. 37). The social context created by the increasingly negative characterizations of teachers and teaching by policymakers and the public, and the growing campaign to privatize education, have adversely affected teachers' experience and practice, and have contributed to the current conditions of deprofessionalization. Teachers, mindful of the historical scrutiny of the profession, negotiate their actions amidst pressures of policymakers and negative interactions with society, and attempt to construct an identity that will contribute to their drive to improve their

professionalism. Compounded with reform movements that are driven by abstract, theoretical principles and divorced from societal connections (Berube, 1996), teachers are bound to struggle to define a professional identity or a way to "explain, justify, and make sense of themselves in relation to others and to the world at large" (MacLure, 1993, p. 311). It is the cycle above that exacerbates a lack of empowerment and influence over programs and reforms that directly influence their jobs and which, in turn, suppresses teachers' abilities to fully enact professional identities and their capacities to influence the course of their profession.

Teacher Voice

Much is said about teachers' practice by policymakers and the public. But the connection between teachers' experiences and performance might be better expressed through the voice of teachers themselves. These connections, when expressed through the dialogue, narratives, and story telling of teachers themselves, have a profound effect on both individual, professional identity, (Watson, 2006) and the "collective storytelling" (Sfard and Prusak, 2005, p. 21) of the teaching profession. There is little research, particularly in the vein of Photovoice, on the voice of teachers in regard to their deprofessionalization. When policymakers and public scrutiny overshadow or devalue the voices of teachers, teacher identity then becomes constructed and negotiated by external contexts (Beynon, 1997); this study makes contributions to the research and places the focus solely on the voice of teachers, which is often otherwise suppressed.

Zemblylas (2003) indicates that forbidden emotions are encouraged by teachers' experiences in particular settings and this influences teaching performance (p. 122). Miller Marsh (2002) argues that conventional structures of power can be changed when discursive opportunities exist for teachers to contribute to the shaping of their own professional identities. Alsup's (2006) study of preservice teachers' identity and application of "borderland discourse"

(p. 187) demonstrates that teachers who confront their ideas about themselves and their professional experience transform how they think about their professional identities. While much of this discourse is the responsibility of school leadership and the school community, one cannot help but think what the impact of teachers' own voices might be if they were included in a nationwide discourse on the professional identity of teachers.

The Rise of Accountability, Centralized Power Structures, and Business Influences

Certain historical events and episodes are commonly cited as having triggered initiatives to manage and reform education: the launch of Sputnik, court cases on racial and ethnic equity, and the push for equal distribution of resources in public schools, to name just a few (Barton, 2010; Murphy and Beck, 1995). Over the last several decades, federal interventions in education such as Goals 2000, No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, and the currently contested Common Core State Standards promised to finally remedy student achievement gaps, primarily by targeting teacher inefficiency (or incompetence). Along with these initiatives, connections emerged that led to reforms largely driven and funded by foundations (Barkan, 2011; Mulcahy and Irwin, 2008) that were either established by private business interests or backed heavily by them. The foundations, with a promise of financial backing, are shaping an increasingly centralized power structure that overrides teachers' power to democratically determine what is taught and how (Rotherham, 2012). By design, teachers are being reduced to "conveyor[s] of information" (Mulcahy and Irwin, 2008, p. 205) who owe allegiance to a centralized authority and whose work is subject to standardization designed by private and corporate interests.

This is not the first time that others have called for educational reform or blamed the "mediocre" public school system for the nation's social and economic woes (Berube, 1996; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Ryan, 2008). In recent years, at least

three presidents, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush, made education a national issue. Although *A Nation at Risk* established a call for state-created standards to designate what students were expected to know and be able to do in each grade, federal policy officially created the standards movement in 1994 (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Ryan, 2008; Thompson, 2001a) with the Goals 2000 Act and the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), which reauthorized Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1998). The standards movement marked a renewed faith in the work of E. L. Thorndike (1913), who first proposed the "new science of testing" in the early 1900s. The era's Progressive educators began to use external standardized testing as a way to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of old-fashioned schooling (Gamson, 2007, p. 23; Schrag, 2000; Thompson, 2001b). Thus, an emphasis on testing, or student "output," became the norm in discussions on education, replacing previous focuses on the "inputs" of schooling, such as facilities, management, and student-teacher ratios (Diner, 1982; Schrag, 2000). With the rise of the excellence reform movement in the 1980s and 1990s, federal dollars were used to incentivize states' establishment of both academic standards and regular student testing that focused on those standards (Rotherham, 2012; Schrag, 2000; Thompson, 2001a; Thompson, 2001b).

Reform through Standardization

Harvard University Director of Teacher Education Programs Vito Perrone stated, in regard to reform through standardization, that

> Those who seem to know best about children's development and needs…stand far away from the classrooms, children and young people. The movement is more about standardization than standards, and a great danger is that given all the state mandates, the

> richness of classroom dynamics, what is studied and talked about, will be narrowed and stunted. (Relic, 2000, para. 10)

There were significant flaws in the standards movement, especially as it affected teachers' influence on their profession: unilateral control by the state; comparisons, punishment, and ranking of non-comparable schools and students based on assessments; and a definition of a well-educated American (Glickman, 2000; Hargreaves and Shirley, 2008; Thompson, 2001a; Thompson, 2001b). Teaching was no longer based on the idea of equalizing all for the betterment of society (Mann and Cremlin, 1957), but more so that the "art of education can be broken down, quantified, and standardized" (Antush, 2014, p. 45).

State funds, federal funds, and private foundations supported President Bill Clinton's Goals 2000 Program, which spelled out what every student should be able to do and called for an increase in the number of students to obtain high SAT and other examination scores (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1998). George W. Bush's 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) emphasized math, science, and reading, and profoundly increased both the frequency and the consequences of standardized tests. Touted as reform movements, both Clinton's and Bush's educational policies provided further support for a top-down, highly centralized, bureaucratic school system that is eerily like Frederick Taylor's "scientific industrial management" model for businesses and industries (Clinchy, 1998; Rotherham, 2012).

NCLB, in particular, brought an unprecedented connection between funding and accountability, which prompted sanctions for schools whose students did not do sufficiently well on their reading and math tests (Ryan, 2008; Schrag, 2004). Although one test to rule them all seemed to become the mantra in the late 1980s, test scores actually became an aspect of discussions in education during the 1950s as support for segregation or desegregation (Diner,

1982; Dorn, 1998). The general public, however, did not express interest in testing outcomes overall until the 1970s and the rise of domestic competition (Diner, 1982; Dorn, 1998; McClure, 2005). Even if the policymakers could be convinced of the limits of testing, they would need to replace the myth that tests are objective with an equally powerful myth: that testing could facilitate the political accountability of schools and allocate scare resources in a seemingly fair and impartial way (McDonnel, 2005, p. 49). School finance reform advocates, who started a persistent push for equal educational funding in 1989, also favored the standards movement because they believed it would increase resources and lead to adequate funding for schools (Ryan, 2008; Schrag, 2000; Thompson, 2001a; Thompson, 2001b).

Closing the Gap at the Expense of Distinctive Features of American Education

For all their creators' efforts, much of the literature finds that all the three remedies were flawed. Turnaround specialists, state takeover, and charter school or private sector management have not rendered academic gains (Antush, 2014; Lewis, 2004). Similar to philosophies of the equity reformers of the 1960s, NCLB supported the notion that more at-risk students fail when standards are raised without large infusions of money for intervention programs. At risk students and the cost are seemingly unaddressed in the standards and system of voluntary testing (Berube, 1996). In addition to these flaws, the rote memorization required in the national standards movement does not include many aspects of the distinctive features of American education and John Dewey's vision of critical-thinking and problem solving. If only 15 percent of teachers, the very people most invested in education of the nation's children, indicate on surveys that the NCLB act is improving local education, we have fallen far from an educational reform that is supposed to be having a positive impact on teaching or learning (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2008). Elliot Eisner (2005) has criticized reforms in the American education system as a "well-

intentioned but conceptually shallow effort to improve our schools" (p. 165). According to Eisner (2005) what we need to teach is not content specific curricula but "how to engage in higher order thinking, how to pose telling questions, how to solve complex problems that have more than one answer" (p. 169).

Defining the Experts

Neither Goals 2000 nor NCLB were particularly attuned to the social constraints teachers faced; neither did either of the policies draw extensively upon the expertise of teachers, teacher trainers, or the teaching profession. The Common Core State Standards was developed almost entirely without teacher input. In fact, no experienced classroom teachers were involved in drafting the CCSS. Of the 15 people who authored the mathematics CCSS, three had some teaching experience outside of elementary and middle school programmatic levels but zero were current classroom teachers. Of the 15 who authored the English language arts CCSS, five had some experience teaching English, but none were currently teaching. None of the original writing committee had elementary, English Language Learner, or Special Education teaching experience; with the exception of one who had a B.A. in Elementary Education but no teaching experience at that level, none even earned a teaching degree. Interestingly, however, all but one on the writing committee had ties to the testing industry (Marshall, 2009; Ravitch, 2014; Schneider, 2014).

Policymakers sought to address education reform through raising standards and providing public and/or private school choice programs, which turned out to be quick and easy solutions to satisfy voters (Berube, 1996). The teaching profession became a casualty of the creation of the national curriculum that advanced the deskilling of teachers. Public education began to resemble a "franchise operation more dependent on a recipe handed down by government, rather than the

exercise of professional expertise by teachers" (Marshall, 2009, para. 3). Instead of education reforms to increase teacher professionalism (i.e. salaries, benefits, and pensions), trends in education legislation targeted government-funded markets that promoted standardized tests and the reskilling of teachers (Antush, 2014).

Standardization: Days of Judgment and Comparison

In reality, Kuhn (2014) writes, "K-12 schooling in America is going through a kind of educational Dark Age, a time in which well-meaning missionaries of high expectations are loading up on barges and crashing into the shorelines of the public schools continent" (Kindle Locations 1678-1680). The contemporary focus is increasingly on evaluating teachers based largely on outcomes of the standards movement, which "is the overriding and most crippling obstacle to a critical pedagogy, and a system of education that promotes democracy" (Mulcahy and Irwin, 2008, p. 205). Much literature on education over the past 20 years has focused on either a move toward standardization or the effects of it. Prominent themes within the literature address what Antush (2014) calls "Ed Deform" or the standardization of curricula and testing, a push for teacher accountability through student test scores, and a centralized power structure (Antush, 2014; Brookhart, 2013; Gordon, 2003; Hargreaves and Shirley, 2008; McClure, 2005; Mulcahy and Irwin, 2008; Olson, 2006; Schrag, 2000). This centralized authority and standardization was practiced during the social efficiency movement of the 1980s to benefit big business (Mulcahy and Irwin, 2008), but localized control and school improvement strategies designed to create teacher empowerment rather than deprofessionalization would be more effective than national standards intended to improve achievement (Berube, 1996; McClure, 2005). In fact, Rotherham (2012) argued that the three largest obstacles to education reform are the "political, conservative, and change-adverse" nature of education policy, the lack of a

suitable method to measure teacher performance, and continuous attempts and notions that reform can be bought.

Creativity has been virtually eliminated from the curriculum and replaced by judgment and comparison of students and teachers. A teacher's job performance is judged by students' ability to demonstrate "mastery" of prescribed information and processes on a test. The same reliance on judgment is used to define and measure student achievement. Over the years, society has become more interested in comparison of students and schools based upon test scores. In the 1960s Gallup survey on the public's attitude toward the public schools, there were no questions regarding testing. This increased to seven of ten questions on the Gallup survey in the 1970s. The public wanted competition and comparison among students (Gallup, 1970, p. 106). Testing presents a downward spiral as teachers prioritize questions based upon interpretations by society and policymakers, and the curriculum focus shifts from the community to the state to the federal government. The danger of this is not only the disregard for the professionalism of teachers but the allegiance to corporate interests or an elite minority that tends to follow. In fact, so little faith exists for teachers from the outside that teacher accreditation tests are even produced by boards and panels that include no teachers or educators. For example, the secretary of education, through noncompetitive grants, awarded $35 million in 2001 for a nationwide federally approved teacher-accreditation test that had almost no input from educators themselves (Mulcahy and Irwin, 2008).

Taking the Reins: Byproducts of the Social Efficiency and Standards Movements

Comments in the literature from business leaders about educators are plentiful. IBM CEO Louis V. Gerstner (2008) is a self-proclaimed "education reformer" who believes the "business" of schools is "the distribution of information" (Ravitch, 2008). "True reform demands distance

from education experts," said Chester Finn, president of the Fordham Foundation. Finn is also associated with American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence, which "promotes results-based accountability through monitoring and assessments of every school in order to streamline federal control over current educational policy" (Mulcahy and Irwin, 2008, p. 204).

A long history has led to this critical juncture. Mulcahy and Irwin (2008) argue that during the early 1900s, the industrial approaches of the standards and social efficiency movements were brought into the field of education in order to deskill teachers and place them under the efficient control of an authority. The idea has persistent appeal; even today, educational "reforms" often seem to concentrate on efforts to control teachers and the work of teaching. Many would not disagree that education, for its dependency on funding, is controlled much by voters and policymakers – and now foundations and profiteers. And, policymakers persist in further undermining the teaching profession with charter schools, right to work, and merit pay (Berube, 1996).

All of this calls into question why teachers and their organizations and unions tolerated a standards-driven system in education for so long. The equalization of opportunities for funding and the philosophy that students would be better prepared citizens and competitive workforce outweighed the fallout from comparisons of students and schools through test scores and rankings (Lewis, 1995). Teachers, in one small glimmer of hope in the late 1980s, benefited from the standards movement with an attempt to recognize education as a profession; federally funded coalitions were designed to create subject-area standards for teachers (Lewis, 1995). However, the standards movement, which "devolved into a matter of political bravura," (Relic, 2000, para. 4) ultimately contributed to the deprofessionalization of teachers as it further reduced local control and forced schools to comply with state and federal mandates that were absent of teacher

input (Glickman, 2000; Hargreaves and Shirley, 2008; Relic, 2000). “No other school reform can match the nation’s standards and accountability movement in size, speed, and momentum. Foundations and business executives, school officials and newspaper editorial boards have all lined up behind the idea” (Lindsay, 2000, para. 7); the sheer momentum of the movement matched the degree that it devalued and isolated those in teaching.

Deprofessionalization

Many of the recent trends and reforms presented in the literature point to teachers who feel disempowered and deprofessionalized. Ironically, opportunities for teachers to appear involved have increased in the most recent decade through social networks and teacher-voice groups (Brown, 2015; Pennington, 2013); however, the vast majority of teachers believe they still have limited involvement in federal and state education policy (Berliner and Glass, 2014; Duncan, 2014; National Network of State Teachers of the Year, 2015; Ravitch, 2011). The National Network of State Teachers identified five structures to professionalize teaching and promote teacher leadership, citing “Teaching does not facilitate policy and advocacy engagement by design” (National Network of State Teachers of the Year, 2015, p. 6). The Phi Delta Kappan/Gallup Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools (October 2014) indicated that teachers, when grouped with 12 other professions, are least likely to indicate, “my opinion seems to matter at work” (Bushaw and Calderon, 2014; Gallup, 2014, 1970). US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said only five percent of teachers believe they have a voice in state policy and two percent feel this way about national policies (Duncan, 2014). Many believe there is a history of others making decisions for them. This particular belief is well founded. Texas lawyer Sandy Kress and Texas-based domestic affairs advisor and lobbyist David Dunn—neither of whom had formal training in education or experience as a classroom

teacher—assisted the principal author of No Child Left Behind, Margaret Spellings, who also had no experience or training in education (Berliner and Glass, 2014; Ravitch, 2011). Additionally, educational novices, such as corporations and foundations, have influence and an increasingly extensive voice in public education policy. Notably, the mission of The Broad Foundation, established in 1999, is to shape public education —through no mention of involvement of teachers or educational scholars – with extensive contributions to projects based in school management and a targeted audience not of teachers but school board members, superintendents, principals, union leaders, policy leaders, and entrepreneurs. Other foundations, such as Fordham and Bradley, seek centralized authority and promotion of school choice and charter schools (Ravitch, 2011). These foundations are a source of frustration for teachers who believe businessmen and policymakers dominate educational policy, almost always without input from educators; it reinforces the notion that teachers are no more than lower-skilled industrial workers who are disposable and interchangeable (Berliner and Glass, 2014; Rotherham, 2012).

Despite the need for a professional status akin to law, medicine, and engineering, the teaching workforce is too often made up of poorly paid, predominantly young, inexperienced women who transition quickly out of teaching (Berliner and Glass, 2014; Inui, 2003). In the 1980s, as Diane Ravitch pointed out (2011), "the idea of teacher professionalism became an antique notion; far more compelling was the search for teachers who would get the scores up" (p. 178). Equally disregarded in a discussion on professionalism, the teacher's voice in test creation was discounted and unsolicited. Instead, foundations sought a transformation of the American education system that omitted the input of local communities and experienced educators. Ravitch (2011) continues: "Their boldness was unprecedented. Never in American history had private foundations assigned themselves the task of restructuring the nation's education system" (p.

199). Untouched by voters and unmonitored by any form of public oversight or review, in 1998 four foundations accounted for 30 percent of funds provided to schools by the top fifty donors. In five short years, the boldness of foundations and their influence grew: The Bill and Melinda Gates, Eli and Edythe Broad, and Walton Family foundations became the top three philanthropies in education (Ravitch, 2011), leading the pack of the four billion dollars donated annually to advance market-based agendas based on ideologies of choice, data-based decision-making, competition, accountability, and de-regulation to overhaul public education (Barkan, 2011).

In thrall to the deep and unscrutinized pockets of foundations, and regularly subjected to highly publicized intrusions from elected officials, teachers lost more and more of their rights to making curricular and pedagogical decisions. Packaged curricula and quick fixes to improve test scores overran the battle for professional identities (Barkan, 2011); a "political negotiation among people who are neither knowledgeable about teaching nor well educated" (Ravitch, 2011, p. 225), led by policymakers and legitimized by powerful private foundations, eclipsed attempts of professionalism of teachers for decades.

All Business: Fordist Ideology and Taylorism for Management

Literature surrounding business models inflicted upon education is plentiful. Those driving decisions in public education became increasingly reminiscent of a Fordist theology and a capitalist market that focuses on streamlined production and simplified tasks performed by semi-skilled workers. Taylorism, created by Frederick Taylor in the 1880s, is based on the premise that the labor process be disassociated from the skills of the workers. Like Taylor, who had managers gather all information possessed by workmen in order to reclassify and tabulate it then reduce it to rules, laws, and formulae (Braverman, 1998), policymakers and foundations

have created rules, laws, and formulae that focus on teacher evaluation, standardization, and testing. As a result, they have according to Braverman (1998) "cheapened the worker by decreasing his training and enlarging his output" (para. 39).

A second principle in Taylorism is the replacement of the individual workman's judgment with the establishment of rules and laws. Disregarding the workers' personal experience and planning input, management creates a new system in which workers have no voice. In line with Taylor's third principle, a "monopoly over knowledge to control each step of the labor process and its mode of execution" (para. 18) is then born. In essence, Taylor believed work is best performed when planned by management and given to workers in the form of detailed orders and discrete, prescribed tasks (Braverman, 1998).

The parallels between the "educational reform" of contemporary foundations and corporations and the industrial reform of an earlier age are hard to miss. The recent environment of teachers is, in fact, quite comparable to factory workers in the early decades of the 20th century. Few industrial jobs required much knowledge or craftsmanship in those decades; the basic literacy skills provided in recitation-based classrooms were enough for this workforce. The management of the workforce of educators by supervisors is similar as well. As with factory workers, a cheap, docile, replaceable, quantity-over-quality workforce of teachers is preferred over the expense of paying teachers at a wage comparable to other professionals or educating all teachers at a university standard instead of replacing them with alternative certifications (Clinchy, 1998; Temin, 2003; Tucker, 2015).

The notion of factory systems began to work its way into education around the turn of the century and reached its high point during the 1920s and 1930s. Later, John Dewey and the progressive education movement humanized the influence of the factory system. Demands to

educate all students, instead of just the privileged, presented a substantial obstacle that could not be met by relying on a cheap-teacher industrial model (Clinchy, 1998). Decisions that were once exclusive to management became required of teachers, who needed to exercise their judgment (Tucker, 2015). Still, educational models that borrowed from business persisted. In the 1980s the New Public Management (NPM) model arose, which presumed to replace inefficiency with hierarchical bureaucracy. The hierarchy was provided by the school system, which devised ways to rank order the performance of students in all schools on a common basis, to present a "survival of the fittest" structure with policymakers controlling superintendents who control principals who control teachers who ultimately control students through standardized testing -- "control of control" at various levels of auditing. This type of market worked with reforms in the US health-care system in the 1990s. When applied to public education, principals controlled schools through tests and targets; accountability was shifted away from politicians by design. This managerial mindset opened the pathway to support for audits and benchmarks and the standards-based movement as part of efficient and low cost reforms. These factory methods, such as inflexibility and interchangeability known to industrialists, drove the educational machine to standardization through achievement tests (quality-control mechanisms) (Clinchy, 1998; Holt, 2001; Tucker, 2015). NPM and the industrial factory systems that preceded it create powerful hierarchies and ends-driven programs. In education, these factory systems are responsible for the renewed interest in performance-based pay (Holt, 2001) and a host of other reforms that reduces autonomy, skills development, career fulfillment, and professionalism.

Teach for America's Contribution to Teacher Deprofessionalization

The popularization of programs like Teach for America (TFA) further supports the notion that professional teachers are becoming disposable. Wendy Kopp proposed that Teach for

America could turn out, in a few weeks' time, what it took at least four years for a university to create (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Ravitch, 2011): a proficient teacher. The four basic assumptions of TFA are these:

1) Teacher preparation programs wield little influence on teacher effectiveness;
2) Education graduates are among the least academically capable to teach;
3) Subject-matter knowledge and general intelligence are more significant than training in learning theory, curricular development, and child development;
4) School districts assume responsibility for mentorship and training of teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1994).

Kopp believed graduates from elite colleges and universities could more aptly address achievement gaps with low-income students. Philanthropists supported her vision with millions of dollars in contributions in the 1990s. By 2009, TFA had spread to 18 sites and had placed 2,500 teachers. TFA now annually contributes about 10,000 teachers annually, and some have founded their own charter schools (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Ravitch, 2011).

Nearly 50 years ago, the vision of a program that provides substitutions for teachers was vastly different. Literature of the 1960s and 1970s is replete with proposals of similar programs, including Teacher Corps and other federally funded recruitment programs that provided scholarships and forgivable loans to talented college students who pursued a career in teaching. These programs included intensive university-based and school-based training and seminars, closely mentored internships, and district and university-sponsored supports for learning. Congress passed similar incentives for preparation of doctors (Darling-Hammond, 1994).

TFA's training program is significantly less involved. TFA has students complete a "portfolio assessment" as a substitute for state licensing requirements and a teaching degree. The

portfolio begins in a summer institute and is completed in the first two weeks of teaching; instructional and evaluation strategies as well as standards for instruction are not included in the portfolio. During the two-year commitment, TFA's support is as limited as it was in the beginning of the program. Most TFA teachers in urban districts leave at the conclusion of the two-year commitment, and 80 percent leave teaching after year three or four (Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Ravitch, 2011).

Instead of addressing the broad range of issues that influence teacher dissatisfaction, policymakers continue to push programs for mid-career switches or quick and easy substitutions for teacher preparation programs (Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012). Many states, like West Virginia, have adopted alternative criteria for teaching certificates and for added endorsements to existing licenses. Without any further coursework, a credentialed teacher may add an additional endorsement by passing a content area test (West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5202). Men, minority groups, and mid-career entrants are especially attracted to the alternative preparation programs (Johnson et al., 2005); however, they leave teaching at a rate higher than that of other teachers (Ravitch, 2011).

"Social Saviors" No More: The Image of Today's Teacher

The public's opinion of teachers, once similar to the respect given servicemen, firefighters, or police officers, is at a historical low (Kuhn, 2014). Many join the teaching profession because of its "heroic callings to public service," but the public perception of teachers has drastically declined over the years. Some even deny the call to serve that brings many to teaching by portraying teachers as "takers" (Kuhn, 2014). Many factors that make the work increasingly unappealing to teachers: lack of input on policy, unrealistic expectations, discipline concerns, and responsibilities that reach well beyond content mastery (Ben-Peretz, 2001; Byrd-

Blake, et. al., 2010; Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996; Ingersoll and Perda, 2012; Ingersoll and Perda, 2008; Riggs, 2013). The lack of respect from the public, however, is a "more overarching issue that may be more generally corrosive to the attractiveness of the job than any other complaint" (Kuhn, 2014, p. 87). In 2012, forty-four percent of teachers reported they were very satisfied with their job, a drop of 15 percent from 2009, according to *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* (2013, 2012) (Resmovits, 2012). This affects job satisfaction and contributes to a high turnover rate as significant numbers of teachers leave for reasons other than retirement (Ingersoll, 2002).

The annual turnover in teaching (16.8 percent) is similar to police officers and higher than that of nursing; it is substantially higher than the highly respected professions of law, architecture, and engineering (Ingersoll & Perda, 2012; Luekens et al., 2004). Urban and rural public schools have higher teacher turnover rates, as do schools in areas characterized by high poverty and those with high concentrations of minority students. Minority teachers leave the profession at a significantly higher rate than white teachers. First year teachers claim the highest turnover rate, with 40-50 percent leaving within five years (Ingersoll and Perda, 2012). Notably, working conditions in regard to autonomy and teacher discretion or influence over school-wide decisions are significant factors in teacher turnover (Ingersoll & May, 2011a, 2011b). Teachers, regardless of experience levels, have been leaving the profession in droves since the late 1980s, ironically when the standards movement, business model reforms, and marketization of education by big business reshaped education in profound and unprecedented ways, with the support of policymakers (Ingersoll & Perda, 2012). The lack of regard for teachers as professionals contributes to the decline in the teaching force as well as the ability of the teaching

force. It is a vicious cycle; greater salary, respect, and empowerment would reap a more professional and academically astute workforce.

Summary

In essence, teaching has become so deprofessionalized by mandates, top down decision-making, standardization, and ever-increasing scrutiny that rising turnover rates and a growing influx of ill-prepared and inexperienced teachers has created instability in the occupation. Compound this with the fact that pay rates and working conditions are steering good candidates away from the profession, and the academic caliber of candidates is dwindling, and it begins to seem that the American teaching force is returning to what it was at its inception: "a mass occupation that was relatively low-paying, temporary, and suited predominantly for young, inexperienced women, prior to starting their real career of child rearing" (Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Lortie, 1975 Tyack, 1974). Students' declining commitments to learning, many parents' decreasing abilities to guide and support their children, and increasing perceptions on the part of policymakers and the public that teachers are disposable, is making it increasingly difficult for many teachers to want to remain in the profession (Gates Foundation Scholastic Survey, 2012; Kuhn, 2012).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This study explored the lived experiences of contemporary teachers who are trying to navigate the current culture of deprofessionalization. Using visual and narrative methods, participants explored their teacher identities and documented deprofessionalization in their daily work lives. A qualitative design, with an emphasis on participatory action research, was utilized because the study sought to engage teachers, to prompt reflection, and to encourage expression in order to change practice (Creswell, 2009). The nature of the study, and its concern with the patterns and correlation of meaning in human experience as described by a small group of participants, lent itself well to phenomenological research (Creswell, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). Elements of narrative research were also vital as participants, in an authentic setting, were asked to provide stories about their experiences (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2009).

I chose a participatory approach for this study as a way to address the politics and political agendas imposed upon teachers today (Creswell, 2009; Neuman, 2000). The visual and participatory approach known as Photovoice, which grew out of Paulo Freire's empowerment education, feminist theory, and documentary photography (Kuratani and Lai, 2011; Wang and Burris, 1994), was selected as an appropriate tool to both document individual experience and encourage group dialogue and critical reflection within the teacher community (Kuratani and Lai, 2011; Wang and Burris, 1994). I believe that these approaches, when combined, lead to change in individual self-image and a pursuit of advocacy for other teachers (Kuratani and Lai, 2011; Wang and Burris, 1994).

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

Two theoretical frameworks established the foundation of this study: empowerment education theory and feminist theory. The method itself drew upon the ideas and practices that underlie documentary photography. Paulo Freire's empowerment education theory encourages individuals to educate themselves about community needs through data collection of these self-identified needs in order to facilitate critical reflection and dialogue that drives empowerment (Freire, 1993/1970; Kuratani and Lai, 2011; Strack, et al., 2010; Wang and Burris, 1994). Feminist theory, particularly its emphasis on the "social self" and social bonds between people in a community that create an identity and individual conscience, was involved in the framework of this study (Grumet and Stone, 2000). It was also important to note the role of feminist theory in the historical context of education as well as what Anne Forer (1967) discussed as "raising her own consciousness" and Kathie Sarachild (1967) later referred to as "consciousness-raising," which aims to call attention to issues of injustice (Brownmiller, 2000; Echols, 1989, p. 83). Lastly, vulnerable populations use documentary photography in order to share their stories and views (Kuratani and Lai, 2011). Photovoice uses documentary photography in a way that includes diverse voices and expands forms of representation to define and improve social, political, and health realities (Wang and Burris, 1994).

With these theoretical and methodological frameworks in mind, visual and narrative methods were utilized during the course of study. Participant-created representations and stories aimed to generate awareness, improve self-confidence, empower individuals, and effect change (Pain, 2012). Freire used pictures or codes to represent community concerns and stimulate dialogue and analysis (Strack et al., 2010); visual methods, as a whole, tend to encourage collaboration, mutual trust, and respect (Freire, 1993/1970; Pain, 2012). This study's aim was to

explore authentic experiences in order to raise critical consciousness among teachers and influence change.

Paulo Freire's Empowerment Education Theory

Paulo Freire developed what came to be known as critical pedagogy at the end of the 1960s. His aim was to help the oppressed of Latin America (Gordon, 2003; Gottesman, 2010), but Richard Shaull (1993) argues that Freire's empowerment education theory and methodologies are equally relevant for addressing the problems of education in the United States. Believing that subjectivity and objectivity are dialectically and mutually dependent, Freire argued that people have the choice—and responsibility—to change their circumstances. Freire emphasized the importance of social context to define lives; not understanding the power of social context can, he asserted, lead to "blaming the victim" or, in Freire's studies, condemning the poor and homeless for their own destitution (Gordon, 2003). In the same manner, teachers are often blamed for their students' poor standardized tests scores and other misconstrued measures of student learning. This characterizes current educational reforms that take an objectivist view and operate as if the processes—and results—of education can somehow stand apart from social forces and problems (Gordon, 2003). Objectivists call for a passive relationship devoid of active inquiry, critical thinking, and authentic understanding (Freire, 1993/1970; Gordon, 2003) refers to this as "banking education," a concept where the actions of the oppressed "extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits" (Kindle Locations 991-994) and where "knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (Kindle Locations 998-999).

The rise of critical educational studies over the past three decades can be attributed to Freire, who tirelessly advocated for social justice and for education's central role in promoting

social change (Giroux, 2008; Giroux, 2009; Gottesman, 2010; Leonardo, 2004). Grounded in Marxist ideas of material relations and economic justice, Freire utilized critical theory and relationships between society through descriptive, explanatory and normative analysis to emphasize liberation as the basis of his theory (Freire, 1993/1970; Gottesman, 2010; Marx, 1887). Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, rightfully so, refers to leadership and its people as "teachers and students" who relied on shared dialogue to drive "common reflection and action" to create an awareness and revolution (Freire, 1993/1970; Gottesman, 2010).

Prior to the 1980s, Freire was little known among scholars within the academic field of education (Gottesman, 2010). Frustration among those same educational scholars during the Reagan/Bush years brought Freire's philosophies to the forefront (Gottesman, 2010). The most fundamental tenet of Freire's dialogical teaching, and the most enduring, relies on a process of learning and knowing that is created in the dialogic process (Freire, 1993/1970). Freire's pedagogy includes a dialectical approach that allows individual participants to ascertain a "consciousness about one's position within the social order" (Gottesman, 2010, p. 392). Freire believes "people need to be able to label their world, assess it, and then act as an agent to change it" (Cohn, 1988, p. 5; Freire, 1971/1968). Education involves "praxis," which includes analysis, discussion, and action to change, create anew, or learn from a situation (Harmon, 1975). In the praxis of liberatory education, both the oppressor and the oppressed are changed (Freire, 1993/1970; Harmon, 1975).

Freire (1993/1970) wrote, "as long as the oppressed remain unaware of the causes of their condition, they fatalistically 'accept' their exploitation. Further they are apt to react in a passive and alienated manner when confronted with the necessity to struggle for their freedom and self-affirmation" (Kindle Locations 851-853). I see parallels between Freire's description of the

oppressed and those who labor in the contemporary teaching workforce. Following one of Freire's (1993/1970) most central ideas, that "human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection" (Kindle Locations 1254-1255), this study offered an opportunity, based upon the frameworks of Freire's critical theory, for teachers to explore common themes drawn from self-selected images and narratives that describe, experience, and reflect upon the current culture of deprofessionalization.

Dialogue, according to Freire (1993/1970), is "radically necessary to every authentic revolution" (Kindle Locations 1947-1948); this study proposed that the participants and I engage in critical thinking and open dialogue as co-investigators to identify "meaningful thematics" that link themes, pose themes as problems, and consider historical-cultural contexts of teachers (Freire, 1993/1970, Kindle Locations 1555-1556). The design included five themes, identified by my conversations with current teachers, for which the participants collected digital images for the purpose of a discussion of their "world of culture," which, by Freire's design, contributed to the discussion of other themes in a progressively critical way (Freire, 1993/1970, Kindle Locations 1784-1788). Educational empowerment studies build upon dialogue that promotes "liberating action" as a "permanent condition" in which the participants become "masters of their thinking by discussing the thinking and views of the world explicitly or implicitly manifest in their own suggestions and those of their comrades" (Freire, 1993/1970, Kindle Locations 1796-1800); this study allowed the participants and me to share experiences and reflections of teachers as they experience a culture of deprofessionalization.

Feminist Theory

Feminism has existed, in one form or another, in the field of education since feminists maintained that women needed to be educated in order to improve society and perform God's

work in the world (Caine, 1997, Delap, 2005; Offen, 1988; Taylor, 1983). For the purposes of this study, feminist ideas around presentation of "social self," as it applies to a community, identity, and individual conscience, was of particular concern (Grumet and Stone, 2000). Forer and Sarachild (1967) refer to the "consciousness-raising" within feminist theory (Brownmiller, 2000; Echols, 1989); it is a form of activism that was popularized by United States' feminists in the 1960s to focus attention on a cause (Echols, 1989). Education needs this kind of "consciousness-raising," more discussions among educators about issues in their lives that can raise awareness for themselves and others.

Historically in education, feminist theory was synonymous with a variety of arguments to improve women's personal, intellectual, emotional and spiritual emancipation: horror of idleness, belief in value of work, dignity of economic independence, and individual self-improvement (Schwartz, 2011). Many of these arguments are significant because they imitate the aspects of what Freire (1993/1970) indicated when considering the consciousness-raising movement of the 1970s; to paraphrase, women, for the first time, had earned "the right to say … her own world, to name the world" (Freire, 1993/1970, Kindle Locations 401-402). Kathleen Weiler (1994) indicates the fundamental aspect of "consciousness-raising" is reliance on experience and feeling. If people make links between experiences, feelings, and the structure in which they live, individual and community self-respect increases. This effect is even more profound when it becomes a shared response to an imperfect situation (Hughes, 1998). Feminist epistemologies, which spring from a moral/political stance in order to uphold freedom, justice and solidarity as well as attention to "self" or "subjectivity" for underrepresented or oppressed people (Griffiths, 1995), will likely prove significant to the plight of today's educator who finds himself repressed by standardization, marketization, and a big business take-over of education.

This study proposed that participants make a moral/political stance in order to draw attention to the manner in which their professional identity is attacked through acts of deprofessionalization (Griffiths, 1995).

