CONSTRUCTING CHILDREN: ONE EDUCATOR'S DICHOTOMY BETWEEN IDEOLOGY AND PEDAGOGY REGARDING CHILDREN AND ACHIEVEMENT

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Doctor of Philosophy

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by

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

CONSTRUCTING CHILDREN: ONE EDUCATOR'S DICHOTOMY BETWEEN IDEOLOGY AND PEDAGOGY REGARDING CHILDREN AND ACHIEVEMENT

presented by Sarah L. Hairston,

a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,

and herby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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Professor Emily Crawford-Rossi

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DEDICATION

My Poppy and Meme always encouraged me to actively seek out learning opportunities, to question everything, and never to settle. This degree comes, in part, as a result of living out their lessons. But it was the encouragement of my husband, Tom, that propelled me to seek out this doctorate. In so doing, he selflessly took on many roles so I could disappear into my thinking and writing. He is a consummate partner, friend, and mischievous cohort in educational disruption. To my BIG love, my daughter, Abi, thank you for patiently spending your first six-years of life with a mother hitched to a laptop. Everything your father and I do is so you may know this world to be a beautiful place. It is the love and joy of being tethered to these beautiful souls, Tom and Abi, that constantly buoyed me.

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I begin by acknowledging my participant, the students, and the school in which this inquiry took place. They welcomed me into their space and allowed me to think with and among them. It is because of the vulnerability of my participant that I was able to engage so deeply with the tensions in educational discourse and discursive practices. I am grateful to call this participant a friend and a partner in (re)imagining schooling.

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LIST OF ABBREVATIONS

COVID-19	Coronavirus disease that cause a global pandemic, 2019
DESE	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
EOC	End of Course assessments, 2009
ESEA	*Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, 1965
ESSA	*Every Student Succeeds Act*, 2015
GLE	Grade Level Expectations
IRB	Institutional Review Board
MAP	Missouri Assessment Program, 1997
MLS	Missouri Learning Standards, 2016
MMAT	Missouri Mastery Achievement Test, 1987
MSIP	Missouri School Improvement Program, 1991
NCLB	*No Child Left Behind Act*, 2001
NDEA	*National Defense Education Act*, 1958
TPS	Travers Public School District (pseudonym)

CONSTRUCTING CHILDREN: ONE EDUCATOR'S DICHOTOMY BETWEEN IDEOLOGY AND PEDAGOGY REGARDING CHILDREN AND ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Historically speaking, educational discourse and practices tend to objectify children through biological and psychological units of analysis. These socially accepted assumptions have created regimes of truth (Foucault, 1977) that construct children as lacking ontology; a premise that guides educational policy and practice. These discourses become problematic since they shape the way educators view and treat children and, in turn, their experiences. Working toward a (re)imagining of schooling and the construction of children within education, this inquiry sought to make visible the discontinuities within discourses that have situated children within schooling. In so doing, this inquiry focused on one elementary art educator's thinking and construction of "children" through the lens of academic achievement and its resulting pedagogical practices. I chose to work from a poststructural paradigm engaging in *thinking with theory* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018) approach using Foucauldian concepts. With respect to qualitative research, I constructed "permeable" boundaries around the field of inquiry, the participants, and data through the iterative process of thinking with literature, data, and theory. This inquiry disrupts the assumed inevitability of hierarchical structures

and truth regimes that produces a binarized either/or. Instead, this inquiry implies that power/knowledge is relational allowing space to (re)construct ways in which to view and interact with children within the current structures of public education inviting a yes/and approach whether in practice or research.

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Toward those who are still trapped in the stone.

Tell them, "I won't give up."

Tell them, "I am with you."

Tell them, "For you, I will learn to eat rocks."

"For you, I will keep chewing, keep grinding,

Until the mountain crumbles to dust."

(author unknown)

The aim of this inquiry emerged before ever pursuing a doctorate due to the tensions I experienced as a classroom teacher. I spent sixteen years teaching theatre and public speaking to students. Sixteen years in three different schools. Three different school cultures. Three different school structures. But eerily similar discourses such as:

Engage with students…police the hallways.

Build a relationship with students…report tardies.

Tap into the interest of students…track progress.

The discourse placed students as an object to control, discipline, and objectify. At the same time educators were being asked to track students with state, district, and school standards for accountability and compliance, we were also being asked to interact in an authentic manner with students to inspire a zeal for learning. As an educator, I have experienced many losses but nothing as great as watching a child's innate desire to learn be numbed by the monolithic encasement of the structures of schooling. *For them, I will eat rocks.*

In my experience as an educator, I was often left alone without administrative oversight. Sometimes in a "fine arts" wing of a building, sometimes in a whole different building than the rest of the school. Divorced, in a way, from the "core" learning environment most often associated with schools. Although alone, that separation provided opportunity. I could focus on learning through participation and risk taking, through gradual improvement and creative sparks, through performance and reflection. From my vantage point, I was able to take the stress of school reform and top-down pressure to squeeze every percentage from students and repackage it into authentic learning opportunities. Sure, there was content to be delivered, consumed, and regurgitated but that was a passionless wasteland and seeing as what I taught was often an afterthought to administering eyes, I used that threshold to make something new. *For them, I will eat rocks.*

After sixteen years, I concluded that while I could employ subterfuge inside of my classroom, those processes were stunted by the discursive formation of schooling – a formation that focused on quantitative outcomes, efficiency, and control. In my last few years of teaching, I sought to go beyond the classroom to engage in administrative roles. It was in that engagement where I began to understand that the institutional practice of teaching – of operating within schools – was steeped in a long historical and sociopolitical discourse of schooling. There I was met with rocks that were inedible. *But for them I will learn how.*

I knew from my own experience in public education that I was often at odds with the educational and sociopolitical discourses and practices that surrounded schooling and children. I also knew that there were other teachers, like me, struggling to adhere to the

requirements their positions garnered and their own ideology. I started a doctorate program to be a knowledge-producer and discourse-disrupter regarding the dominant structures of schooling. With an emerging inquiry paradigm that puts into conversation axiology, ontology, epistemology, and ultimately methodology, I drew on the work of poststructural scholars as I sought to push past easily consumable metanarratives regarding schooling and children within schooling toward (re)imaginings; a rupture in what is already believed to be truth. My curiosity of how others grappled with the structures of schooling within their classrooms through this dissonance as well as desire to challenge discourses that creates binaries within education led me to this specific inquiry focused on one educator's thinking and constructions of children through academic achievement. For me, this work begins with making visible the discontinuities within historically prominent discourses around children and schooling. Since I was no longer working in public education at the time of this inquiry, I sought the reflective collaboration of a classroom teacher to explore these gaps in order to produce (re)imaginings for both educators and students. For them, "I will keep chewing, keep grinding, until the mountain crumbles to dust" (author unknown).

The Ambiguity of Children and Childhoods

There is a level of ambiguity when trying to operationalize the meaning of children, as the meaning is often equated to what children are not. The language of development and socialization position children in a state of becoming adults through a lens of being incomplete and incompetent, thus requiring adult guidance (Hearne, 2018; Klemenčič, 2015). Most related theories explore and assume biological universality through "normal" developmental patterns in fixed stages towards adulthood (Woodhead

& Montgomery, 2003). As Mayall (1994) pointed out, “The crucial distinction that makes children is that they are not adults; as individuals and as a social group, they lack adulthood” (p. 118). Operationalizing children as being on the periphery of becoming adults creates a lack of ontology for children (Alanen, 1988; Hearne, 2018; Lee, 1999; Leonard, 2016; Qvortrup, 1994).

It is just as difficult to operationalize childhoods. As with the dichotomy of children and adults, childhoods are regularly understood in relation to adulthoods, a boundary that is determined by adults themselves (Shanahan, 2007). For some, childhoods are understood developmentally as a permanent institution (Qvortrup, 2002). As Morrow (2011) stated,

> Its members change, but childhood, in its relation with the other major social group – adulthood – continues as an essential component of a social order where the general understanding is that childhood is a first and separate lifespan whose characteristics are different from the later ones. (p. 23)

For others, childhoods are not a natural phenomenon reliant on biological markers but rather exists only as a modern social construct (Jenks, 1982). If childhoods are understood as a social construct, then they have the potential to be reconstituted through its cultural positioning in space and time (Lee, 1998).

Institutions, such as schools, act as locations for socialization of children into an adult society. The ambiguity regarding children and childhoods can lead society to insufficiently align educational policies and schooling structures to children (Freeman, 1998). Historically speaking, educational discourse and practices tend to objectify children through biological and psychological units of analysis, creating an ambiguous

ontology requiring adult intervention. These institutional structures, along with a neoliberal context of schooling toward economic efficiency, have promoted federal policies focused on data-driven schools and accountability measures.

Seen through a lens of neoliberalism, schooling is for productivity, demonstrated through a standardization of schooling and mandatory testing in order to measure productivity (Au, 2011; Lissovoy, 2013; Savage, 2017). Neoliberalism and education became linked through *A Nation at Risk* (1983) report. Less than twenty years later, comparative and competitive quantifiable metrics tied to children were legislated through *Goals 2000* (1994). With the passage of *No Child Left Behind* (2001), federal education policies became firmly rooted in data-driven schools and accountability measures. The resulting effect of federal policies has led to the construction of children through a narrow hegemonic lens of codifiable measurements of academic success (Apple, 2007; Bowles & Gintis, 2011; McNulty & Roseboro, 2009).