Documentary Photography

Visual methodologies are intended to include the affected in representations and explorations of issues that influence them, so as to draw the attention of the public, researchers, and policymakers; they are, thus, a kind of participatory research. Visual methodologies also often include interviews and a mode of inquiry for the researcher, who is often engaged in social science inquiry (Mitchell, 2011). A broad range of tools is used in visual methods to engage participants, who are often "provoked" to tell authentic stories (Knowles and Cole, 2008). Visual methods vary in the participatory nature of the research as equally as the interpretive processes of the researcher and participants range from reflexivity to interpretive (Mitchell, 2011). The deliberate photographing of objects and places instead of people raises possibilities for working with the symbolic for community-based projects (Mitchell, Moletsane, Stuart, Buthelezi, and de Lange, 2005); the use of objects increases the interpretive possibilities, including social, autobiographical and historical narratives, within a broader social question (Mitchell, 2011). Admittedly, visual methods and approaches to research are relatively new, but they enrich critical social research for the "potential to raise (and answer) new and ongoing questions" (Mitchell, 2011, p. 50).

John Collier provided the first documented photo-elicitation in the 1950s (Harper, 2002, 1984; Heisley and Levy, 1991; Plunkett, Leipert, and Ray, 2013) when photographs were taken by the participant or researcher and utilized during the interview. Taking photographs as an orientation exercise enables researchers to gain an entry point to initiate conversations with

people who may not otherwise engage in conversation to share their perspectives and experiences (Hage, 2014; Mitchell, 2008; Pain, 2012). Using photographs in interviews allows a full flow of interviewing to continue through second and third interviews in ways that verbal interviews do not (Hage, 2014; Mitchell, 2008). As a prompt, metaphor to explore abstract ideas, or object to provide a shared focus, photo-elicitation is a tool to induce conversation, reduce misunderstanding, and promote shared understandings of issues (Hage, 2014; Harper, 2002, 1984; Heisley and Levy, 1991; Pain, 2012). This helps the researcher as well as the participant, who may be prone to poor language skills or other inhibitors (Hage, 2014; Pain, 2012). Others who have used visual participatory research include James Hubbard's (1994) work with Native American youth, Lana Wong's (2000) work with Nairobi children in the slums, Mary Brinton Lykes' (1997, 1999, 2001) work with women in war-torn Guatemala, and Wendy's work (1985, 1992, 1996, 2011) with children in Appalachia, northern Canada, India and South Africa (Mitchell, 2011).

QUALITATIVE STRATEGIES

Participatory Action Research

Participatory action research, more often used with qualitative research, was popularized during the 1980s and 1990s to better address social justice and research involving marginalized individuals (Creswell, 2009). Participatory action research is connected to politics, and an "action agenda for reform" to change participants' lives is an aspect of the end result (Creswell, 2009, p. 10). Collaboration between researcher and participants is integral in every detail of the research study design, from the questions to data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the participatory action was dialectical, as participants and I interpreted reality and history from the perspective of the current culture of a teacher (Creswell, 2009; Freire, 1993/1970). This

study examined the manners in which teachers are oppressed, as verified through individual narratives and visual representations in the context of a school, in order to influence change.

Phenomenological Research

The lived experience of teachers was integral to this study: How are they experiencing deprofessionalization and how does it affect their practices and identity? Phenomenology was the philosophy and method of inquiry utilized in this study to explore the experiences and authentic narratives of this small group of teachers. In the view of phenomenology, I collaborated with participants in order to identify and describe the central phenomenon that surrounds the deprofessionalization of teachers based on their experiences in the field (Creswell, 2009); significant statements, or emerging themes, in the participants' photographs and narratives compiled by me and used to generate additional discussion during interview sessions. The visual methods, narrative and interviews were utilized to construct this phenomenon in collaboration with the participants (Creswell, 2009).

Narrative Research

Narrative research requires that individuals provide stories of themselves; I, in order to encourage reflection and provide meaning, then combined these narratives or retold the participants' experiences in a narrative chronology (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2009). Embedded in this study's narrative research and central to the discussion of identity was the use of the photographs to explore the experiences of the teachers. Personal narratives were connected to the feminist theory frameworks of this study, as participants explored connections between personal experiences and social structures; the participants' and my interpretations of these experiences examined how the personal is associated with the political (Biklen, Marshall and Pollard, 2008).

The examinations of metaphors to describe experiences of student teachers and practicing teachers to explain their understanding of their identities are much reported in the literature (Ben-Peretz, 2001; Goldstein, 2005; Leavy, McSorley and Bote, 2007; Martinez, Salueda and Huber, 2001). The metaphors connect past and current experiences of teachers, and the narratives supported the discussion of identities and experiences (Conley, 1996). Despite the obvious power of metaphor as a vehicle for considering teaching, the metaphors we have come to associate with teaching need reconsideration as Lesnick (2005) points out. In suggesting that previously used metaphors may lack the power to describe teacher identities today, she argues for new metaphors for conceiving the profession and the identities within. This study provided an opportunity for the use of renewed metaphors as determined by the authentic reflections of the participants in this study.

Photovoice

Since its use in the 1990s, three goals have been established in the research that utilizes Photovoice: 1) reflection and documentation of personal and community concerns and strength; 2) promotion of group discussion of photographs for critical reflection and dialogue; 3) access to policymakers (Wang, 1999). Photovoice has been used for projects to represent the life cycle, in *Lifeline*, or the effects of Alzheimer's in *Still Life*, which features refrigerator doors with artifacts of Alzheimer's victims. These projects of Photovoice transfer the interview into visual representations to draw the attention of public, health care researchers, and health care policymakers (Mitchell, 2008; Moxley, Bishop, and Miller-Cribbs, 2015). Based upon the premise that individuals can best identify and present their own realities, Photovoice is a participatory research method that generates needs which lead to policy review and change (Hage, 2014; Harley, 2012). The change may be in the form of personal change in the life of a

participant or represented in social change (Hamilton Community Foundation, 2007; Moxley et al., 2015).

The duration of projects range from two weeks to several years in length, and the quality participation of a group of participants, which range from two to no more than 15 (Blackman and Fairey, 2007; Catalani and Minkler, 2010; Hage, 2014; Hamilton Community Foundation, 2007), is vital to a project. Photovoice was particularly important to this study for its ability to improve understanding among stakeholders, create dialogue, and drive awareness among participants who become their own change agents (Catalani and Minkler, 2010; Hage, 2014).

Photovoice is a visual method patented by Caroline Wang, who sought "a type of grassroots policy-making where populations whose voices are often absent from policy are given simple cameras to express their point of view on a particular issue" (Hage, 2014; Mitchell, 2011, p.51). The "through our eyes" approach offered in Photovoice was integral to this study (Mitchell, 2011, p. 70) because it affords an authentic representation that generates critical thought and communication directly from participants. Other reasons to use Photovoice vary: building rapport, facilitating communication, enabling expression of tacit knowledge, improving the researcher's access to difficult-to-reach places or groups, and promoting reflection (Hage, 2014; Moxley, et al., 2015; Pain, 2012). Participants share observations, including common experiences, and develop connections through facilitated discussions, exhibits, and debriefs. Issues immerge and participants may begin to consider themselves change agents (Hage, 2014; Kuratani and Lai, 2011; Pain, 2012; Wang and Burris, 1994). While teachers certainly are not subjected to homelessness or war-torn conditions, the rich, authentic perspective provided from the lived experiences of teachers is vital to increasing dialogue, in a manner not heavily researched, on the issue of deprofessionalization.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. How do participants see themselves as teachers?
2. How do participants believe others see them as teachers?
3. How does the current culture of deprofessionalization express itself in teachers' daily work lives?
4. How can participating in this project affect that experience?
5. How might teachers regain some measure of influence and control over their profession?

RESEARCH DESIGN

The goal of this study was to examine the authentic experiences of teacher and increase dialogue in order to raise consciousness in regard to teachers' experiences and reflection upon their current culture of deprofessionalization. A qualitative design model, coupled with a phenomenological and narrative approach, was utilized in the research design to encourage an environment of trust, dialogue, and reflection. This study proposed a utilization of the framework in Freire's educational empowerment theory to discuss the relationships between teachers and society via methods provided in Photovoice; the relationships between teachers and society was analyzed through descriptive and explanatory processes (Freire, 1993/1970; Gottesman, 2010).

Participant Identification and Visual Knowledge

After I identified seven K-12 teachers to serve as participants, I conducted a brief, individual conference with each to provide an overview of visual ethics as identified by Hamilton Community Foundation (2007) and Marion and Crowder (2013): representational authority, circulation of images, presumed and actual outcomes, responsibility to others, and informed consent of subjects (pp. 6-7). To an extent, participants served as researchers in order

to capture the images, or "visual field notes" (Marion and Crowder, 2013); when used in conjunction with the researcher's observations, interviews, and field notes, the images "invoke understandings in a way that words alone cannot" (Marion and Crowder, 2013). Other researchers such as Pink (2006) identify visual data as "pertinent in investigating embodied experiences" (p. 28), and Postma and Crawford (2006) claim that an "image speaks directly to the senses and emphasizes…social aesthetics and social interaction, instead of ideas, meanings, and concepts" (p. 2).

Because the images are particularly important to the research, participants received what Marion (2011) describes as key considerations: choose topics agreeable to visual depiction; ignore images that duplicate content of other images; seek images that explain, provide insight or understanding; juxtapose images for comparison and greater understanding; incorporate captions or words to advance understanding (p. 33). During this individual conference, participants received Appendix C, which included an overview sheet for the study with a statement of the "researcher's intent" (Marion and Crowder, 2013): Your role in this study is to use a smartphone as a tool to capture symbols, objects, and scenes that elicit your reflection, provide understanding for others, or analyze effects based upon the five assigned prompts during the 10-week period. The overview included, as identified by Blackman and Fairey, in *The PhotoVoice Manual* (2007) key points for the project, including the study's overall goal, specific aims, and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound) objectives for each aim (Appendix C).

Population

Seven currently employed teachers in grades K-12 of public education were participants of this study. A minimum sample size of six was considered for the study; a maximum of 10 individuals were asked to participate via email solicitation. Teachers from Harrison and Taylor

counties were selected through purposeful sampling, selection of individuals "who will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (Creswell, 2009, p. 178) and emergent leads. This study was limited to adults only, and no images that would explicitly identify individual students or specific locations were used in the project. Participants used a personal cell phone. Participants were limited to Harrison and Taylor counties.

DATA COLLECTION & INTERPRETATION

Image and Narrative Collection

With some expectations for future attendance and participation during the two focus group discussions, the participants used Photovoice to facilitate dialogue on five prompts chosen by myself. Given the familiarity with smartphones and the prominence of digital images in their modern culture, I assumed that the participants' visual literacy was sufficient for successful participation in this project. I also believed that a workshop on composition, including cropping within the frame, foreground and background relationship, proximity or distance, and diagonal division of the frame for effect (Blackman and Fairey, 2007) was not necessary.

During the individual conference, participants reviewed the timelines, prompts, and procedures identified for the submission of digital images (Appendix C.). The partnership of caption and image was discussed at this conference. Blackman and Fairey (2007) tell us "strong captions tell the viewer something about the photographer's intentions or what a photograph means to them emotionally, and enable the audience to empathize" (p. 95). For effect and instructional purposes on Photovoice, I provided and discussed with each participant a sample packet of photographs from Photovoice projects. Some were devoid of captions, and some were paired with captions to demonstrate the significance of text for reflection, voice, and understanding. I collected the email of participants during this meeting and indicated that

submission of photographs and captions, reminders of prompts and deadlines, and arrangements for the two focus group sessions in the future were communicated via email. Consent for use of images was secured (Appendix D). With regard to confidentiality and anonymity, I informed prospective participants that anonymity could not be guaranteed but I would maintain confidentiality in the dealings with individual participants and would not share images or captions with other project participants without that individual's consent. For participation in the two audio-recorded focus groups, participants could opt to be interviewed separately from the group in order to maintain their confidentiality. If, during the course of the focus group discussions, expressions of discontent with particular jobs or colleagues occur, I would not include such materials in the presentation of the study without explicit permission for use of these materials and with understanding that the participant would not be identifiable.

Over the 10-week period, the main form of data collection in this study was digital collections and two focus groups. Participants collected and submitted a minimum of 15 images (three images for each prompt) during the study. The project's five research questions served as a foundation to prompts for participants' self-created digital photographs:

1. How do you see yourself as a teacher?
2. How do you believe others see you as a teacher?
3. How does the current culture around teaching affect teachers' daily work lives?
4. How can participating in this project affect your experience as a teacher?
5. How might you regain some measure of influence and control over your profession?

The project was divided into five two-week periods. At the conclusion of each two-week period, I compiled the images and captions submitted by participants into a PowerPoint presentation. Additionally, each submission was printed as an 11 X 17 image in order to be

displayed throughout a room during the focus groups (Figure 1). These processes allowed the me to identify and index common themes and the participants to describe, experience, and reflect further upon the particular prompts or themes. At the end of week four, the first focus group was conducted to increase dialogue and reflection; participants discussed how the teaching profession is perceived and defined. "Discussing and editing images is one of the most important parts of a Photovoice project," note Blackman and Fairey (2007), so the first focus group interview session was integral to generate discussion and insight for the research and the whole group in order that it may be carried on into the remaining six weeks of the study.

Identifying Emergent Themes

Throughout the study I identified emerging themes in the participants' digital collections. During the final focus group, the participants were asked to identify the emerging themes reflected in the collection of images and narratives. I provided participants with PowerPoint slides that contained images that received a ranking during the first focus group session when the participants were asked to rank, with a #1-6, the images and captions that elicit an emotion from prompts 1 and 2. Also included were all images and captions received from participants for prompts three and five (Appendix J). During the focus group, participants were asked to review the picture cards provided, reading the narratives and reviewing the images. They were asked to identify the themes that emerge in the photographs and list them.

Focus Group Discussion: Part One

In accordance with narrative research, I collected and retold the participants' experiences in a narrative chronology via a PowerPoint. Each participant received this collection of images for the first time at the focus group sessions. In the fashion of an art gallery, each of the participants' images were displayed throughout the room before the first focus group session

began. The framing questions for the session, which further elaborate on the first two prompts (How do you see yourself as a teacher? How do you believe others see you as a teacher?), were provided at the session to each participant on a Focus Group Guidance card (Appendix E):

1. What images best show the teaching profession?
2. In what ways and by whom are teachers defined?
3. What are the greatest obstacles or threats to how others perceive teachers?

Participants were encouraged to walk around the room and view the images and captions before beginning the focus group discussion. The participants completed activities that asked them to rank the images by emotional importance and to select the image that elicited the greatest level of fear, anger, love, and hope (Blackman and Fairey, 2007). Finally, participants were provided the SHOWED activity (Appendix F), which asked them to review the PowerPoint of images and captions for prompts one and two and complete for email submission at a later time. As recommended in strategies of the *Photovoice Manual*, "the use of text enables participants to draw audiences further into their worlds" (Blackman and Fairey, 2007, p. 94), so this untimed activity was vital for participants' critical reflection after the focus group.

This session was audio recorded for my future review and incorporation into the subsequent group interview. I reviewed and categorized the printed images and the participants' rankings and emotional designations after the focus group session.

Focus Group Discussion: Part Two

Mindful of emerging themes and the participants' roles to collaborate with me and I with them, the study solicited continuous input that shaped and reshaped evolving interpretations. In Photovoice, the "pictures are often compelling and may draw people into a dialogue with photographers regarding the issues" (Hamilton Community Foundation, 2007), so it was my

hope that images collected after weeks five through ten would yield more in-depth and profound discussion regarding how reflection upon the previous weeks' images and that of fellow participants affected a teacher's experience and how this could be used to extend some influence and control for their own profession. This was also the time when the I asked participants what change they would like to see from the project (Hamilton Community Foundation, 2007). The framing questions for Focus Group Two included (Appendix E):

- What is the current culture of teaching?
- How does the current culture affect your daily work life?
- What can you do to retain or regain influence in the teaching profession?

Participants were asked to use a clock organizer to describe a typical day in teaching, reflecting upon when the workday begins or ends, what is required during the eight-hour workday, and duties related to the profession during a typical 24-hour time period (Appendix I). Next, they were asked to review the images and captions submitted from prompt three: How does the current culture around teaching affect teachers' daily work lives? They were again asked to choose three pictures that elicited the most emotion for them from these prompts, with a ranking of #1 through #3, #1 representing the image that elicits the strongest emotion. Also, they were asked to identify the concrete cause and effect associated with the caption submitted (Blackman and Fairey, 2007). They placed three stickers (number ranking #1 through #3, cause, and effect) on each of the three pictures chosen. The participants were encouraged to reflect upon images that are not their own for this activity. Finally, participants reviewed the picture cards that contained the images and captions submitted for all five prompts during the 10-week study. They identified the themes that emerged in the photographs and captions. Based upon review of the images and captions, they identified the three main concerns impacting the current culture of

teaching. And finally, participants selected one image that best addresses what participants or the profession can do to counter the identified concerns.

Sharing the Voice

The experiences and findings of the research project will be shared with participants and at new teacher mentor trainings. Because presentations to influential audiences and policymakers are an integral aspect of Photovoice, I will take additional opportunities to provide the information to interested parties, such as boards of education and teacher preparation programs at higher education institutions. Most importantly, the benefits of the experience through Photovoice is integral in the development of the individual voices of participants for their ability "to speak about the issues that are bothering them, connect with others in their community, and advocate for change" (Hamilton Community Foundation, 2007).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

This study utilized a qualitative approach to investigate perceptions surrounding teachers and the teaching profession. The study's aim was to elucidate, through qualitative methodologies, elements of the teachers' authentic voice as it relates to the construction of educational policy, instructional design, and professional identity. The hope was that this study would add to research surrounding the current culture of deprofessionalization of teachers. Two additional purposes of the study included: introduction of Photovoice as a reflection tool for teachers to use personally and/or as an instructional tool in the classroom and creation of a public display that generates awareness of elements of the teaching profession to other groups. The research combined participant-created images and captions collected with two focus group discussions, to respond to five research questions.

Demographic Information

I chose at least one participant per programmatic level, all of whom had at least three years of experience. The following, identified by first name only by consent, participated: two K-6 teachers, Melissa and Danielle; one 5-8 teacher, Kayla; and four 9-12 teachers, Paula, Greg, Becky, and Emily. Their years of experience in public school education ranged from seven to 16 years (Table 1). All participants had earned a Master's degree or higher in an educational field; one participant had earned a doctorate in education. All participants identify as White. All participants currently teach at least one core content area; they are regular or special education teachers in the areas of mathematics, English language arts, social studies, or grade levels K-6.

Years of Experience	Number of Participants
0-5 Years	0
6-8 Years	2: Kayla, Emily
9-11 Years	2: Melissa, Greg

12-14 Years	2: Paula, Danielle
15 or > Years	1: Becky

Table 1. Years of Experience of Participants
The table represents the ranges of years of experience and number of participants per designated range in the study.

Participants were chosen from Harrison and Taylor counties and included individuals with which I had prior professional relationships and shared experiences; this purposeful sampling afforded a measure of comfortable and frank rapport All but two of the participants were unacquainted with each other. Harrison County School System is the seventh largest in West Virginia with nearly 11,000 students, who are served by 965 professional employees at 24 schools (Harrison County School System, 2016). The total population of the county is 69,000, and the median household income is $43,130 (United States Census Bureau, 2015). The school system is the third largest employer in Harrison County, behind the Federal Bureau of Investigation Crime Data Center and United Hospital Center (West Virginia Department of Commerce, 2016). The average gross salary of the county's over 700 teachers is $62,000-$64,000 (kindergarten to secondary), and all professional employees were recently given an $800 raise, through the renewal of a levy, on top of the state's annual increase for teachers (Harrison County School System, 2016).

Taylor County is one of 21 school systems in West Virginia with a total enrollment below 2,500 students; there are 2,450 students in five schools, including three elementary, one middle school and one high school in the Taylor County School System. The largest employers in Taylor County are Wal-Mart and Grafton City Hospital, and the school system employs fewer than 200 (West Virginia Department of Commerce, 2016). The county has a total population of just below 17,000 residents and a median household income of $40,000 (United States Census Bureau, 2015).

The study's seven participants responded to five prompts selected by me; each prompt was chosen to address teacher identities, perceptions of self and others as it relates to professional identity, and perceptions of the current culture surrounding teaching. All participants responded to the five prompts by capturing three digital photographic images and writing captions for each image; the participants then sent their three image-caption sets to me via email at the end of each two-week period. Additionally, all participants attended the first focus group session. Five attended the second session; two participants made arrangements for individual sessions for Focus Group Two, each one meeting separately with me due to a family vacation or professional development conflict. Each focus group session was grounded in framing questions, which are listed in Table 2. These framing questions, along with the two activities of the focus group session, were listed on a guidance document that was the size of a postcard (See Appendices VI and XV.); this document was provided to participants at the beginning of each focus group session.

Focus Group	Framing Questions Posed
Session One	What images best show the teaching profession?
	In what ways and by whom are teachers defined?
	What are the greatest obstacles or threats to how others perceive teachers?
Session Two	What is the current culture of teaching?
	How does the current culture affect your daily work life?
	What can you do to retain or regain influence in the teaching profession?

Table 2. Framing Questions for Focus Group Sessions
The table indicates the three framing questions utilized for each of two focus group sessions in the study.

Visual Display of Images

Figure 1 demonstrates that, for each focus group, I displayed participants' photographs and captions on a bulletin board or poster board in an art gallery fashion. Blackman and Fairey (2007) note that successful facilitation encourages many learning styles to draw participants into

the process. In keeping with the methods and aims of Photovoice, a particular emphasis was placed on the visual learning style in this project, however I also asked the participants to draw upon reading, writing, dialogue, social interactions, movement, and physical engagement. I printed all of participants' images for prompts one and two on 11X17 paper. Sitting at the table among the pictures and participants, I wanted these prints to serve as acknowledgements of participant's artfulness as well as tools to increase reflection and discussion; the images became centerpieces that generated further reflection on the research questions and discussion. On a smaller card beside the 11X17 paper, a 3X5 index card-sized slide of each image, its caption, and the assigned image number for reference (Appendix G) was hung so that participants could read the captions or create their own reflections based upon just the picture itself. I encouraged participants to review the display, inviting them to do as I had done and walk throughout the room to review the pictures for five to seven minutes before our session started.

Figure 1. Focus Group One Display of Photographs and Captions
This image demonstrates the manner in which participants' images and captions were displayed, in art gallery style, during Focus Group One.

Focus Group One: Activities Overview

During the initial focus group's first activity, I asked participants to use five minutes to rank the photographs displayed on the wall by emotional importance (Blackman and Fairey, 2007); they placed a numbered sticker #1 through #6 on images, with #1 designating the image that elicited the most emotion. As Blackman and Fairey (2007) describe, the process of ranking photographs encourages participants to quantify the significance of an issue for further reflection and discussion. In Figure 2, participants assigned the #1 sticker to seven different images that identified teaching or teachers in the captions as "consuming fire"; "superhero"; "play[ing] many roles such as informant, educators, problem-solver, confidant, cheerleader, referee as well as many other duties"; "lifesaver"; "one way"; a positive note from a student; or "cracked."

Figure 2. Participants Choose Images that Elicit the Strongest Emotion
This montage represents images with the highest ranking, #1, for elicitation of emotion during Focus Group One.

When I asked participants to discuss the similarities and differences among the images they ranked, they discussed the significance these particular images triggered because of the many roles and expectations thrust upon teachers, the manners in which teachers respond, and

the resulting perceptions of teachers. Four of these same images were also selected to elicit anger, hope, love, and fear. In Figure 3, the #2, which noted the image that elicited the second strongest emotion for a participant, was assigned to six images, with Image 12 (a teacher grading papers during his dinner) receiving the #2 ranking by two participants. Images 2, 5, 6, 12, 23, and 43, those that the captions identify teachers or teaching as "noble," "consuming fire," "superhero," "extra mile," "band-aide," and "cracked" were chosen. Four of these images were also associated with hope, love, anger, and fear.

Figure 3. Images That Elicited the Second Strongest Emotion Among Participants
The image includes the six images that were ranked #2 by participants during Focus Group One.

In Figure 4, six images (4, 5, 19, 26, 30, and 35) were identified with a #3; these associated teaching with work that takes precedence over personal life, or expressed perceptions of a distaste or lack of support for teachers among the public. The captions for these images included "consuming fire," "a complaint or an adventure," "one way," bus duty over instructional needs, or "a strong flavor that just does not appeal to everyone like the ramp…we are just a weed."

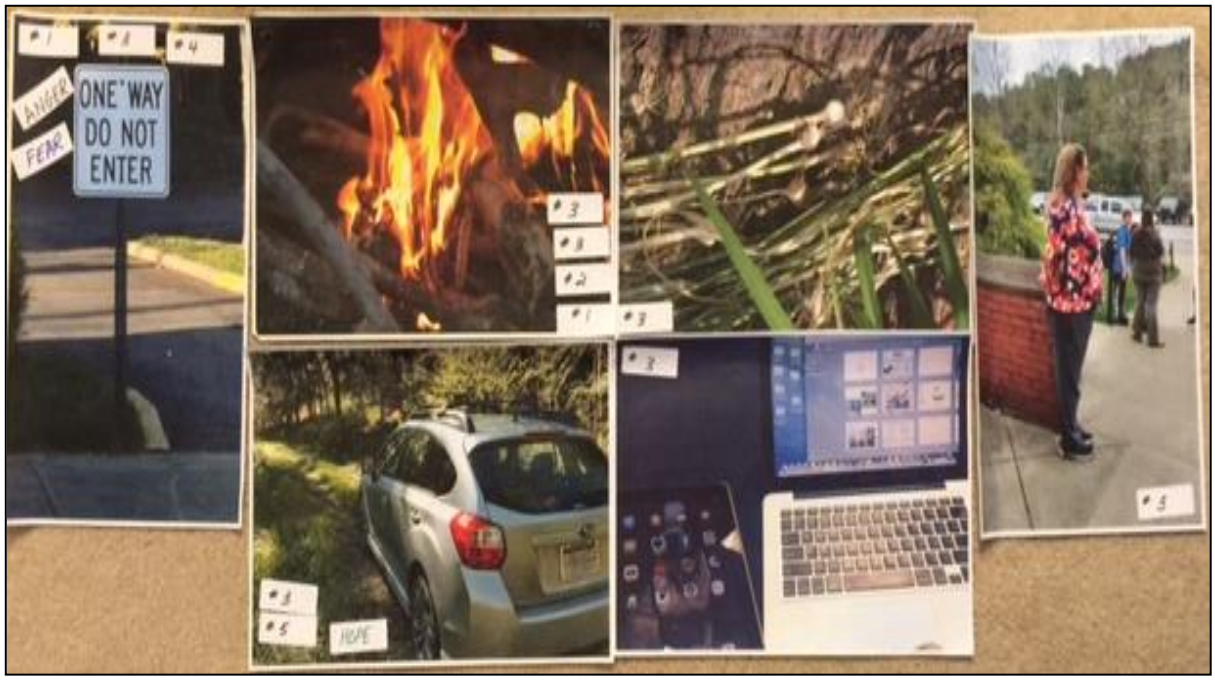


Figure 4. Images That Elicited the Third Strongest Emotion Among Participants
The image above includes those images ranked as #3 by participants during Focus Group One. Two of these images were also associated with anger, fear, or hope.

Table 3 shows that twenty-three of the images received at least one ranking from participants.

Image Number/ Title	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Average of Rankings
1: SCHOOL		1				1	4
2: WEEDS					1		5
3: COMPUTER			1				3
4: FIRE	1	1	2				**2.25**
5: HERO	1	1		2			**2.75**
6: HATS	1						**1**
7: TUTOR				1			4
8: DESK					1		5
9: COKE							0
10: NOVEL							0
11: BOWL		2					**2**
12: CAMPING							0
13: BATTERIES							0
14: TEACHER							0
15:LILY PADS							0
16:FLOWER				1	1	2	5.25
17:TACOS							0
18: SUBARU			1		1		4
19: NOTICE							0

20: FOUNDATION							0
21:GROUP							0
22: BANDAID		1					**2**
23: NEWSPAPER							0
24: LIFESAVERS	1						**1**
25: ONE WAY	1		1	1			**2.66**
26: HURDLES					1	1	5.5
27: BEACH							0
28: STUDENTS						1	6
29: BUS DUTY			1				3
30: HALL PASS							0
31: TEACHERS							0
32: BACKBEND							0
33:IVORY TOWER				1			4
34: RAMPS			1				3
35: DOG							0
36: PAN							0
37: FEET UP							0
38:RED				1	1		4.5
39: ORGANIZE							0
40: NOTE	1					1	3.5
41: NAILS							0
42: CRACK	1	1				1	3
43: CAPTAIN					1		5
44: DESKS							0

Table 3. Ranking Elicitation of Emotion
Participants were asked to consider all images and rank, using stickers identified with #1 through #6, images and captions that elicited the strongest emotions in response to the framing questions during Focus Group One. The average of the participants' rankings are identified in the final column of the table.

In Figure 5, three or more participants selected these five images (Images 5, 6, 17, 26, 43) to receive a #1 through #6 ranking. Participants believed these five images elicited the strongest emotions to the framing questions about defining teachers, the teaching profession, or obstacles to teaching. In order of the average of the rankings given to each picture, these images include the "consuming fire," "one way," "superhero," "Education is cracked," and a "professional."

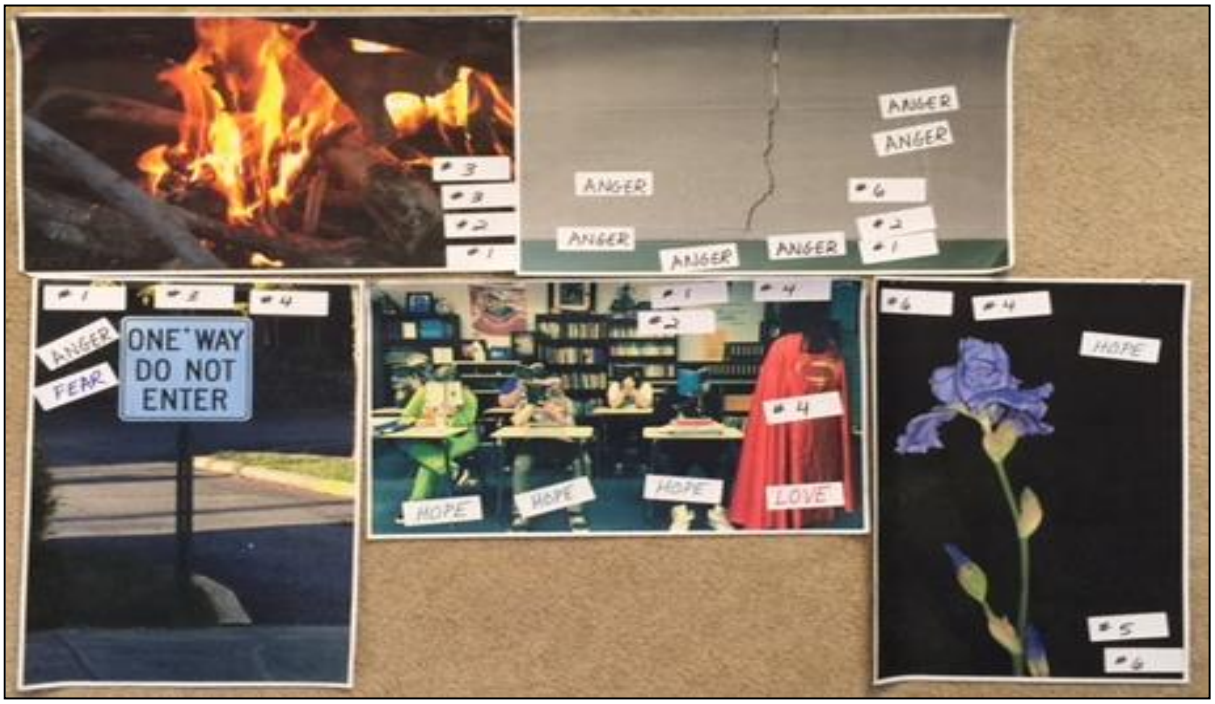


Figure 5. Images Ranked by Three or More Participants
This image represents the five pictures that were selected by three or more participants with a ranking of #1 through #6 for elicitation of emotion during Focus Group One.

Some images were ranked by at least two participants. In Figure 6, participants selected six images that elicited high emotions for them, designated with a ranking of #1 through #6; these include, in the order of the lowest average of the rankings to the highest, images 12, 41, 2, 19, 39, and 27.

Figure 6. Images Ranked by At least Two Participants
The montage represents the six pictures, ranked #1 through #6, by at least two participants for elicitation of emotion during Focus Group One.

In these, the images and associated captions emphasize "off the clock" work, an appreciative note from a student to teacher, a "part of something very old and noble," "either a complaint or an adventure," and "public and policy makers [who] expect us to have everyone finish the race at the same time."

During the final phase of the first activity, I asked the participants to look at the pictures and identify and label with a sticker four pictures for which the image and caption elicited the greatest level of 1) anger; 2) fear; 3) love; and 4) hope. This exercise is one of many to generate discussion of the images so that participants can begin to reflect upon what the images are communicating and become more comfortable in identification of themes (Blackman and Fairey, 2007). Table 4 contains a listing of all photographs submitted for prompts one and two, including the 18 photographs that were neither marked for eliciting a specific emotion (fear, love, hope, or anger) nor ranked as an image that elicits any emotion (#1 through #6, with #1 being the strongest) in response to the Focus Group One framing questions:

- What images best show the teaching profession?
- In what ways and by whom are teachers defined?
- What are the greatest obstacles or threats to how others perceive teachers?

Image Number	Anger	Fear	Hope	Love
1: SCHOOL			1	1
2: WEEDS		1		
3: COMPUTER				
4: FIRE				
5: HERO			**3**	1
6: HATS				
7: TUTOR				
8: DESK				
9: COKE				

10: NOVEL				
11: BOWL		1		1
12: CAMPING			1	
13: BATTERIES				
14: TEACHER				
15:LILLY PADS				
16:FLOWER			1	
17:TACOS				
18: SUBARU			1	
19: NOTICE				
20: FOUNDATION				
21:GROUP				
22: BANDAID				
23: NEWSPAPER				
24: LIFESAVERS				
25: ONE WAY	1	1		
26: HURDLES				
27: BEACH				
28: STUDENTS				
29: BUS DUTY				
30: HALL PASS				
31: TEACHERS				
32: BACKBEND				
33:IVORY TOWER				
34: RAMPS				
35: DOG				
36: PAN				
37: FEET UP		1		
38:RED		1		
39: ORGANIZE				
40: NOTE				4
41: NAILS				
42: CRACK	6			
43: CAPTAIN				
44: DESKS		2		

Table 4. Identification of Specific Emotions
Participants were asked to use stickers, labeled as "love," "hate," "fear," "anger," to identify one image that elicits these emotions most strongly. The photo and image numbers are bolded to distinguish those identified by multiple participants.

Next, I brought the participants back to the Focus Group I Guidance card, which was printed on postcard-sized cardstock and provided at the beginning of each focus group session (Appendix E), and asked them to individually brainstorm for 10 minutes on the following

prompt: *How does this montage of four pictures you have selected tell the viewer what teaching is and the impact others have on teaching?* Then, participants discussed their responses as a whole group.

I wanted to continue the participants' reflection upon the images and captions they viewed during Focus Group One, so I provided an exercise rooted in the SHOWED activity of Photovoice (Appendix F). I asked the participants to choose one image submitted by their peers for prompts one and two and reflect upon it by answering the following questions, which are associated with the acronym, SHOWED:

- What is SEEN in the image? Describe what the eye sees.
- What is really HAPPENING in the image – the unseen "story" behind the image?
- How does this relate to OUR lives?
- WHY are things this way?
- How could this image EDUCATE people?
- What can I DO about it? What will I DO about it? What will we DO about it?

At the end of Focus Group One, I gave the SHOWED activity handout to participants to take with them to complete independently over a two-week period of time. The reflection time for SHOWED coincided with their reflection on prompt three, which asked them to define the current culture of teaching. I believed the SHOWED activity would serve as a reminder and transition into the activities that asked participants to reflect upon the perceptions of teachers as it applies to the current culture of teaching. The participants emailed the SHOWED activity to me for analysis.

Emerging Themes

Separately, between focus group sessions one and two, I reviewed the PowerPoint with

the images and captions for prompts one and two in order to identify emerging themes in the individual submissions of captions and images (Appendix G). For me, these included: the impenetrable and necessary superhero, the obligations and expectations beyond the work day, overcoming obstacles from the outside, the roles beyond teaching, and the negative perceptions of others. A summary of commonalities I identified in the images and captions from prompts one and two are represented in Table 5:

Total Images	Theme	Caption Words / Phrases	Image Numbers
11	The impenetrable and necessary superhero	"superheroes," "lifesavers," "greater than just today," "something beautiful," "abundance of patience," "flexible," "foundation," "batteries," "cultivator," "adventure car."	See Images 2, 6, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 25, 33, 37, and 41.
11	The negative perceptions of others	"only went into teaching to be coaches," "become teachers to have their summers off," "babysitter/parent/counselor to their youth first, and an imparter of knowledge second," "look[ing] down on us from their Ivory Towers," "strong flavor that just does not appeal to everyone so like the ramp, we are just a weed," "lazy profession that only works 10 months out of the year," "babysitter," "all I do is paint my fingernails and put on makeup," "one way," or "cracked," "anyone could do it [of teaching]"	See Images 24, 26, 28, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 42, 43, and 45.
8	The obligations and expectations beyond the work day	"something teachers are not obligated to do" "can do attitude, even in the face of adversity"; "private tutor," "extra mile," "leaves very little time for any socialization," "incredible amount of time making sure that I know the content," "health of the whole child," bus duty, hall duty.	See Images 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 18, 22, 30, 31.
4	The obstacles from the outside	testing, standardization, and student apathy, factors outside of education	See Images 3, 10, 16, 27.
4	The roles beyond teaching	"dad," "nurse, counselor, part-time mother," "informant, educator, problem-solver, confidant, cheerleader, referee," "person who helps alleviate problems that students may have"	See Images 7, 9, 23, 44.

Table 5. Emergent Themes As Identified By Researcher

The table includes the emergent themes, as identified by me, based upon the participants' submission of images for prompts one and two. These themes were identified prior to Focus Group One. Image numbers are coordinated with the slide numbers in Appendices G, H, J.

Focus Group Two: Activities Overview

To begin, I distributed a visual organizer of a clock and asked participants to list, in one-hour increments, a teacher's activities in a typical day (Appendix I). Next, participants were asked to identify the themes in the images and captions submitted for prompts one through five (Appendix J); all participants could identify at least three emerging themes and all of their responses are summarized in Table 6. Popular identifications among the participants include: collaboration (3 of 7 participants); the perception versus the reality of the profession (4 of 7 participants); motivation provided within the community of teachers (3 of 7 participants); and pressures and the results from the outside (5 of 7 participants).

Participant	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6
1	Collab-oration	Perception	Teacher culture	Importance of reflection	Pep-talk/ambi-tion	N/A
2	The fight – struggle to regain our profess-ion	The work of teaching	The faults – cracked	The hope – growth	N/A	N/A
3	What the job really is (not under-stood by outsid-ers)	How we succeed in spite of others (overcoming obstacles)	Only teachers can encourage teachers	Politics make education messy	The unreason-able is required	Outside forces get education off track
4	Identify-ing the problems in education	Becoming proactive for our profession	Getting back to the real purpose of education	N/A	N/A	N/A
5	Hope	Collabora-	Unity to	Overwhelm-	Child first	Reflect-

		tion	speak up	ed		ion
6	Calling of a teacher – seeing one's self as part of the old "respect-ed" profess-ion	Actual teacher being overwhelm-ed – staying positive regardless of the many hats of a teacher	The teaching community – being stronger together, collab-oration	N/A	N/A	N/A
7	Teacher burn out	Loss of good people	Perception of teaching	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 6. Emergent Themes As Identified By Participants
At the conclusion of Focus Group Two, participants identified the themes that emerged during the study. Participants wrote their phrases on the Focus Group II Guidance card.

I found that the use of images to provide reflection and generate dialogue was instrument-al in the focus group sessions; the shortest length of a focus group session was 72:58 while the longest discussion was 142:27. The guidance cards assisted to keep the participants focused on the framing questions during the discussion. After reviewing all images and captions submitted and based on the discussion conducted in Focus Group Two, I asked participants to identify the three main concerns impacting the current culture of teaching. Additionally, participants were asked to choose one image that best addressed how they or the profession could counter the concerns impacting the current culture of teaching.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS/QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Research Question One

How do participants see themselves as teachers?

Roles Beyond Teaching

In response to this prompt, participants submitted images and captions that represented self-perceptions of one who has many roles or must wear many "hats," such as "informant,

educator, problem-solver, confidant, cheerleader, [and] referee" or replacement for a parent/caretaker. Paula, a secondary teacher with 13 years of experience, supported this notion of many "hats" as she photographed her desk and provided the following caption:

> "All the items on my desk are representative of me as a teacher. I see myself as being more than just someone teaching and grading papers but as someone with many different professions from nurse to counselor as well as being a part-time mother."

Figure 7. The Desk of a Teacher
Paula submitted this image in response to prompt two: How do you believe others see you as a teacher?

I found this was reiterated in the first focus group session when participants reviewed the gallery of photographs and captions; they described teachers as "catch all[s]" who have "sewn clothes…bandaged kids" to me. Although participants realize "that's part of teaching," inhabiting these many different roles can lead to difficulty. Paula told me she "sometimes feels very alone because of that"; Becky, a high school teacher with 16 years' experience, said that her very

broad range of roles and responsibilities often "stresses me out." Melissa, an elementary teacher of 11 years, and Greg, a high school teacher of nine years, confirmed the feeling of stress, and distinguished during discussion that the hats are often dictated to them in that "you don't always get to change the hat," "—or choose the hat." Among all the roles beyond teaching, Melissa, who provided the image below, referenced the teacher as a "lifesaver" to parents for all the roles they play.

Figure 8. Teachers As "Lifesavers"
"Just when a parent thought there was no hope, a teacher steps in and sees something special about that child that no other teacher has seen before. That teacher is thought to be a lifesaver" (Melissa).

Danielle, an elementary teacher of 12 years, who referenced her own image and caption in Figure 10, affirmed that teachers do assume many responsibilities to save students, all-the-while not receiving the credit for it:

...there are so many times I have been a voice for a child. I have fixed a situation that may not have been fixed had that child not come to school…what we do as teachers is unbelievable, but I don't think we get the credit we deserve.

Figure 9. Teachers As Band-Aids
"As a teacher, I see myself as a person who helps alleviate problems that students may have. Just as a Band-Aid helps a child's scratch to get better, I feel that teachers help heal their own students' type of "scratches." These types of injuries may range from unfortunate home life, inability to efficiently learn, physical/mental impairments, to just the need to be noticed and loved" (Danielle).

In listening to their discussions, I found that participants see themselves, increasingly, as a substitute or replacement for parents; this is one of the newer "hats" that they feel asked to wear. Attending to the fellow participants' reflection upon duties beyond that of teaching, Becky, the most experienced of the group, contemplated:

> I lucked out. I started teaching in a decade when the huge shift for everybody to work began, so I had a little bit of time before everybody had to work. There were some stay-at-home moms still back when I first started. There aren't even stay-at-home kids anymore…so I've watched this trend change and there is this desperate need by society for teachers to begin to fill that void more and more and more…all the time for these parents who do not have time to parent because when they come home, they're tired from their jobs too. And they're like 'I want to have positive time with my kid. I want to go to baseball games and I want to enjoy dinner. I do not want to harp on him all night long about what he did not do for you in the day time.'

The juxtaposition of the images and captions as positive perceptions of themselves with the discussion in the focus group as one of being, as Emily, a high school teacher of seven years, described, "burned out," revealed an interesting tension to me and the group: "We pick a hat that we wear well and then you suffer in other aspects of your life." She paused, in deeper reflection, before she added, "It's a choice you make for life – if we choose to stay in. And, unfortunately, many, many teachers [do] not." She discussed, expressing both irony and contempt, the pressure of the teachers' many roles, and the current pressure to "teach with fire":

> I had a very amazing host teacher who gave me a book [referencing Rafe Esquith's book *Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire: The Methods and Madness Inside Room 56*]. I still have it. I almost took a picture of the front cover and made it some kind of joke, but I was trying to be hopeful. It just keeps coming up. Teacher burn out…teacher burn out. We are supposed to teach with fire, but then we teach with so much fire that we burn ourselves out… I don't know a single teacher that says, 'oh I'm not burnt out.'

Sacrifice of Personal Time

Participants view teachers as those who sacrifice personal time and family time in order to remain in the profession. Emily observed, "Teaching is not a profession. It's a lifestyle." Some teachers feel a kind of home guilt; Melissa worries about sacrificing her own children. Sometimes, Melissa said with a remorseful look, she ends up giving "so much to these other kids that sometimes I feel like I don't give enough to my own." When teachers are outside of their workday, they are still performing the job. Kayla, a middle school teacher of seven years, wrote about "waiting at the hospital for my nephew to be born and I'm typing lesson plans, developing a unit on Syrian Refugees, and analyzing statistics from our last track meet."

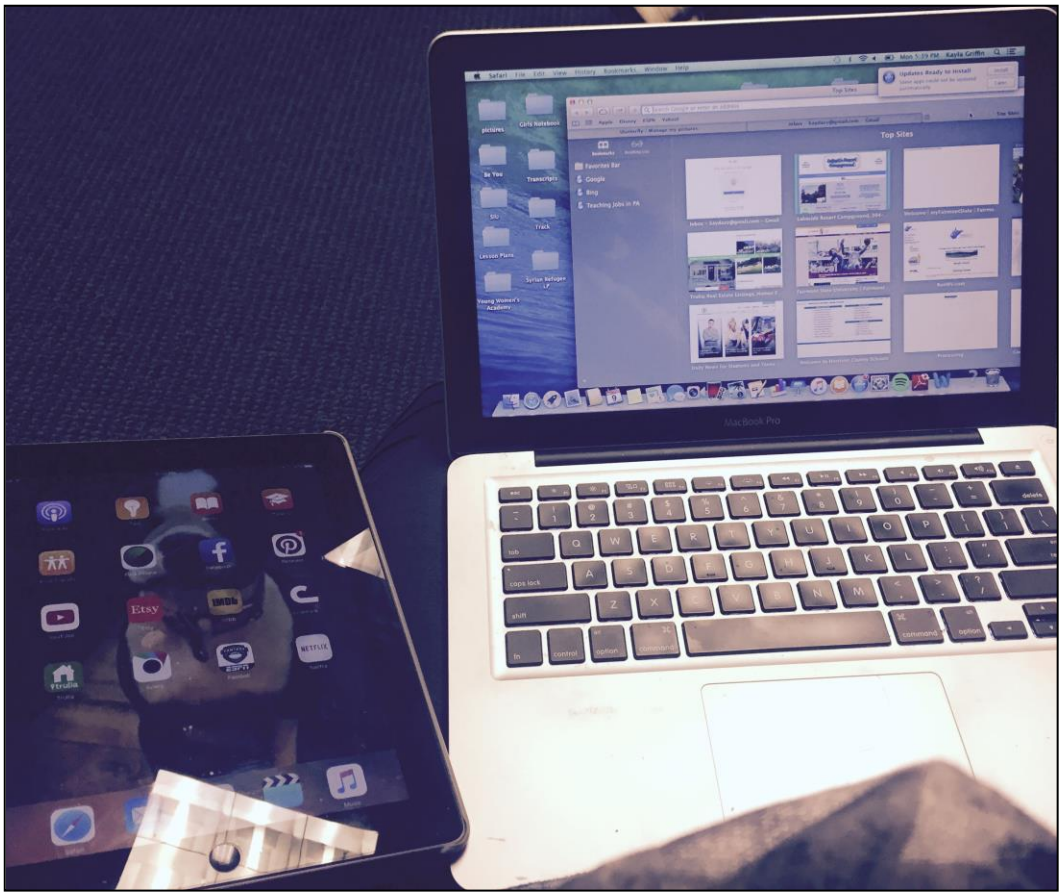


Figure 10. Splitting Time
Image 4 (Appendix G) is submitted in response to prompt one: how one participant sees herself as a teacher.

I found that the themes of uncompensated work and roles that go well beyond teaching were repeatedly referenced in the focus group sessions; this theme is also repeated in 12 of 42 images for prompts one and two. Greg wrote he "do[es] what it takes, and it takes more than what I am given... off the clock!" because "I believe in what I am doing…I have to go the 'extra mile' or it doesn't get done!" Participants note the unspoken assumption to perform extracurricular activities further sacrifices family and personal time. One participant supported this with a reference to the balancing of social life, professional responsibilities, and expected extracurricular activities.

Figure 11. Little Time for Socialization
"On most days I don't get home until at least after 7 [PM] between preparing for school, coaching, student council activities, and recruiting and interviewing candidates for my summer job. That leaves very little time for any socialization, but I'm young and single and human and once in awhile I need tacos and drinks with a cute date" (Kayla).

After reviewing the collection of all 42 images and captions submitted for prompts one and two, Greg pointing to his own photograph in Figure 12, observed what he sees "a teacher doing something they're not obligated to do." It is a common image as Becky expressed when she looked at the same image, "this stresses me out [because] I can immediately see they're working during their dinner and I've done that so many times."

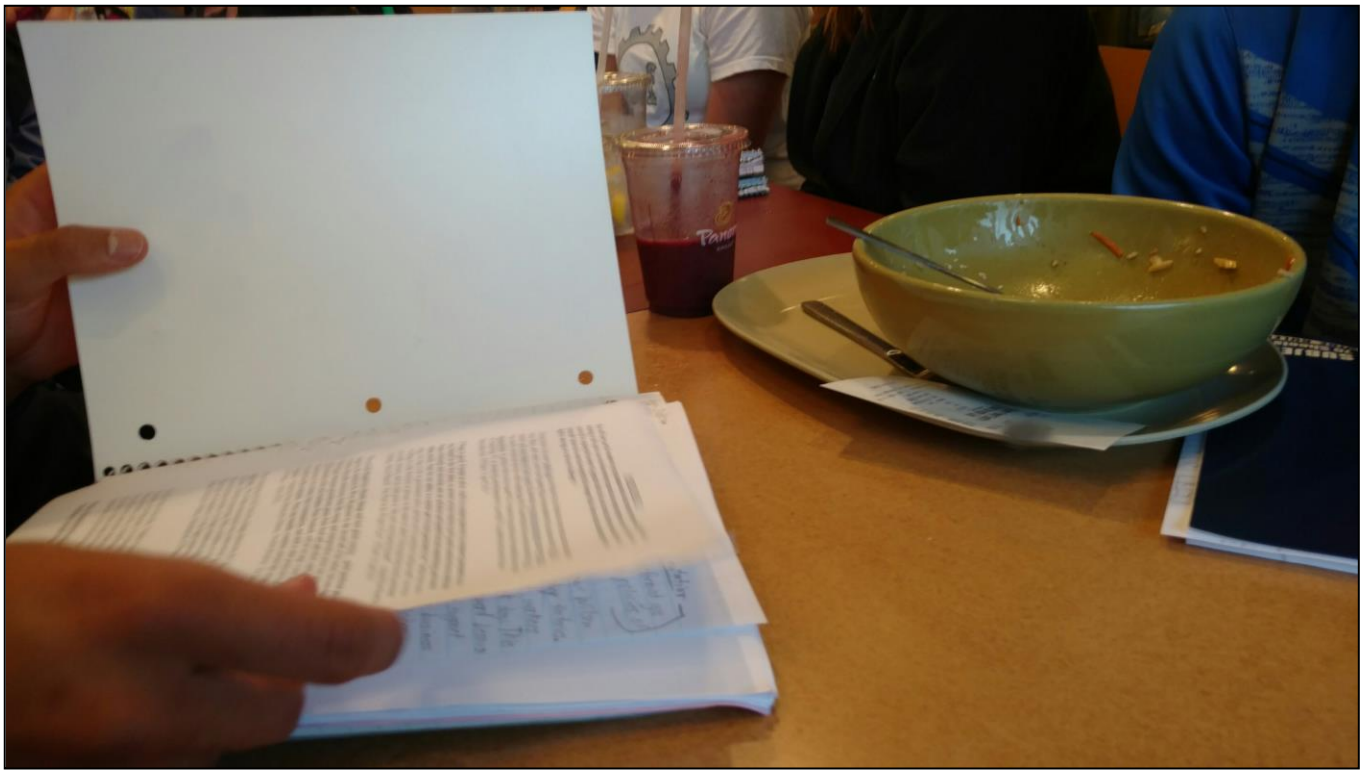


Figure 12. Work For Dinner
"The Work – I have to do what it takes, and it takes more than what I am given. This is a review session for an exam at Panera with a majority of the class…off the clock! There isn't enough time and there is too much work and it isn't fair, but I do it anyway because I believe in what I am doing. I have to go the 'extra mile' or it doesn't get done!" (Greg).

Metaphors for Strength and Necessity

I found that participants identified themselves positively in a number of ways in the discussion and submission of images. They used phrases such as an "expert in my field" and "the foundation."

Figure 13. Teachers as The Foundation
"I see myself as the foundation. Just as this foundation was constructed so this house could be built and remain strong. I believe that an elementary school teacher strives to do the same. We are giving our students an educational foundation that is rich with knowledge and skills that they can build upon throughout the rest of their school years" (Danielle).

They relied upon metaphors that represent necessary components of something larger – batteries in a toy truck that "provide students with the knowledge and skills that they need in order to complete school and make their life 'work.'"

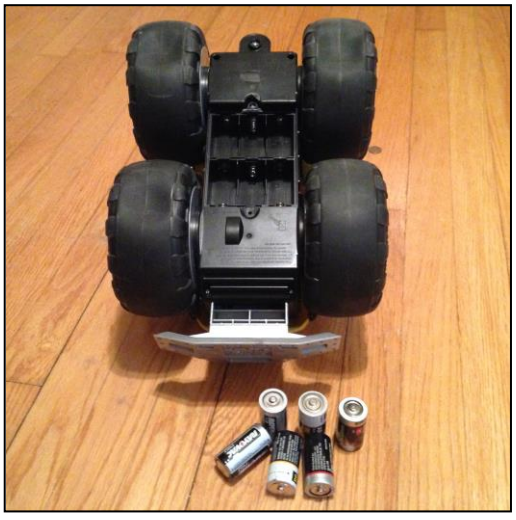


Figure 14. Teachers as Batteries

"Without the batteries, the toy truck will not work. I compare my role as a teacher to the batteries. I provide students with the knowledge and skills that they need in order to complete school and make their life 'work' just as the batteries do the same for the truck" (Danielle).

Greg believes teachers are not only necessary components, but he compared teachers to one who tends the "fire" who works to "build the fire and nurture it until it grows into a consuming fire" and makes a commitment to "feed it" with oxygen or a teacher's "inspiration" and tend it to "keep it going" through a teacher's commitment.

Figure 15. The Role of a Teacher
"The Role – The wood is student potential. The fire is the education. I build the fire and nurture it until it grows into a consuming fire. It takes skill to arrange the wood in such a way that it catches (guidance), oxygen to feed it (inspiration), and tending (commitment) to keep it going" (Greg).

Similarly, positive metaphors that represent perseverance, necessity, or constant motion were used when participants were asked to identify how they see themselves: a fence holding back weeds, sun shining on water lilies, and a one-room schoolhouse. These metaphors demonstrated the teachers' perseverance when they "get weak and overwhelmed at times" and "struggle withstanding the weeds" (which Melissa likened to students who do not work to their

full potential) like a fence. The students' "lack of focus and motivation tries to overcome me," wrote Melissa.

Figure 16. "Withstanding the Weeds"
"During the school year, I get weak and overwhelmed at times. Like this fence, I struggle withstanding the weeds. The weeds are students with potential, but [who] don't work to their potential. I am trying to educate them, but their lack of focus and motivation tries to overcome me" (Melissa).

Figure 17. Students Likened to Water Lilies
"Teachers provide a classroom where all students will receive an education no matter their ethnical background, religion, disabilities, social economic status, etc…just like lilies provide an

excellent habitat for different kids of animals. Water lilies can grow and reproduce rapidly if not maintained correctly causing fish and plants to die from lack of sunlight. Students', much like water lilies, behaviors and attitudes can be negatively impacted if we allow too much negativity over our classroom. I, as a teacher, nourish my students with wisdom and offer rays of sunlight with my warm smile" (Melissa).

Participants viewed themselves as one who cannot be deterred partly because, as Paula wrote, "I see myself as being part of something greater than just today but part of something very old and noble."

Figure 18. The Once Noble Profession
"I see myself as a teacher as being part of something greater than just today but part of something very old and noble" (Paula).

When asked to identify the images that elicited the strongest emotion of "love" among the ones submitted for prompts one and two, participants chose just four images: a student's letter to a teacher, the superhero, the tradition of a noble profession, and the grading of papers over dinner as shown in Figure 19. Captions for these images include "a note from one of my students…be-

cause I was the person who helped them discover this new world which is full of possibilities, experiences, and lessons…being part of something greater than just today but part of something very old and noble…but I do it anyway because I believe in what I am doing." Three of the images for "love" were also selected to define "hope" (Images 6 and 2, Appendix G) and "fear" (Image 12, Appendix G). I came to understand that teachers provide strength and necessity for students, and it is hope and love for the profession that strengthen and sustain participants.

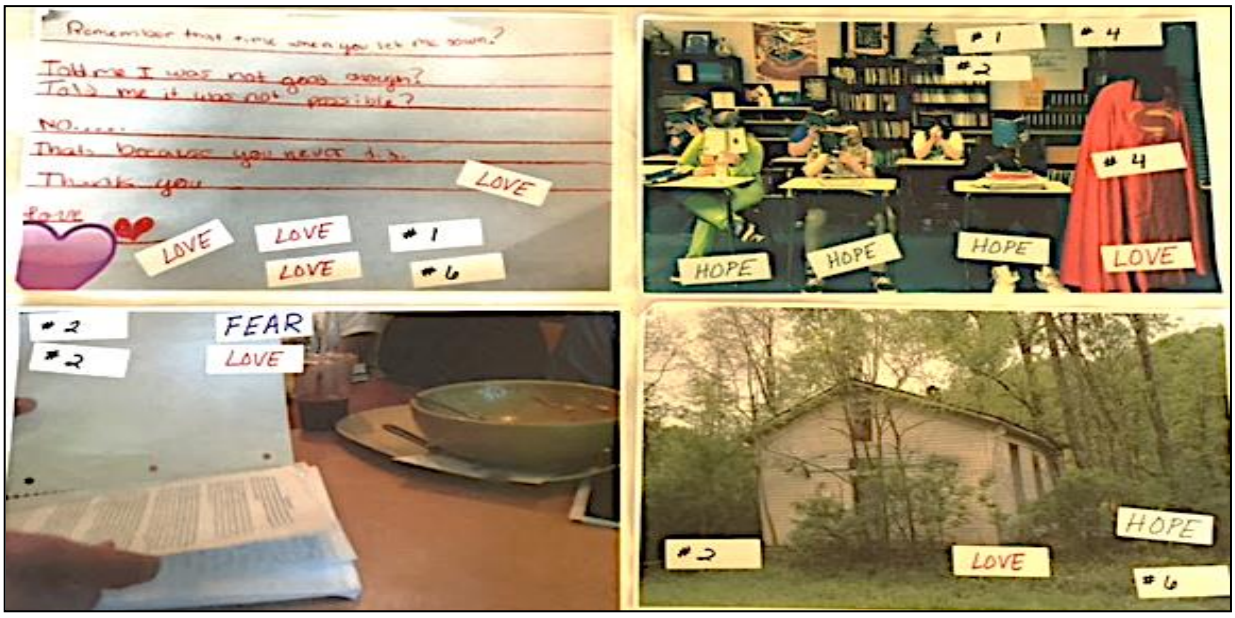


Figure 19. Images Identified to Elicit "Love"
Seven participants placed stickers with the word "love" on four images that elicited the strongest emotion of love for them.

Identified Bumps and Stress Factors

While 11 of the 42 images submitted for prompts one and two used metaphors or phrases that positively identified teachers as "superheroes," "cultivator," "adventure car" who persist through obstacles thrust upon them to produce results that are fulfilling to them, the participants also identified "bumps and stress factors" such as "testing, data analysis, parents, misbehaved students, abused students, lack of teacher motivation and collaboration," flawed evaluation

systems for teachers and students, the lack of support from parents and administrators, and a society which "has not kept its obligation to pave the road we must drive on."

Figure 20. A Teacher's Adventure Car
"The road is there but unpaved. Nothing about the journey is easy, though it could be. Though society has not kept its obligation to pave the road, we must drive on. Education then can either be a complaint or an adventure. I choose to drive the adventure car (It's a Subaru!)" (Greg).

Following up on the positive metaphors discussed among participants, I asked what they believe limits the "good" that they expect to happen. Greg said they "are stifled by things that are way beyond our control" because "the community [which he defined as parents] stops what we are trying to do sometimes because everybody wants it their way." The pressure to listen to or please those outside of the profession is stifling, as Greg explained in Focus Group Two:

> If I could just do what I have a vision to do sometimes, without everybody telling me how I should do it, I think there would be something way more beautiful. Sometimes they take the energy right out of it. Whether it's the idea of a test or the idea of a time frame or the subject matter or why do you do it this way, come do it this way, you must do it *this*

> way…The kids don't even know. They just expect me to do – to have it all. I can't always bring it all because I have to please so many people.

Paula added, "It's not necessarily always administrators [be]cause I think administrators see us as professional…they don't necessarily always give us the support we need. The real crux of it comes from the communities we are trying to serve." To these obstacles, participants see themselves as the driver of an "adventure car" or "rays of sunlight with my warm smile" who will "rise up to every opportunity to make a difference in the children that I teach…because 'Ain't no mountain high enough' to stand in the way of my passion to teach." The drive to overcome was further supported by Greg's response to the photographs displayed throughout the room collectively during the first focus group:

> They evoke the emotions I actually feel while I'm teaching – they are varied just like the human emotion is. When I say emotion, they're not always good but they are all rooted in the pursuit of excellence. So if there is a feeling of upset, it's because I expect something good that isn't happening or if it's a feeling of upset it's because I feel there is something that limits that good that I was looking for. I feel like I have enough resources or I can be creative with the ones I do have, but I don't always necessarily feel I'm supported in the endeavors that I take. You know you have to tell yourself to 'Just do it!'

Individually, the participants perceive that they do fight against obstacles yet maintain a positive attitude about their profession through it. When asked to identify those images that elicit the highest level of "hope" during the focus group, participants chose five images that represent a teacher as a superhero, a fire, a Subaru "adventure car," a flower, and a representative of a strong tradition and noble profession as shown in Figure 21. The narratives for each of these pictures included the following phrases: "I feel like a superhero"…"I see myself as a profession-

al”…”Though society has not kept its obligation to pave the road we must drive on”…”part of something greater than just today but part of something very old and noble”…”one who cultivates creativity and encourages students to be open-minded, releasing their fears of being different or ‘weird.’” Figure 22 of Image 6, that of a teacher wearing a superhero cape, received three designations of “hope,” more than any other image.

Figure 21. Images of “Hope”
Seven participants placed stickers with the word “hope” on five images that elicited the strongest emotion of hope for them.

Figure 22. Teacher as a Superhero
"Literature Lady – There is nothing more inspiring than seeing a classroom full of students engrossed in a good book. Helping a student discover a love of reading is the best reward there is as an English teacher. I feel like a superhero, because I was the person who helped them discover this new world, which is full of possibilities, experiences, and lessons" (Emily).

All of the images represent a single element, an individual's hope. Collectively, however, the participants do not identify themselves as a united profession because, as Becky said, teachers "don't think we know how to unite to help each other to rise up and overcome the things we feel" as she pointed at an image submitted by one participant that reveals "Ain't No Mountain High Enough." The "things" identified in this image and caption happen to be "testing, data analysis, parents, lack of teacher motivation" and, like so many of the participants, Melissa focuses on the individual's response, instead of the collective response, to concerns within the profession.

Figure 23. Overcoming Mountains
"As a teacher I hit some bumps and stress factors such as testing, data analysis, parents, misbehaved students, abused students, lack of teacher motivation and collaboration, but as for myself there 'Ain't no mountain high enough' to stand in the way of my passion to teach. I'll rise up to every opportunity to make a difference in the children that I teach" (Melissa).

Participants are aware of the perception that “education is so cracked”; collectively, they identify teachers as those who “don’t know if we can” fix it.

Figure 24. Education Is Cracked
Greg, when asked how others perceive teachers, wrote, “The Problem: Education is cracked. It’s the teacher’s ‘fault.’”

Finding inspiration in the metaphor of a cracked wall, Paula, after selecting a montage of pictures that elicit the greatest level of fear, hope, love and anger for her, described teaching as a “dysfunctional profession where there is a love for teaching based on calling – a hope for the future – while at the same time a frustration stemming from fear of society’s perception of the teacher and anger because the crack created by society.”

Community and Individuals Before Systematic Changes

Participants identify and find positivity within the localized community to which they associate – not the bigger community of the profession in general. Paula said teachers identify themselves as a member of a “community here at our schools.” Kayla resolves to focus on the fulfillment surrounding “fixing” an individual child instead of an entire system or profession:

> I think if you do think of teaching as a whole, it can get stressful and overwhelming. You think, *how can we fix education*? We can't *fix* education. It's something that really is not fixable, but we can fix a child.

Instead of uniting to counter the indictment that education is "cracked," Becky believes it's "easier to think of one child at a time versus the thousands – the whole system of children that are affected." There is a view, when looking into changing the profession as a whole, that teachers have surrendered with, as Emily said, the notion that "we just give up." They acknowledged "this crack in the wall really bothers" them, but Greg, turning around in his chair to face the image of a cracked wall on display, does not perceive teachers as the ones to fix it [the educational system]:

> First of all, I didn't build the building [educational system]. The building that's built is built by the community – the public has created this. It belongs to the public. It does not belong to me, so why am I shouldering the burden? Why is it that, pardon me, 'that damn teacher' every single time there is an issue? Why isn't it something else? Whenever the community gets upset, why do *we* [teachers] have a backpack program to send food home to kids who aren't eating on the weekends? Why are *we* not calling CPS? Really. Why are these kids going home like that and then it's *our* issue to deal with it?

Greg's passionate remarks seem to imitate thoughts of the others as participants were asked to choose two images that elicit the highest level of "anger" for them; six of the seven participants chose Image 43, a crack in the wall, with the caption: "The Problem: Education is cracked. It's the teacher's fault." The second image, a One Way Do Not Enter sign, with the caption concerning the irony associated with parental involvement, was selected as an image that

elicited “anger” as well. This image was associated with “fear” for one participant. The single image that received the most choices as eliciting an emotion, however, was “the crack” for anger.

Figure 25. Ironic Perception of Parental Involvement
“So often, parents and the community feel like they are not welcome in our schools and at the same time schools complain about having no parental involvement” (Melissa).

In summary, the participants believe teachers perceive themselves positively, as the proverbial “superhero,” who stands amongst impossible odds, pressures, mountains, and demands in order to support their students. Interestingly, participants did not identify themselves as a “professional” or a practitioner with a specialized body of knowledge in response to prompt one, which asks participants to consider how teachers identify themselves. Despite the fact that they believe others view education as “cracked” and attribute teachers as the cause of that crack, the participants are committed – and content -- to assisting “one student at a time.”

This, participants overwhelmingly indicate, is what contributes to their positive perception of themselves as well as the only public perception that matters to them. Participants believe there is a community within each school as a support system, but it is the personal fulfillment of assisting just one student at a time, as shown in Figure 26, amidst high levels of stress as well as significant and uncompensated demands on their time, that encourages them the most. They acknowledge the perception that education is in a poor state, however they do not perceive themselves in the same manner.

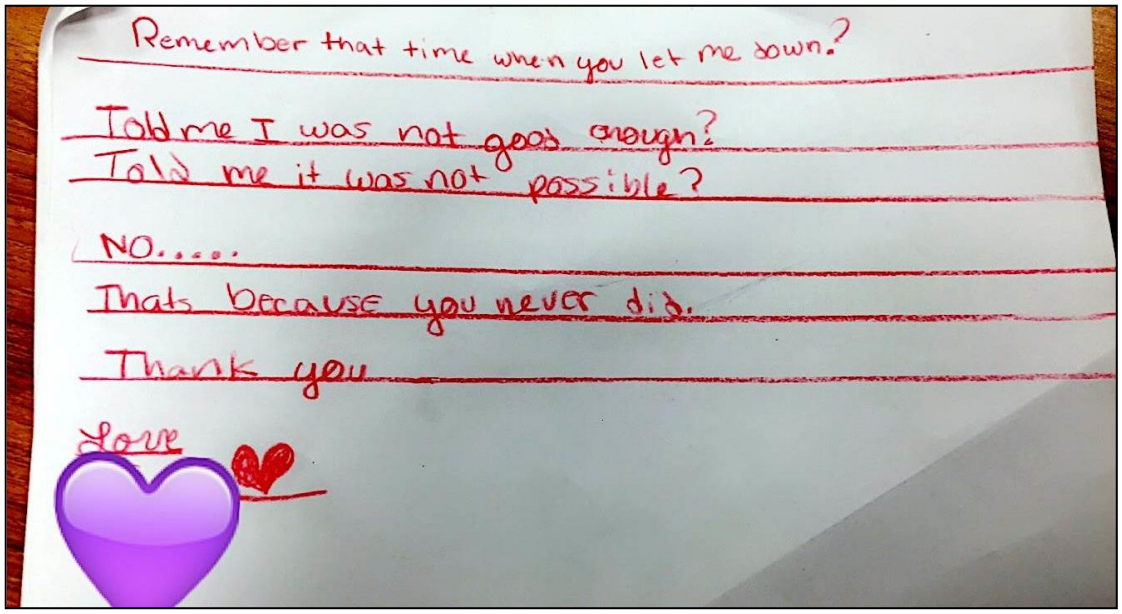


Figure 26. Acknowledgement From a Student
"A note from one of my students," the simple caption to explain how Kayla believes others perceive teachers.

Research Question Two

How do you believe others define teachers?

Participants often used terms like "scapegoat," "babysitter," "incompetent," and "dispensable" when they were asked to discuss how they believe others perceive teachers. Only nine of 21 images submitted for prompt two pointed to positive perceptions, as shown in Figure

27, such as “others see a teacher as being flexible” and “patient” or as one who can “respond adequately to changes” or in order to serve students, or as a “lifesaver” who “steps in and sees something special about that child that no other teacher has seen before.”

Figure 27. Teachers Are Flexible
“I believe that others see me as a teacher as being flexible. Just as this young girl’s body easily handles the changes being made to her body, I believe that as a teacher, others see me do the same. I respond adequately to changes within the school day to best meet the needs of my students” (Danielle).

The Parent Trap

There was a clear distinction between what participants believed students perceived of teachers and what participants believed parents or others perceived. As Becky explained, “parents see me as a babysitter/parent/counselor to their youth first, and an imparter of knowledge second.” How teachers believe parents perceive them was expanded upon in the

focus group when participants described the negative perception of teachers as society-wide. Greg's response emphasized Becky's point:

> What I see is a problem with society. I see that education is the scapegoat. If I'm not raising somebody else's kids the way they're wanting them raised then it's my fault. But it's not my job to raise their kids. It's my job to inspire them to be learners. That is my job. But I take on all these other roles because they're lacking. She sews clothing, but there should be a parent to do that.

Student Perceptions Versus Others' Perceptions

Students, who spend significant amounts of time with teachers, perceive teachers differently than parents. Participants said that students perceive them as "the intimidator…with a reputation of having high expectations, a no-nonsense attitude…and perfectionist," one who is "organized"; other participants believe, as shown in Figure 28, "the perceptions of coworkers, supervisors, families and the communities are all secondary to the perceptions of my students." In contrast to how participants believe teachers are viewed by parents and society in general, participants believe many students perceive teachers, as shown in Figure 29, as "a hero, a dad, a trusted person, a real person."