The normalizing indicators within the study of children and childhoods and neoliberal federal education policies influence the ways educators construct children and childhoods through discourse and discursive practices (Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005). Through schooling structures and hierarchical relationships between teachers and students, schools can be viewed as institutions of control with the potential to constrain and enable the agency of children (Malmberg & Hagger, 2009; Rainio, 2008; Rajala, Kumpulainen, Rainio, Hilppö, & Lipponen, 2016; Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016). However**,** research shows children can create agency within the power relations they have with educators, and children, as well as educators, possess the agency to manipulate and challenge normative schooling structures (Barton & Tan, 2010; Caiman & Lundgård,

2014; Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011; Roth et al., 2004; Tilly, 1991). Therefore, the dominant constructions around children and childhoods are not absolute. According to James and James (2004), since childhoods can be understood as a "cultural phrasing," it is also subject to change (p.13).

Inquiry Aims and Guiding Questions

Over time, regimes of truth – a collection of rules that create and regulate social order (Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005) – form socially accepted assumptions around children and childhoods. These socialized assumptions are what Gramsci (1971) called a *false consciousness*. In other words, the entrenched philosophies in the past have created historical and sociopolitical discourses that objectify children within schooling, research, and educational policies (James & James, 2004). In this inquiry, children are discursively positioned within the field of human sciences through normalizing indicators that affect the discursive practices of educators and how those educators reconstitute children within schooling (Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005).

Since the way educators view children, and the discourses that exist about them shape how educators treat children and, in turn, their experiences (James & James, 2004), an in-depth look at the discourses and resulting practices of educators is warranted. This inquiry, therefore, functioned as a *genealogical* (Foucault, 1977) assessment of the origins of the systems of power/knowledge that construct discourse and discursive practices regarding children and childhoods within schooling. I utilized the forward slash in power/knowledge because Foucault spoke of power and knowledge inferring one another (Foucault, 1980). Therefore, the slash does not indicate an abbreviation for "or", rather it indicates that it is both; it represents yes/and. This genealogical endeavor reveals

discontinuities in the present dominant discourses in order to create new possibilities of recognizing children ontologically within their own time and space within schooling. This inquiry, therefore, asked the following overarching question: *how does one U.S. educator construct children and childhoods within our historical and sociopolitical context?*

This inquiry also explored the overarching question with two initial sub-inquiries. First, with decades of federal education policies focused on measurements of individual aptitudes (e.g. *National Defense Education Act*, *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, *Goals 2000*, *No Child Left Behind*, *Every Student Succeeds Act*), I found myself interested in the discourse of academic achievement structuring the way educators "do" school and construct children. Therefore, I asked: *how does one U.S. educator reify or disrupt discourses regarding academic achievement through their constructions of children and childhoods and discursive practices?* Second, it is difficult to move toward an abstract conception of children and childhoods that can invite new discursive possibilities (Rose, 2009) when engaging within hegemonic methods that were formed through these truth regimes. Therefore, I chose to work within a poststructural paradigm that seeks to problematize meaning. In order to disrupt the historical and sociopolitical discourses that have constructed children and childhoods within schooling through specific power/knowledge relationships, I employed a *thinking with theory* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018) approach using Foucauldian concepts. From this positioning, I also asked: *how does thinking about the historical and sociopolitical discourses and discursive practices regarding the construction of children and childhoods through Foucauldian concepts produce new ways of thinking?*

Conceptual Framing

Pioneers in a cross-disciplinary approach to childhoods studies, Allison James and Adrian James (2004), proposed that the way adults view children shapes adults' behavior toward children. In other words, the entrenched philosophies created in the past shape how adults seek to interact with children now. In this inquiry, I explored the genealogy of historical, philosophical, and sociopolitical discourse that has situated children and childhoods within the institution of schooling. Genealogy, from a Foucauldian perspective, places the origins of systems of knowledge and resulting discourses under analysis to highlight discontinuities in order to produce new ways of thinking (Foucault, 1977). I analyzed the genealogical audit of children and childhoods through a thinking with theory approach (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018) that places data, theory, and other inquiry components, such as literature, into discussion through an analytical process of *plugging in. Plugging in* is a non-hierarchical reading of each datum, theory, and other inquire components through and with one another in order to push past sameness or meaning making (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018; Mazzei, 2014).

Through my readings of Foucault, I found the concepts of *power/knowledge*, *discourse,* and the *agentic subject*, defined below, most beneficial in uncovering specific modes of operating that appear rational and unified within schooling regarding children. I view Foucault's conception of power/knowledge from a macro- and microlevel as being relational in the production of structures that organize, constitute, and reify social order as well as produce people as subjects (Foucault, 1980; Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005). Through power/knowledge, *truth regimes* form as a collection of rules that create and regulate social order (Foucault, 1977; Kumaravadivelu, 1999;

Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005). From a macrolevel, such truth regimes have been institutionalized regarding our thinking around children and their childhoods within schooling. Through *discourse*, written or spoken language, and discursive enactments, such as policies, the truth regimes regarding children and childhoods are produced and reproduced (Foucault, 1976, 1981; Hook, 2001; Kumaravadivelu, 1999, Lazaroiu, 2013). At a microlevel, the discourses surrounding children and childhoods is further played out by the *discursive practices* of the educator. These *discursive practices* are the enactments of the power/knowledge constructs regarding children and childhoods (Graham, 2005; Hook, 2001; Lazaroiu, 2013).

In Chapter 2, I introduce the historical philosophies of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau who created a hegemonic understanding, based on developmental discourse, of children as being removed from adults and requiring adult intervention in the way of socialization. Albeit not the only philosophical thinkers, their discourse is entrenched within the studies of children as well as the politicking and thus structuring of the educational system. Within the genealogy of the disciplinary roots of children and childhoods, I explore the continuation of developmentalism and socialization constructing narrow hegemonic binaries and placing children without ontology, recognition of their individual being. I also introduce the new sociology of childhood that attempts to interrupt, with varying effect, the truth regimes put in place by prominent academic disciplines making more visible children as beings within their own time and space within research (Cocks, 2006; Danby & Farrell, 2004; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Thomas, 2002; Wyness, 2000).

An analysis of the genealogy of the common school movement (1830s) and the advent of compulsory schooling (1920s) gave rise to the notion that a public education acts as an agent of socialization. A counter-discourse from scholars and writers gives a glimpse of alternative schooling practices and how the prominent discourses have been interrupted. Additionally, the sociopolitical climate over the past eight decades has created schooling practices, expectations, and relationships framed first by dominant nationalistic discourses, then dominant neoliberal discourses that are still prevalent, and most recently under the 45th President a discourse of "patriotic" education. In the mid-twentieth century schooling was linked to the nation's global interests and the desire for an economically viable workforce through the *National Defense Education Act* (1958). Federal education policies and politicking (i.e. *Elementary and Secondary Education Act; A Nation at Risk; America 2000; Goals 2000; and Every Student Succeeds Act*) have established a neoliberal discourse through a focus on measurements of individual aptitudes forcing a dynamic of competition around meritocracy (Hursh, 2007; Morrow, 2011; Nichols & Berliner, 2007). Accordingly, *neoliberalism* within education is a form of governance that frames schooling through a lens of productivity, often demonstrated through a standardization of schooling and testing measures (Au, 2011; Foucault, 2008; Lissovoy, 2013; Savage, 2017).

The schooling structures that have resulted from historical and sociopolitical truth regimes regarding children and childhoods can be understood as producing discursive practices that constrain or enable agentic children. Through social and material structures as well as hierarchical relationships, schools are viewed as institutions of control. Utilizing Foucault's conception of power/knowledge relationship schools can also be

understood as points of opportunity for the agency of children to take shape (Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016; Tilly, 1991). Engaging, from a Foucauldian perspective, in the historical and sociopolitical discourses surrounding children and childhoods, as well as the resulting discursive schooling practices, is where I entered the field of inquiry.

Approach to Inquiry

From a *poststructural* paradigm, I chose to work both within and against a traditional qualitative methodological approach to inquiry. With respect to qualitative research, I have constructed "permeable" boundaries around the field of inquiry, the participants, and data such as observations, personal communication, and artifacts through the iterative process of thinking with literature, data, and theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018). The notion of "producing" rather than "collecting" data is a phrasing that aligns with my paradigm and thinking with theory approach, inspired by Jackson and Mazzei (2012, 2018). Specifically, producing data opens the inquiry process to emergent ideas and content to take shape in relationship to the inquirer and participants in the field (St. Pierre, 2018). Collecting data evokes the notion that the truth is out there to be collected. Additionally, collecting data often forces a predetermination of what will be collected prior to entering the field. Through changing how I viewed data; I opened the field of inquiry for a multiplicity of possibilities. This is not to suggest that I disregarded scientific thinking, rather I provided another way to approach academically the conversation on children and education.

I positioned this inquiry in an elementary art classroom with the art educator and corresponding students as participants. I borrowed socialized age-grading measures to define children and childhoods to include school aged individuals starting with

kindergarten age 5-6 up until early adolescence ages 10-14 which corresponds with fifth grade. The classroom resided within a familiar district which provided me with a strong working knowledge of the policies and procedures that have historically and sociopoitically taken root. The focus of this inquiry was on one art educator and three classes: one third grade, one fourth grade, and one fifth grade section. I chose to focus on third grade through fifth, because these grades provided the best insight into instructional variations regarding academic achievement as it aligned to standards. The lessons taught in kindergarten through second grade focused more on behavioral aspects whereas instruction from third grade through fifth focused on content knowledge and building skills.

To avoid reductionist thinking through a comparative analysis, I chose to work with one educator. I found it important for this inquiry to select an educator willing to engage in a deep iterative reflection. The educator I chose to work with was an art teacher with nine years professional experience and with whom I had a strong working relationship.

To usher in a (re)thinking of the historical and sociopolitical constructions of children and childhoods present within schooling from a poststructural paradigm, I chose to engage in a thinking with theory approach that uses a method of plugging in for analysis (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 1). Using plugging in, I placed literature, inquiry data, and theory, non-hierarchically, into conversation by reading each through and with one another. In this inquiry I worked with Foucault's concepts of power/knowledge, discourse, and the agentic subject. Utilizing Foucault's concepts, I conducted a genealogical (Foucault, 1977) investigation of the systems of power/knowledge and

corresponding historical and sociopolitical discourses that form functioning truth regimes within schooling that construct children and childhoods. Through plugging in, these Foucauldian concepts acted as "analytical tools" (Kuby & Fontanella-Nothom, 2018, p. 4). Thinking with theory in this manner produced pathways for new insights and analytical questions to emerge (Aguayo & Dorner, 2017; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018; Kuby & Fontanella-Nothom, 2018) toward a (re)thinking of hegemonic constructs within schooling.

From a poststructural paradigm, I chose to define my dissertation work as an *inquiry* instead of a research or a study. The term "research" implies an investigation toward conclusive facts and "study" evokes the imagery of placing something or someone under observation. Both terms, research and study, can evoke a sense of "doing" something to someone. By choosing the term inquiry, I positioned myself in the act of questioning and the collaborative act of "doing" with the participant. Furthermore, to invite multiplicity of cultural diversity beyond that of the current hegemonic Eurocentric framework, I utilized the plural children and childhoods when not directly referring to a current discipline of thought, such as, the new sociology of childhood (James & James, 2004).

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation starts with a thinking through literature, Chapter 2, regarding the philosophical, historical, and sociopolitical construction of children and childhoods as well as the discourses that position children within educational policy, schooling structures, and hierarchical relationships. Chapter 2 begins with my understanding of the Foucauldian concepts that I interweave throughout the inquiry. These concepts include

power/knowledge, discourse, and the agential subject. Then, I move onto the genealogy of the construction of children and childhoods through philosophical thinking and academic positioning before I discuss the formation of the tradition of schooling for the masses. Subsequently, I examine the discourses of educational policies and politics that produce a neoliberal lens constructing educators and children within schooling. Chapter 2 ends with a look at agency of children within neoliberal schooling structures and hierarchical relationships.

In Chapter 3, I describe the context and methods for inquiry. To begin, I explain my choices for utilizing inquiry questions as a guiding tool and the selection of the location and participants for the inquiry. Next, I discuss how my poststructural paradigm guides a thinking with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018) approach toward an inquiry design, emerging data, and analysis. Chapter 3 concludes with a discussion of how the potential limitations between the interplay of academic requirements, positionality, Foucauldian concepts, and a thinking with theory approach can be considered a threshold toward new possibility.

In Chapter 4, I describe my thinking with data and theory utilizing Foucauldian concepts. The first major section, The Standardization of Children, outlines the power structures within standardized learning that construct children as objects. The second major section, Power is Relational, positions both the art teacher and her students through a Foucauldian lens as co-constituting power. The third major section, Tensions in Pedagogical Enactments, highlights the dichotomy in both the art teacher's pedagogical enactments and ideology around students as learners.

In Chapter 5, I review the analytical points made in Chapter 4 before moving into the contributions the analytical points made to research. Based on my thinking in Chapter 4, I then make recommendations for continuing research within the study of children and childhoods and schooling. Next, I turn to potential contributions regarding methodology and theory. I end with concluding thoughts and potential forward actions.

This inquiry asks the reader to think with the inquirer through the tensions within the power relations of educational truth regimes, schooling structures, children, and one art educator. The purpose is to compel a pause in what is already perceived to be known through analytical questioning. Within this space the reader is asked to (re)consider schooling and the construction of children and childhoods.

Definition of Key Terms

This inquiry utilized unique terminology related to Foucauldian concepts, poststructuralism, and schooling that are briefly defined below. The nuances of these terms are further explicated throughout the dissertation when appropriate. Key terms used in this inquiry and grammatical devices, in alphabetical order, include:

Agentic subject places the subject as a social formation with individual agency functioning within the social background (Bevir, 1999; Foucault, 1980). Within Foucault's work agency and the subject is often utilized interchangeably. Therefore, I have chosen to apply the phrasing *agentic subject* to represent both the social construction as well as the independent choices made in relationship to those constructions.

Axi-onto-epistemology (axiology + ontology + epistemology) is the thoughtful merging of axiology, the study of what is valued, ontology, the study of being, and

epistemology, the study of knowing in order to represent how they mutually co-constitute one another toward an inquiry paradigm that influences methodological choices (Barad, 2007).

Childhoods is a socially constructed period that separates children from adults (Shanahan, 2007). The study of childhoods is typically from a Eurocentric framing (Shanahan, 2007). In recognition of the cultural variability that exists across children, I chose to utilize the plural tense of the word (James & James, 2004).

Children are understood developmentally as becoming adults (Alanen, 1988; Burman, 1994; Lee, 1998; Prout & James, 1997; Wyness, 2006). In recognition of the cultural variability that exists across children, I chose to utilize the plural tense of the word (James & James, 2004) instead of the singular child. Furthermore, I use the term students and children interchangeably.

Discourse is the production of knowledge/power through written or spoken language as well as produces knowledge/power (Foucault, 1976; Foucault, 1981; Hook, 2001; Kumaravadivelu, 1999, Lazaroiu, 2013).

Discursive formations are a grouping of words that work as rules, tools, frameworks, and practices in which to organize objects, subjects, and thoughts (Foucault, 1977, 1980; Hook, 2001; O'Farrell, 2005).

Discursive practices are the enactments of discursive formations that reproduce social order (Graham, 2005; Hook, 2001; Lazaroiu, 2013).

Forward slash (/) is purposefully utilized throughout this inquiry. The forward slash does not indicate an abbreviation for “or” or “and”, rather it indicates that it is both; it represents yes/and.

Genealogy is a consideration of the origins of systems of knowledge and resulting discourses in order to reveal discontinuities which are breaks or gaps in what is believed to be true (Foucault, 1977).

Learning Standards, Learning Expectations, and Learning Objectives indicate the various ways education has labeled the specific things a student should learn and/or be able to do after instruction has occurred. In this inquiry, all three terms are utilized interchangeably.

Neoliberalism within education is a form of governance that frames schooling through a lens of productivity, often demonstrated through a standardization of schooling and testing measures (Au, 2011; Foucault, 2008; Lissovoy, 2013; Savage, 2017).

Object and Objectification represents how children are often reduced to a nonagential thing within schooling to be controlled, disciplined, and labeled through homogenous standards (Foucault, 1977; Freire, 2002; Hearne, 2018).

(Parentheses) around (re) throughout the inquiry emphasizes the rupture of what is believed to be stabilized structures, understanding, or meaning toward new(ness). It does not represent repetition of or a backward glance toward what was/is. Additionally, I utilized the parentheses around (ness) throughout the inquiry to create a momentary pause for the reader. The suffix "ness" denotes quality. The parentheses act in a manner that the impact of the suffix is not overlooked.

Plugging in is an analytical process of reading data, theory, and other inquiry components, such as literature, non-hierarchically through and with one another in order to push past sameness or meaning making (Barad, 2007; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018; Mazzei, 2014).

Poststructural paradigm destabilizes meaning which is counter to structuralism that relies on frameworks to help establish truths.

Power/knowledge are co-constituted. Power and knowledge are relational structures that organize, constitute, and reify social order (Foucault, 1980; Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005). I utilized the forward slash in power/knowledge because Foucault spoke of power and knowledge inferring one another (Foucault, 1980).

Relational Power is the notion that power/knowledge exists and is co-constituted through interactions between people and institutions (Foucault, 1980; Mills, 2003).

Teacher/educator are terms that I utilized interchangeably throughout the inquiry.

Thinking with Theory is a qualitative research approach that utilizes concepts and theories toward a deep analytical reading of data through a process of plugging in (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018).

Truth regimes are a collection of rules used to create and regulate social order (Foucault, 1977; Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005).

Chapter 2: THINKING THROUGH LITERATURE AND CONCEPTS

In this chapter, I explore the discourse on children and childhoods historically, philosophically, and sociopoitically, as well as outline through discursive practices how children and childhoods are situated within the institution of schooling. I start this chapter by providing an introduction of the Foucauldian concepts I have engaged throughout the inquiry. Next, I think through the genealogical construction of children and childhoods from historical, philosophical, and sociopolitical discourses before turning to the prominent theories on children and childhoods including developmentalism and socialization. Additionally, I introduce the new sociology of childhood that attempts to interrupt, with varying effect, the truth regimes put in place by prominent academic disciplines that study children and childhoods. Following this, I think through the genealogy of schooling that instituted compulsory education and conversely in response a counter-culture movement to schooling. Lastly, I conclude with the neoliberal discourse of educational policies and politicking that structures schooling through a lens of economic productivity and thusly structures schooling and guides discursive practices by educators.

As an emerging poststructuralist, I cannot delineate my epistemology, ontology, and axiology into workable isolated sections, which I further elucidate in Chapter 3. Therefore, my thinking with Foucauldian concepts appears whenever appropriate throughout this dissertation. The integration of my thinking with Foucauldian concepts is not to center self within the field of my inquiry but to acknowledge that my thinking is always present (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Although not fully integrated or always explicitly stated, Foucault is always present in the background of my writing.

Thinking with Foucault

Through my readings of Foucault, I found concepts that have helped me to uncover specific modes of operating that appear rational and unified within schooling. The overarching concepts from Foucault that I apply are power/knowledge, discourse, and the agentic subject. When thinking with Foucault I view his concepts of power/knowledge at a macrolevel that produces disciplines and discourses that play out at the microlevel producing agential subjects. This thinking, although appearing linear, is more complex and iterative through another Foucauldian concept, *power as relational*. Below I outline each concept utilizing both Foucault's own words, as well as how other academics have positioned his work. To avoid oversimplification of Foucault's shifts in thinking, I do not attempt to produce a definitive definition for each concept; rather, these are my constructions of his concepts for thinking through this inquiry.