Figure 28. Perceptions of Teachers From the Perspective of a Student
"The perceptions of coworkers, supervisors, families, and the communities are all secondary to the perceptions of my students. I asked my students to honestly pick one work to describe me" (Kayla).

Figure 29. Teachers Perceived as Heroes
In response to how he believes others perceive teachers, Greg wrote: "The Good: To some students I am a 'hero,' a 'dad,' a trusted person, a real person. I am not accepted unless I care."

Participants wrestled with an explanation of how others view teaching and the reality of teaching, "the perceived versus the reality," according to Emily, in responding to this prompt, as shown in Figure 30: "Society as a whole often thinks of teachers as 'babysitters' who get paid really well…In reality, we are working hard and I am doing all I can to get all of my required objectives taught while students strive to meet my expectations."

Figure 30. Perceptions Versus Realities of Teachers' Daily Work Lives
Emily provides the paradox for society's perception compared to her perception of self. The majority of the images and captions submitted indicate a negative perception of "a lazy profession "where individuals "become teachers to have their summers off," as shown in Figure 31, or those "who don't teach and only went into teaching to be coaches," as shown in Figure 32 (See images 36, 28, and 24.).

Figure 31. Lazy Days of Summer for Teachers
Several participants discussed the perceptions of teachers in regard to the summer months. The images above are two examples. "I think some see us as a lazy profession that only works 10 months out of the year with no thought to what a professional teacher has to do in the summer – CE and planning for next year for a couple of examples" (Paula). Another participant reflected, "People think teachers become teachers to have their summers off. They also think we are paid for our summers off. Little do they realize we are paid for ten months of the year and often spend summers working on continuing education and classroom preparations" (Melissa).

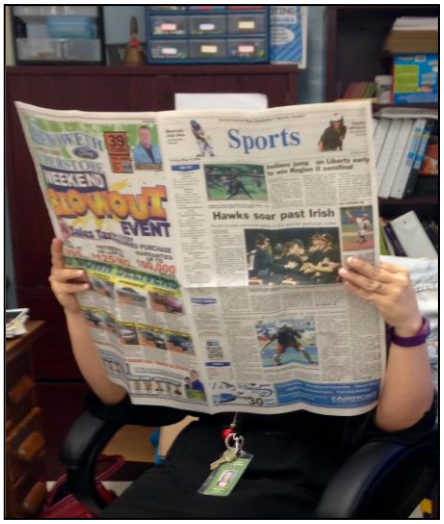


Figure 32. Teaching In Order to Coach
Teachers who coach don't teach and only went into teaching to be coaches" (Melissa).

Next to the images submitted that define others' perception of a "lazy" profession, participants address the policymakers' perceptions of what education should be. The perception from "the public and policymakers [who] expect us to have everyone finish the race at the same time," regardless of consideration that "academics is not the only hurdles these kids face," is compounded by the perceived disconnect between the schools and stakeholders as "parents and the community feel like they are not welcome in our schools" and "schools complain about having no parental involvement." In summary, the metaphor of a ramp, as shown in Figure 33, reminds participants that teachers have both "a strong flavor that just does not appeal to everyone," and that "we are just a weed."

Figure 33. Teachers Are Weeds
"I think some people – parents in particular – see me much like a ramp, the WV wild onion. It is like I am not a professional at all but someone that they either hate or love. The profession of

being a teacher has a strong flavor that just does not appeal to everyone so like the ramp, we are just a weed" (Paula).

Participants identified a wide spectrum of perceptions, including the belief, as Paula described, that those in higher education institutions "look down on us from their ivory towers" or there are those who, according to Greg, believe teachers cannot do anything else so they teach ("I can't because I teach.").

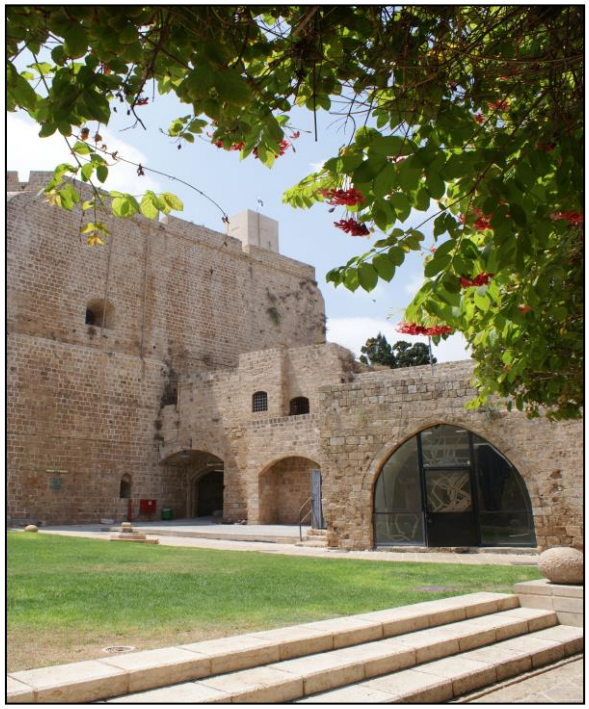


Figure 34. View From the Ivory Tower for Those Who "Can"
Participants submitted images that described their perceived perceptions of teachers. "I call this the view from the Ivory Tower and it is how those at Universities view teachers as their students and only they can teach us how to teach. In short, they look down on us from their Ivory Towers" (Paula). Greg added, "The Job – Many think I do nothing or "I can't" because I teach. The perception is that anyone could do it. Desks don't have free will and the community perspective of me as a teacher is that it can't be hard. The ingredient missing from the perspective of many is that of free will on the part of the student."

There is resentment that teachers are perceived as incompetent, incapable of being the expert, as Paula explained:

> We are part of something that's very old that people sometimes want to put the cracks in – want to tear us down, thus the ivory tower effect. I've got something new for you to try. I've got a book for you. I've got a class for you to take. You've got to try this new method in your classroom. Core curriculum – all these things and they don't let you do what you're called to do, what you want to do, and for me that's the struggles that I have as a teacher.

In images, some participants acknowledged they feel resentment toward administrators, who as Paula indicated in the discussions, believe teachers are professionals, but contribute to the negative perception or the deprofessionalization of teachers indirectly through their actions.

Figure 35. Teachers On Duty
Becky expressed frustration at the non-teaching duties assigned to teachers; she indicates these duties do not exist in other professions and distract from the true purpose of teaching.

> Becky wrote, when asked how teachers are perceived by others, administrators have …no answer for when in the world [a teacher] is supposed to do all the things they want her to do every day…to complete ridiculous amounts of CYA paperwork (like SAT

> forms and court reports, and IEP paperwork and blah, blah, blah, blah) [instead of] being in her room at the end of the day, getting grades into the computer or getting ready for the next day's learning.

Some participants liken administrators to drill sergeants who will try to "break you" with different philosophies and expectations; Becky, who has taught for 16 years, has worked for five administrators and three superintendents during that time. She advised teachers to define their own teaching identities and philosophies, because there will be many who try to influence, contradict, or disappoint them. "If you don't formulate yourself," she said, "It will break you. Don't let the system break you because it will try to break you." This supported what Becky previously wrote in a caption for her One Way Do Not Enter sign: "Teachers will need to figure out their own teaching philosophies and principles, based on their experiences in the actual classroom, and then stick to them." Paula, reflecting upon her own advice to a daughter who just finished her first year of teaching and was struggling to find support from administrators and form her own philosophies, said:

> A good administrator tries to act as a buffer to protect your teachers from the outside world. It's hard because the outside world is always coming in at us. The hardest thing you have to do is put yourself in a teacher's place. Sometimes you forget that once you've left the classroom. That's what administrators do; they leave the classroom.

When I asked how there was a disconnect and if the images separate teaching from any other profession, participants offered insights like, no one would "ask lawyers in a courthouse to stand in the hall and observe defendants and plaintiffs to make sure they don't get into arguments or altercations before court hearings" or "imagine asking doctors at a hospital to stand in the parking lot and complete a duty in which they are expected to make sure that those who arrive

get into any mischief." This lends credence to the participants' feelings that others have the perception "that anyone could do it."

Replaceable and Interchangeable

The perception that teachers are replaceable or responsible was prevalent in images and discussions. When teachers are perceived as a "scapegoat" for a host of ailments in society, including failing student performance based solely upon test scores, Greg indicated that the impact is "that it stifles the profession":

> It stifles the learning that can happen because we have to jump through all of the hoops to meet the demands of a failing profession – so we have to give tests, prepare for tests, etc., prove to everybody that's what's going on is actually what's going on. Make it look good on paper – nobody cares what's actually going on – as long as it looks good on paper – or bad because then there is the other part we are accused of by the community of media, parents and politicians.

Teachers can feel alone in their positive perceptions of their profession, as Paula observed: "Teachers are the only people that see education as positive." Participants believed others perceive that "education is cracked" because of consistently negative commentary about education in the media. As Greg asserted, "Nothing that I see reflected in the [news]paper, whether it was NCLB and now Every Student Succeeds – whatever it is that we're measuring and putting out there in the public where every school is ranked A to F now – is portraying teachers positively."

Teacher Evaluation: True Measure of Success?

Melissa stated she "wish[ed] there was another way to evaluate"; Greg concurred, saying, "whatever that garbage is…that is not based on the success I see as a teacher." He added, "What

I see inside the school on a[sic] every day basis is a lot of success. I see kids thriving and surviving and going beyond, and I don't see a single test measuring that." Although this frustration was strongly expressed in the focus groups, it was not as pronounced in the images and captions. Of the 105 images and captions submitted, 12 of them mentioned testing, standards, assessment, or decisions of policymakers. Only one of these 12 was in response to prompts one and two, which asked how teachers perceive themselves or believe they are perceived by others. The bulk of these were in response to prompt three, which asked participants to describe the current culture of teaching. But when participants selected images to represent their greatest "fear" in the first focus group, one of the six referenced standards.

Fears of Teachers

In their discussions around this topic, I found that participants gravitated toward the following topics: respect from parents and society, teacher evaluation and student assessment, and the magnitude of their responsibilities and roles that do not include teaching. The six images shown in Figure 36 represent their "fear" when asked how others define the profession and teachers; in submission of images from prompts one and two, participants made little mention of evaluation and assessment among them. Participants "fear" the perceptions identified in the images and captions of Figure 36: "… anyone could do it…it takes more than what I am given…teachers as 'babysitters' who get paid really well…parents and the community feel like they are not welcome in our schools." The focus groups, however, brought to life additional fears and frustrations associated with assessment and teacher evaluation.

Figure 36. Images Identified to Elicit "Fear"
This image represents the six photographs participants chose to represent "fear" during Focus Group One.

There appears to be a vast difference between how teachers define themselves and how participants believe others perceive teachers. In summary, participants believe that others either do not solicit their expert advice or disregard it; they indicate that this includes school administrators, parents, politicians, and higher education. Participants attribute their experiences with parents, higher education, administrators, policymakers, and society, in general, as perception versus reality in that these individuals have an unrealistic perception of the jobs of a teacher or they believe teachers are "incompetent" or "replaceable." If participants fear the perceptions that "anyone can do it" or labels such as "babysitter," they are most angered at the perception that education is "cracked" because "it's the teachers' fault." Being considered lazy, replaceable, or incompetent are among the greatest fears of teachers according to the participants, and the scrutiny and pressures of an "overworked," "underpaid," and "undervalued" profession contribute to the deprofessionalization of teachers' daily work lives.

Research Question Three

How does the current culture of deprofessionalization manifest itself in teachers' work lives?

I asked participants to respond to the prompt: *How does the current culture around teaching affect teachers' daily work lives?* In 11 of 21 images submitted for prompt three, participants described the current culture with terms such as one with "pressures," "one more thing" added to an "already full bag," "overworked…underpaid…overwhelming," "stressors," "stretched to the max." They cited specific examples, as shown in Figure 37, such as paperwork, insufficient planning and collaboration time, pressures from parents and society, demands outside the classroom, testing, tracking data, duties, IEPs, attacks on the profession, and the content standards. The effects presented include teacher burn out, drinking or other vices, "melt down," "cause us to break," and "exhausted."

Figure 37. Overworked
A prominent theme among images and captions submitted for prompt three is one of being overworked.

Time to Teach: A Visual Organizer

This notion was further supported during Focus Group Two, when participants completed a visual organizer set up as a clock to represent a typical day in the life of a teacher (See Appendix I). In reflecting upon her own clock, as shown in Figure 38, Emily said,

> We are overworked. Teachers are expected to go above and beyond the normal person just to get their minimum job requirements done – not even to be a really good teacher. You'd have to be doing the bare minimum to get in the regular work day I guess.

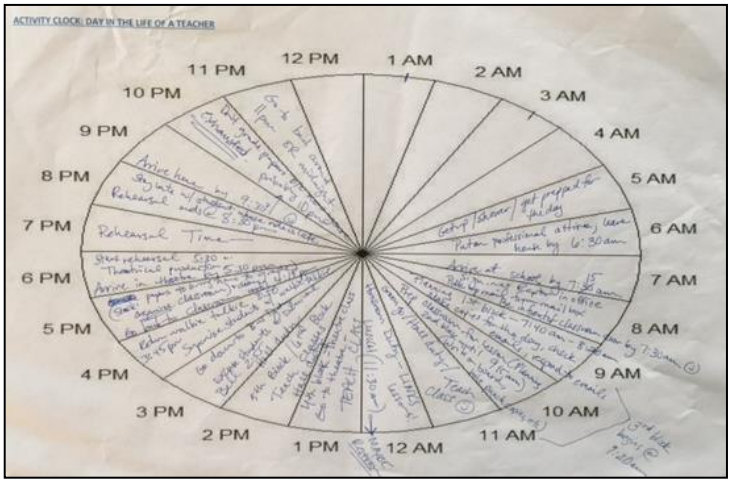


Figure 38. Clock Visual Organizer
This is an example of the visual organizer completed by participants to represent a day in the life of a teacher during Focus Group Two.

Participants indicated the time allotted for "actual teaching" during the day is characterized by frequent interruptions. Greg described teaching days in which, "literally every hour there are five interruptions, whether it's on the phone, at the door, or on the intercom." Participants shared tales of frustrations for tracking students who skipped class, phone calls from the office for parent picks ups, or interruptions from the intercom for students who are needed for yearbook photos or an administrator or teacher. "Teach" was minimized on each participant's

clock as Paula acknowledged, “everything else” because “it’s your responsibility”: attendance, phone calls, hall duty, restroom duty, drills, schedule adjustments, etc. During the eight-hour workday, participants indicated instruction “in theory” is six hours, but when I asked if a teacher typically uses that much time for teaching, the resounding response was, “Absolutely not!” This leaves Emily feeling that “there’s no way to prepare adequately in the amount of time you have to…to teach these perfect lessons” or, as Greg added, “process any of it.” There is a sacrifice of personal needs, indicated Danielle, who “would not drink anything during the day because I could not go to the restroom or leave my kids.” She added, a teacher would “give up your lunch because sometimes you want to talk to a parent about a concern you have.” The effect of the “other stuff” beyond teaching is that, according to Greg, “it diminishes the expertise of what I’m able to do.” He discussed the daily struggle to meet the needs of students despite all of the other demands on a teacher’s time:

> I could make tomorrow’s lesson better because I could tell where they are today, but I can’t do that. I have to stop – and hopefully I get to take a look at their work before tomorrow. Maybe I can’t. So I can’t give them accurate feedback because I don’t have time to look at it. I could try to look at it as I go – but that’s still not detailed – especially if I’m doing writing. There’s no way to learn to write but to write – and there’s no way to give feedback without reading their writing. I can’t just pretend like I read it. You can but then you’re not being expert about it. So I think kids don’t get expert feedback from experts. That, to me, is a tragedy because it reduces the quality of what they’re getting. I really think that we need to take things off our plate so that we can focus on our job and it would be so much better.

Then, beyond the eight-hour workday, Emily and Kayla indicated that teachers are "expected" to be involved in extracurricular programs. As described in photographs and narratives, as well as the discussions and clock activity, participants believe that teachers are asked to do so much that their time becomes strained, which makes maintaining the level of instruction they were trained to deliver, difficult. While they indicate the strain on time exists among some other professions, they are clear to distinguish the difference between other professions and the "uncompensated time" characteristic of the job of teaching. They find this to be due to a lack of respect for teachers.

Uncompensated Time

Respect in the eyes of the public is valuable to teachers; participants indicated the value of respect could be a reasonable exchange for uncompensated time. Emily, a full-time English teacher who tells of carrying her newborn son during after school and weekend theater practices for 12 weeks for a stipend of $500, goes home to grade and plan for tomorrow's lessons and wrestles with the notion that the "uncompensated expectations" are due to a lack of respect inherent to teachers:

> If we were respected as doctors or nurses, if we were just respected and most all [of] society stood behind us, it would be a lot easier to swallow the work, and it would make us feel much more valued. Uncompensated expectations, disrespect from the student and parents and society as a whole – we are just not obviously valued, and this public belief that teachers just aren't competent…

Overwhelmingly, participants indicated that other professions who have a "clock" representative of a "typical day of a teacher," do "get paid for having a clock like that." Becky distinguished, "teachers are not considered upper level professions." Greg said, the "average worker is going to

be paid for the hours they work" or salaried workers will "get paid for it or time." Emily, attempting almost to rationalize the lack of fair compensation for teachers, noted that the culture of teaching expects this "sacrifice." Becky, retelling a recent experience at a retirement dinner, suggested that many veteran teachers (with 16 years or more) remain [in teaching] due to the health and retirement benefits—which have recently come under attack—but she also observed that several newer teachers are struggling to maintain a long-term commitment to teaching, weighing their desire to teach against the fact that they have to "take on all these extra jobs" because they "can't make a home payment, car payment, and a student loan payment" on a teacher's salary.

Scrutiny, Disrespect, and Accountability

Seven of 21 images and captions submitted individually by participants described the culture surrounding teachers as a struggle against politicians; public ridicule; disrespect from parents; lack of support from parents, administrators, media, or politicians. Greg wrote "it's always the teacher's fault," and Emily labeled the current culture as "the public circus." Although the topic of accountability and evaluation did not present itself in images and captions collected for prompts 1, 2, 4, and 5, prompt three presented several examples of a culture overwhelmed by accountability and evaluation that distracts teachers from the goal of educating students. A culture where there is, as Greg wrote, a "requirement to be held 'accountable' by scores or the belief that 'I pay my taxes; I pay your salary; you work for me" causes a sense of fear there will be of no support because, as Paula wrote, "teachers are thought of as weeds." The effects are that teachers "shift their focus away from their main task" of educating students or they surrender to burn out because they "start thinking, *why am I pushing myself when the parents aren't holding up their end."* Once burn out sets in, teachers "may stop doing things

because you start feeling – not angry – but a sense of resentment" because they're "treading water." Danielle indicated that another result is "we are losing teachers because of the stresses that are being put on them."

Melissa said not all teachers "walk" because "we feel we are replaceable." Paula mentioned a recent conversation with a politician, an ex-Marine, who she recalled said "had taught Marines under him for years so he could teach and replace me with no problem." Greg, with a tone of exasperation and indignation, interrupted Paula, "You *can* replace us with less qualified people." It's another example of a disconnect acknowledged Becky, who said politicians "don't know what we are really capable of" but "we do not unify and make it very clear to people [that] you cannot replace us."

Figure 39. Ranking of Images Representative of the Current Culture of Teaching
Participants chose images that define the current culture of teaching. They ranked the images and listed the cause and effect they associate with the information provided in a fellow colleagues' photograph and caption.

The image of a cannon, as shown in Figure 40, represents a culture of disrespect for the professional teacher; Greg wrote, “teachers are forced to defend themselves in front of administrators who want to please parents,” students who feel entitled, and politicians who do not understand contemporary schools, which leaves the teacher without a voice and unable to “advocate for students” in the interest of what Greg called, “self-preservation.”

Figure 40. Culture of Attack
“Attack – What does the culture of attack create? Those who can do, those who can’t teach! REALLY??? Disrespect of teachers as professionals and even authority figures impedes the educational process. Teachers are forced to defend themselves in front of administrators who want to please parents, students who as a result feel victorious and entitled, and politicians (time consuming to say the least) who want to look like heroes, all [the] while our actual voice (i.e. professional associations) to make education better is destroyed and our ability to advocate for students falls victim to self-preservation” (Greg).

Surrendering Decisions and Disconnect

Teachers are asked to sacrifice their professional opinions because, as Danielle said, “there was always that fear that you weren’t going to have somebody who said we trust what you’re saying or that parent that was going to say we feel the same way and we support your

decision." Decisions about education are made by others; as Emily described the culture of teaching has become a "public circus" where "mandates with no instructional merit" from "politicians [who] know better than teachers," leaves teachers feeling "demoralized, powerless, and angry." When I asked what the surrendering of decisions indicate about their profession, Paula indicated, "we are being directed by higher academics and politicians and administrators on the state level who have not stepped foot in a classroom in 10 years…but this is a way to spend the money." Becky, the first to mention the Common Core during this session, frustrated, said, "How many times have we been to a training that a Common Core person got paid 6-800 [dollars] to present at a training, and the room and their food and then you look around the room…you go back and they say the money that's been made off of Common Core!" Greg expands on the conversation, saying "There are politics that are so much bigger than the local university at work here…This testing industry is so well connected to both politics and huge money corporations."

Participants described a disconnect between policymakers' actions, and the reality of a school; they point to specific policies regarding student attendance and teacher evaluations as a concern. Greg indicated, "everybody has to impress somebody on paper without anybody ever coming and standing in a classroom or even in a principal's office." The effects of policymakers'

Figure 41. The Public Circus
"The Public Circus: Demoralized. Powerless. Angry" (Emily).

disconnect and decisions are that teachers feel, as Emily wrote, in Figure 41, "demoralized" and "powerless" in the profession, or they look for a way out.

Reflecting upon a recent conversation with a colleague, Danielle shared the struggle that teachers face when considering the testing and curriculum mandates and why good teachers are leaving teaching:

> I just want to teach. I don't want to have to worry about a test or that I have to attend this training that doesn't remotely affect what I'm doing in the classroom. I just wanted to teach…Why can't someone just say you know what's best. That's hugely impacting a lot of our teachers. That's why we're losing them.

Assessment and Ownership of Education

Assessment weighs on participants' minds as a way that policymakers, as Greg, who pointed to the sign for valuable slaves, in Figure 42, said, "own you" by controlling instructional time and forcing "labels" and a "value-added model" upon teachers in order to determine federal funding. Greg continued his resolve, beginning with his imagined conversation from the perspective of a policymaker to a teacher:

> …assessment, money making scheme by the way – and we're going to institute this test by a professional test company because you don't know what the needs of the students are. You are not the expert...I came to a point in my professional career – maybe two years ago – where I was so sick of the numbers and the data and the fact that they are meaningless. That no matter what I did, no matter what learning I saw happen – no matter what measurable learning I saw happen – it didn't matter in the end. It doesn't matter. The outcome of what happens in the classroom has no impact on the data. It never does.

So I said, you know what, I'm not giving one more ounce of instructional time away because I'm preparing for a test. I'm not doing worksheets and test prep. These kids are tested out. I'm not giving up any more actual learning time. I could be teaching a valuable skill instead of teaching all of that – and you know that's hard as a professional because someone always wants to hold you accountable. So at some point the grim reapers may come knocking on my door because I don't care any more about that. I came to a place where I said I'm a professional and I cannot any longer. I see these kids and, in good conscience, [I cannot] go into a classroom and not give them what they need because that's what I signed up for. When I see things that rip weeks away like testing, of instructional time, that doesn't add value to my classroom. It doesn't make any sense at all. It's not that testing doesn't have a place. If testing, however, does not inform my instruction, it has no purpose for me. If its purpose is to label a school and determine federal funding, A-F, it has no purpose in my classroom.

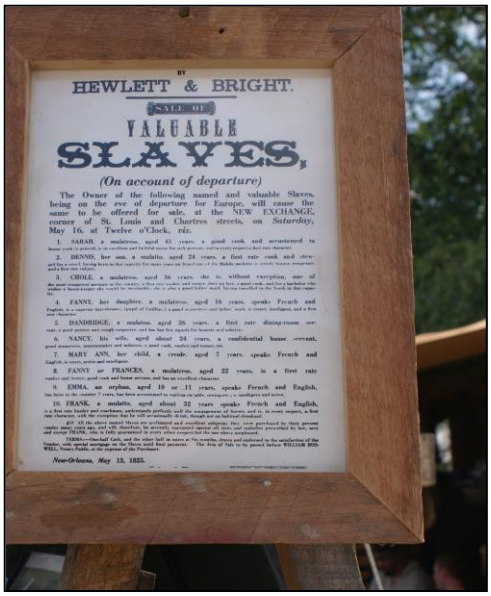


Figure 42. Likened to Slaves

"Today, culture is not much different from the slave traders of the early 1800's. Instead of listing us by age and skills, we are listed by certifications and what other activities we can oversee. Just like the slave serving his/her master's purpose, we are there to serve their purpose for their children at the best price possible" (Paula).

Participants resent their perceived ownership by testing companies, people who Becky said, have "probably never been in the classroom"; they also resent, as Paula added, higher education, politicians and administrators "who have not stepped foot in a classroom in 10-plus years and don't have a clue what's going on." All are touched by a "testing industry [that] is so well connected into both politics and huge money corporations" asserted Greg, "…even the College Board and the Common Core are connected." Paula interjected, "somebody's making money on these tests." Becky referenced a husband on the popular reality show *Housewives of Orange County* who benefited from the big business of education: "One of the billionaires said he is a *billionaire* because of an educational product that he put out. He's a *billionaire* off of us!"

I asked participants to identify why and when this shift occurred. They were unsure of the time, but they are keenly aware of its presence now. Paula cited, "money is the root of all evil" in reference to the textbook companies who produce standardized assessments. She added that she believes the basis of the testing movement was "a group of parents who were upset that their children weren't doing what they felt they should be doing." Greg cited "competing agendas" or "class division" as the causes of the shift toward testing. As a result of the infringement, textbook companies believe that "education has to be done a certain way in order to be effective"; thus, Greg said teachers are left to "believe they are incompetent" as determined by "people from outside not knowing my world."

In reference to new teacher evaluation schemes that incorporate student test scores used toward teachers' evaluations, Greg said that legislators "believe that teachers should be competing against each other because that's how you do it in the business world." Becky noted,

this results in people who “think that they know what’s best for every aspect of the profession” but they create “the pile of muck that faces the teaching profession.” Emily agreed, adding that teachers “take the abuse or get out” to avoid “rushing over a cliff” as Greg referenced in the caption for Image 19, as shown in Figure 43, for his response to prompt three to describe the current culture of teaching. Higher education is considered among “those people” as Paula and Emily retell “ivory tower” interactions with higher education, where Emily said she “felt snubbed as if a public school teacher was world’s away from a college professor.”

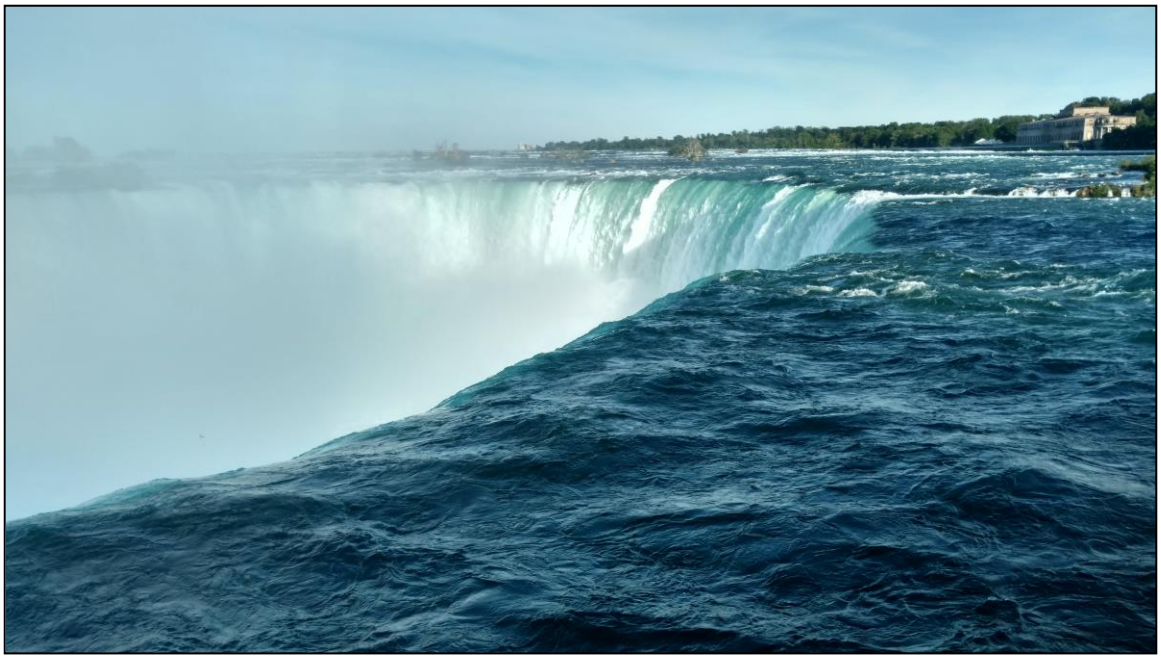


Figure 43. A Culture of Public Panic
“The Panic - The response of the public to the belief that education is failing or ‘falling off a cliff’ as in this picture is public panic, which results in a culture of teachers feeling helpless. The public asks, ‘how can we stop the raging water from flowing off a cliff?’ The panic is artificial. Teachers know the water is meant to form a waterfall and continue as a river. Being unable to accomplish the impossible demand of the public to stop the river, teachers are made to believe they are incompetent and take the abuse or get out” (Greg).

Focus Group Two Emphasis

In an effort to further support the submitted images and captions as well as the discussion from both focus groups, I also developed activities for Focus Group Two around three framing

questions that emphasized reflection and discussion around the culture of teaching:

- What is the current culture of teaching?
- How does the current culture affect your daily work life?
- What can you do to retain or regain influence in the teaching profession?

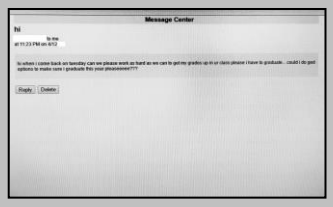
In one activity, participants were asked to write the three main concerns impacting the current culture of teaching; I compiled these from the cards that participants used to brainstorm during Focus Group Two as shown in Table 7.

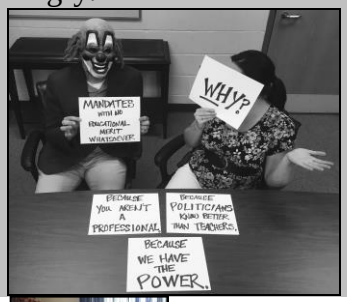
Concerns
Accountability, Test Results
Fixing the Problems
Truly Educating Kids and Eliminating Duties/Time to Teach
Uncompensated Expectations
Disrespect
Public Belief that Teachers are Incompetent
Turnover
Burnout
Negative Perceptions of Teachers
Pleasing Others Outside of Education
Entitlement Culture and Personal Responsibility
Positive Parental Involvement
Communication of Our Needs
Time to Collaborate Without Fear

Table 7. Identified Concerns in the Culture of Teaching
During Focus Group Two, participants identified the main concerns affecting today's culture of teaching.

Next, participants were also asked to review the images and captions submitted for prompt three, which were displayed around the room in an art gallery fashion. They were asked to rank three images, #1 through #3, with #1 being the image that elicits the most emotion; they were then asked to describe what they believe caused the caption and identify the effect of the caption (Figure 39). This information, the number, the cause, and the effect was placed on three separate

stickers and assigned to the chosen pictures. Table 8 compiles the participants' selected images and captions, along with their rankings and written cause and effects:

Image	Caption	Rank	Cause	Effect
6	"No Parental Support: Messages such as these from my 18 year-old students at the end of the year show the lack of parental guidance and responsibility. "We" means the student feels that the teacher needs to help her graduate versus taking ownership of her complete lack of participation and effort." 	1 1 2 2	• "Lack of personal responsibility in American culture" • "Misconceptions about where responsibilities lie" • "Parents don't hold their children responsible to complete work" • "We live in a culture where everyone is catered to and rewarded"	• "Disrespect/mutual anger/retaliation" • "Bringing down a profession and institution because of misunderstanding where responsibilities lie" • "Teachers are asked to take on responsibility instead of students being accountable" • "Students believe that they deserve things instead of having to work for them"
5	 "Betrayal – The requirement to be held 'account-able' by scores of the belief that 'I pay my taxes; I pay your salary; you work for me' or any number of circumstances outside the control of the teachers causes teachers to 'look over their shoulder.' Fear of being 'thrown under the bus' or 'stabbed in the back' by parents, administrators, media or politicians causes teachers to shift their focus away	1	• "As a teacher, you always fear that someone won't be there to support your decision when you know that it's the best thing for the student."	• "You hold back and don't always follow your instincts."

	from their main task of tending the fire."			
3	 "At the end of the day I close my door and reflect on my day, sometimes feeling exhausted from the expectations and demands aside from teaching."	1	• "The demands of administration and the public along with the needs of my students"	• "Frustration that I could not do everything"
8	 "For the teaching profession to survive, teachers will need to rebel against the notion that education has to be done a certain way in order to be effective. Teachers will need to figure out their own teaching philosophies and principles, based on their experiences in the actual classroom, and then stick to them."	1 3	• "The end result of teaching has become high scores on a standardized test." • "Teachers no longer have a say about what/how they teach."	• "Teachers are not encouraged to use their own strengths and philosophies are not as successful as they could be." • "We struggle keeping up and can't be as effective as we could be if we taught from our philosophies."
10	"The Public Circus: Demoralized. Powerless. Angry." 	1 2	• "Policymakers make decisions on education." • "Demagoguery – Politicians want to be heroes"	• "Teachers get the blame and continue to not have a say in their profession." • "System becomes more broken, tossed by every trend and 'solution.'"
21	 "Today's culture concerning teachers is like this stack of	2	• "Breakdown in society"	• "Teachers and students are having a hard time actually getting to the content. It's going to topple."

	books. Just like the variety of books that are shown here, today's society puts so many different types of stressors on teachers. Although these situations may be different, they all add up and impact teachers' daily lives."			
19	"The Panic – The response of the public to the belief that education is failing or 'falling off a cliff,' which results in a culture of teachers feeling helpless. The public asks, 'how can  we stop the raging water from flowing off a cliff?' The panic is artificial. Teachers know the water is meant to form a waterfall and continue as a river. Being unable to accomplish the impossible demand of the public to stop the river, teachers are made to believe they are incompetent and take the abuse or get out."	1	• "Public believe that teachers are incompetent"	• "An artificial and unwanted mistrust and social stigma on teachers"
18	 "After a long day? Nah, after most days."	2	• "Disrespectful students, parents, community…too much grading and not enough time"	• "A feeling of hopelessness – drinking anxiety, taking out our feelings on our loved ones"

12	"Attack – What does the culture of attack create? 'Those who can do, those who can't, teach!' REALLY??? Disrespect of teachers as professionals  and even authority figures impedes the educational process. Teachers are forced to defend themselves in front of administrators who want to please parents; students who as a result feel victorious and entitled; and politicians (time consuming to say the least) who want to look like heroes, all [the] while our actual voice (i.e. professional associations) to make education better is destroyed and our ability to advocate for students falls victim to self-preservation."	2 3	• "The lack of respect that makes teacher feel she needs to defend his/herself." • "A belief that teachers really aren't smart or actually cannot 'do'"	• "You feel like you are battling more than teaching." • "Disrespect from everyone – students, parents, community, etc."
11	 "My bag is already full, yet they continue to ask me to just do "one more thing."	3 3	• "We need involved and caring teachers to make our schools successful." • "Breakdown in the social system"	• "Some teachers take on too much because they feel they need to in order to be successful." • "Good teachers are burning out and leaving the profession."
22	"Current culture around teaching expects us to make a learning environment that allows students to grow throughout the year and then let them go. It's not	3	• "You become so invested in your class every year. You create bonds with these students and feel an	• "It's hard to let them go at the end of the year and then watch another teacher create a bond with them the next."

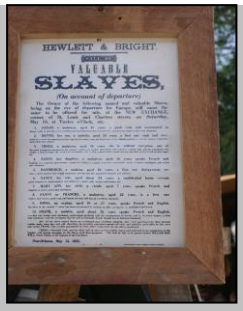
	always easy to let them go." 		attachment like none other.”	
15	 “The pile of muck that faces the teaching profession is not over. Many people think that they know what’s best for every aspect of the profession. Hopefully, someone will get it all under control before it’s too late.”	3	• “People in higher academics or at state level thinking they have the solution but haven’t set a foot in a classroom for a lot of years”	• “Make work for the teacher and less time to teach”
16	 “Today, culture is not much different from the slave traders of the early 1800’s. Instead of listing us by age and skills, we are listed by certifications and what other activities we can oversee. Just like the slave serving his/her master’s purpose, we are there to serve their purpose for their children at the best price possible.”	3	• “Human need to feel powerful; paid for by taxes”	• “Loss of assessment of true needs by a profession so needs [of students] don’t get met”

Table 8. Emotional Rankings and Cause and Effect

During Focus Group Two, participants were asked to rank, #1 through #3, those images submitted in response to prompt three. Also, participants identified a cause and effect for each of the images. This table includes the caption and image submitted by a participant; how another participant ranked the image for elicitation of emotion; and the identified cause and effect for the image and caption. Participants used stickers to make these representations on the images.

Participants identified and ranked 13 pictures that elicited a significant and meaningful emotion in response to the framing questions:

- What is the current culture of teaching?
- How does the current culture affect your daily work life?
- What can you do to retain or regain influence in the teaching profession?

The images that received the highest ranking represented lack of parental support; lack of administrative and political support, particularly in relation to testing or accountability; exhaustive demands outside of teaching; and decisions made by others outside of education.

Overwhelmingly, the participants defined the current culture of teaching as one of surrendering educational decisions or a "cookie-cutter classroom experience" because "other people try to infringe upon it [the power to teach] and think they have control over you." Participants recognize that the "layers" associated with the students in front of them, school boards, policy makers, administrators, must exist but that these groups understand teachers "to a certain extent." The scrutiny and disrespect leave them feeling that "we are wrong as professionals—like we're not meeting the needs of our students, our school, or our community or the world at large." Another side effect is that teachers seem to accept the disrespect as part of the job because of the "emotion" of "dealing with someone else's kids," noting politicians, administrators, and policymakers "can get parents" because all they "have to do is throw a bone out there and they latch on and say, 'oh yeah we think that too so now you have our support.'"

Critical Comparisons for Identity

Comparisons of teachers to "retail workers," "babysitters," "customer service," or "McDonald's" were common in the discussion "because as teachers we're told you are a professional, but are respected on the same level as a retail worker," said Emily, wrestling with the identity of teachers. Several participants drew comparisons between teacher and police officers or federal employees of the FBI Data Collection Center. As Becky said, recalling a conversation with a neighbor who works at the local division of the FBI, "but somehow people are seeing them as much more highly professional than they are seeing us." While teachers are often categorized as public servants, Paula indicated she feels less valued than public servants: "…even though everybody is cynical about them, I feel like they [public servants] have more respect than we [teachers] do." There is an acknowledgement that many other professionals receive different treatment as Emily stated, "For the life of me I would never imagine being a doctor or a nurse [and] having to deal with what we deal with." But, there is equally a recognition that participants fail to understand why this occurs. When the I asked participants to explain what makes the teaching profession different to others, Danielle explained:

> Why does that happen? I don't know. That's really…We went to school, we got our degrees – and no one ever questions what an accountant does – no one really questions my mom or her job and she went to school just as long as me. I mean I went to school longer than her and we're questioned more. She makes a good bit more than me too. I've never thought about that. And we're the ones who are teaching these lawyers and these doctors and these politicians. No wonder we feel yucky all the time because we are questioned all the time.

Greg suspected that it is due to control of funding for public education:

> I think a lot of it has to do with they're the ones giving us the money to teach and the ones above us are making the laws and telling us this is what you should teach. And we're just little puppets because they can pull strings and we have to do what they say or you know you're going to lose your funding or we're going to cut your job.

Battles From Within

Some suspect other teachers contribute to the negative perceptions of teachers. Melissa described those teachers "in the building who do nothing but show movies or sits there and says here's some bookwork." She believes negative comments on social media or blanket descriptions in passing by those within the profession contribute to negative perceptions of teaching at large. Teachers on social media who post "all we do is have recess" to protest a superintendent's decision on a day of inclement weather or "bicker with our parents" contribute to negative perceptions of teachers.

Preoccupations from Teaching

The theme of the many "hats" worn by teachers, particularly that of an expected parental role, was discussed when participants identified issues facing the current culture of teaching. A "change in parents," the "need for someone else to raise their kids," "two professional households," "single parent homes" caused Becky to say "it's not teaching – that's parenting and social skills." Becky, inspired by a conversation on the lack of planning time for teachers, likened the responsibilities of teachers to that of what the Dallas police chief, in response to the recent shootings of police officers in Dallas:

> …they're giving too many jobs to police officers period. Hmmm. Sounds like a profession I know. They want you to be there for kids' drug problems, their mental health problems, their physical health problems, their immunizations, their – I can't even name

> it all. There are so many things. And what happens is we have so many kids that end up in the counselor's office right now – it's constant. The first 10 years of my teaching career, you hardly ever had a kid say they needed to go to the counselor's office. It's constant. They're in there for the whole math class and then they come out and say the math teacher didn't teach that. They have literally quit going to class and the school board says if they've got problems we address it. If you're hungry you can't learn, if you have a drug problem you can't learn. If you're not in the room, you can't learn either.

Not only do participants believe teachers are expected to take on additional roles, often in place of teaching, but they believe teachers are unsupported by policymakers and parents when asked to assume these other roles, including attendance, counseling, and substance abuse.

In summary, the bulk of this study's qualitative research is rooted in descriptions of the current culture of teaching; the framing questions and activities for Focus Group Two emphasized this research question particularly. While participants hope that teachers and education are perceived as Emily's vision of superheroes, Greg's plan for "adventure cars," or as part of a Paula's "noble tradition," the reality is that participants believe the current culture of teaching is characterized by unrealistic expectations, misguided intentions, uninformed decisions, and disregard for the voice of teachers. The assessment of students and evaluation of teachers dominate the current culture of teaching, along with widespread disrespect from parents, students, communities, policymakers, administrators, and fellow teachers.

Research Question Four

How does participation in this project affect a teacher's experience?

Three concepts were repeatedly expressed as valuable to participants: reflection, collaboration, and understanding. Through this project, participants were afforded time to reflect

upon their experiences of being teachers within today's culture of teaching. The study encouraged participants to self-reflect by responding to prompts with images and captions. It also provided them with opportunities to dialogue, share common concerns, and "open up and reflect on their feelings" in the words of Melissa. "Reflection is so important," noted Danielle, as she likened this experience in reflection to the impact of the student teacher journal she had maintained many years ago. Reflection has the ability to clarify and change your position sometimes, according to Danielle: "what a difference…you realize you feel a certain way when you really didn't feel you felt that way."

SHOWED

Through the SHOWED activity, I asked participants to reflect further upon an image submitted by another participant in response to prompt one or two. Beyond the desire to increase deeper meaningful reflection that would affirm connections and similar feelings and situations among participants, I used the SHOWED activity to ask three poignant questions related to Research Question Four: *How does participation in this project affect a teacher's experience?*

- How does this [picture] relate to OUR lives?
- How could this image EDUCATE people?
- What can I DO about it? What will I DO about it? What will we DO about it?

Emily, who further reflected upon Image 41, the note from a student submitted by Kayla, wrote that she would use this image to educate the "average teacher hater [about] how important we really are to our future…our children." Participation in this project would prompt her to "strive to earn moments like this." Danielle chose Image 4, an image submitted by Kayla about her working at the hospital while she awaits the birth of her nephew, reflected that participation in this project has inspired her to "feel that teachers can support one another and help when they

know another teacher might be overwhelmed with school or other outside issues." She believes that an image like this can help to "educate other people by showing them an idea of how much time and effort teachers give as they prepare for their job." Melissa, referencing Image 17, by Paula, a solitary flower that "grows into something beautiful," said that the project has taught her that "we must be patient and try new ways to help" including parents and other out of classroom resources. Stressing what seems like it should be the obvious, "people need to understand that no teacher wants the students to fail," Melissa believes that she is reminded to "stay positive…share ideas and be a leader with my colleagues…and continue to rely on one another" as a way to affect her experience as a teacher. Image 26, that of a One Way Do Not Enter sign, will affect Greg's experience as a teacher by encouraging him to "make the most of every opportunity to communicate with parents and involve the community" to "be a part of planned events as well as create a showcase for parents to come in." He believes that teachers need to collaborate or cooperate with parents and other teachers. Becky, inspired by Image 5 of the fire, believe that teachers need to "continue to collectively speak out about problems and solutions."

Gaining Strength in Reflection

Beyond reflection and clarification, participants noted the value of gaining understanding; reflection is a way to deliver a "pep talk" or the power to muster up the ambition to say what Melissa and Emily described as the notion that, "I'm not going to hid in my shell" or I'm just really ready to push through." One participant described participation as a way to grow professionally.

Figure 44. Standing Firm
"After participating in this project I will stand more firm[ly] for my students and colleagues. I want to be more united with them and grow professionally" (Melissa).

The common experiences and struggles embolden understanding and make participants stronger so that "we will get our strength from each other" wrote one participant, who likened participation to lifting weights.

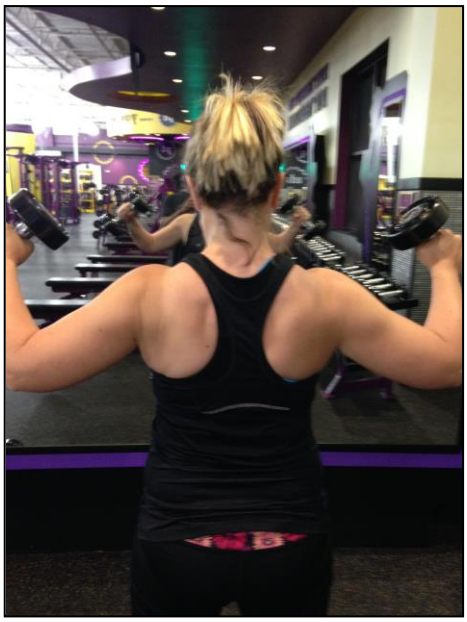


Figure 45. Grow Stronger
"Becoming a stronger teacher after learning other colleagues feel the same as me. We will get our strength from each other" (Melissa).

“Takes One to Know One”

The experience of a dialogue with similarly situated individuals affected the experience of Danielle as she indicated, “only teachers understand teachers,” and “only teachers can encourage teachers.” She suggested, “I can’t just talk to my husband about my profession because he just doesn’t understand.” She added, “I talk to my mother but she can just listen because she doesn’t know.” Beyond a spouse or parent, Paula had similar experiences with friends: “When I’m out with friends who aren’t teachers, what do I talk about?” There is value in understanding the events that encourage collaboration throughout the focus group sessions; these sessions are an example of the “community” of reflection and collaboration that Emily described as a way to “encourage other teachers” and unify.

Figure 46. Need for Collaboration and Reflection
“Collaboration or commiseration – call it whatever you want. It’s always productive when your colleagues assemble and discuss the good, the bad, and the ugly of your profession and then brainstorm how to fix a broken system…especially over chips and queso” (Emily).

Plans for a New Tool

Participants expressed a desire to use Photovoice in their classrooms as a strategy that encourages hands-on and student-driven instruction. Just as the study provided a forum for the authentic voice of teachers, I hope that students will be given a similar opportunity in community awareness projects for presentation to organizations, policyholders, administrators, and communities. I also propose that participants can use the activities of the focus group sessions, including SHOWED, and facilitation techniques within their classrooms in the future.

Research Question Five

How do teachers regain some measure of influence and control over their profession?

While participants could not identify when the "shift" of disrespect for teachers occurred ("possibly ten to 12 years ago in the late 1990s" according to Emily) or what prompted it, they can all identify specific areas in which they have lost control of their professions – and to whom they have lost that control. They cite design of assessments for students; the expectation to provide "uncompensated time" outside of the workday; the expansion of responsibilities, providing food, counseling, and parental advice, beyond teaching content; and the evaluation of teachers based upon standardized tests.

Participants were asked to review the images and captions submitted by participants for prompts one through five as provided by me on 3X5 index cards, which contained images and captions for accessibility and ease of manipulation by participants. To identify emergent themes, participants could express that "outside forces [not teachers] get education off track." In order for teachers to regain some form of influence over their profession, participants write that teachers need to "become proactive in unifying as a community," "become assertive," as shown in Figure 47, and "speak up."

Figure 47. Determination to Finish the Race
"I think that in order to regain some control over my profession you have to show determination and become assertive. Just as a runner begins a run, he has to decide to make the initial move and then display determination to finish what he started" (Danielle).

The call "to organize" and "join your union" was mentioned by two of seven participants.

Figure 48. The Call to Organize
A few of the participants mentioned involvement in unions. These images represent the thoughts of these participants. "We need to organize" (Becky). Emily added, "Join Your Union – Join your local education association. Get informed and then get active. UNION STRONG!"

As Emily indicated of picture cards she had placed into piles to identify the emerging themes in

the study:

> My second largest pile presents the struggle or fight to regain our profession. It's a lot of pictures about…we need to get stronger, climb our mountains, don't hide in our shells, stand for what we believe in, join the union, support each other, be a superhero, rise above, organize, speak up – all of these things, these action things that teachers feel the need to do in order to try to regain our profession.

The vast majority of the images and captions submitted in response to what teachers can do to regain some influence in their profession involve maintaining a positive disposition, "hope in the promise of the future" in the words of Paula, as represented in Figure 49, and working harder within an individual classroom despite negative influences on the culture of teaching.

Figure 49. Success is a State of Mind
Participants define their happiness and success as a teacher on a personal level, and they choose to remain positive. "I can dream about what I want my classroom to look like, but it will never reach its full potential unless I work hard" (Kayla). Paula added, "Rainbows have always been a sign of hope in the promise of the future so in a strange way, it is hope for the future in that someone realizes how teachers feel. With that I am encouraged to go on and try new ideas."

Despite the challenges they face and the difficulties they encounter, participants do find fulfillment and satisfaction in the act of teaching; as Kayla said, "we are not angry about being teachers." Instead, participants said, "we're angry about all the outside stuff" that is "thrust" upon the profession from "those outside of education." They do realize that they want change to

occur; participants identified that they need to open "communication of our needs to administrators and parents" in order that they may increase "time to teach." Additionally, positive parental involvement where parents and teachers are not "undermining each other" was identified as a way to recreate respect in the profession. Collaboration with fellow teachers as well as those outside of education must increase; Greg likened it to creating an environment of a family dinner or sit down meeting: "I do have something that I need to contribute that I do know how to contribute – that I'm trained in. We have to sit at the same table."

When asked to select one image from the collection that represents a way to counter the main concerns facing the profession, each participant selected a different image. In response to the framing question, *What can you do to retain or regain influence in the teaching profession*, participants chose metaphors such as a microphone, weight bench, "Union Strong sign" superhero cape, bundle of kittens, a note from a student, or a podium before a board of education. To describe the significance of the images, participants' comments range from "speak up" to "look at what I can do and not what anyone else can do" to "working toward the same goals" to "come together and communicate more."

Still, participants remain resigned to the fact that "a lack of family life," the perception "we're working for them," and a breakdown in American culture create a vicious cycle where there is, as Paula said, "a loss of respect for other people's feelings, their thoughts, and their opinions." All of these contribute to students not respecting teachers because as Emily said, "they see their parents not respecting teachers." Some, like Greg, remain hopeful that they will "create a culture of passion to counter it – to educate."

Inevitably, the awareness that "it's impossible to get the politics out" of education exists among participants as sure as they realize that, as Greg said, there is a dire need "for people to

quit trying to control with these policies and politics that have absolutely nothing to do with education." Participants call for an opportunity to "give teachers the voice at the table." Public service announcements or campaigns that, as Emily described, are "basically talking about teachers and how much education we have … [that] we have more education than this career and this career as a whole and yet this career is considered more esteemed." Standing before the board [of education], as seen in Figure 50, or the unenviable act of engaging with politicians are steps that teachers can take to "educate" and "voice their concerns." Greg, who referenced the image of a teacher standing as a delegation before a board of education and an experience with a state policymaker who was meeting with union representatives, explained:

> Unfortunately, whether we like it or not we do answer to politicians. We can't not talk to them. We have to engage them. That's a lot of work and it's taxing and we don't want to do it. We don't like them. We think they're liars and they don't like us. They see us coming.

Figure 50. Become Active with Local Board of Education
A teacher presents a delegation before a local board of education

As a final activity during Focus Group Two, I asked participants to choose just one image that they believed represented what they could do to regain some measure of influence and control over their profession. The participants flipped through the stack of 86 picture cards, each one containing an image submitted for prompts three through five and those images from prompts one and two that received a ranking during the first focus group. Strength, voice, students, union, superhero, and communication were key factors in the captions and metaphors represented in the picture cards, as compiled in Figure 51.

Figure 51. Images and Captions Chosen to Represent Teachers' Influence

During Focus Group Two, participants selected one picture card to reflect how they believe teachers can regain some form of influence over their profession.

While participants stressed, "we have to stick together as a group," there was an acknowledgement that "we beat each other up." Melissa noted, "a lot of teachers' problems is teachers are not supporting each other" or, as Danielle said, "cattiness." Becky perhaps said it most accurately in reference to the "pile of muck" created by others: "Hopefully, ***someone*** will get it all under control before it's too late." It represents what Greg referred to as the teachers' current culture of "they" instead of "we" when describing one avenue accessible to teachers to establish unanimity: unions. Teachers, for the most part, remain individually positive and "rise above," as one participant represented in Figure 52.

Figure 52. Rise Above the Negative Perceptions
"Rise above those who would look down on us and look beyond them" (Paula).

As a whole, participants agree that, too often, teachers fail to unite together for a common cause in the profession – particularly one as important as influencing or controlling their profession.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to engage the authentic voice of teachers, through qualitative participatory and exploratory research methods, in order to explore their insights, record the manifestations and effects of deprofessionalization in their daily work lives, and suggest ways that teachers might reclaim influence within the teaching profession. In this chapter, I reflect upon and discuss the conclusions and implications of the study, which was grounded in these five research questions:

1. How do participants see themselves as teachers?
2. How do participants believe others see them as teachers?
3. How does the current culture of deprofessionalization express itself in teachers' daily work lives?
4. How can participating in this project affect that experience?
5. How might teachers regain some measure of influence and control over their profession?

This chapter also weaves the study's findings into the literature, and provides suggestions for future research.

Shaping Teachers' Experiences and Profession

So many factors have a hand in shaping the practices and identities of teachers, from mandates and top down decision-making, to deskilling, standardization, and ever increasing public scrutiny. Over the last several decades, teachers' abilities to shape their own practices and identities have been increasingly muted or ignored. Increasingly, policymakers, private entities,

non-profits and for-profits are defining teachers' roles and practices, a trend, which has contributed significantly to the deprofessionalization of teachers.

Previous chapters have demonstrated a number of important points: that teaching lacks a universally accepted list of criteria that defines it as a profession (MacBeath, 2012); that teaching has wrestled with the labels of "semi-profession"; that teachers' identities are deeply affected by the sociopolitical context and the perceptions of others; and that the work of teaching has been reshaped by standardization, negativism, and the limitations on professional practices that society and policymakers impose (Beijaard et al., 2004; Bolton and Muzio, 2008; Collay, 2006; Hoffman, 1981, p. 15; Pescosolido, 2006). Research demonstrates that social settings and social practices affect teacher identity (Beijaard, et al., 2004; Izadinia, 2013; Smagorinsky, et al., 2004); the social interactions with or about educators, which are increasingly identified as negative, significantly influence the professional identity of teachers (Antush, 2014; Alsop, 2012; Braverman, 1998; Duncan, 2009; Goldstein, 2014; Gonen, 2012; Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996; Harvey, 2014; Kuhn, 2014; Lynch, 2014; Maxwell, 2010; Miller, 2006; Obama, 2011; Sawchuck, 2012; Song, 2010; Thomas, 2001). As schools have become defined by labels such as "failure" and "mediocre" (Berube, 1996; Kuhn, 2014, Kindle Location 817-819; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Ryan, 2008), or inefficient and monopolized (Carey, 2013; Kuhn, 2014; SpeakOut Foundation, 2015), crafting a professional identity has become increasingly difficult for teachers.

Professionalism is important for teachers for a range of reasons. Professionalism creates systems and practices that encourage collaboration, and allows for a collegiality to emerge that is built upon the development and expression of ideas and experience. Professionalism also helps to create structures of conduct and credentials that are focused on identified practice for individuals

and supported by professional organizations (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009; Williams, 2013). Without strong professional structures, teachers' identities and practices become defined by others; this is manifested in the contemporary status of teaching by labels and treatment befitting a "semi-profession," a return to the semi-skilled workers teachers once were, when the workforce was designed to exploit inexperienced women who would accept low wages and moral duty for payment (Goldstein, 2014; Hoffman, 1981, p. 15; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Jessop, 2013; Lortie, 1975; Race, 2002; Shea, 1992; Strober and Tyack, 1980; Tyack, 1974).

During this study, several particular and compelling themes related to contemporary teachers' identities and experiences emerged:

- the impenetrable and necessary superhero
- the obligations and expectations beyond the work day and outside of teaching
- overcoming obstacles from the outside through collaboration and support of peers
- the constant presence and effects of negative perceptions of teachers.

Project participants and I identified these themes together, through a series of activities during focus group sessions, digital submission, and associated narratives. These themes were representative of participants' experiences as teachers and, for the most part, they are also reflected in the contemporary literature around teaching that describes negative social interactions plagued by standardization, negativism, and limitations on teachers' professional practices.

Summary of Demographics

The participants in this study represented a population of seven, White teachers from two of fifty-five counties in West Virginia. The teachers were employed, for the 2015-2016 school year, in five different public schools, including two elementary, one middle, and two high

schools. Participants were further distinguished by the number of years employed, highest degree level, and content area.

I sought a sample size of six in order to maintain the suitable focus group size that Photovoice developers and practitioners recommend (Blackman and Fairey, 2007; Catalani and Minkler, 2010; Hage, 2014). In all, I sent invitations to ten prospective participants, whom I recruited through purposeful sampling and emergent leads in Harrison and Taylor counties. These participants were individuals with which I had a professional experience and shared rapport, in various capacities, during my own teaching career. The invitations generated six participants from Harrison County and one participant from Taylor County. At least one participant represented each of the programmatic levels: two elementary school teachers; one middle school teacher; and four high school teachers. The majority of participants were secondary teachers. Their years of experience extended from seven to sixteen years in public school education, and all of the participants had earned a Master's degree or higher in an educational field.

Summary of Methods

The study's data was collected through the use of Photovoice, a participatory action research method that asks participants to generate and narratively reflect upon visual images. Photo elicitation methods like Photovoice are widely used by social scientists, who argue that they can successfully evoke and unearth information, conjure memories, enhance involvement, and understand behaviors (Collier and Collier, 1986; Harper, 1984; Heisley and Levy, 1991; Schwartz, 1989). Photovoice was particularly relevant for this study because its participatory structure allowed me and participants to, at times, reverse roles; for this study, it was integral to eliciting teachers' authentic voices. Photovoice can also lead to social action. Wang and Burris

(1997) demonstrated that Photovoice helps participants to recognize, characterize, and improve their community through critical dialogue that creates awareness and addresses policymakers. This is one of Photovoice's most appealing attributes to me. I also appreciate its focus on avoiding researcher misinterpretation and its apt application to a major premise of this study: that today, so many others—policymakers, society, non-profit and for-profit entities—attempt to speak for the teacher. Photovoice encourages teachers to speak for themselves.

The five research questions at the center of this study served as the foundation for the open-ended prompts, the interviews and focus group sessions, and the framing questions and activities conducted during these sessions. The research questions were slightly reworded in order to directly address participants, and were used in order to determine the perceptions of teachers and the current culture of teaching. The following prompts resulted:

1. How do you see yourself as a teacher?
2. How do you believe others see you as a teacher?
3. How does the current culture express itself in teachers' daily work lives?
4. How can participating in this project affect your experience as a teacher?
5. How might you regain some measure of influence and control over your profession?

Participants submitted 15 images and captions that addressed these prompts, three images per prompt. The information resulting from the responses were analyzed for emerging themes. Because participatory approaches lend themselves to collaboration (Campbell and Lassiter, 2015; Lassiter, 2005, Spatig and Amerikaner, 2014), participants also identified themes within the data collected. Per Wang and Burris (1997), the processes and discussions surrounding the collection of images and captions in response to open-ended questions, as well as the interviews and focus group sessions, addressed two of the three goals of Photovoice:

1. To enable people to record and reflect upon their community's strengths and concerns
2. To promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues through large and small group discussion of photographs

The study's focus groups became forums for deeper engagement with the questions, which helped to contextualize the data, identify common themes, and share critical reflections with other participants (Collier and Collier, 1986; Harper, 2002; Schwartz, 1989; Wang and Burris, 1997; Wang, 1999). The focus groups' juxtapositions of the submitted images and captions often garnered more emotional and thoughtful responses that expanded upon participants' original reflections. Some of the tools utilized during the focus group sessions, such as the clock diagram and ranking of images, helped to explore the effects of the current culture of teaching; these are examples of what Blackman and Fairey (2007) and Save the Children Norway projects (2008, 2003) illustrate as the use of time analysis or prioritization and quantification with participants. In this study, the time analysis expanded upon the original reflections by offering more specific examples of how time is squandered from teachers and how others explicitly direct it. Using Photovoice led to multiple modes of data collection—digital images, narrative captions, individual reflection, and group discussion—which opened up many opportunities for triangulating research results.

Summary of Resources and Materials

The overall qualitative data in the current study included 105 images and captions, two focus group sessions consisting of two activities to address the framing questions, and a SHOWED activity. Again, participants responded to these five open-ended questions:

1. How do you see yourself as a teacher?
2. How do you believe others see you as a teacher?

3. How does the current culture express itself in teachers' daily work lives?
4. How can participating in this project affect your experience as a teacher?
5. How might you regain some measure of influence and control over your profession?

The images and captions submitted to address these prompts and collected over a ten-week period were compiled into PowerPoint presentations for Focus Group One and Focus Group Two; these data are found in Appendix G and J. Additionally, a PowerPoint presentation was assembled separately for data from Prompt Three, which asked participants to identify the current culture of teaching and its effects. This can be found in Appendix H.

The Overview of the Study, which was provided to participants who signed the study's consent, is found in Appendix C; it identifies my intent, aim and objectives, as well as the prompts and timelines for the study. All participants signed the consent for participation, including consent for use of images, which is found in Appendix D. Among a number of items addressed in the consent is permission to display the images and manner in which participants can be identified as a photographer. A sample of how images were displayed can be found in Figure 1.

Materials were developed to guide discussion and reflection during the two focus group sessions; these are provided, including the framing questions and specific brainstorming and discussion activities, in Appendix E. The SHOWED activity document, distributed at the end of Focus Group One and used as an activity to transition into Prompt Three on the culture of teaching, is found in Appendix F.

All participants responded to all prompts with the minimum 15 images and captions. Likewise, all participants participated in both focus group sessions and the related activities.

Results of focus group activities, including the ranking of images and captions and the cause and effect data, are described and provided as insets throughout the body of Chapter 4.

Four major themes emerged out of this study:

1. The teacher as the impenetrable and necessary superhero
2. The obligations and expectations beyond the work day and outside of teaching
3. Overcoming obstacles from the outside through collaboration and support of peers
4. The presence of and effects of negative perceptions of teachers by others

The data provided a deep understanding of how teachers believe they are perceived within the current culture of teaching, as defined by the authentic voice of teachers, and how this culture affects them.

SUMMARY: RELATED DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions

1. How do participants see themselves as teachers?

The major purpose of this question was to determine how participants perceive themselves. The literature provides the definition of professionalism (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009; Williams, 2013) and how teachers can be recognized as professionals (Bangs and Frost, 2012; Hoyle and Wallace, 2007; Sachs 2001; Whitty, 2002). To be a teaching professional is to possess control for curricular and pedagogical decisions and a vested interest over content and practice (Race, 2002), so it was important to determine if the seven teachers of this study experience professionalism in their daily work lives. If they did not, it was important to identify the reasons and influences that resulted in its absence. The literature also discusses the phenomenon of teacher deprofessionalization (Apple, 1978; Darling-Hammond, 1994; De

Siquerira, 2012; Evans, 2008; Goldstein, 2014; Hoyle and Wallace, 2007; Race, 2002; Rosenberg, 2003; Sachs, 2001; Smyth et al., 2000; Steiner-Khamsi, 2012; Teleshaliyev, 2013). This study focused on how teachers experience that deprofessionalization.

Overall, participants in this study saw themselves as superheroes that undertake numerous roles and obligations beyond teaching content, during the workday and afterward, in order to be a substitution for parents, fulfill basic teaching needs, and meet the daunting expectations of others. Participants described themselves as burned out or weakened as a result of the sacrifice of personal time, increasing expectations beyond those that involve content area teaching, and a lack of support from others including parents, policymakers, and administrators. In reflecting on their superhero roles, participants perceived that they fill a necessary role for students; they help to provide many students with a sort of foundation, in the form of support for emotional or personal needs that go well beyond learning. Participants used other professions to describe their roles (i.e. counselors, nurses, mothers, psychologists, disciplinarians, and social directors), yet participants ironically failed to use the actual term "professional" when asked how they see themselves. They accept these associated roles and turn to a school-based community of teachers for their own personal support; they want to maintain the ideal of a, as Paula wrote, "once noble profession" as perceived by those who still identify it as such. They are adamant that no one understands the plight of a teacher but a teacher.

Hoffman-Kipp (2008) and Beijaard, et al. (2004) argued that teachers' personal views and sociopolitical context contribute to the formation of their professional identity. This study's findings are consistent with the literature in that participants identify themselves with the roles thrust upon them by society, and they recognize the limitations on their time and delivery of instruction imposed by society and policymakers. The participants' perceptions are frequently

associated with what Olson (2008b) describes as the negotiations that teachers make, unlike other professions, for social positioning, meaning systems and self-concepts. As part of their social positioning, the study indicates teachers are conditioned to negotiate their time, autonomy, and expertise.

Teacher identity has long been considered the core of the teaching profession according to Sachs (2001), so the manner in which participants perceive themselves and negotiate their professionalism is particularly significant. The teachers in this study perceived that their abilities to teach content, care for their families, and engage in a meaningful social life are detrimentally affected by the expectation that they make their teaching jobs their primary responsibilities. These strains on teachers and results that follow such strains, such as burn out or altered professional judgment, are consistent with the findings of Riggs (2013) and Ingersoll and Merrill (2012), who indicate that teachers are departing the profession or experiencing burn out in increasing numbers. Additionally, Goldstein (2014) argues that the workforce of teachers was once and continues to be today viewed as missionary work, filled by those who have—or are expected to have—a moral obligation for the day-to-day care of students. This study's findings fit solidly within this literature; the study finds that the act of actual teaching is deeply constrained by duties and responsibilities outside of content area teaching; moreover, teaching itself is, per Marshall (2009) and Hargreaves and Shirley (2009), increasingly prescribed and standardized, and characterized by less and less time for teachers to ground their teaching in their own content and pedagogical expertise. Participants in this study regularly pointed out that they are focused more on student supervision, or on serving students' social and emotional needs than they are on developing their own authentic teaching strategies and practices.

The overall conclusions generated from the results of the study for research question one, how these participants see themselves as teachers, are as follows:

- As teachers, participants perform numerous roles beyond teaching and at the expense of instructional decisions and personal and family time
- Participants (and their colleagues, they report) work well beyond their compensated time to meet the needs of students and fill what participants believe to be, the voids left by parents and society
- Participants believe that teachers experience burn out as a result of the external pressures of parents, administrators, and policymakers
- Participants provide roles of many other professions (i.e. nurse, counselor, psychologist, social worker) but do not identify themselves as a professional in their own right
- Participants identify themselves positively in terms of necessity and perseverance in spite of the obstacles that they identify: testing, data analysis, parents, misbehaved students, abused students, decreased teacher motivation, absence of collaboration systems, lack of support from parents and administrators, and misunderstanding from policymakers
- Participants view themselves individually or as a member of a school-based community that serves as a support system instead of a collectively united profession

2. How do participants believe others see them as teachers?

The goal of question 2 was to identify how teachers believe others perceive them. An examination of the literature found that there is extensive commentary on the perceptions of teachers; this study sought data concerning how teachers, themselves, believe they are perceived. Both scholarly research and the popular press regularly report that teachers are incompetent (Corcoran et al., 2004; Goldstein, 2014; Gonen, 2012; Greenhouse and Dillion, 2010; Ingersoll et

al., 2014; Ingersoll and May, 2011; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Maxwell, 2010; Song, 2010). Today's teachers are increasingly subject to derision and calls for replacement because of standardized test scores, school data and ratings systems, teacher evaluation structures, and workplace shortages. Scholars also suggest that the now-persistent feminization of the field also contributes to its perennially low status (Anderson, 2010; Christie, 2012; Goldstein, 2014; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Isherwood, 2013; Labrana, 2007; LoBianco, 2015; Lortie, 1975; Obama, 2015; Shea, 1992; Strauss, 2016; Strober and Tyack, 1980; Tyack, 1974).

The teachers who participated in this study echoed those perceptions. Much of what this study found is echoed in the literature: based upon their experiences and critical reflections, participants do believe that teachers are perceived by parents, policymakers and administrators as incompetent, lazy, parental surrogates or substitutes, replaceable or interchangeable cogs, unapproachable and unappealing culprits, or "babysitters." The study also finds, however, that that the perceptions of students are inconsistent with those of parents, policymakers and administrators; according to participants, students perceive teachers in much the same ways that teachers perceive themselves: "hero," "dad," "confidant."

These seven West Virginia teachers believe there is a clear difference between the reality of what occurs in the classroom and what policymakers and parents perceive to happen in the classroom, or what administrators imagine to be the primary role of the teacher. Paula recounted an interaction with a policymaker who believed that their experience in the military would allow them to replace teachers; Emily and Paula both remembered exchanges with individuals in higher education who left them feeling that teachers were incapable of being public school experts. This study also found that administrators assign menial duties and responsibilities to teachers that encourage teachers to believe they are unsupported, that their expertise is devalued,

and that their roles as educators are diminished. Becky, for example, makes comparisons to other professions, such as lawyers and doctors, who would not be asked to perform duties in hallways or to monitor behaviors. The findings indicate that teachers are managed, rather than encouraged to develop professionally. This data is consistent with the literature that suggests a significant loss of professional autonomy for teachers; the extent of negative outcries of mediocrity of the school systems, fueled by an increase in "value added systems," diminish the perceptions of teachers even further (Ravitch, 2011; Schrag, 2000; Sullo, 2011; Toppo, 2008). A closer look into the literature supports the notion that teachers are managed instead of empowered; Smyth et al. (2000) and Race (2002), in particular, recognize and critique the heavy presence of surveillance and prescription in the work of teachers. The findings also point toward the Foucauldian notion of a workforce that is engineered for compliance and consent (Foucault, 1991).