Power/Knowledge

Foucault's conception of power is not one that is limited to a few people, nor is it power administered solely from a hierarchical top-down motif (Foucault, 1980). Foucault did not refer to specific institutions, laws, or a state apparatus as holding power; instead he viewed power as a multiplicity of forces (Foucault, 1980): "the ossification of highly complex sets of power relations which exist at every level of the social body" (as cited in O'Farrell, 2005, p. 99). Therefore, an individual does not innately possess or own power but rather exercises power relationally (Foucault, 1980).

The conception that power is relational gives power the possibility to be actively repressive and actively productive (Allen, 2002; Foucault, 1980). Foucault argued that wherever there is power there is also resistance (Foucault, 1980; O'Farrell, 2005).

Therefore, individuals exercise power and are not the point of application of power (Foucault, 1980; McHoul & Grace, 1993) making power neither fixed nor transcendental. For example, within schooling, children's reactions, responses, and resistances exist within shifting relations of power between children, educators, sociopolitical discourses, and the structures of schooling. It can be argued that children, as agential subjects, are created within these power relations. Children, in this view, are not passive objects. Instead, children must accept power or resist power for power to exist. It can be true that a teacher has power over children, as do sociopolitical discourses and the structures of schooling. It can also be true, that how children interact with those relationships – whether children accept or reject that relationship, however limited their ability may be to do so – is through power.

Power and knowledge are not independent; they directly infer one another (Foucault, 1980; Lazaroiu, 2013; Peters, 2003; Popewtiz & Brennan, 1998). Power exists because of truth regimes that create knowledge that organizes, constitutes, and reifies social order (Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005). Foucault defined truth regimes as an "ensemble of rules according to which the true and the false are separated and specific effects of power attached to the true" (as cited in O'Farrell, 2005, p. 65). As truth regimes emerge, they are then reified through power/knowledge that continues to support the structures of knowledge/power that first created the truth regime. Therefore, what one is to know and how one is to behave is normalized in a truth regime through power/knowledge (Popewitz & Brennan, 1998). What counts as knowledge is dependent on the underlying structures that support its production (Hook, 2001). For example, within schooling, the educator is viewed as the apex of knowledge production

for students. Using Foucault's conception, one must look at the genealogy of the truth regimes evident in the classroom to find the ways that power/knowledge is interwoven in the present, the past, and the future.

Within Foucault's concepts of power/knowledge are the notions of disciplines and disciplining the body. Both are exercises of control that exist within how people think about schooling, children, and childhoods, as well as, how people enact structures within schooling onto children potentially constraining or enabling the agentic subject. Below I briefly outline how I understand Foucault's conception of both through the specific lens of this inquiry.

Disciplines. According to Foucault, disciplines are anything that organizes objects and thoughts toward the purpose of control (Foucault, 1977). Academic disciplines are an example of a modality of control. Foucault argued that science creates standards for what is known, how it is known, and by whom (Orellana, 2019). For example, the human sciences position the human as their subject with behavior defined through terminology such as "normal" or "abnormal." A normalization of this type of conceptual order creates regimes of truth that exercise control through practices, which Foucault called games of truth. Those games of truth regulate society (Foucault, 1977, 1980; Lazaroiu, 2013; Peters, 2003). Such disciplinary powers function within institutions like schools through the way children and childhoods are understood, which I will further highlight in the sections on developmentalism, socialization, and the new sociology of childhood.

The Body and Discipline. Foucault viewed the body as "a site of disciplinary technologies of power becoming both an object of knowledge and a site where power is exercised" (Lazaroiu, 2013, n.p.). According to Foucault (1980), the purpose of disciplinary technologies, within the modern state, are to exercise power at the lowest cost with the maximum effect and to increase the submissiveness and usefulness of the populace. Schooling, from this perspective, serves as a disciplinary technology. School structures are panopticons (McHoul & Grace, 1993) that utilize power relations to surveil the student through disciplining the body and creating ways of knowing. This type of control over the body within schooling is achieved by a codification of space, time, and movement through a developmental lens of age, gender, and ability (Foucault, 1984). When a child is unable to be normalized or displays resistance, they are disciplined through corrective actions. Additionally, a student is surveilled through one-way judgments based on knowing. The teacher provides information. The student regurgitates that information. The student is given a grade and labeled based on achievement indicators. Repeatedly, the body and mind are molded, increasing a more docile student.

Discourse

Foucault's conception of discourse refers to the formation and production of knowledge through written or spoken language and practice (Hook, 2001; O'Farrell, 2005). Foucault considered discourse both a product of power as well as a way that power is produced and disseminated (Foucault, 1976, 1981; Hook, 2001; Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lazaroiu, 2013). Foucault (1981) positioned discourse as more than stagnant language or text. Rather, discourse is something that is done (Foucault, 1981) through producing modes of operating (Graham, 2005). Additionally, Foucault's

conception of discourse is understood as a living reproductive thread of the past (Hook, 2001). Therefore, Foucault historicized truth through the materiality of discourses around regimes of truth and the resulting practices (Foucault, 1977; O'Farrell, 2005). Through a genealogy of discourse, dominant discourse can be unveiled by isolating where it is located, identifying where it dominates, and through revealing distinctive vocabulary, values, and assumptions attached to the discourse. It is through this archaeological endeavor that dominate regimes of truth can be "denaturalize[d]" (Moss, 2006, p. 128) and viewed as a choice rather than an edict. Foucault (1981) cautioned, however, that despite the privileging of one discourse over another there is not a repressed discourse that should be sought out but rather a "multiplicity of discourses" (as cited in Moss, 2006, p. 128).

Discursive Formations. Discursive formations are a group of statements that provide a way for talking about and representing a topic or field (Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lazaroiu, 2013). Discursive formations work as rules, tools, frameworks, and practices in which to organize objects, subjects, and thoughts (Foucault, 1977, 1980; Hook, 2001; O'Farrell, 2005). This formation creates a socialized mechanism for control making discursive formations inherently political (Kumaravadivelu, 1999). Academic disciplines, federal education policies, and the sociopolitical framing of academic achievement are all types of discursive formations. Through these types of discursive formations, children are classified, and childhoods stratified. For example, the idea of "mature" is often privileged over "immature," and "complete" is privileged over "incomplete," thus placing adults over children (Lee, 1998).

Agentic Subject

Foucault's (1966/2005) early writings pronounced the subject as "dead" (Bevir, 1999, p. 68). Foucault (1980) later recanted and positioned the subject as historically constituted through social relations within the context of power/knowledge (Allen, 2002; Bevir, 1999). Using Foucault's position, Bevir (1999) defined the subject as being "conceived in terms of both the norms by which we try to live and the techniques by which we try to ensure we do so. The individual is the arbitrary construct of a social formation" (p. 66). Using this interpretation, Foucault's subject, is not autonomously functioning outside of the social context but is constructed within the "historical-cultural context of genealogical narrative" (Besley, 2005, p. 78). However, this lack of autonomy does not suggest that the subject lacks agency. The subject's agency, instead, functions within the social background (Bevir, 1999). Therefore, within a social context a subject can regulate oneself within the norms and act through resistance against norms (Besley, 2005). Additionally, Foucault often used the terms subject and agency interchangeably because he saw subjectivity as a precondition for agency (Allen, 2002). In this inquiry, children as subjects are discursively positioned within the field of human sciences through normalizing indicators affecting the discursive practices of educators and how those educators reconstitute children within schooling (Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005). These power/knowledge regimes construct children within a specific time and place. The regimes become an iterative part of children's agentic selves. A subject's creative agency is, therefore, in how they choose to interact and reason within their given social context (Bevir, 1999).

Genealogy of the Construction of Children and Childhoods

In this section, I think through the genealogical construction of children and childhoods through historical, philosophical, and sociopolitical discourse. I acknowledge that the predominant framing of schooling is through a narrow lens that ultimately favors white property-owning males, leaving out many voices. The purpose of this inquiry is not to re-center patriarchal whiteness but to investigate the historical power relations that have become discourses of truth in order to invite a (re)thinking of these discourses (Peters, 2003). As O'Farrell (2005) stated, "To be unaware of the past is to be trapped by it" (p. 72). I refer to this white patriarchal lens as Eurocentric since I view traditional schooling as forming preeminently from European culture excluding other cultures and geographical influences (Spring, 2014).

Construction of Children as Evil, Empty, and the Personification of Innocence

The philosophical thinking of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau from the 17th to 18th centuries portray children alternatively as evil, empty, and as the personification of innocence. I have chosen these three philosophers due to their permanence over time in the study of children as well as the variance in thinking around the construction of children each thinker provides. The discourse of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau provide the context for Eurocentric theorists that in turn delineated children from adults through developmental categories.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), an English philosopher known for forming the social contract theory, saw humans as "brutish," requiring society to tame them (as cited in Schochet, 1967, p. 427). In step with the 17th century Puritanical concept of children, Hobbes saw children as innately evil and the sovereign property of the father, only to be

superseded by that of the will of the government (Schochet, 1967). Hobbes did not view children as fully formed persons, instead as something that required intervention toward adulthood. Therefore, Hobbes talked "around" children instead of speaking directly to their experience. Hobbesian discourse of becoming an adult can be located within the study of children from a developmental lens, as well as through federal education policy language such as being "college-and-career-ready" (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.).