The teachers whose experience is at the heart of this study believe that negativity surrounds teaching, and that too much of the talk about teaching is diverted toward linking student test scores with teacher evaluation. This way of constructing accountability incites fear in teachers – not for the essence of accountability – but for the blame on teachers associated with the discussions that surround it and how these discussions affect the profession. The literature supports the participants' feelings that teachers are perceived as a "scapegoat" for society's ailments, and the reputation of educators is based solely on test scores and rating systems. There is a rich history of scrutiny of teachers and the association of teachers' and education's "effectiveness" based upon assessments: *A Nation at Risk* (1983), No Child Left Behind Act (2001), Race to the Top (2009), and Every Student Succeeds Act (2015). Equally relevant to the evolution of perceptions about teachers are the study's findings that reinforce what Tyack and

Cuban (1995) refer to as the catalysts of reform: cultural anxieties, perceptions of social challenges, educational decline, and economic competition.

The overall conclusions generated from the results of the study for research question two, how participants believe others perceive them, are as follows:

- Participants believe that parents, policymakers, and administrators perceived teachers as incompetent, lazy, replaceable, and "babysitters"
- Participants believe that students perceive them positively, in a manner consistent with how teachers perceive themselves.
- Participants believe that teachers are perceived as "scapegoats" for what ails society as measured by standardization and teacher evaluations.
- Participants believe that administrators and policymakers heavily manage teachers, at the cost of their own professional autonomy.

3. How does the current culture of deprofessionalization express itself in teachers' daily work lives?

The bulk of the study's findings, through individual reflection and several activities during the focus group sessions, take up research question three, which asked participants to define the current culture of teaching and how it affects their daily work lives. The investigation into how participants define the culture of teaching was of particular interest to me because a major premise of this study is that so many others define the teaching profession and its education systems, and I wanted to explore how these teachers would actually define their culture. As previously stated in this chapter, teachers are regularly labeled and portrayed as incompetent by policymakers and society. Although researchers have explored the current culture of deprofessionalization in teaching (Barantovich, 2006; Beijaard et al., 2004; Bolton and

Muzio, 2008; Boote, 2006; Duncan, 2009; Goldstein, 2014; Ingersoll and Merrill, 2012; Ingersoll and Perda, 2012; Ingersoll and Perda, 2008; Kuhn, 2014; Labaree, 1992; Lee, 1995; Lortie, 1975; Milner, 2013; Ravitch, 2011; Rooney, 2015; Sachs, 2001; Wills and Haymore Sandholtz, 2009), I was particularly interested in how this current culture of teaching, as defined by teachers, affects the profession. I proposed, in keeping with the research of Olson (2008b) and from the perspective of Ellis on culture (1996), that teaching and acceptable practices of teachers are defined by others and that teachers negotiate pressures from outside the profession in order to maintain an identity. As with Lassiter's (2012) discussion of race and diversity, teachers act as an independent group, bound by unifying characteristics, in order to adapt and survive and maintain an identity despite external attempts to diminish the very essence of their profession. This is exemplified in Paula's discussion of finding support in school-based communities rather than from the profession as a whole.

Secondly, I sought to discover how teachers, in their own voices, are affected by the culture of their profession. It was interesting to me, as Spatig and Amerikaner (2014) discussed in their exploration of "outsiders" in a community, that the culture of teaching—or even the community of teaching—is so suspicious of influence from outsiders. I wondered how and why the profession or the community, defined by what Banks (2009) describes as the vital beliefs and practices of a group who are resistant to influence from outsiders, was so likely to be dominated by the control of others.

Findings related to research question three are associated with those of research question two in that participants report feeling "pressured" and "overwhelmed" because of how they are perceived by many policymakers, administrators and parents. Based upon findings in the study, it is these outside groups rather than teachers themselves that, to a great extent, define the current

culture of teaching. Participants described typical days plagued with frequent interruptions; participants report that their numerous roles and duties outside of teaching (hall duty, attendance, counseling, paperwork, etc.) minimize the primacy of teaching and diminish teachers' expertise. The findings suggest that teachers' average workdays include very little time to teach; participants report that their roles beyond teaching, as Greg indicated, "shift their focus away from their main task": teaching. This would suggest that the role of the teacher is similar to what Mulcahy and Irwin (2008) describe as industrial approaches to education in which policymakers, persuaded by private and corporate interests, formulate teachers as "conveyors of information," modern day factory workers who serve a centralized authority that seeks standardization. Similarly, teachers wrestle with increasingly complex societal expectations:

> As a nation we are expecting teachers to become bilingual or often times multilingual, experts in special education so we could mainstream youngsters, counselors of parents, counselors of students as well as experts in humanities, social studies, fine arts, career education, and all the mandated programs, not simply math and science. (Hiatt, 1986, p. 3)

Participants' focus on time continued to produce findings that indicate the current culture of teaching represents an expectation that teachers regularly work well into the evening by leading extracurricular teams or activities or because their planning periods were taken up by other demands during their workdays. Or both. This study provides several examples of what Emily and others collectively described as "uncompensated time" associated uniquely with the teaching profession. They indicate this to be an example of the obliged sacrifice that comes with the expectation that teaching is a kind of missionary work, or with the pervasive lack of respect for teachers' time and expertise in crafting standards, curriculum, and pedagogy that places

critical curricular and pedagogical, decisions in the hands of policymakers, big business, big philanthropy, and others who have limited or no experience in teaching (Antush, 2014; Berube, 1996; Kuhn 2014; Marshall, 2009; Mulcahy and Irwin, 2008; Ravitch, 2014; Schneider, 2014).

This study's participants described the current culture of teaching as reflecting a deep lack of respect and support for teachers; examples include public ridicule or exchanges with politicians and parents that diminish teachers' professional and personal worth. Danielle and Emily reported that they often question if they will be supported by administration in exchanges with parents; others know—with certainty—that their opinions are not trusted by parents or respected by administrators and policymakers. This group has been in numerous situations where, as Greg and Becky indicated, they felt disrespected by top-down curriculum and testing mandates from policymakers and administrators; they have had what Paula and Emily describe as "Ivory Tower" exchanges with higher education; and they have experienced what Greg, Becky, and Paula referenced as the unyielding power and connection among the testing industry and politics. Further, they provide structures controlled by virtual novices to education or devoid of input of practicing teachers: Common Core initiative, teacher evaluation and school rating systems.

Overall, the findings present a current culture of teaching that too often disregards input from teachers themselves. Moreover, participants describe theirs as a culture heavily influenced by scrutiny, disregard, and mistrust. At the root of this deteriorating culture, they believe, are the perceptions of teachers by others. In response to the third research question, how the current culture of deprofessionalization expresses itself in teachers' daily work lives, the study results indicated:

- Participants believe they sacrifice expertise in order to perform numerous duties and responsibilities unrelated to teaching.
- Participants believe they are expected to fulfill roles beyond their workday and outside of their training.
- Participants believe decisions on curriculum are greatly influenced by those outside of education such as policymakers and business.
- Participants believe they are expected to fulfill standards and measures for which they had no input.
- Participants believe they are surrounded by a culture of disrespect.
- Participants, though unaware of when the shift occurred or why, believe they are not considered professionals.

4. How can participating in this project affect that experience?

The voice of the teacher is best-established and shared through reflection, collaboration and understanding because, as Whitty (2002) and Sachs (2001) explain, these principles support professionalism over "managerialism" (p. 151). The study indicates self-reflection and opportunities for dialogue best serve a teacher's experience in the current culture of teaching. The use of visual methods by these K-12 educators further encourages what Pain (2012) describes as a system of collaboration, mutual trust, and respect. Although the findings indicate teachers are often disregarded in decision-making, those who participated in this study felt that they gained a "seat and voice at the table"; moreover, the dialogue and motivation they established through participating in the study affected them positively.

As expressed earlier, participants do experience support among other teachers, in smaller communities, in pockets of the profession, or individually; they report that collaboration with

other teachers affords a great sense of motivation and encouragement. Paula spoke of feelings of isolation when discussing her work with non-teaching friends over dinner. Danielle noted that "only teachers understand teachers" as she recalled the disconnect during conversations with her husband and mother about work. Paula said teachers identify with the local "community here at our schools" instead of the larger profession, and Emily likened the group of seven in this study as a "community" of reflection and collaboration. Resoundingly, the seven educators indicate they find support most within themselves as the individual "superhero" who comforts, motivates, and supports. In effect, they expressed feelings of unity, strength, and encouragement through validation of their experience because of participation in the study. Likewise, participants plan to utilize Photovoice as a classroom strategy. Using Photovoice as a personal and classroom tool, teachers can convey the effects of the social constraints and the decisions of policymakers.

I had hoped the study would incite participants to become what Fullan (1993) describes as "change agents" instead of what Hiatt (1986) references as "agents of morality." As discussed earlier in this chapter, Hiatt argued that the nation's education system expects too much of teachers. Teachers are expected to do too many things, from career education and counseling to bilingual delivery and sex education; Danielle, Kayla, Melissa, and Paula support Hiatt's argument as they discuss the additional support they regularly provide for students as nurses, counselors, seamstresses, and "lifesavers." Fullan (1993) reminds us that teachers believe in "moral purpose" but goes on to say that the drive for morality cannot be where teaching ends. He challenges teachers to develop personal visions for the future, find others with the same visions, develop inquiry and model mastery, and ignite a change that is not just personal but organizational in nature (para. 5-6). Teachers need to help change the perceptions and directions of education.

It was most important to me to provide an avenue through which participants might form a mantra that emulates Freire's (1993/1970) belief: "Men are not built in silence but in word, in work, in action-reflection." Teachers can no longer surrender to the decisions and opinions of others, the non-experts, they must reclaim their own teaching voices. As Fullan (1993) writes, "Teachers will never improve learning in the classroom unless they help improve conditions surrounding the classroom" (p. 100). The participatory nature of this study did increase the participants' reflection upon the perception of teachers and the current culture of teaching, but the study provided few concrete ways to change how others perceive the profession. Although that kind of change was not my aim, I had hoped that participants would come to own the culture of teaching instead of begrudgingly surrendering it to others. Ellis (1996) describes this as negotiating the culture of teaching based on pressures from outside. Still, this group of West Virginia public school teachers did take some important steps toward identifying and representing the authentic voice of the teacher by participating by using Photovoice (Wang and Burris, 1994), per Freire (1993/1970), in a dialogue and reflection on the perception of and current culture of teaching.

In response to the fourth research question, how participation in the project can affect a teacher's experience, the study results indicated:

- Participants believe that the voice of teachers is best-represented, understood and supported through collaboration, reflection and understanding.
- Participants believe that teachers value most the understanding, motivation and encouragement they receive from other teachers.
- Participants were positively affected by the dialogue and reflection through Photovoice.

5. How might teachers regain some measure of influence and control over their profession?

Freire (1993/1970) writes: "Because dialogue is an encounter among men who name the world, it must not be a situation where some men name on behalf of others." Just as Freire (1993/1970) asked the oppressed to use dialogue to critically examine their current situation in order to create and drive change, it was important to relate his principles so that teachers may identify the causes of their struggle and open a dialogue among themselves and others in order to "critically act upon it" (Kindle Locations 1571-1572). The majority of the findings of this study, through dialogue created in individual reflection and focus group discussions, do reinforce perceptions of teachers and give specific examples of the culture of teaching. The particular ways in which participants perceive that teachers have lost influence over their profession include: external creation of student assessments and curriculum, expansion of teacher responsibilities well beyond teaching, and evaluation of teachers and schools based on standardized tests. In conversations about how they might reclaim their profession, Emily, Danielle, Melissa, and Kayla said that teachers should become proactive and hopeful, and that they must organize, unify, and develop a broader sense of community. In addition, Greg, Paula, and Becky expressed the belief that an increase in communication and collaboration with administrators, parents, and policymakers would increase influence.

Notably, many factors contribute to the decline of the profession, which these teachers feel in their daily work lives: a lack of parental involvement, declining respect in American culture in general, and the overbearing influence of politics, big business, and powerful philanthropists. By and large, participants believe that teachers are aware of the negative influences and they are hopeful that *someone* will step forward to incite a change. However, the

study indicates that the current culture of teaching is reflected in the notion that, as Greg and Becky indicated, "they" instead of "we" will influence change. While Emily and Greg spoke of unions or general unity in the profession, the study finds that teachers choose to individually remain positive and hopeful rather than banding together to change their conditions – essentially resigning themselves to the "situation where some men name on behalf of others" (Freire, 1993/1970).

In response to the fifth research question, how teachers can regain some measure of control over their profession, the study results indicated:

- Participants can name specific examples of how and who influences their profession.
- Participants can identify key influences outside of the profession that have an outsized effect on their own work and lives: a lack of parental involvement, declining respect in American culture in general, and the overbearing influence of politics, big business, and powerful philanthropists.
- Participants can identify ways that teachers could influence their profession.
- Participants, for the most part, prefer to remain positive and hopeful in isolation instead of unifying together as a profession, through a union, or otherwise.

In conclusion, the study's findings are grounded in the research literature: these teachers feel disempowered and disheartened; they believe that parents and teachers are disillusioned equally with their relations; opinions of teacher quality are exaggeratedly low; and rates of teacher burnout are pronounced (Goldstein, 2014; Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009; Schrag, 2000; Riggs, 2013; Teleshaliyev, 2013). Findings, in regard to the effect of participation in the study, provide some examples of practical pathways toward collaboration and reflection to generate understanding and encouragement, such as Photovoice. It should be noted that additional

research into how a participatory method of this nature could directly influence the teaching profession would be beneficial; also, this question could likely be elaborated upon after the presentation of the findings of this study to union groups or school boards. There also are some concrete examples for how teachers may influence the profession, but additional research in this area is suggested. As the emergent themes identified in the study indicate, teachers have negotiated themselves, based upon their perceptions, into the identity of impenetrable superheroes because of all the forces affecting and deprofessionalizing them from the outside. Teachers believe collaboration and support of peers are important ways to regain some influence over the profession. But they are unclear on how to unify beyond the comfortable and supportive communities they have within their schools.

Recommendations for Further Research

In considering the emergent themes and related findings of this study, the following recommendations for further research regarding deprofessionalization of teachers come to mind:

1. Regarding one of this study's emergent themes, the presence and effects of negative perceptions of teachers, few research studies have employed the authentic voice of teachers to connect positive perspectives of the profession to how teachers could express themselves as specialized and qualified. For example, a study that compares physician and teacher preparation programs might reflect ways that teachers could influence change and increase positive perceptions of those in the profession.
2. Considering that the results of this investigation yielded a considerable amount of data that explored the use of time, the theme of obligations, and the expectations of work beyond the workday and outside of teaching could be examined in a future qualitative

study that utilizes Photovoice as a viable tool to use for critical reflection and dialogue in order to drive change.

3. Reflecting upon the scholarly research that emphasizes the productive and concrete results of empowerment, collaboration, and stakeholder involvement (Berube, 1996; Catalani and Minkler, 2010; Freire, 1993/1970; Gottesman, 2010; Hage, 2014; Kuratani and Lai, 2011; McClure, 2005; Shaull, 1993; Strack et al., 2010; Wang and Burris, 1994; Webb, 2004), a future qualitative study about how these are used successfully to empower those within the teaching profession could provide concrete examples of how teachers can influence the current culture of teaching; findings in a study of this nature could assist in addressing the theme of overcoming obstacles from the outside by providing concrete examples from the authentic voice of teachers.
4. The current study included an in-depth exploration of the experiences of seven public school teachers in two counties of West Virginia. More qualitative studies of this nature, in West Virginia and other places, could begin to develop a thicker body of knowledge around teachers' experiences of deprofessionalization.
5. This study relied on self-reporting of teachers to gather information on the perceived identity of teachers and the current culture of teaching. Additional personal observations, interviews, or action research from the point of view of policymakers, parents, and administrators, as they consider their perceptions of teachers or the current culture of teaching, could provide greater insight and consciousness into the preconceptions, prejudices and deprofessionalization of teachers.

Significance of Conclusions

In summary, this study contributes to a limited body of research concerning deprofessionalization of teachers, particularly from the perspectives and authentic voices of teachers. Participants describe and critically reflect upon a culture that creates and perpetuates frustration, disempowerment, and deprofessionalization for teachers; it leads to mistrust among parents, teacher burnout, and to ever diminishing opinions of teacher quality. Of critical importance is the fact that teachers have negotiated themselves into the role of impenetrable superhero, all the while remaining supportive of self and those within their school-based communities instead of the profession at large. These negotiations are poignantly and significantly recorded through Photovoice, which encourages the very participation and dialogue needed to drive change within the profession. During this process of critical reflection, it is significant that participants recognize how the perception of teachers contributes to the current culture of the profession. While participants reveal limited concrete examples for how teachers may influence the profession, it is meaningful that they believe that collaboration with and motivation of peers influence the current culture of the teaching profession. Equally interesting and supportive of the notation that deprofessionalization is occurring is that participants were unclear on how to unify in order to influence the current culture of teaching and drive change in their profession.

This study informs others, including administrators and policymakers, of how teachers believe they are perceived, why they believe themselves to be perceived in that way, how they feel about it, and what their perceptions and feelings mean to the culture of teaching. The findings shed light upon the manners in which teachers feel deprofessionalized. Most importantly, the study's greatest contribution is the validation of the teachers' experiences,

through their authentic voice, as they struggle to defend their expertise and professionalism within the current culture of teaching.

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APPENDIX A: OFFICE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY APPROVAL LETTER

May 5, 2016

Elizabeth Campbell, Ph.D.
College of Education and Professional Development

RE: IRBNet ID# 859620-1
At: Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral)

Dear Dr. Campbell:

Protocol Title:	[859620-1] DEPROFESSIONALIZATION OF TEACHERS: FROM "THE GREAT EQUALIZER" TO "THE FRANCHISE OPERATION"	
Expiration Date:	May 5, 2017	
Site Location:	MUGC	
Submission Type:	New Project	APPROVED
Review Type:	Expedited Review	

In accordance with 45CFR46.110(a)(7), the above study and informed consent were granted Expedited approval today by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral) Chair for the period of 12 months. The approval will expire May 5, 2017. A continuing review request for this study must be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the expiration date.

This study is for student Donna Hage.

If you have any questions, please contact the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral) Coordinator Bruce Day, ThD, CIP at 304-696-4303 or day50@marshall.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

APPENDIX B: SUPERINTENDENT APPROVALS

Donna D. Hage, NBCT, Ed. S. dhage@k12.wv.us
Marshall University Doctoral Student 304-641-1720 (cell)

Dr. Mark A. Manchin, Superintendent
Harrison County School System
408 E. B. Saunders Way
Clarksburg, WV 26301

RE: Request to Conduct Research Study
DATE: April 21, 2016

Dear Dr. Manchin:
I respectfully request your permission to conduct a research project among a sampling of current K-12 educators in Harrison County Schools. This project, entitled "Deprofessionalization of Teachers: From 'The Great Equalizer' to 'The Franchise Operation,'" will collect information on how the identities of educators are defined by society and how teachers negotiate pressures from outside the profession (i.e. policymakers, parents, social media, etc.) to maintain a professional identity.

The duration of the participatory action research study is 10 weeks. The study proposes to utilize the framework in Freire's educational empowerment theory to discuss the relationships between teachers and society via methods provided in Photovoice. Participants will address the following research questions: How do participants see themselves as teachers; how do participants believe others see them as teachers; how does the current culture of deprofessionalization express itself in teachers' daily work lives; how can participating in this project affect that experience; and how might teachers regain some measure of influence and control over their profession. There will be an individual conference and two focus group sessions with participants during the study.

The study is limited to adults only, and no images that would explicitly identify individual students or participants will be used in the project. Participants will be chosen through purposeful sampling and/or emergent leads, and participation is voluntary. Consent for participation and use of images will be secured from participants, and the researcher ensures confidentiality to the best of her ability for participants. The results of the study will be shared with participants and new teacher mentor trainings; the researcher will take additional opportunities to provide results from the study with other interested parties such as boards of education, teacher preparation programs at higher education institutions, and policymakers.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Dr. Elizabeth Campbell, Principal Investigator, at campbelle@marshall.edu or myself. Questions concerning rights as a research participant may be directed to the Marshall University Office of Research Integrity at 304-696-4303.

If you agree that I may conduct this study during the Spring and Summer months of 2016 in Harrison County Schools, please confirm below:

Superintendent Dr. Mark A. Manchin

4-21-16
Date

Donna D. Hage, NBCT, Ed. S.
Marshall University Doctoral Student

dhage@k12.wv.us
304-641-1720 (cell)

Ms. Kathy Green, Superintendent
Taylor County Schools
71 Utt Drive
Grafton, WV 26354

RE: Request to Conduct Research Study
DATE: April 18, 2016

Dear Superintendent Green:
I respectfully request your permission to conduct a research project among a sampling of current K-12 educators in Taylor County Schools. The research project, entitled "Deprofessionalization of Teachers: From 'The Great Equalizer' to 'The Franchise Operation,'" will collect information on how the identities of educators are defined by society and how teachers negotiate pressures from outside the profession (i.e. policymakers, parents, social media, etc.) to maintain a professional identity.

The duration of the participatory action research study is 10 weeks. The study proposes to utilize the framework in Freire's educational empowerment theory to discuss the relationships between teachers and society via methods provided in Photovoice. Participants will address the following research questions: How do participants see themselves as teachers; how do participants believe others see them as teachers; how does the current culture of deprofessionalization express itself in teachers' daily work lives; how can participating in this project affect that experience; and how might teachers regain some measure of influence and control over their profession. There will be an individual conference and two group interview sessions with participants during the study.

The study is limited to adults only, and no images that would explicitly identify individual students or participants will be used in the project. Participants will be chosen through purposeful sampling and/or emergent leads, and participation is voluntary. Consent for Use of Images will be secured from participants, and the researcher provides a guarantee of anonymity for participants. The results of the study will be shared with participants and new teacher mentor trainings; the researcher will take additional opportunities to provide results from the study with other interested parties such as boards of education, teacher preparation programs at higher education institutions, and policymakers.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Dr. Elizabeth Campbell, Principal Investigator, at campbelle@marshall.edu or myself. Questions concerning rights as a research participant may be directed to the Marshall University Office of Research Integrity at 304-696-4303.

If you agree that I may conduct this study during the Spring and Summer months of 2016 in Taylor County Schools, please confirm below:

Kathy Green
Superintendent Kathy Green

May 3, 16
Date

APPENDIX C: OVERVIEW OF STUDY

Participant Name: _____ Email:_____

Researcher's Intent: Your role in this study is to use a smartphone as a tool to capture symbols, objects, and scenes that elicit your reflection, provide understanding for others, and analyze effects based upon the researcher's five assigned prompts during the 10-week period.
Overall Goal: To identify, record and reflect upon the important issues according to teachers

Primary Aim	Key Objective(s)
1. Facilitate a Voice for Teachers	• To work with 6 participants to produce an exhibition of 50 images, over a period of 10 weeks, on the subject of deprofessionalization of teachers • The exhibition will be presented to participants, new teachers, boards of education or teacher preparation representatives for higher education

STUDY START DATE: _____ **STUDY END DATE:** _____

DIRECTIONS FOR PROMPTS:

1) Follow the timelines below to address each prompt with three (3) digital images per prompt.

2) Write a brief written caption (1 to 5 sentences) to explain each digital image.

3) By the end of each two-week cycle, send the three (3) digital images and written caption to hagedonna@gmail.com.

Week 1-2: How do you see yourself as a teacher?

Week 3-4: How do you believe others see you as a teacher?

PARTICIPATE IN SMALL GROUP INTERVIEW

Week 5-6: How does the current culture express itself in teachers' daily work lives?

Week 7-8: How can participating in this project affect your experience as a teacher?

Week 9-10: How might you regain some measure of influence and control over your profession?

PARTICIPATE IN SMALL GROUP INTERVIEW

Adapted from: The PhotoVoice Manual: A Guide to Designing and Running Participatory Photography Projects at http://www.photovoice.org

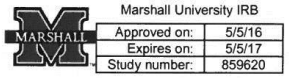
Participant Initials: _____

APPENDIX D: CONSENT

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

In Their Own Words and Images: Teachers Explore What it Means to Teach Today

Elizabeth Campbell, Ph. D., Principal Investigator
Donna D. Hage, Ed. S., Co-Investigator



Introduction

You are invited to be in a research study. Research studies are designed to gain scientific knowledge that may help other people in the future. You may or may not receive any benefit from being part of the study. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Please take your time to make your decision, and ask the Co-Investigator Donna D. Hage to explain any words or information that you do not understand.

Why Is This Study Being Done?

The purpose of this study is to explore how teachers currently see themselves, their work, and the profession. Current K-12 public school teachers will use participatory action research such as the visual and narrative methods of Photovoice. This study operates from the assumption that an exploration of the lived experience of teachers can provide meaningful insight into the perceptions of teachers. It is believed this study will contribute to the information on the experience of educational reform, create awareness for the profession, and open dialogue among others about the deprofessionalization of educators.

How Many People Will Take Part In The Study?

Six (6) K-12 public school teachers will take part in this study. A total of ten (10) subjects are the most that would be able to enter the study.

What Is Involved In This Research Study?

You will attend an individual conference with the co-investigator, who will share the study's overall goal, specific aims, and SMART objectives for each aim, consent for participation and use of images will be secured from each of the six (6) participants. You will be provided copies of the documents signed. The co-investigator will use email for all communications, reminders, and scheduling of the two group interviews; the co-investigator will provide her email and cell phone number to participants.

During the 10-week study, you will use their personal phone, or the co-investigator will provide a digital camera in order to respond, with a minimum of 15 photographs, to five prompts (three images per prompt) provided by the co-investigator, every two weeks. You will attend a focus group interview with other participants at Week 4 of the study and a second focus group interview with the same group at Week 10 of the study. Both group interviews will be audio recorded; you may request to be interviewed separately to maintain your confidentiality from other participants.

Subject's Initials _____

How Long Will You Be In The Study?

You will be in the study for about ten weeks during the Spring and Summer months of 2016.

You can decide to stop participating at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, we encourage you to talk to the Co-Investigator Donna Hage as soon as possible.

The study investigator may stop you from taking part in this study at any time if he/she believes it is in your best interest; if you do not follow the study rules; or if the study is stopped.

What Are The Risks Of The Study?

There are no known risks to those who take part in this study.

Are There Benefits To Taking Part In The Study?

If you agree to take part in this study, there may or may not be direct benefit to you. We hope the information learned from this study will benefit other people in the future. The findings will contribute to the body of information on the current culture surrounding the teaching profession as very little is known about how teachers themselves experience the phenomenon of deprofessionalization. The final report will identify the many facets of participants' teacher identities, document the manifestations and the effects of deprofessionalization in their daily work lives, and propose possible ways for teachers to reflect upon ways to regain some measure of influence and control in their profession.

What About Confidentiality?

We will do our best to make sure that your personal information is kept confidential. However, we cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher will not share images or captions with other project participants without the individual's consent. Two audio-recorded group interviews will be convened, for which confidentiality cannot be guaranteed; thus participants who wish to maintain confidentiality may ask to be interviewed separately. Although the purpose of this study is not to provide a venue for expressions of discontent with particular jobs or colleagues, the researcher recognizes that such expressions could occur, In these cases, if the researcher wishes to include such materials she will ask the participant for explicit permission for those materials and use them in such a way that the participant will not be identifiable in the research. All forms will be collected and maintained in locked cabinets by the investigator during the study; all forms will be destroyed by the co-investigator after the final report is written. Federal law says we must keep your study records private. Nevertheless, under unforeseen and rare circumstances, we may be required by law to allow certain agencies to view your records. Those agencies would include the Marshall University IRB, Office of Research Integrity (ORI) and the federal Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP). This is to make sure that we are protecting your rights and your safety. If we publish the information or photographs from this study, you will not be identified by name or in any other way.

What Are The Costs Of Taking Part In This Study?

There are no costs to you for taking part in this study. All the study costs, including any study tests, supplies and procedures related directly to the study, will be paid for by the study.

Subject's Initials _____

Will You Be Paid For Participating?

- You will receive a $40 gift card as reciprocity for images, discussion, and active participation during the ten-week study. Credit for payment will accrue as the study progresses and is not contingent upon completion of the entire study.

What Are Your Rights As A Research Study Participant?

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or you may leave the study at any time. Refusing to participate or leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. If you decide to stop participating in the study we encourage you to talk to the investigators or study staff first.

Whom Do You Call If You Have Questions Or Problems?

For questions about the study or in the event of a research-related injury, contact the study investigator, Dr. Elizabeth Campbell at campbelle@marshall.edu. You should also call the investigator if you have a concern or complaint about the research.

For questions about your rights as a research participant, contact the Marshall University IRB#2 Chairman Dr. Stephen Cooper or ORI at (304) 696-4303. You may also call this number if:

- You have concerns or complaints about the research.
- The research staff cannot be reached.
- You want to talk to someone other than the research staff.

You will be given a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

SIGNATURES

You agree to take part in this study and confirm that you are 18 years of age or older. You have had a chance to ask questions about being in this study and have had those questions answered. By signing this consent form you are not giving up any legal rights to which you are entitled.

_____
Subject Name (Printed)

_____ _____
Subject Signature Date

_____
Person Obtaining Consent (Printed)

_____ _____
Person Obtaining Consent Signature Date

Subject's Initials _____

Consent For Use of Images

Study: In Their Own Words and Images: Teachers Explore What it Means to Teach Today
Marshall University
Spring 2016
Co-Principal Investigator: Donna D. Hage, NBCT, Ed.S.
Principal Investigator: Elizabeth Campbell, Ph.D.

The purpose of Photovoice is to use pictures and brief narratives as a way of making those in power more aware of the needs of groups of people who typically do not have a voice. Pictures taken in Photovoice may be shown in presentations, gallery displays, public shows, and/or published on a website. The images are used to create awareness about the needs of those who are facing challenges. The digital images in the collection for this study, which will not include identifiable images of children, are intended to be shown as part of the dissertation and to fellow participants during two focus group interviews to generate reflecton and discussion among participants. The researcher may also use the images and captions in oral presentations during teacher mentor trainings and other opportunities from interested parties such as boards of education, teacher preparation programs at higher education instituations, and policymakers. The co-investigator, to the best of her ability, will provide confidentiality and anonymity for participants who desire it.

Are you willing to have your photographs used in public displays about Photovoice?
_____ Yes _____ No

Do you want your name listed as the photographer?
_____ Yes _____ No

If you would like your name listed, would you prefer to use your first or full name?
____First ____Full

Please list or describe any concerns/restrictions/limitations for use of your work:

_____

_____

If you change your mind at any time, please contact Donna D. Hage, researcher, at hagedonna@gmail.com or 304-641-1720.

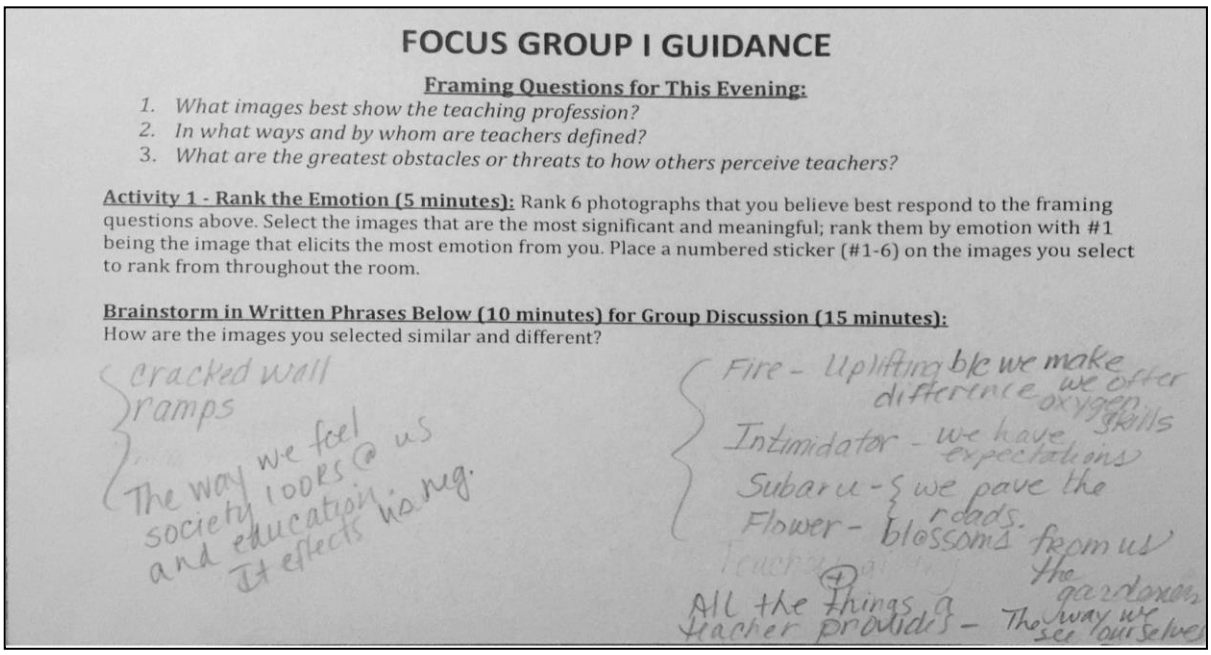
_____
Name of Photographer

_____ _____
Signature of Photographer Date

Adapted from: Hamilton Community Foundation. (2007). Photovoice: Manual and resource kit. Retrieved from: http://archived.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/mapp/framework/clearinghouse/upload/Photovoice-Manual.pdf

Subject's Initials _____

APPENDIX E: FOCUS GROUPS ONE AND TWO GUIDANCE CARDS



FOCUS GROUP I GUIDANCE

Framing Questions for This Evening:

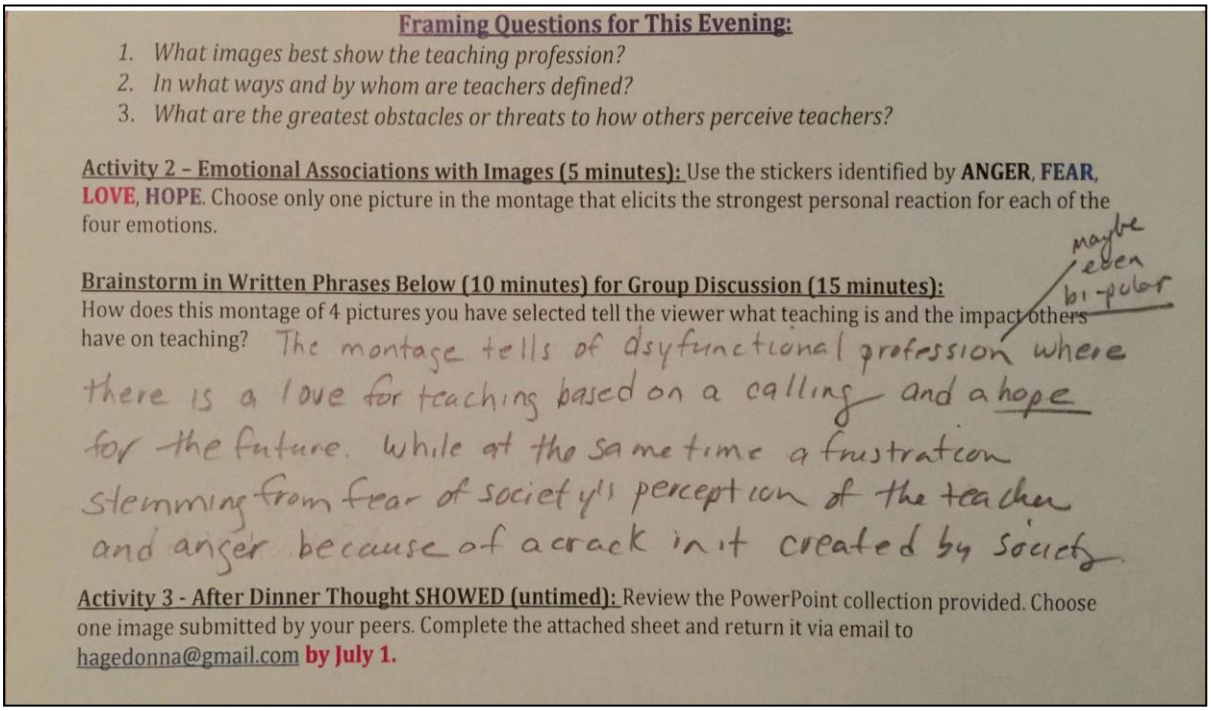
1. *What images best show the teaching profession?*
2. *In what ways and by whom are teachers defined?*
3. *What are the greatest obstacles or threats to how others perceive teachers?*

Activity 1 - Rank the Emotion (5 minutes): Rank 6 photographs that you believe best respond to the framing questions above. Select the images that are the most significant and meaningful; rank them by emotion with #1 being the image that elicits the most emotion from you. Place a numbered sticker (#1-6) on the images you select to rank from throughout the room.