John Locke (1632-1704), an English philosopher, heavily influenced modern teaching pedagogy that is still present today and helped to usher in the concept of childhood as a specific period (Androne, 2014). Locke disagreed with Hobbes' assertions that children are innately evil and instead claimed that at birth minds are a "tabula rasa," a blank slate, needing the moral guidance and molding of parents and educators to make children adaptable to social life (Androne, 2014, p. 75). It is through sensation, experience, and reflection that children fill the blank slate, speaking specifically to an epistemology of empiricism. Locke's focus on the necessity of adult intervention in the lives of children echoes Hobbes' sovereign authority over children by adults. In relationship to education, Locke believed in both the voluntary submission of children to the structures of education as well as a pedagogy that adjusts to children. Despite Locke's promotion of a more "child-centered" philosophy, the adult is still viewed as a necessary guide. The corresponding metaphors to Locke's ideals such as "empty vessels" and the educator as the "gatekeeper of knowledge" is a pedagogy that is present today in schooling through standardized curriculums and testing (Apple, 2014; Freire, 2002; Giroux & Giroux, 2006).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), a Genevan philosopher, has influenced modern educational thought through his renowned work *Emile* (1762). Rousseau's thinking hinged on the natural goodness and innocence of children, pointedly rejecting Hobbes' assertions. He additionally revoked the notion Locke put forth of the teacher as the authority over knowledge and skills. Instead, Rousseau's thinking placed children at the center of their education through autonomous discovery. However, Rousseau did impose a four-stage, developmentally focused process of guiding children - albeit one that is as free as possible from domination and constraints (Bertram, 2018). Today, the notion of a child-centered classroom is a common educational phrase, but due to federal and state interventions in the form of policies regarding curriculum, standards, and testing, the child-centered classroom Rousseau envisioned is not typically practiced in K-12 public education (Leonard, 2016). As I address Piaget and developmentalism, I will revisit child-centered classrooms, and how that discourse continues to be constructed and construed.

The philosophies of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau have aided in the hegemonic discourse that separate children from adults. This understanding has been, and continues to be, based on developmental discourse which views children requiring adult intervention. Albeit not the only philosophies entrenched within the educational system, each contributed to truth regimes regarding children that then influenced policy making and discursive practices in the form of schooling structures. Pioneers in a cross-disciplinary approach to childhood studies Allison James and Adrian James (2004) proposed that the way adults view children shape their behavior toward children. In other words, the entrenched philosophies created in the past shape how adults seek to interact

with children and helped to develop the modern conception of childhood as a specific period.

Origins of Childhoods

French historian Philippe Ariès (1914-1984) is often credited with introducing the modern concept of a socially constructed childhood as first appearing in the 17th century. Ariès' demographic research on the family found that during the latter part of the medieval ages (5th-15th century) children from age seven left the protection of their family unit to participate within society alongside and in the same manner as adults. During this time, Ariès argued, that children were pictorially represented as miniature adults and that a marker of youth was based on physical attributes and behaviors rather than chronological age. Ariès claimed that the modern social construction of childhood as a period that separates children from adults arose within a Eurocentric context by the 17th century. This construction of childhood was in part due to more prevalent record keeping that gave prominence to accounting for chronological age. Also, at this time the European educational system became more formalized with age-based classes and control through hierarchical relationships.

Due to Ariès' Eurocentric focus and overreliance on artistic renderings as evidence, some scholars have contested his historical assumptions, especially the notion that childhood was not a formalized conception until after the medieval period (Shanahan, 2007). Despite the criticism, Ariès' work is often cited as shifting the sociological paradigm around the study of childhood (Corsaro, 1997). James and James (2004) drew two key propositions from Ariès. The first proposition is the notion that childhood is a "cultural phrasing of the early part of the life course, historically and

politically contingent and subject to change" (p. 13). The second proposition is that the way adults view children shape their behavior toward children thus shaping children's experiences (James & James, 2004, p. 13). These propositions align with how I conceptualize discourse and discursive formations from a Foucauldian lens. Discourse around children and childhoods historically becomes a socialized norm through discursive practices. Our behaviors are not original productions but rather inhabit a linage of regimes of truth that arose within a dualistic world. These regimes, in part, arose through specific disciplines within academic thought that attempt to organize and control the social and natural world (Orellana, 2019).

Genealogy of the Disciplinary Roots of Children and Childhoods

The above section discussed the evolving construction of children and childhoods over time that separated children from adults and positioned childhoods as a specific period within a person's life. The discourse conceptualizing children and childhoods helped to establish the structural context of compulsory schooling and the frameworks by which children and childhoods is studied. Two prominent fields of study on children and childhoods are psychology and sociology. Both similarly construct children and childhoods in narrow ways that create a binary between childhood and adulthood (Alanen, 1988; Burman, 1994; Lee, 1998; Prout & James, 1997; Wyness, 2006). Emerging from these fields are two heavily called upon theories regarding children and childhoods, developmentalism and socialization. Here I discuss the discourse that developed within these disciplines as well as problematize the resulting socialized truth regimes regarding children and childhoods that effect the discursive practices within the institution of schooling. Lastly, I introduce a shift in these theoretical frameworks to the

new sociology of childhood that attempts, with varying effect, to interrupt the truth regimes put in place by these disciplines. These lenses, through which children and childhoods are studied, help to further elucidate the "cultural phrasing" of childhoods from a disciplinary standpoint as well as gives insight on how children are constructed (James & James, 2004, p. 13).

Discourse of Developmentalism

Developmental psychology created frameworks for thinking about human growth and learning through a linear progression from childhood to adulthood, moving from the "irrational to the rational" (Kenway & Bullen, 2001, p. 3). Child psychologists that have helped advance developmental theories are plentiful, and their theories are still being utilized today in research on children as well as within educational discourse that drive pedagogy. Some popular early contributors to developmentalism and their theories include Sigmund Freud's (1905) psychosexual development and Jean Piaget's (1936) four stages of cognitive development. Piaget is considered the founding father of developmental psychology (Morrow, 2011). His "child-centered" discourse focused on the individual cognitive development of a child. This child-centered discourse has found permanence in the fabric of educational speak and pedagogy by affecting educational policy, inspiring intelligence testing, guiding standardized testing, and thusly effecting teaching practices (Leonard, 2016).

In the second half of the 20th century, developmentalism was advanced by Erik Erikson's (1950) eight stages of psychosocial development, Lawrence Kohlberg's (1958) moral development, Albert Bandura's (1963) social learning theory, and John Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory. All these theories explore and assume biological universality

through “normal” developmental patterns in fixed stages towards adulthood (Woodhead & Montgomery, 2003). These theories narrowly label the development of children using normalized truths established by the discipline itself (Prout & James, 1997) with little recognition of a child’s specific social and cultural context (Epstein, 1993).

One famous exception to the positioning of developmentalism toward a biological privileging is Leo Vygotsky’s sociocultural perspectives, published in 1962. Vygotsky’s introduction of social interaction within developmentalism began to form the constructivist movement and provided an opening into the possibility of viewing human development beyond a biological framework to one with cultural significance (Soto & Swadener, 2002). Introducing the importance of social interaction in cognitive development Vygotsky’s theory ushered in the sociocultural approach. By highlighting cultural backgrounds, Vygotsky’s theory made visible the prevalent Eurocentric constructs within most developmental studies of children (Rogoff, 1991).

Problematizing Developmentalism. Exploring the development of children through a primarily biological lens toward an understanding of how they grow, behave, and think produces a focus on chronological age and gender. Age-grading and corresponding labels creates normative discourse situated primarily within a Eurocentric context (Morrow, 2011). The socialized framework of age-grading places expectations upon children that are primarily outside of their control and input. Age-grading is present in commerce with age guidelines on toys and movies, for example (Ryan, 2008). It extends into policies determining whom can have sexual intercourse, judgments on criminal acts as well as when people can marry, vote, and legally work (Leonard, 2016).

Within schooling, age-grading is present within age-level classrooms, curriculum development, and testing (Leonard, 2016).

Discourse of Socialization

Building from developmentalism, psychologist Émile Durkheim's (1956, 1961) socialization theory rose to prominence between the 1940s and 1970s by extending the social, emotional, and cognitive development of children to environmental considerations. Durkheim believed in the collective good of society achieved through assimilation to social laws. Accordingly, socialization theory describes how a society maintains order through assimilation as well as how it is accentuated by people and institutions such as the family, school, and peer groups (Wyness, 2006). People and institutions promulgate social order through habitually conforming behaviors and enforcing socially constructed roles. From a perspective of children and childhoods, socialization theory explains both the goals of assimilating children into fully socialized adults as well as identifies failures to assimilate (Prout & James, 1997). Children are socialized by learning the attitudes, values, and appropriate behaviors within a culture. This learning within schools occurs through hierarchical relationships, behavioral expectations, and academic outcomes. When a child does not conform, they are often labeled, and intervention is implemented.

Problematizing Socialization. Like that of developmentalism, socialization theory can reinforce universal biological truths that separate children from adults (Wyness, 2006). Within socialization theory, children are non-social and incompetent as well as passive recipients of an adult's control (Qvortrup, 2002). The notion that children are incompetent positions children as a "potential threat or challenge to the social order

and its reproduction" (James, Jenks & Prout, 1998, p. 9). Due to the disregard of children's subjectivity within their present time of childhood, adults attempt to assimilate children into society through repetition and imitation. Lee (1999) found that adult institutions such as the United Nations, pediatric units, and criminal courts display an inability to determine the level of legitimacy of children's words resulting in an overall ambiguity of childhoods. The tension of children not being "the same as" as well as potentially being or becoming "different from" adults (Lee, 1999, p. 465) creates ambiguous tension. Due to this ambiguity, children are presented as a problem to institutional order. Lee (1999) expressed that the burden of ambiguity can be deferred, but when the deferral stops children are often the ones who bear the burden of the ambiguity.