Brainstorm in Written Phrases Below (10 minutes) for Group Discussion (15 minutes):
How are the images you selected similar and different?

cracked wall
ramps
The way we feel
society looks @ us
and education
It effects us.

Fire - Uplifting b/c we make difference we offer oxygen skills
Intimidator - we have expectations
Subaru - we pave the roads.
Flower - blossoms from us
All the things a teacher provides - The way we see ourselves



Framing Questions for This Evening:

1. *What images best show the teaching profession?*
2. *In what ways and by whom are teachers defined?*
3. *What are the greatest obstacles or threats to how others perceive teachers?*

Activity 2 – Emotional Associations with Images (5 minutes): Use the stickers identified by **ANGER**, **FEAR**, **LOVE**, **HOPE**. Choose only one picture in the montage that elicits the strongest personal reaction for each of the four emotions.

Brainstorm in Written Phrases Below (10 minutes) for Group Discussion (15 minutes):
How does this montage of 4 pictures you have selected tell the viewer what teaching is and the impact others have on teaching? The montage tells of dsyfunctional profession where there is a love for teaching based on a calling and a hope for the future. While at the same time a frustration stemming from fear of society's perception of the teacher and anger because of a crack in it created by society.

maybe even bi-polar

Activity 3 - After Dinner Thought SHOWED (untimed): Review the PowerPoint collection provided. Choose one image submitted by your peers. Complete the attached sheet and return it via email to hagedonna@gmail.com **by July 1.**

FOCUS GROUP II GUIDANCE

Framing Questions for Today:

1. ***What is the current culture of teaching?***
2. ***How does the current culture affect your daily work life?***
3. ***What can you do to retain or regain influence in the teaching profession?***

Activity Clock (10 minutes): Use the organizer provided to brainstorm. Describe what you do on a *typical* day in teaching by writing the actions you are performing during a 24-hour cycle as designated in one-hour intervals. *When does your work day begin or end? What do you do during your designated 8-hour workday? Include other duties related to your profession on the organizer.*

Brainstorm for Group Discussion (10 minutes) and Group Discussion (15 minutes): Pass your clock to the person to your right. Identify the similarities and differences. *How does this define the current culture of teaching? What is the impact(s) on your daily work life?* - duties and things unrelated to teaching
- no actual grading or planning during planning - no RR break
- every minute planned - at least 2-3 hours past work day

Picture Cards (15 minutes) and Group Discussion (15 minutes):

1. Flip through the picture cards provided for Activity 1, reading the narratives and examining the pictures.
2. Rank 3 images that you believe best respond to the framing questions above by placing a numbered sticker (#1-3) on the images displayed throughout the room. Select the images that are the most significant and meaningful; rank them by emotion with #1 being the image that elicits the most emotion from you.
3. For each of the 3 images you rank, complete a "CAUSE" and "EFFECT" sticker to place on the image. *What do you believe causes the caption written? What do you believe is the effect associated with the caption written?* Write this on the appropriate stickers and apply it to the image. You should not choose your own images for this exercise. Be prepared to discuss.

Framing Questions for Today:

1. ***What is the current culture of teaching?***
2. ***How does the current culture affect your daily work life?***
3. ***What can you do to retain or regain influence in the teaching profession?***

Activity 2 – Themes and Patterns (20 minutes) and Group Discussion (15 minutes): Review the picture cards provided for Activity 2, reading the narratives and reviewing the pictures. Identify themes that emerge in the photographs. List the themes here. Be prepared to explain why these themes emerge to represent the profession.

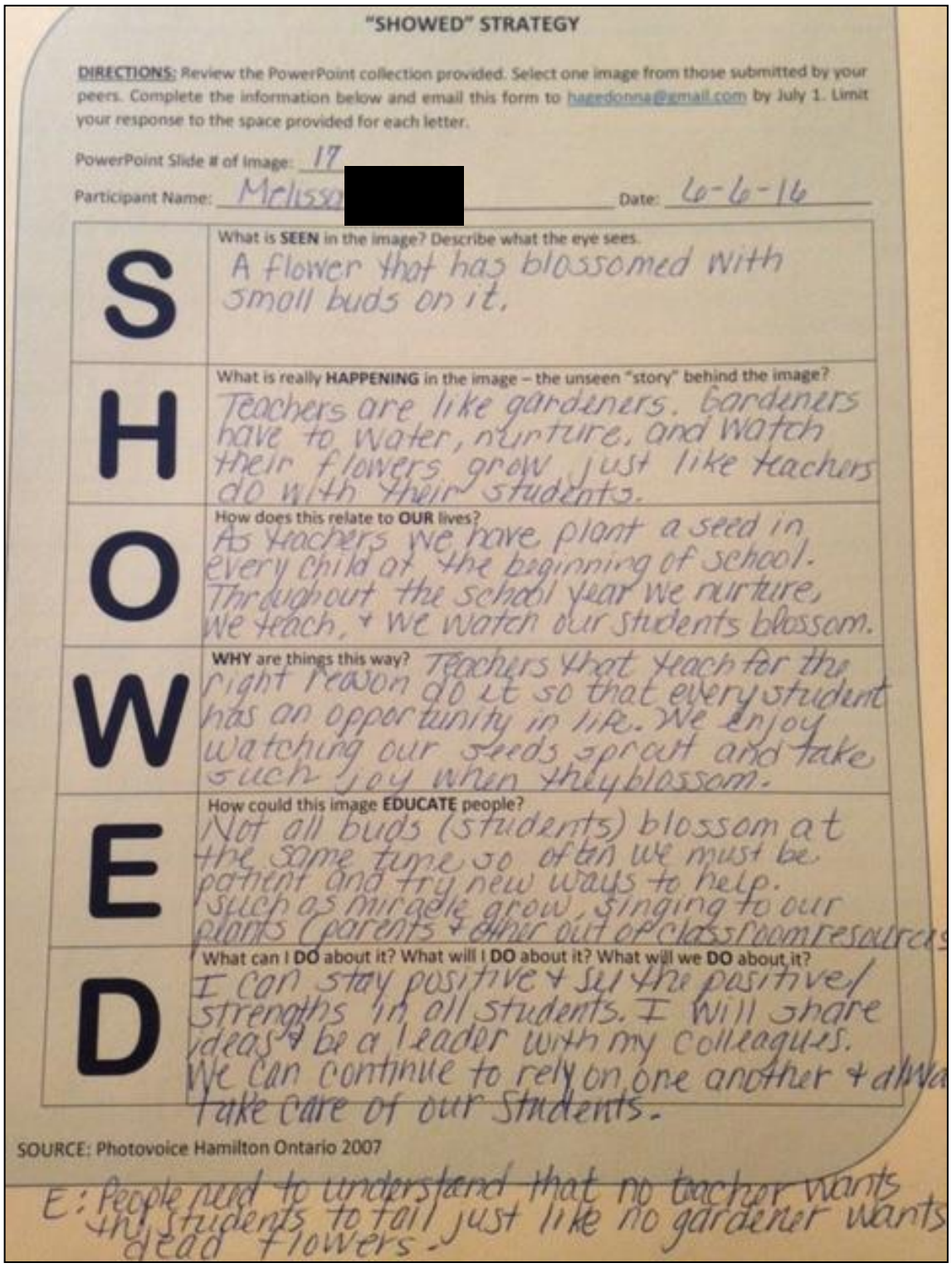
- Identifying the problems in education
- Becoming proactive for our profession
- Getting back to the real purpose of education

Zeroing In to Influence: Brainstorm the questions below (10 minutes) and Group Discussion (15 minutes): Based upon your review of the picture cards and the discussion today, *what are the 3 main concerns impacting the current culture of teaching?* Accountability
Fixing the problems
Truly educating kids and getting rid of all the other nonsense

And, what can you or the profession do to counter these concerns? How? Select the one image displayed from prompts 3-5 or in the picture cards that best addresses how this can occur. Explain.

Join together, become stronger, and take back our profession
The picture of the microphone because once we come together on identifying the main problem(s), we need to SPEAK UP and make it clear that things must change.

APPENDIX F: SHOWED STRATEGY



"SHOWED" STRATEGY

DIRECTIONS: Review the PowerPoint collection provided. Select one image from those submitted by your peers. Complete the information below and email this form to hagedonna@gmail.com by July 1. Limit your response to the space provided for each letter.

PowerPoint Slide # of Image: 17

Participant Name: Melissa [redacted] Date: 6-6-16

S	What is **SEEN** in the image? Describe what the eye sees. A flower that has blossomed with small buds on it.
H	What is really **HAPPENING** in the image – the unseen "story" behind the image? Teachers are like gardeners. Gardeners have to water, nurture, and watch their flowers grow just like teachers do with their students.
O	How does this relate to **OUR** lives? As teachers we have plant a seed in every child at the beginning of school. Throughout the school year we nurture, we teach, & we watch our students blossom.
W	**WHY** are things this way? Teachers that teach for the right reason do it so that every student has an opportunity in life. We enjoy watching our seeds sprout and take such joy when they blossom.
E	How could this image **EDUCATE** people? Not all buds (students) blossom at the same time so often we must be patient and try new ways to help. Such as miracle grow, singing to our plants (parents & other out of classroom resources
D	What can I **DO** about it? What will I **DO** about it? What will we **DO** about it? I can stay positive & see the positive/ strengths in all students. I will share ideas & be a leader with my colleagues. We can continue to rely on one another & alwa take care of our students.

SOURCE: Photovoice Hamilton Ontario 2007

E: People need to understand that no teacher wants the students to fail just like no gardener wants dead flowers.

APPENDIX G: FOCUS GROUP ONE IMAGES AND CAPTIONS POWERPOINT

6/25/16&

Focus Group I: June 1, 2016

Perceptions of Teachers
Prompt 1: How do you see yourself as a teacher?
Prompt 2: How do you believe others see you as a teacher?

Dissertation Entitled
Deprofessionalization of Teachers:
From "The Great Equalizer" to "The Franchise Operation"

Co-Researcher: Donna D. Hage, NBCT, Ed. S.
Marshall University

I see myself as a teacher as being part of something greater than just today but part of something very old and noble.

~ Teacher of 13 Years

2

1&

During the school year, I get weak and overwhelmed at times. Like this fence, I struggle withstanding the weeds. The weeds are students with potential, but don't work to their potential. I am trying to educate them, but their lack of focus and motivation tries to overcome me.

~ Teacher of 11 Years

3

It's day two of waiting at the hospital for my nephew to be born and I'm typing lesson plans, developing a unit on Syrian Refugees, and analyzing statistics from our last track meet.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

4

The Role - The wood is student potential. The fire is the education. I build the fire and nurture it until it grows into a consuming fire. It takes skill to arrange the wood in such a way that it catches (guidance), oxygen to feed it (inspiration), and tending (commitment) to keep it going.

~ Teacher of 8 Years

5

Literature Lady: There is nothing more inspiring than seeing a classroom full of students engrossed in a good book. Helping a student discover a love of reading is the best reward there is as an English teacher. I feel like a superhero, because I was the person who helped them discover this new world which is full of possibilities, experiences, and lessons.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

6

As a teacher, I feel that I wear many hats. I play many roles such as an informant, educator, problem- solver, confidant, cheerleader, referee as well as many other duties. I believe that as a teacher, one has to be prepared to take on any role that the student and situation may need.

~ Teacher of 12 Years

7

Private Tutors: This is a picture of a teacher outside school hours tutoring a student. He often has to do this with students who don't show up for his math class. These young people expect him to constantly stay beyond his regular work hours to privately tutor them because. It's quite frustrating when it's a student who doesn't bother to come to school during regular school hours and then expects him to give up his free time to reteach... for free. If someone wants my private time, I believe they have to pay me a professional wage. Otherwise, they will not get my private time.

~ Teacher of 16 Years

8

All the items on my desk are representative of me as a teacher. I see myself as being more than just someone teaching and grading papers but as someone with many different "professions" from nurse to counselor as well as being a part-time mother.

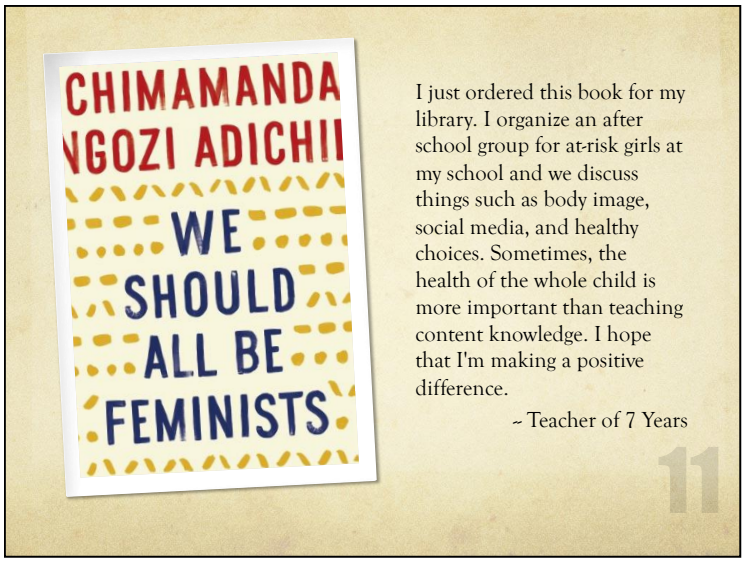
~ Teacher of 13 Years

9

As a teacher I hit some bumps and stress factors such as testing, data analysis, parents, misbehaved students, abused students, lack of teacher motivation and collaboration, but as for myself there "Ain't no mountain high enough" to stand in the way of my passion to teach. I'll rise up to every opportunity to make a difference in the children that I teach.

~ Teacher of 11 Years

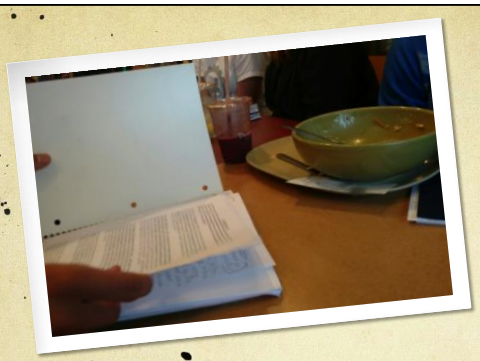
10



I just ordered this book for my library. I organize an after school group for at-risk girls at my school and we discuss things such as body image, social media, and healthy choices. Sometimes, the health of the whole child is more important than teaching content knowledge. I hope that I'm making a positive difference.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

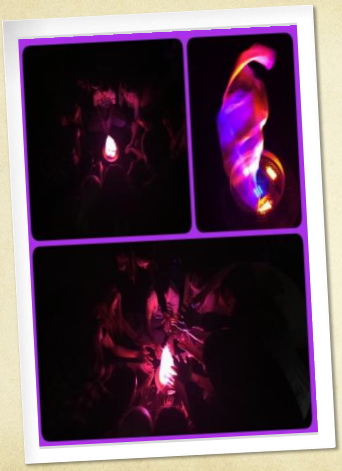
11



The Work - I have to do what it takes, and it takes more than what I am given. This is a review session for an exam at Panera with a majority of the class... off the clock! There isn't enough time and there is too much work and it isn't fair, but I do it anyway because I believe in what I am doing. I have to go the "extra mile" or it doesn't get done!

~ Teacher of 8 Years

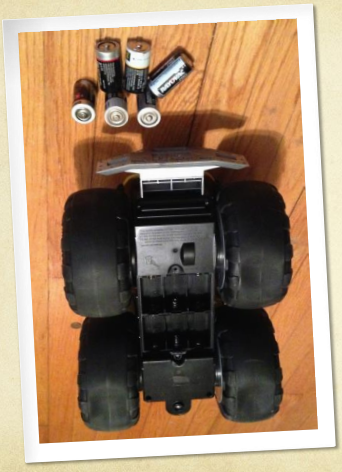
12



Creativity Cultivator: Students warm their hands by the fire as we discuss the first performances during a history of theatre lesson. As a teacher, I see myself as one who cultivates creativity and encourages students to be open-minded, releasing their fears of being different or "weird." We must celebrate what makes us unique to unlock our full potential as human beings, and it's my job to help students find the key.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

13



Without the batteries, the toy truck will not work. I compare my role as a teacher to the batteries. I provide students with the knowledge and skills that they need in order to complete school and make their life "work" just as the batteries do the same for the truck.

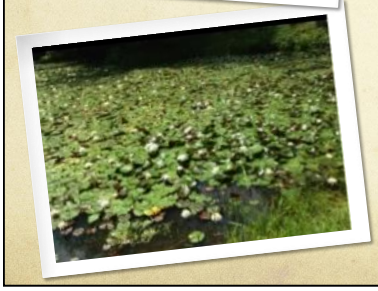
~ Teacher of 12 Years

14

I see myself as someone who can research and analyze data to design a curriculum that meets the needs of all, including those who need extra help or enrichment.

~ Teacher of 16 Years

15



Teachers provide a classroom where all students will receive an education no matter their ethnical background, religion, disabilities, social economic status, etc... just like lilies provide an excellent habitat for different kinds of animals. Water lilies can grow and reproduce rapidly if not maintained correctly causing fish and plants to die from lack of sunlight. Students', much like water lilies, behaviors and attitudes can be negatively impacted if we allow too much negativity over our classroom. I, as a teacher, nourish my students with wisdom and offer rays of sunlight with my warm smile.

~ Teacher of 11 Years

16

I see myself as a professional because when I am teaching it is like being a gardener with that special flower. You nurture it, water it, and watch to see if it grows into something beautiful.

~ Teacher of 13 Years

17

On most days I don't get home until at least after 7 between preparing for school, coaching, student council activities, and recruiting and interviewing candidates for my summer job. That leaves very little time for any socialization, but I'm young and single and human and once in awhile I need tacos and drinks with a cute date.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

18

The Journey - The road is there but unpaved. Nothing about the journey is easy, though it could be. Though society has not kept its obligation to pave the road we must drive on. Education then can either be a complaint or an adventure. I choose to drive the adventure car (It's a Subaru.).

~ Teacher of 8 Years

19

Tough Love Teacher: Pasted on my classroom door is a notice. It basically explains my teaching philosophy: I'm here to be a teacher, yes, but also to help my students learn to govern themselves. Students must learn how to take ownership of their education, because it is the ability to seek and find information for ourselves that enables us to thrive in this game we call life.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

20

I see myself as the foundation. Just as this foundation was constructed so this house could be built and remain strong, I believe that an elementary school teacher strives to do the same. We are giving our students an educational foundation that is rich with knowledge and skills that they can build upon throughout the rest of their school years.

~ Teacher of 12 Years

21

I see myself as an expert in my field, who designs instruction and imparts knowledge to students so that they can be successful men and women with bright futures. I have spent an incredible amount of time making sure that I know the content so that I can better convey the information and skills to my students.

~ Teacher of 16 Years

22

As a teacher, I see myself as a person who helps alleviate problems that students may have. Just as a band-aid helps a child's scratch to get better, I feel that teachers help heal their own students' type of "scratches." These types of injuries may range from unfortunate home life, inability to efficiently learn, physical/mental impairments, to just the need to be noticed and loved.

~ Teacher of 12 Years

23

Teachers who coach don't teach and only went into teaching to be coaches.

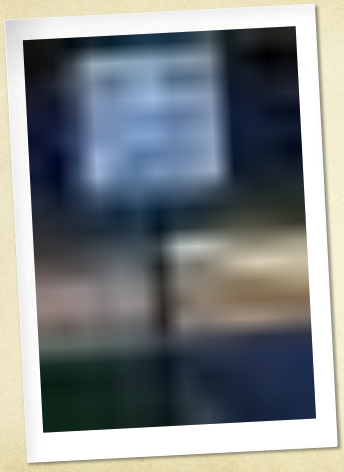
~ Teacher of 11 Years

24

Just when a parent thought there was no hope, a teacher steps in and sees something special about that child that no other teacher has seen before. That teacher is thought to be a lifesaver.

~ Teacher of 11 Years

25



So often, parents and the community feel like they are not welcome in our schools and at the same time schools complain about having no parental involvement.

~ Teacher of 11 Years

26

Every student has hurdles in their lives. Some can run them very easily, others are just a few steps behind, and then there are those that stumble and fall over them. People do not realize that academics is not the only hurdles these kids face. As teachers, the public and policy makers expect us to have everyone finish the race at the same time, but that is not the case.

~ Teacher of 11 Years

27

People think teachers become teachers to have their summers off. They also think we are paid for our summers off. Little do they realize we are paid for ten months of the year and often spend summers working on continuing education and classroom preparations.

~ Teacher of 11 Years

28

The perceptions of coworkers, supervisors, families, and the communities are all secondary to the perceptions of my students. I asked my students to honestly pick one word to describe me.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

29

This is a picture of my very capable and intelligent colleague doing bus duty after school, instead of being in her room at the end of the day, getting grades into the computer or getting ready for the next day's learning (i.e., setting up a Chemistry lab). The administrators have no answer for when in the world she is supposed to do all the things they want her to do every day, like take perfect attendance electronically, and answer all parents' ridiculous calls/emails, and complete ridiculous amounts of CYA paperwork (like SAT forms, and court reports, and IEP paperwork, and blah blah blah), and help kids get makeup work, and....(you get it), but they have no problem asking her to spend half an hour after school watching kids board their buses for home.

~ Teacher of 16 Years

30

Many of us have as much schooling as lawyers. Do we ask lawyers in a courthouse to stand in the hall and observe the defendants and plaintiffs to make sure they don't get into arguments or altercations before court hearings? No, we have trained police officials to do that.

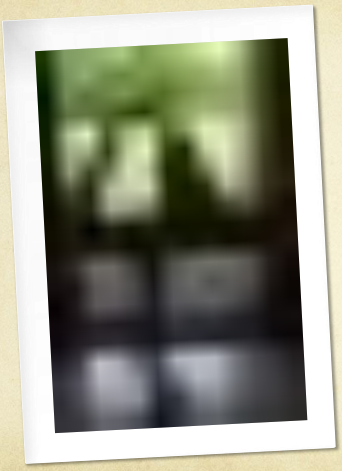
~ Teacher of 16 Years

31

I feel that a lot of parents see me as a babysitter/parent/counselor to their youth first, and an imparter of knowledge second. I have seldom ever felt the need to take on a parent role during my teaching experience. I also do not feel compelled or qualified to offer psychological advice. I do, sometimes, share with students how I handle my life and personal experiences, but I advise them that my choices may not be fit for them. For these reasons, I consider myself to be a mentor, but not the replacement for parents/guardians.

~ Teacher of 16 Years

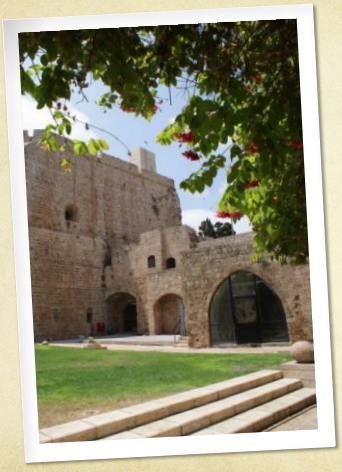
32



I believe that others see me as a teacher as being flexible. Just as this young girl's body easily handles the changes being made to her body, I believe that as a teacher, others see me do the same. I respond adequately to changes within the school day to best meet the needs of my students.

~ Teacher of 12 Years

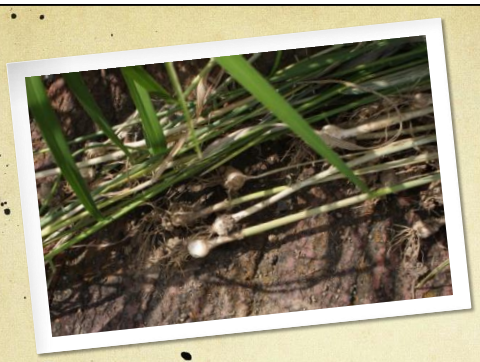
33



I call this the view from the Ivory Tower and it is how those at Universities view teachers as their students and only they can teach us how to teach. In short, they look down on us from their Ivory Towers.

~ Teacher of 13 Years

34



I think some people - parents in particular - see me much like a ramp, the WV wild onion. It is like I am not a professional at all but someone that they either hate or love. The profession of being a teacher has a strong flavor that just does not appeal to everyone so like the ramp, we are just a weed.

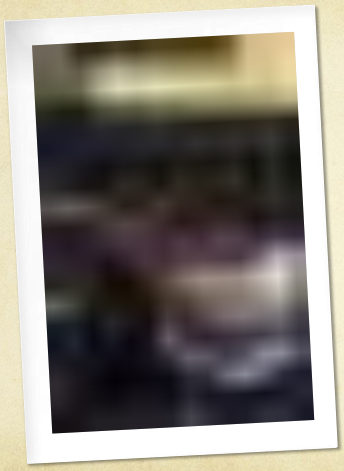
~ Teacher of 13 Years

35

I think some see us as a lazy profession that only works 10 months out of the year with no thought do what a professional teacher has to do in the summer - CE and planning for next year for a couple of examples.

~ Teacher of 13 Years

36



The saying goes- "A watched pot never boils." This is all about being patient. I believe that others see me, as a teacher, as possessing an abundance of patience.

~ Teacher of 12 Years

37

The Babysitter: Society as a whole often thinks of teachers as "babysitters" who get paid really well so my picture depicts this stereotype with kids on their phones, listening to music, hanging out, and sleeping. This is not the norm, but the rarity. In all reality, we are working hard and I am doing all I can to get all of my required objectives taught while students strive to meet my expectations.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

38

The Intimidator: When asking my students how they viewed me as a teacher before they got to know me as a teacher, the resounding answer was "intimidating." My reputation of having high expectations, a no-nonsense attitude, and being highly organized and a perfectionist seems to precede me. As a discussion ensued, another young lady explained: "You're just a strong leader and you expect things a certain way and that scares some people. You don't take no one's crap." Guilty.

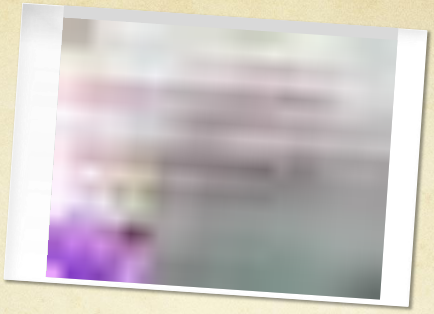
~ Teacher of 7 Years

39

The Organizer: When asking other teachers how they see me, the resounding answer was "organized." I provide students with a Help Desk which houses any tool that they wish to utilize while in my class from markers, crayons, colored pencils, rulers, and paper to post-its, highlighters, glue sticks, staplers, and hole punchers. If they have the tools necessary to thrive in my classroom, I am giving them a base they can benefit from the rest of their life.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

40



A note from one of my students

~ Teacher of 7 Years

41

I once overheard a parent say that all I do is paint my fingernails and put on makeup. In all honesty, I try to look nice but I only have time to paint my nails about once every two weeks and I put my makeup on once in the morning.

~ Teacher of 7 Years

42

The Problem: Education is cracked. It's the teacher's "fault."
~ Teacher of 8 Years

43

The Good: To some students I am a "hero," a "dad," a trusted person, a real person. I am not accepted unless I care.
~ Teacher of 8 Years

44

The Job: Many think I do nothing or "I can't" because I teach. The perception is that anyone could do it. Desks don't have free will and the community perspective of me as a teacher is that it can't be hard. The ingredient missing from the perspective of many is that of free will on the part of the student.

~ Teacher of 8 Years

45

APPENDIX H: PROMPT THREE IMAGES AND CAPTIONS POWERPOINT

7/18/2016

Focus Group 2:

Activity 1: How does current culture of teaching affects teachers' daily work lives?

July 14, 2016

Co-Researcher: Donna D. Hage, NBCT, Ed. S.

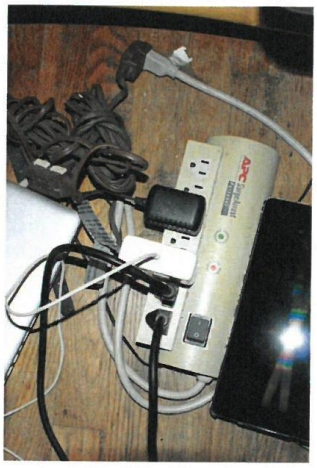
Marshall University

Perceptions of Teachers

Dissertation Entitled: Deprofessionalization of Teachers: From "The Great Equalizer" to "The Franchise Operation"

Our current culture puts more demands on us than we have time or resources for.

-- Teacher of 13 Years



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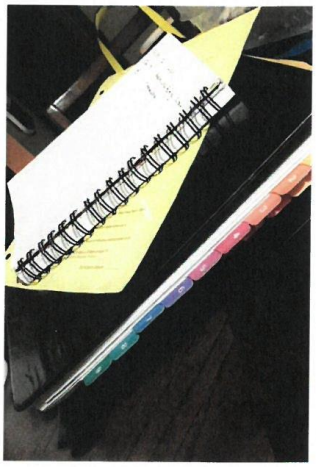
At the end of the day I close my door and reflect on my day, sometimes feeling exhausted from the expectations and demands aside from teaching.

-- Teacher of 11 Years

3

There's always so much to do- lesson plans, content standards, IEPs..... I never feel like I can catch up.

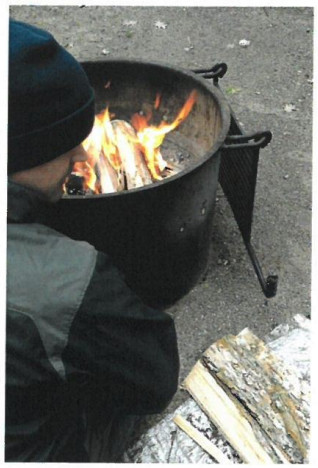
-- Teacher of 7 Years



4

Betrayal - The requirement to be held "accountable" by scores or the belief that "I pay my taxes; I pay your salary; you work for me" or any number of circumstances outside the control of the teacher causes teachers to "look over their shoulder." Fear of being "thrown under the bus" or "stabbed in the back" by parents, administrators, media or politicians causes teachers to shift their focus away from their main task of tending the fire.

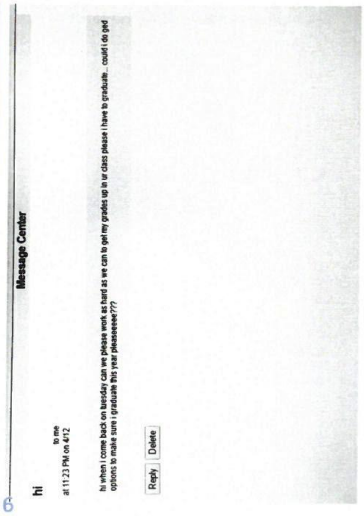
-- Teacher of 9 Years



5

No Parental Support: Messages such as these from my 18 year old students at the end of the year show the lack of parental guidance and responsibility. "We" means the student feels that the teacher needs to help her to graduate versus taking ownership of her complete lack of participation and effort.

-- Teacher of 7 Years



6

Current culture sends mixed signals to teachers, which causes confusion and mixed feelings. One day teachers are applauded for making such an impact on students, while other days we are attacked for not doing enough or providing a sufficient education for our students.

-- Teacher of 12 Years

7

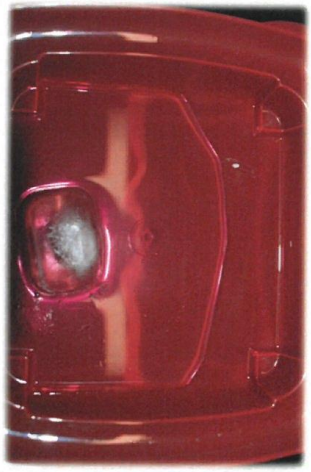
For the teaching profession to survive, teachers will need to rebel against the notion that education has to be done a certain way in order to be effective. Teachers will need to figure out their own teaching philosophies and principles, based on their experiences in the actual classroom, and then stick to them.

-- Teacher of 16 Years

8

In a word, meltdown. Sometimes all the pressures I feel as a teacher from today's education culture, it is like I am just going to have a melt down.

-- Teacher of 13 Years



9

Scrambling around with all my colleagues throughout the school day trying to survive with demands of teaching, testing, tracking data, bus/lunch duty, etc....

-- Teacher of 11 Years

10

My bag is already full yet they continue to ask me to just do "one more thing."

-- Teacher of 7 Years

11

Attack - What does the culture of attack create? "Those who can do, those who can't teach!" REALLY??? Disrespect of teachers as professionals and even authority figures impedes the educational process. Teachers are forced to defend themselves in front of administrators who want to please parents, students who as a result feel victorious and entitled, and politicians (time consuming to say the least) who want to look like heroes, all while our actual voice (i.e. professional associations) to make education better is destroyed and our ability to advocate for students falls victim to self-preservation.

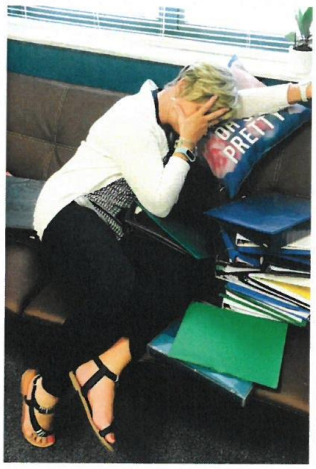
-- Teacher of 9 Years

12

Overworked and Underpaid:

The mounds of papers and grading can be overwhelming. Planning times do not cover the work that needs to be done to be an effective teacher. Teacher burn out is at an all time high.

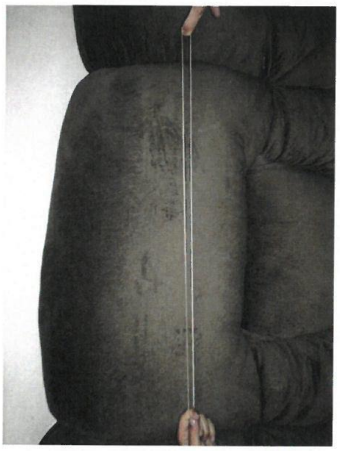
-- Teacher of 7 Years



13

Today's culture makes teacher's daily work lives feel as if they are stretched to the max just like this rubber band. Between paperwork, lesson plans and the pressure from parents, we feel like sometimes one more added thing may cause us to break.

-- Teacher of 12 Years



14

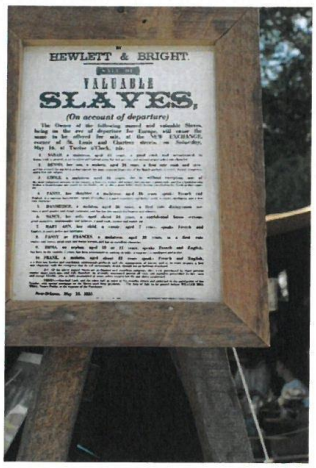
The pile of muck that faces the teaching profession is not over. Many people think that they know what's best for every aspect of the profession. Hopefully, someone will get it all under control before it's too late.

-- Teacher of 16 Years

15

Today, culture is not much different from the slave traders of the early 1800's. Instead of listing us by age and skills, we are listed by certifications and what other activities we can oversee. Just like the slave serving his/her master's purpose, we are there to serve their purpose for their children at the best price possible.

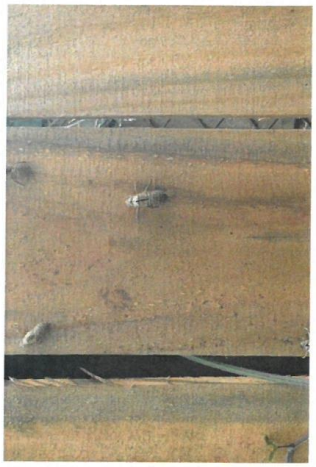
-- Teacher of 13 Years



16

We sometimes feel we are an annoyance to the students, parents, and community. We try hard to grow professionally and we sometimes feel empty.