Discourse of the New Sociology of Childhood, Shifting the Paradigm

First emerging in the mid-1980s, the new sociology of childhood views children as encompassing their own cultural group, as ontologically complete beings, and as active social agents (Cocks, 2006; Danby & Farrell, 2004; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Thomas, 2002; Wyness, 2000) through a historical lens as well as through cultural values and power structures within a society (King, 2007). The new sociology of childhood was built around structuration (Giddens, 1984) and social constructivist approaches. Giddens' (1984) structuration theory looks at agency and structure in relation instead of in binary opposition. Giddens (1984) defined structuration as "the structuring of social relations across time and space" (p. 376). Giddens's (1993) structure is a mode of societal and social organization that includes micro and macro institutions, policies, and practices that when applied within the new sociology of childhood account for the large-scale

patterning of childhoods. Therefore, social action depends on individual agency but can also be enabled or constrained through rules and resources. Through structuration, childhoods are a permanent position in the social structure (Qvortrup, 1994). From a social constructivist's lens, childhood is understood as a historical and cultural phenomenon (Prout & James, 1997).

According to Prout and James (1997), the new sociology of childhood paradigm contains the following six characteristics, pushing it away from previous scholarship that approached understandings of childhoods and children from primarily a developmental and socialization standpoint:

1. "Childhood is understood as a social construction…distinct from biological immaturity, is neither a natural nor universal feature of human groups" (p. 8).
2. Childhood cannot be "entirely divorced from other variables such as class, gender, or ethnicity" and is not a "single and universal phenomenon" (p. 8).
3. "Children's social relationships and cultures are worthy of study in their own right, independent of the perspective and concerns of adults" (p. 8).
4. Children must be understood as active agents in their own construction and should not be viewed as "passive subjects of social structures and processes" (p. 8).
5. Ethnography is a recommended methodology as it can give "children a more direct voice and participation" with sociological research (p. 8).
6. "To proclaim a new paradigm of childhood sociology is also to engage in and respond to the process of reconstructing childhood in society" (p. 8).

The new childhood paradigm in the social studies of childhood has rapidly been growing since the 1990s and has begun to take root academically. In 1992, the American

Sociological Association started a childhood section, effectively creating a sub-discipline. From 1993-1996, three new journals developed with a focus on children and childhood (Matthews, 2007, p. 322). In 1998, a research committee around childhood emerged within the International Sociological Association. The academic recognition of the new sociology of childhood opens additional possibilities for researchers to extend present thinking around children and childhoods.

Criticism of the New Sociology of Childhood. The new sociology of childhood paradigm has provided both a critique of previous dominant frameworks as well as a prying open of the study of children and childhoods. However, the current paradigm for childhood is not without its criticism. The discipline is still in its infancy with children remaining largely invisible within sociological theory (Bühler-Niederberger, 2010; Morrow, 2011, Leonard, 2016) placing childhood on the fringes of the discipline rather than at the center (Leonard, 2016). Prout and James (1997) outlined how the new paradigm frames children as active social agents independent from adults. Some researchers challenge the notion of a truly independent child, both as participant and object, within an adult framework of research. King (2007) pointed out that in order to make statements regarding children, the dichotomy of adult and child is necessary. Ryan (2008) argued that the new sociology of childhood is not a paradigmatic or epistemological shift as many may claim due to the necessity of the adult and child binary outlined by King. Additionally, King (2007) stated that the authenticity of communicating children's experiences to other adults as truth is questionable. As Alanen (1988) stated, much of the research within the new sociology of childhood speaks to the "theoretical child" (p. 56).

Another criticism of the new sociology of childhood paradigm is that it is still rooted primarily within Eurocentric thought (Prout & James, 1997) with a preoccupation of dominant cultural forms of power relationships related to age (Kenway & Bullen, 2001). Prout (2005) stated that the over-emphasis on the social construction of childhood can shut out any biological or psychological factors that still need to be entertained. A preoccupation with dominant ideology can be seen by the heavily situated discourse at the macro-level of the collective, structural, and institutional rather than the micro day-to-day interactions of children within new sociology of childhood research (James & James, 2004). For example, the macro-level focus, such as the institution of schooling, is historically and sociopoitically Eurocentric, whereas, a micro-level focus on the experience of children can enfold a specific sociocultural perspective, a discourse often not presented. The criticism around the new sociology of childhood is challenging researchers to think critically regarding their own participation in reifying hierarchical structures and coopting voice. As Dorner (2015) cautioned, in research "adults ultimately have more power to speak for children, and thus, they have greater opportunities for silencing their voices whether consciously or not" (p. 362). What the new sociology of childhood provides is "an alternative history of ideas about children and repositions our understanding of the contemporary social study of them" (Ryan, 2008, p. 555).

Genealogy of Schooling

The previous section discussed the historical, philosophical, and social genealogy of the construction of children and childhoods that lead to disciplinary fields of study around children and childhoods. This inquiry specifically orients the focus of the construction of children and childhoods within the institution of schooling. In this

section, I outline the evolution of schooling in the United States. I start with the industrial revolution (18th-19th century) and explain how child labor laws separated children from adults and society. This separation and the desire for shared democratic values led to the common school movement and eventually compulsory public education throughout the states. I then end with a discussion of the philosophical discourses and educational activism that lead to a counter-culture movement to public schooling and its structure. The historical, cultural, and political framing of schooling help to further investigate the notion that childhood is a specific period as well as begin highlighting how societal views of children can shape their experiences within schooling (James & James, 2004).

Separation of Children from Society

Industrialization during the 18th and 19th century saw children integrated into the labor force and considered as an economic contributor to the home and society. Prior to the 19th century, children were often economic contributors to their families. During 1832, New England factory workers were 40 percent children (Bakan, 1971, p. 985). Due to exploitation of child labor, new laws arose as a way of protecting children (Corsaro, 1997; James & James, 2004; Zelizer, 2002). These laws, in part, cut children off from being contributing members to society and placed them in the role of dependents who require adult control. Lee (1982) marked this time as the "preindustrial" paradigm of childhood.

Starting in the 1870s, discourse emerged placing children as "innocents" who require protection through surveillance and control (Corsaro, 1997; James & James, 2004; Zelizer, 2002). Due to new social conditions arising from an influx of "idle" children and a need to assimilate a multitude of cultures due to immigration, the common

school movement was created (Salomone, 2011; Spring 2014). The notion of compulsory schooling for all children developed in parts of Europe as early as the 16th century and found its way to the United States in the 19th century. Compulsory schooling segregated children from their adult counterparts, which further constructed children as "other" – on their way to adulthood.

Common School Movement

The common school movement began in the 1830s by creating a mass schooling system known today as the public schooling system. Spring (2014) outlined three features to the common school movement: (1) to educate toward a common culture in order to reduce class conflict; (2) to improve morality, end crime and poverty, and provide equal opportunity; and (3) to create local and state control (p. 79). The idea of a shared consensus around political and social values was a way to calm unrest among the classes and unruly youth as well as to promote a democratic citizenry among a diverse nation (Salomone, 2011; Spring, 2014). A mass schooling system served to transmit these social values to the populace.

Early supporters of a public education, such as Benjamin Rush (1746-1813), Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), and Noah Webster (1758-1843) predicated the good of the nation of a citizenry centered on shared democratic values. These democratic values were not innate but birthed through the political dominant majority. The Whig Party (1833-1854), recognizing that the most powerful way to insert ideals of a popular sovereignty is through a uniformed education, made a path for more government control within schooling (Clausen, 2010). Horace Mann (1796-1859), considered the founder of the common school movement, asserted in the late 1830s, "if educational decisions were

left to parents or special interest groups there would be a great potential for the mis-education of children, the creation of a class system, and the loss of democracy" (Clausen, 2010, p. 97). Mann was influenced by the thinking of Rousseau who argued that the only way to equalize citizenry is by relating to one another through an attachment to the state. Rousseau believed that self-interest through proper education could be suppressed to the common will of the state (Clausen, 2010). Therefore, education's democratic purpose within the United States was, and still is, to Americanize and assimilate individuals early as children to the will of the dominant class. As Noah Webster, a father of American scholarship and education, once wrote in the late 1700s,

> Good republicans...are formed by a singular machinery in the body politic, which takes the child as soon as he can speak, checks his natural independence and passions, makes him subordinate to superior age, to the laws of the state, to town and to parochial institutions. (as cited in Clausen, 2010, p. 104)

Horace Mann intended to provide equal opportunity to all students. Despite Mann's call, common schools, from a modern view, fostered segregation as well as built and maintained class stratification creating vast inequities still present today (Spring, 2014). Blacks, American Indians, women and girls, the poor, and Catholics all experienced some form of exclusion or inequity during the common school movement through forms of forced subpar alternative schooling from their counterparts (Spring, 2014). Black students, prior to the end of enslavement, generally did not attend formalized schooling since they were legally barred. Many American Indians also experienced segregation. Due to the dominant rhetoric of needing acculturation and assimilation, American Indian children were sent to boarding schools to live in isolation

away from their tribes. Irish immigrants found their Catholic faith under attack in common schools due to the Protestant teachings leading them to establish independent parochial schools which threatened the democratic ideals being proposed by the common school movement. By the late 19th century, the common school movement had spread throughout the states with varying requirements for enrollment age and attendance (Bakan, 1971). However, most Anglo-Americans did not welcome integrated schools; therefore, de jure racial segregation existed until the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) while de facto segregation persisted long after.

Throughout the first two decades of the 20th century, children's value continued to change from one of economic usefulness (Zelizer, 2002) to a "sentimentalized vision of childhood in which children were to be nurtured and protected" (Corsaro, 1997, p. 194) which shifted the orientation of adult relationships toward children. Lee (1982) marks this time as the "dependents" paradigm of childhood. This paradigm suggests the dependence of children on adult institutions and adult guidance such as schools and educators whom are assumed to possess the sole knowledge of how-to navigate children to adulthood.