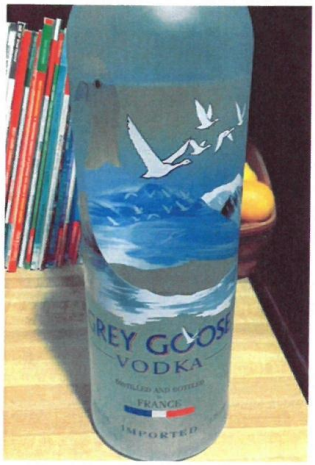
-- Teacher of 11 Years



17

After a long day? Nah, after most days.

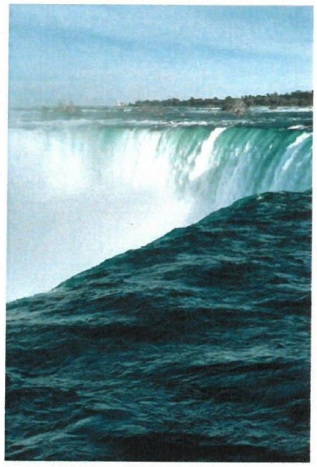
-- Teacher of 7 Years



18

The Panic - The response of the public to the belief that education is failing or "falling off a cliff," which results in a culture of teachers feeling helpless. The public asks, "how can we stop the raging water from flowing off a cliff?" The panic is artificial. Teachers know the water is meant to form a waterfall and continue as a river. Being unable to accomplish the impossible demand of the public to stop the river, teachers are made to believe they are incompetent and *take the abuse* or *get out*.

-- Teacher of 9 Years



19

The Public Circus:

Demoralized.

Powerless.

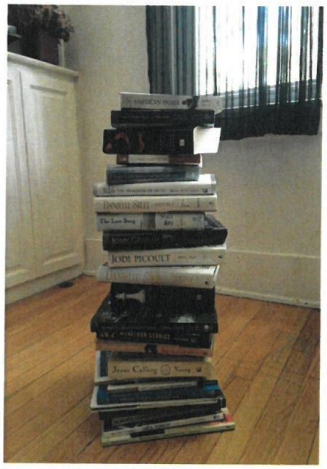
Angry.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

20

Today's culture concerning teachers is like this stack of books. Just like the variety of books that are shown here, today's society puts so many different types of stressors on teachers. Although these situations may be different, they all add up and impact teachers' daily lives.

-- Teacher of 12 Years



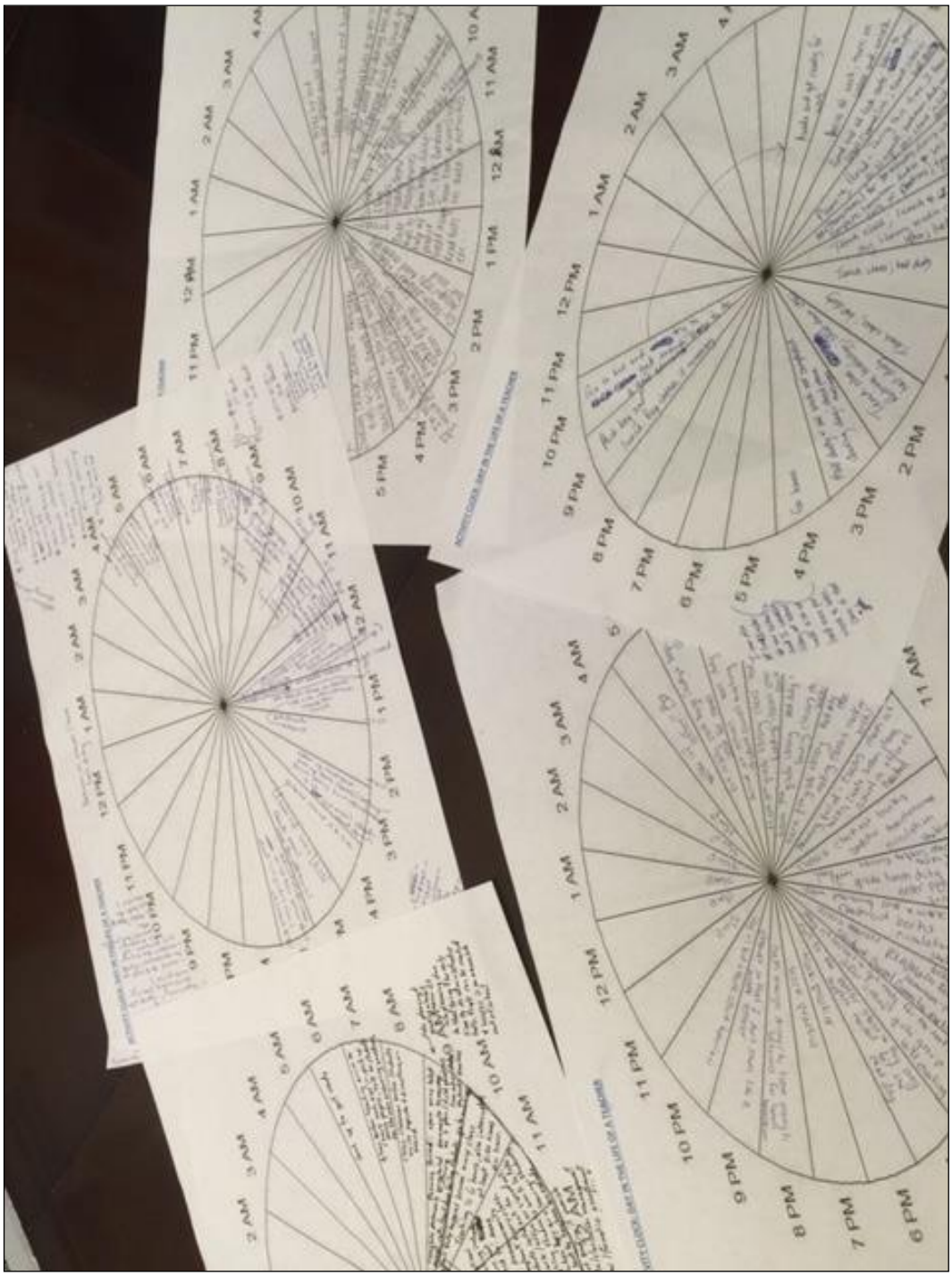
21

Current culture around teaching expects us to make a learning environment that allows students to grow throughout the year and then let them go. It's not always easy to let them go.

-- Teacher of 11 Years

22

APPENDIX I: CLOCK VISUAL ORGANIZER



APPENDIX J: FOCUS GROUP TWO IMAGES AND CAPTIONS POWERPOINT

7/18/2016

FOCUS GROUP 2

Activity 2: Identifying Themes, Patterns, and Influence

July 14, 2016

Co-Researcher: Donna D. Hage, NBCT, Ed. S.

Marshall University

Dissertation Entitled

Deprofessionalization of Teachers:

From "The Great Equalizer" to "The Franchise Operation"

Co-Researcher: Donna D. Hage, NBCT, Ed. S.

Marshall University

Rainbows have always been a sign of hope in the promise of the future so in a strange way, it is hope for the future in that someone realizes how teachers feel. With that I am encouraged to go on and try new ideas.

-- Teacher of 13 Years

2

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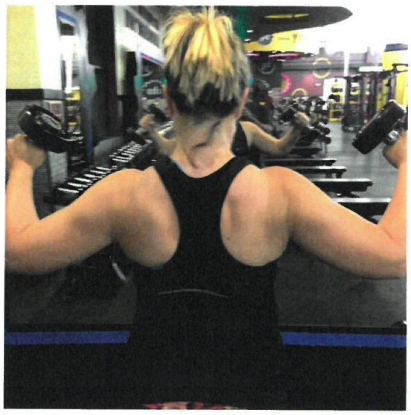


Becoming a stronger teacher after learning other colleagues feel the same as me. We will get our strength from each other.

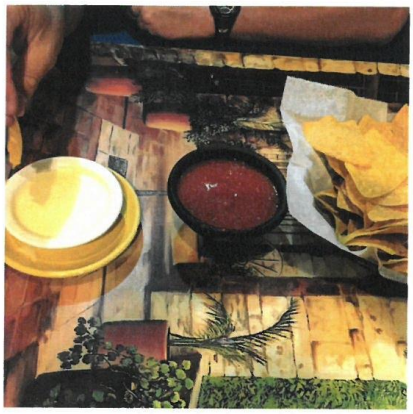
-- Teacher of 11 Years

3

I see myself as a teacher as being part of something greater than just today but part of something very old and noble.

-- Teacher of 13 Years

4



Collaboration or commiseration – call it whatever you want. It's always productive when your colleagues assemble and discuss the good, the bad, and the ugly of your profession and then brainstorm how to fix a broken system…especiall y over chips and queso.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

5

During the school year, I get weak and overwhelmed at times. Like this fence, I struggle withstanding the weeds. The weeds are students with potential, but don't work to their potential. I am trying to educate them, but their lack of focus and motivation tries to overcome me.

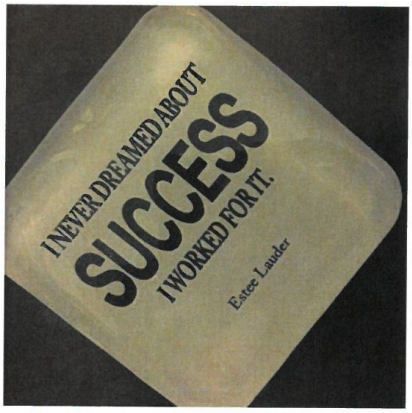
-- Teacher of 11 Years

6

I think that in order to regain some control over my profession you have show determination and become assertive. Just as a runner begins a run, he has to decide to make the initial move and then display determination to finish what he started.

-- Teacher of 12 Years

7



I can dream about what I want my classroom to look like, but it will never reach its full potential unless I work hard.

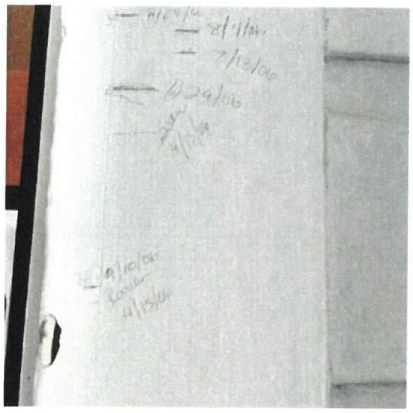
-- Teacher of 7 Years

8

It's day two of waiting at the hospital for my nephew to be born and I'm typing lesson plans, developing a unit on Syrian Refugees, and analyzing statistics from our last track meet.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

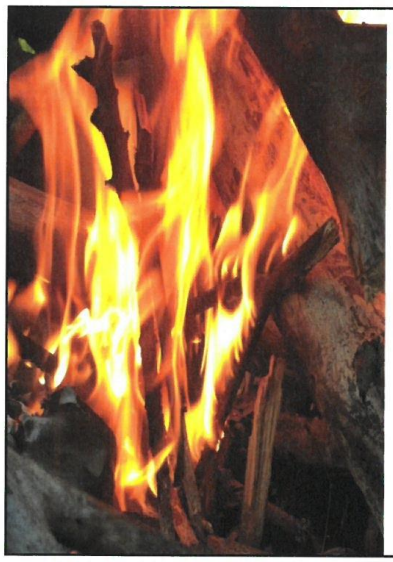
9



Working with other colleagues always helps me grow as a professional. This is a picture of my kids' growth chart in my house.

-- Teacher of 16 Years

10



The Role - The wood is student potential. The fire is the education. I build the fire and nurture it until it grows into a consuming fire. It takes skill to arrange the wood in such a way that it catches (guidance), oxygen to feed it (inspiration), and tending (commitment) to keep it going.

-- Teacher of 9 Years

11

Maintenance for the Long Run - Teaching has been around for a long time and is a strong, well-built building that houses society and keeps it safe from elements that corrode. All old buildings require maintenance for them to last and education is no difference. Society may ignore the solid stone structure and only see a crack, but we maintainers of the building know the building is solid and we work to pass it on. The project is a bit of that maintenance and is only effective if the conversation (maintenance) continues both with me in my job and at large in society.

-- Teacher of 9 Years

12

Finally, we need to speak up.

-- Teacher of 16 Years

13

"Literature Lady: There is nothing more inspiring than seeing a classroom full of students engrossed in a good book. Helping a student discover a love of reading is the best reward there is as an English teacher. I feel like a superhero, because I was the person who helped them discover this new world which is full of possibilities, experiences, and lessons."

-- Teacher of 7 Years

14

We need to organize.

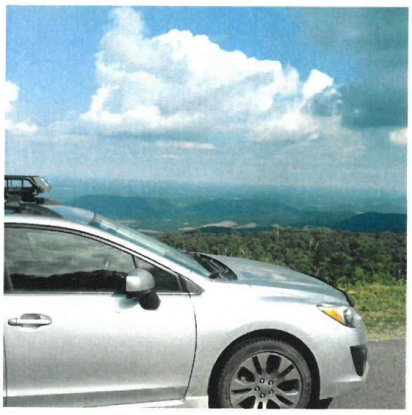
-- Teacher of 16 Years

15

As a teacher, I feel that I wear many hats. I play many roles such as an informant, educator, problem- solver, confidant, cheerleader, referee as well as many other duties. I believe that as a teacher, one has to be prepared to take on any role that the student and situation may need.

-- Teacher of 12 Years

16



The Journey - The project is a vehicle that is going somewhere. The road is steep and the climb difficult. The project gives me as a teacher a vehicle for my voice among accomplished colleagues. When I am outside the vehicle (done with the project) and take a picture of it (reflect) I know that I am still going some where, and so is my voice.

-- Teacher of 9 Years

17

You may not always have the best of resources but you can learn anywhere and do the best with what you have. I will stay positive and create a positive environment.

-- Teacher of 11 Years

18

Private Tutors: This is a picture of a teacher outside school hours tutoring a student. He often has to do this with students who don't show up for his math class. These young people expect him to constantly stay beyond his regular work hours to privately tutor them because. It's quite frustrating when it's a student who doesn't bother to come to school during regular school hours and then expects him to give up his free time to reteach…for free. If someone wants my private time, I believe they have to pay me a professional wage. Otherwise, they will not get my private time.

-- Teacher of 16 Years

19

Find Your Voice: 7:46 PM on a Tuesday evening in early June, a week after school has let out. I'm voicing my concerns and requests to my school board for the updating of our theatre facilities. Find your voice and you will make a difference. It's that simple.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

20

All the items on my desk are representative of me as a teacher. I see myself as being more than just someone teaching and grading papers but as someone with many different "professions" from nurse to counselor as well as being a part-time mother.

-- Teacher of 13 Years

21

I am going to just keep on teaching. This is not my best picture but this week's question was a tough question. Am I learning anything to apply to my teaching experience or is it more of a sharing of feelings and frustrations that is coming out?

-- Teacher of 13 Years

22

Rise above those who would look down on us and look beyond them.

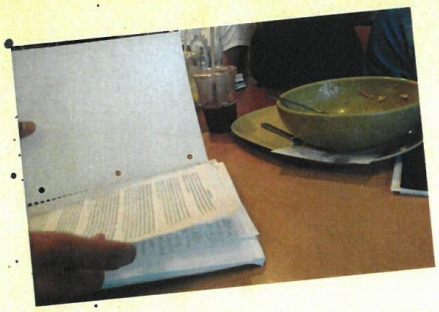
-- Teacher of 13 Years

23

I believe that this project has made me feel that my experience as a teacher is just like being a superhero. When you are teaching you feel like you need to see and hear everything and you are never off the clock just like a superhero. Teachers rescue and save many children's lives just by doing their daily job.

--Teacher of 12 Years

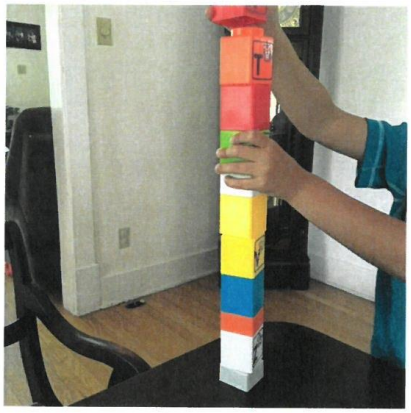
24



The Work - I have to do what it takes, and it takes more than what I am given. This is a review session for an exam at Panera with a majority of the class... off the clock! There isn't enough time and there is too much work and it isn't fair, but I do it anyway because I believe in what I am doing. I have to go the "extra mile" or it doesn't get done!

-- Teacher of 9 Years

25



I feel that teachers have to show perseverance when trying to regain control and some influence in their profession. Just as a child building a tower, you can't give up when things get shaky. You have to bring in reinforcement and help in order to push through and achieve the goal you have set.

-- Teacher of 12 Years

26

I see myself as a professional because when I am teaching it is like being a gardener with that special flower. You nurture it, water it, and watch to see if it grows into something beautiful.

-- Teacher of 13 Years

27

Join Your Union: Join your local education association. Get informed and then get active. UNION STRONG!

-- Teacher of 7 Years

28

The Journey - The road is there but unpaved. Nothing about the journey is easy, though it could be. Though society has not kept its obligation to pave the road we must drive on. Education then can either be a complaint or an adventure. I choose to drive the adventure car (It's a Subaru.).

-- Teacher of 9 Years

29

As a teacher, I see myself as a person who helps alleviate problems that students may have. Just as a band-aid helps a child's scratch to get better, I feel that teachers help heal their own students' type of "scratches." These types of injuries may range from unfortunate home life, inability to efficiently learn, physical/mental impairments, to just the need to be noticed and loved.

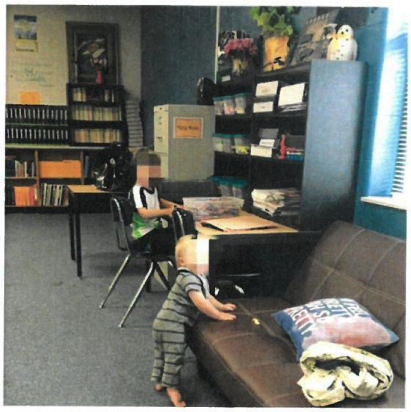
-- Teacher of 12 Years

30

Collaboration with other teachers is a way to gain back control in our profession. Teachers need to share ideas, goals and visions and then work together to display what teachers need in order to be successful.

-- Teacher of 12 Years

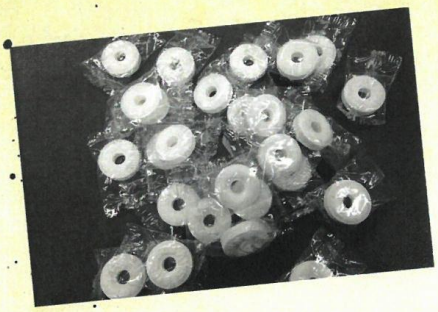
31



Participating in this project has given me initiative to get ready for next year! Here I am with my two little helpers in my classroom in the middle of June as I create digital unit plans and research and save some of the new ideas and sources for my classes.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

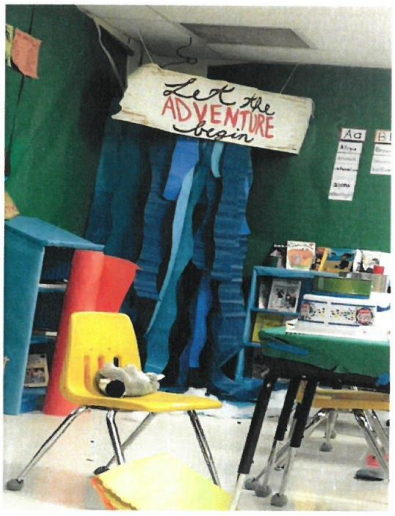
32



Just when a parent thought there was no hope, a teacher steps in and sees something special about that child that no other teacher has seen before. That teacher is thought to be a lifesaver.

-- Teacher of 11 Years

33



It's ok if I have a different teaching style or use different methods to deliver my content. Learning should be an adventure.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

34

These guys were so cute all piled up together in the shade on a very hot afternoon. All their different colors reminded me of teachers and how in some ways we are all the same regardless of what we teach and we need to communicate more. That is something I want to get more out of for my future teaching.

-- Teacher of 13 Years

35

So often, parents and the community feel like they are not welcome in our schools and at the same time schools complain about having no parental involvement.

-- Teacher of 11 Years

36

I will regain control of my profession because I realize my attitude influences my students. They are relying on me to make them one smart cookie. They are the reason I teach.

-- Teacher of 11 Years

37

Every student has hurdles in their lives. Some can run them very easily, others are just a few steps behind, and then there are those that stumble and fall over them. People do not realize that academics is not the only hurdles these kids face. As teachers, the public and policy makers expect us to have everyone finish the race at the same time, but that is not the case.

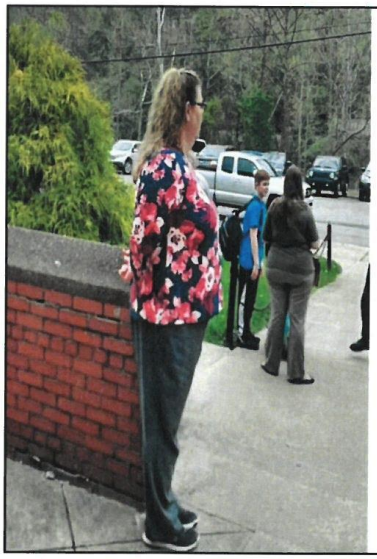
-- Teacher of 11 Years

38

The perceptions of coworkers, supervisors, families, and the communities are all secondary to the perceptions of my students. I asked my students to honestly pick one word to describe me.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

39



This is a picture of my very capable and intelligent colleague doing bus duty after school, instead of being in her room at the end of the day, getting grades into the computer or getting ready for the next day's learning (i.e., setting up a Chemistry lab). The administrators have no answer for when in the world she is supposed to do all the things they want her to do every day, like take perfect attendance electronically, and answer all parents' ridiculous calls/emails, and complete ridiculous amounts of CYA paperwork (like SAT forms, and court reports, and IEP paperwork, and blah blah blah), and help kids get makeup work, and....(you get it), but they have no problem asking her to spend half an hour after school watching kids board their buses for home.

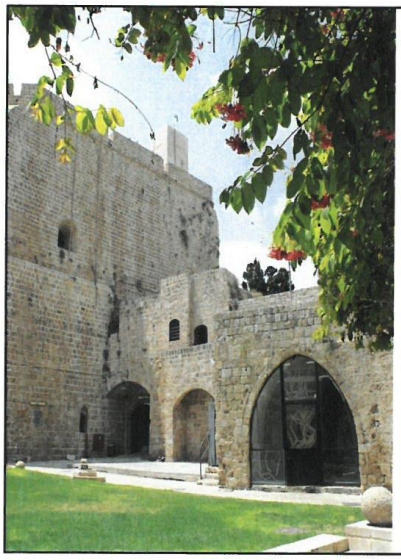
-- Teacher of 16 Years

40

After participating in this project I will stand more firm for my students and colleagues. I want to be more united with them and grow professionally.

-- Teacher of 11 Years

41



I call this the view from the Ivory Tower and it is how those at Universities view teachers as their students and only they can teach us how to teach. In short, they look down on us from their Ivory Towers.

-- Teacher of 13 Years

42

I will regain my influence and take control of my profession by not hiding in my shell. I will share my ideas and wisdom (not opinions) with others.

-- Teacher of 11 Years

43

I think some people - parents in particular - see me much like a ramp, the WV wild onion. It is like I am not a professional at all but someone that they either hate or love. The profession of being a teacher has a strong flavor that just does not appeal to everyone so like the ramp, we are just a weed.

-- Teacher of 13 Years

44

Seeing through someone else's view helps me see a little clearer.

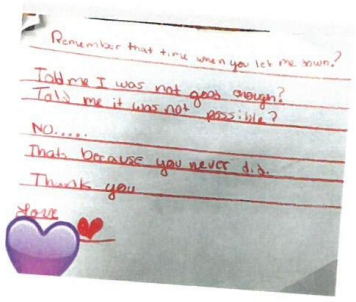
-- Teacher of 16 Years

45

The Intimidator: When asking my students how they viewed me as a teacher before they got to know me as a teacher, the resounding answer was "intimidating." My reputation of having high expectations, a no-nonsense attitude, and being highly organized and a perfectionist seems to precede me. As a discussion ensued, another young lady explained: "You're just a strong leader and you expect things a certain way and that scares some people. You don't take no one's crap." Guilty.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

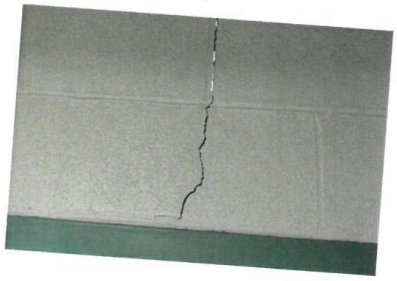
46



A note from one of my students

-- Teacher of 7 Years

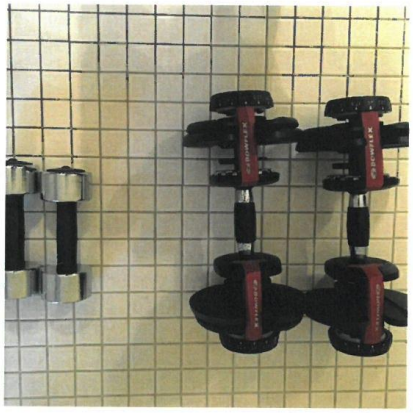
47



The Problem: Education is cracked. It's the teacher's "fault."

-- Teacher of 9 Years

48



By participating in this project, I have been able to self-reflect and really think about my experiences as a teacher. Through this reflection, I have been able to identify my strengths as a teacher as well as my weaknesses. Just as the bigger weights display my strengths, I should make sure to use these them more often in the classroom. The smaller weights signify my weaknesses, therefore I should focus on those areas that need improvement and try to strengthen them as much as possible.

-- Teacher of 12 Years

49

The Good: To some students I am a "hero," a "dad," a trusted person, a real person. I am not accepted unless I care.

-- Teacher of 9 Years

50

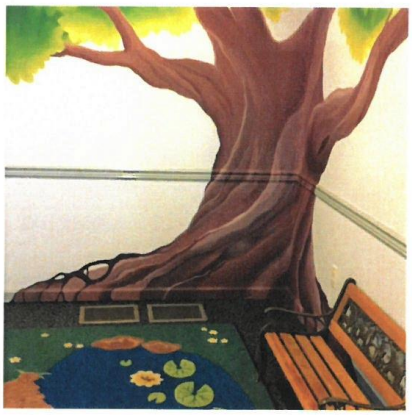
Hearing others' stories helps me better understand the profession and what other teachers face.

-- Teacher of 16 Years

51

I believe that this project has affected my experience as a teacher because it has opened my eyes and helped me to identify all the emotions I feel from being in the teaching profession. From being angry, exhausted, excited, relieved, fearful, proud, happy, overwhelmed and accomplished, I never realized how many times my emotions change during my time at school.
--Teacher of 12 Years

52



Perspective: This project has forced me to look at teaching from many different perspectives and what better perspective than a child's? This doctor's office waiting room may have a tree mural, a mini park bench, and a creative rug to the adult eye, but to a child it is a fantasy world ripe for the exploring. I'm ready to start this year with fresh childish eyes.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

53

Temporary Relief - We are not alone. The project has been a place in which teachers with many common experiences and even needs have come to provide more than data. We also provide supplies (encouragement) that help us through the flood (cultural damage) all of us have experienced. We hope the encouragement lasts of course, but as with any supplies they serve their purpose and then more supplies are required.

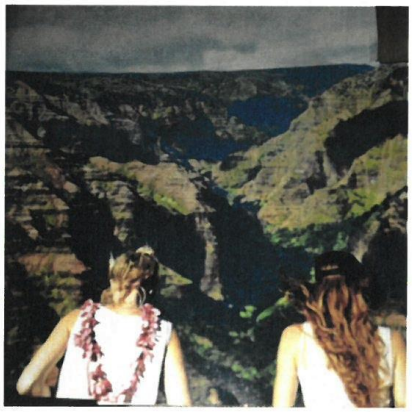
-- Teacher of 9 Years

54

Reflection is good.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

55



After participating in this project I realize I am not alone climbing these mountains and feeling the demands of teaching. This will make us stronger and more determined to meet the demands.

-- Teacher of 11 Years

56

We need to get stronger as a group.

-- Teacher of 16 Years

57

Love What You Do: Love what you do; do what you love. Find your passion and everything else will fall into place…and a beautifully crafted hazelnut cappuccino can't hurt.

- Teacher of 7 Years

58

It is time to quit hiding but we need to come out and make our profession heard.

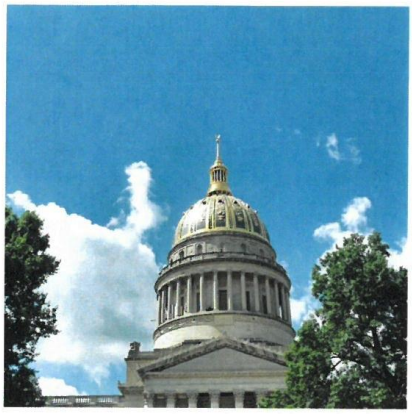
--Teacher of 13 Years

59

In order to change how others see our profession, we first need to see ourselves in a new light.

--Teacher of 13 Years

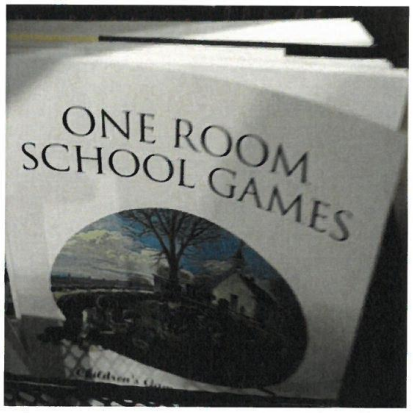
60



Advocate: Unfortunately, public education is governed by politicians who have many agendas, often incongruent with the needs of students. It is important to insisted upon teachers having a seat at the table always in policies that impact public education.

-- Teacher of 9 Years

61



Educate: The public believes education is the way it has always been, which means everyone's own personal experience. If a politician was a dedicated student, they do not see how others cannot be. The many learning styles and levels of students is not understood by the public nor is student choice understood. It is taxing to continue to have these conversation with family and social groups. As a teacher I want relief and do not always want talk about education on my "free time".

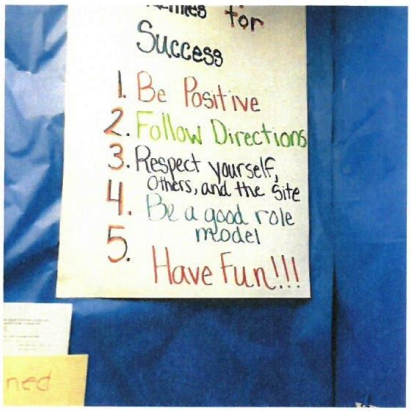
-- Teacher of 9 Years

62

Stand up: It requires personal integrity to do right by students. Public pressure to look good on paper undermines student success by taking time and focus off of the main goal. It is difficult to say "no" so that I can be prepared for class as my number 1 goal. This statue is "Lincoln Walks at Midnight". He is in heavy contemplation about making an important, difficult decision.

-- Teacher of 9 Years

63



These are the expectations that's we follow at our summer program. I feel as if we as teachers, as well as families and communities, follow these guideline as well, it will help regain some control of the teaching profession.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

64

We need to make learning fun again.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

65

Like these "Me" bodies made by students, each educator is inherently different. When we begin to recognize and appreciate our differences, we can begin to regain some control.

-- Teacher of 7 Years

66

APPENDIX J: VITA

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EDUCATION

Marshall University, Huntington, WV
Doctoral Student for Curriculum and Instruction
Minor: Educational Leadership **2011-current**
Dissertation:
http://www.marshall.edu/gsepd/edd/

Marshall University, South Charleston, WV **2014**
Education Specialist in Curriculum and Instruction
http://www.marshall.edu/gsepd/programs-offered/education-specialist/

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards **2005**
English Language Arts Adolescence and Young Adult Certification
http://www.nbpts.org

West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV **2004**
Educational Leadership Certification, Principal PK-AD
http://edls.wvu.edu/home/certification

West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
M.A. in Special Education, Specific Learning Disabilities, K-12 **1998**
http://specialed.wvu.edu/

West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
B.S. in Secondary Education, English Language Arts, 5-12 **1995**
www.hre.wvu.edu/

AWARDS

West Virginia Institute for 21st Century Leadership, WV Center for Professional Development **2008-2009**
http://wvde.state.wv.us/principalsinstitute/institute08-09/docs_spring/Classof2009_YearBook_Week1.pdf

Principals' Leadership Academy Distinguished Scholar **2008**
CRESCENT: Communicating and Responding Effectively to Staff, Community and Educational Needs Together
http://www.loganbanner.com/pages/full_story/push?article-WVCPD%20&id=1550860 [Start Date] – [End Date]

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Marshall University, South Charleston, WV
Co-Teach CI 551: Writing to Learn in Content Areas **Fall 2013**
Brainstormed student activities, suggested resources to support objectives of course, facilitated on-line discussions, evaluated weekly journal entries and provided written feedback on assignments

Marshall University, South Charleston, WV
Co-Author CI 560: Issues in Education, Summer Professional Development Series, Internet-based **Summer 2014**
Created module topics and activities with group members; developed objectives, activities and evaluations for a module on Year-Round Calendar; created a Symbaloo to model expectations and communicate

Grafton High School, Grafton, WV
English, Honors English, AP Literature Teacher **1995-2007**
Incorporated small group collaborations, student-led instruction, peer review, 21st century technologies, and student reflection

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Harrison County School System
Assistant Superintendent Human Resources and Policy **2013 – current**

http://www.harcoboe.net/page/departments/human-resources1

Harrison County School System
Assistant Principal Robert C. Byrd High School **2011 – 2013**
http://www.harcoboe.net/robertcbyrdhighschool

Harrison County School System
Assistant Principal of Curriculum Liberty High School **2008 – 2011**
http://www.harcoboe.net/libertyhighschool

Ritchie County School System
Assistant Principal/Athletic Director **2007 - 2008**
http://ritchiecountyschools.wv.schoolwebpages.com/education/school/school.php?sectionid=50&

Grafton High School **1995-2007**
Teacher of AP Literature and English Language Arts 9-12
http://ghs.grafton.k12.wi.us/

PRESENTATIONS, PUBLICATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

"Interview Techniques" and "Leadership Styles" **2015**
West Virginia Association of School Facilities Administrators, July 13-14, 2015, Morgantown, WV

"Wrapping Up the Common Core: Don't Push the Button!"
Member of a Panel on Common Core at Annual Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, U of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign **2014**

"Blooming and Pruning": Connections to the First four Years of Doctoral Life, Portfolio Defense, Marshall University, South Charleston, www.donnadhage.com or www.donnadhage.weebly.com **2014**

WVDE Classroom Assessment Network 2 participant **2010**

STEM Blue Ribbon Mathematics Project **2010**

RESA 7 Principals' Mentorship Training participant **2009**

WVDPD Observation and Coaching Skills to Improvement Teacher Performance **2009**

WVDE Principals' Institute for 21st Century Leadership participant **2009**

Presenter or CRESCENT: Communicating and Responding Effectively to Staff, Community, and Education Needs Together at WVCPD **2008**

WV New Principals' Academy participant **2008**

WVDE County Leadership Team Institute participant **2008**

WVCPD 2nd Annual Professional Development Conference participant **2008**

RESA V Leadership Series: Assessing FOR Learning participant **2008**

University of Kansas Writing Strategies Workshop participant **2007**

WV Association of Secondary Curriculum and Development 21st Century Technology Conference participant **2007**

WVDE Reading Language Arts Assessment Alignment and Benchmark Committee participant **2006**

WVCPD AP Literature and Composition Phase I participant **2005**

WVCPD Evaluation Leadership Institute participant **2003**

MEMBERSHIPS

Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development **2008 - present**