Counter-Discourse to the Ideals of the Common School Movement

Counter-discourses to the principles of the common school movement emerged from 18th century Enlightenment ideals centered on ownership of self. This ideal is contradictory to the internalized authority developed through the traditional educational system (Spring, 2014) and echoed in developmental and socialization theories. Instead of consciously socializing a person into the majority culture, learning was viewed as a process of all the social forces that shape an individual culture (Spring, 2014). Below I

outline various influential voices that contributed to the counter-discourse that brought into focus the hegemonic flaws within public education as well as introduce alternative schooling approaches.

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) ushered in the idea of cultural hegemony and its use in institutions, such as schools, as a form of the dominant class maintaining power through consent. John Dewey (1859-1952) was influential in educational reform through the belief that curriculum should be interactive and child-centered while still maintaining balance within the educational structure. Dewey also believed that education was a democracy, directly tying schooling and society together. George Counts (1889-1974) built off Dewey's work. Counts believed that schools could transform social order and was critical of how schools reify the status quo continuing unequal distribution of wealth and power. Counts was both a strong proponent and critic of the progressive educational movement. Moving toward a social reconstructivist framework, Counts criticized the progressives for an over-focus on individual growth which privileges the elite and stifles social justice.

By the mid-1960s, political activism and the counter-culture movement began to push back at schooling's hegemonic ideals, the lack of connection of the self to the greater world, and the inequitable traditional structures in schooling (Bauman, 1998; Miller, 2002; Lehr, Tan, & Ysseldyke, 2009). Unlike the hegemonic structures and ideals of public education, which have emphasized the importance of democracy while subjecting students to possible rigid authoritarianism, the values of the counter-cultural education movement sought to provide students with the freedom and space necessary to determine their own learning interests and outcomes and in some cases rejecting

schooling altogether. There are many influential scholars and authors who contributed to the counter-cultural movement. What follows are various voices that contributed to a heterodoxy of traditional schooling discourse.

John Holt and Ivan Illich both promoted completely moving from traditional structures of schooling through their "unschooling" and "deschooling" approaches. Holt (1923-1985) introduced an "unschooling" approach which allows children to drive their own learning through access to rich resources but without any formal guidance. Attempting to counter the uniformity in pedagogy, textbooks, and methods for learning, Illich (1926-2002) did not believe schools could be reformed, rather that schools could only act to separate one from their learning. Illich promoted children becoming deinstitutionalized through deschooling, a period where one learns to detach from normative ways of learning focused on developmental skills and standard curriculum (Salomone, 2011; Spring, 2014). Instead, in this perspective, children move to a place where learning is predicated off one's own natural curiosities.

There were also scholars and activists that arose during the counter-cultural movement who wrote against the hierarchical structures and inequities inherently present within traditional schooling. For example, Jonathan Kozol (1936 -), focused his educational activism through writing about segregation within schooling and the inequities of education for children of color and poor children. Edgar Z. Friedenberg (1921-2000) theorized about the controlling and abusive treatment of children in schools stemming from the fear and derision that adults hold for them. Meanwhile, Michael Apple (1942 -) criticized the ideology of curriculum within schools through the lens of

how schools confer hegemonic knowledge and cultural legitimacy, centralizing schools as an institution of power that reifies inequalities.

The counter-culture movement was heavily influenced by the work of Paulo Freire (1921-1997), a leading advocate of critical pedagogy. Freire's work pushed against the traditional "banking model" of education that places the student as an object to be filled with knowledge rather than the subject of their learning. Freire (2005) argued:

> The teacher teaches and the students are taught; the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing; the teacher thinks and the students are thought about; the teacher talks and the students listen – meekly; the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined; the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply; the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher; the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it; the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students; the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects. (p. 73)

The scholars and writers that contributed to the counter-discourse of the ideals of the common school movement put into dissonance two key components, that of hierarchical control and the ideology of learning. The counter-discourses lead to various alternative approaches to schooling within the United States. Some of the alternatives were borrowed from progressive movements already present within other countries while other alternatives formed due to the inequities in schooling within the U.S. educational system.

Alternative Schooling Approaches. The progressive educational movement led to alternative schools, such as Free Schools and Freedom Schools, and new models of schooling, such as Reggio Emilia, attempting to liberate students from public education, which was viewed as an oppressive institutional tool. Two major alternative school movements in the United States included the Free Schools and Freedom Schools. These schools grew both out of the desire to make up for the subpar education afforded to minorities, and due to the libertarian movement within education seeking to center learning on children. The Reggio Emilia approach also places the student central through self-guided curriculum.

In the 1950s, the first Free School Society in the United States was established condemning public schooling for killing the innate joy of the learner through continued inequities and the promotion of competitive materialism (Bauman, 1998; Graubard, 1972; Jurenas, 1971; Miller, 2002). The movement modeled itself on A.S. Neill's Sommerhill School (1921), located in the United Kingdom, which introduced flexible teaching methods and curriculum to free children from adult coercion (Bauman, 1998). Free Schools began to emerge in the United States during the 1960s. Some popular characteristics of a free school include "one-on-one interaction between teachers and students, a supportive environment, student-centered curriculum, flexibility in structure, and opportunities for students to engage in decision making" (Lehr, Tan, & Ysseldyke, 2009, p. 20).

Freedom Schools, developed in the 1960s, were a network of alternative schools for Black students formed around the ideals of the Civil Rights Movement and work of historian and sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963). Freedom Schools aimed to

intersect education and political social reform through academic subjects, cultural programs, political and social studies, as well as participation (Perlstein, 1990). The Freedom Schools struggled to sustain themselves with the same vigor after the summer of 1964. The pedagogical ideals that a democratic and progressive curriculum could empower students towards social change became the movement's own downfall (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1998). The growing sense that racial inequalities and oppression are impenetrable in American society deflated the call for liberation (Perlstein, 1990).

Later, in the 1970s, the Reggio Emilia approach introduced a student-centered constructivist pedagogy. The pedagogy uses a self-directed, experiential learning, and relationship-driven focus within preschool and primary education. The approach was first introduced by Loris Malaguzzi and parents in the Italian villages around the city of Reggio Emilia but is utilized internationally (North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, 2019).

Despite the prolific work of educational philosophers, theorists, and activists, alternatives to public education exist but the ideals have not replaced the neoliberalism inherent within public education. What the counter-culture movement has provided is a critical lens in which to interrogate the purpose and outcomes of our current educational system. As Rose stated (2009), "It matters a great deal how we collectively talk about education, for that discussion both reflects and, in turn, affects policy decisions about what gets taught and tested, about funding, about what we expect schooling to contribute to our lives" (p. 5). Making nondominant discourses familiar and questioning current dominate discourses can serve to create new imaginings within schooling.

Discourse of Federal Education Policies and Politics

As discussed previously, the common school movement and the advent of compulsory schooling have given rise to a public education that acts as an agent of socialization. As Ryan (2008) stated, "the apparatus of the modern state is dedicated to unprecedented levels of service, regulation, protection, and segregation based on the age of individuals and modern ideas about their development, conditioning, agency, and innocence" (p. 553). According to James and James (2004), "social expectations become law through informal discursive practices morals, norms, [and] behaviors" (p. 49). Federal education policies in the mid-twentieth century linked schooling to the nation's global interests and the desire for an economically viable workforce positioning it within a neoliberal framework. In the past forty-years federal policies have reified neoliberal discourse through their focus on measurements of individual aptitudes forcing a dynamic of competition around meritocracy (Hursh, 2007; Morrow, 2011; Nichols & Berliner, 2007). With the passage of *No Child Left Behind* (2001), the normalization of publicizing results of standardized tests has brought surveillance of schooling to the general public (Lipman, 2006). The use of standardized tests to identify "failing" students and the dominant discourse of accountability has normalized the surveillance of every student within schooling (Hairston, 2013).

Discourse of Federal Education Policies Constructing Children

In this section I discuss how the sociopolitical climate over the past eight decades has led to federal education policies that create schooling practices, expectations, and relationships framed first by dominant nationalistic discourses, and now by dominant neoliberal discourses. Neoliberal discourse within education can be identified as that

which positions education as an efficient economic tool toward "global competition and private wealth accumulation" (Sleeter, 2008, p. 1948). Both policy discourse and the disciplines of psychology and sociology discussed previously have constructed children and childhoods through developmental age-grading and socialization toward a "commodifiable" child. Constructions around children discursively linked as a product to be utilized for capital gain continue today.

***National Defense Education Act* (1958).** Starting in the 1940s, the federal government began to intervene and invest heavily in education towards building a globally competitive nation. In 1958, President Dwight Eisenhower implemented the *National Defense Education Act* (NDEA) which earmarked spending for areas such as mathematics and science education. The motivation was one of competition with the Soviet Union in an arms and technology race, inspired by the Sputnik "crisis." This move drew education and foreign policy in direct alignment (Clausen, 2010). The government called on "high-ranking scientific managers" (Clausen, 2010, p. 106), not educators, to supervise schools and create curriculum. Working off the exaggerated views that Soviet students were challenged more than American students in school, the NDEA provided funding to school districts for testing. These tests promoted meritocracy by explicitly identifying the most talented children for scientific tracks (Kaestle, n.d.). The call for education to produce an economically viable work force created an approach to education reform and initiatives that tied schooling and the economy together. By the 1960s testing came under scrutiny through civil rights concerns around the cultural bias of tests and the resulting inequities on various groups within schooling (Kaestle, n.d.). Conversely, at the

same time, evaluation and accountability began to take root in educational discourse, placing a heightened focus on student results on achievement tests (Kaestle, n.d.).

***Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (1965).** President Lyndon Johnson's "war on poverty" birthed the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), signed in 1965, switching from a state-driven educational system to greater federal participation. In order to fight poverty, ESEA sought to equalize funding and opportunity for all children through the provision of resources, materials, teacher training, and incentives to continue learning. Decades of research shows that individual economic outcomes still heavily favor those already with privilege, and inequities continue to plague the underprivileged within schools due in part to the neoliberal lens surrounding achievement birthed through ESEA (Bowles & Gintis, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2004). For example, academic performance and the narrowing of the performance gap between white students and those of color has yet to be realized (Klaf & Kwan, 2010). Additionally, ESEA has been re-authorized numerous times since 1965 and evidence shows that disadvantaged schools "lag substantially behind" (Shouse & Mussoline, 1999, p. 254) when implementing federal policies with little long-term achievement and a lessening of financial resources (Hollingworth, 2009).

***A Nation at Risk* (1983).** President Ronald Reagan's *A Nation at Risk,* released in 1983, warned that public education was the main contributor to the nation unable to stave off global competitors in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovations leading to America's decline in international economic competition. The document reported flaws in the content, expectations of student mastery, the lack of time on content, and poor teacher preparation (National Commission on Excellence in Education,

1983). Prior to the 1980s, K-12 schools were not closely linked to federal and state education departments. Instead, public education was considered a "loosely coupled system" with individual teachers driving the content and outcomes of individual classes (Allbright & Marsh, 2020, p. 5). The report helped solidify arguments for the utilization of quantitative metrics in a competitive comparison against international counterparts as well as ushered in core curriculums (Superfine, 2005). As a result, achievement scores became a common tool for identifying a school and district's success in educating their children (Hollingworth, 2009). Public education effectively became a weapon in global economic competition, with young people referred to as "intellectual capital" (Miller, 2002, p. 110). As the United States emerged into what was dubbed the "excellence era" beginning in the 1980s (Murphy & Adams, 1998), compulsory public education was viewed as a tool for mastering specific disciplines (Levinson & Holland, 1996; Swartz, 2003) as well as assisting in maintaining capitalism's hierarchal divisions of labor through a reproduction of these social class structures (Bowles and Gintis, 2011). *A Nation at Risk* solidified schooling's place in the country's economic outcome producing commodifiable children.

America 2000. The discourse of *A Nation at Risk* opened the door for proceeding decades of administrative policies on accountability measures. President George H.W. Bush's *America 2000* set forth six national educational goals to be achieved through four strategic measures, one of which relied on accountability measures through national standardized tests resulting in a discourse of producing gains in student performance (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). A second goal, on a district level, asked communities to adopt their own method of progress monitoring around learning (U.S.

Department of Education, 1991). Although never adopted, *America 2000* continued to champion *A Nation at Risk's* report through legitimizing national standards and testing in core areas (Schwartz & Robinson, 2000) as well as allowed corporations to determine educational standards (Lewis, 1991) in order to produce a consumable populace. As stated by the Department of Education in *America 2000* (1991), "The business community will use the American Achievement Tests in hiring decisions, develop and use its own skill standards and, perhaps most important, will provide people and resources to help catalyze needed change in local schools, communities and state policies" (p. 35).

***Goals 2000* (1994).** President Bill Clinton's *Goals 2000* ushered in the legislation that carried out the goals of *A Nation at Risk* resulting in the expansion of the federal government's role in education through incentivizing reporting accountability measures based on a discourse of outcomes-based education (Deas, 2018; Superfine, 2005). Due to this legislation, states began constructing their own measurable "high" academic standards to show student improvement (Greer, 2018; Hess & McGuinn, 2002; McGuinn, 2006; Schwartz & Robinson, 2000). This expanded the federal role in education by providing fiscal support for states using standards-based reform as a major component of state guidelines. School reform moved to a standards-based approach with more required courses and testing which often resulted in low-income students paying the price through less funding for their schools (Filardo, Vincent, Sung, & Stein, 2006; McCarthey, 2008;); more inexperienced teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Ng, 2006); and state policies that required students to be held back due to poor performance as early as third grade (Orfield, 1999).

***No Child Left Behind Act* (2001).** President George W. Bush's *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) passed in 2001 with bipartisan support. *No Child Left Behind* further increased the government's role in education through accountability measures tied to funding (Hursh, 2007). The NCLB focused on schooling as an economic mean through high academic standards, school-level accountability for student outcomes, and quantitative performance measures (Allbright & Marsh, 2020). With the passing of NCLB, states were required to adopt standards-based reform along with multiple annual assessments across subjects and grade levels as well as a set of improvement programs to quantify outcomes. The discourse of NCLB created an "audit culture" reducing accountability measures for both schools and individual teachers to that of standardized achievement scores resulting in a comparative culture with punitive results (Apple, 2007, p. 112). Schools failing to consecutively meet "adequate yearly progress" could be forced to pay for supplemental services for students without monetary assistance, result in the firing of staff, and trigger major governance changes including the possibility of reopening as a charter school (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, p. 17). This discourse placed a quantifiable and monetary value on children's academic success. With the introduction of NCLB, failure was made highly visible with the publication of standardized test results, state watch lists of schools, and NCLB's index of failing schools (Lipman, 2006, p. 56). It has been argued that NCLB shifted the conversation of education away from the social issues predicated in ESEA toward one of "efficiency and individualism" (Hursch, 2007, p. 306) through an overemphasis on standardized scores and a privileging of specific knowledge (Apple, 2007; Lipman, 2006).

***Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015).** The reauthorization of ESEA through *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) as passed by Congress and signed by President Barack Obama in 2015 lessened federal control, giving states more choice in assessments, while still requiring annual assessments and standards for schools to access federal funding (Close, Amrein-Beardsley, & Collins, 2018). With the inception of ESSA, the concept of student learning was broadened through assessments that measure "higher-order thinking skills and understanding" (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2016, p. 5). Some would argue that ESSA has brought about an end to public scrutiny over school performance allowing opportunity for states to shift policy focus to issues such as social emotional learning (Dusenbury, Dermody, & Weissberg, 2018) and exclusionary discipline practices (Steinberg & Lacoe, 2017). These claims are still yet to be fully realized, and although the act allows for the use of various assessments beyond testing as well as adaptive assessments, the discourse of accountability and academic standards still exists.

In summary, U.S. public education is still regulated through dominant discourses around academic achievement that commodify education into an economic production of children becoming adults. Currently, under the 45th President's administration, ESSA is still in effect. States continue to work on their own plans for standards and assessments. One of the most prevalent discourses around education from Secretary of Education, Betsy Devos, is that of school choice. Devos has repeatedly supported the 45th President's educational budget cuts in upwards to nine billion dollars, as well as brought forth her own proposals for school voucher funding in upwards to fifty billion dollars (National Education Association, 2019). Most recently, the 45th President has taken up threats of funding cuts based on what he views as "Marxist" education through content around

critical race theory (Crowley, 2020). In response to rising discourse around civil rights, the 45th President has promised an executive order to create a commission for the purpose of promoting "patriotic education" (Crowley, 2020). The continued discourse around privatization and assimilation around nationalistic ideals further places a focus of education as something to be consumed through a market-based approach (Barkan, 2017; Devos, 2018).

Neoliberal Discourse and Discursive Practices of Education Policies within Schooling

Education through a neoliberal framing positions schooling through a lens of productivity, often demonstrated through a standardization of schooling and testing measures (Au, 2011; Lissovoy, 2013; Savage, 2017). Foucault viewed neoliberalism as a form of governance through *political rationality* (ideas) and *political technology* (practices) extending into non-commodity arenas such as education (Foucault, 2008, pp. 285-332). Such policies and practices as age-grading, tracking of ability, high-stakes testing, and formalized curriculums are examples of political technologies toward the standardization of schooling. These policies and practices are determined by adults and inscribed as measures for the benefit of the student. However, according to Rainio (2008), the centering of the student is subterfuge toward consumable outcomes that continue to reify the neoliberal structures already present.

Notions of neoliberalism within education can be found as well in the political and social discourse surrounding schooling as a form of "economic good" influencing curriculum development toward "twenty-first-century skills" and whose effectiveness is then quantified through published high-stakes tests (Savage, 2017, p. 143). This framing views children as "redemptive agents to be programmed to become solutions to certain

problems arising from highly competitive market capitalism" (Moss, 2006, p. 128). In this manner, children are reduced to a numerical outcome through a narrow lens of what it means to learn and show comprehension. Children unable to meet normative frameworks of success are constructed as "failing" or "deviant." Additionally, the discursive control applies a prejudicial lens around the "normal" child and "successful" student within schooling through narrowly defined outcomes. Furthermore, the discourse in published test scores creates "winners" and "losers" through a meritocratic lens (Au, 2011; Lissovoy, 2013). The continuation of mandated achievement tests ensures that school districts and children conform to the standardization (Nichols & Berliner, 2007) while the visibility of accountability systems compel educators to comply (Close, Amrein-Beardsley, & Collins, 2018; Ranson, 2003; Webb, 2005). The narrowing of discourse around education through economic needs and large-scale assessment restricts our idea of what school ought to be about (Rose, 2009; Warner, 2006). Due to these policies, education is for public consumption and scrutiny (Ranson, 2003) and the neoliberal approach can be considered one of the "most pervasive and dangerous ideologies of the twenty-first century" (Giroux & Giroux, 2006, p. 22).

The privileging of neoliberal educational policies positions compulsory schooling as an institution of hegemonic control (Apple, 2007; Foucault, 1977; Freire, 2002) and legitimates power constructs that assign adults as experts of children and childhoods, placing adults hierarchically over children (Prout & James, 1997). Through access to the dominant discourse or directives, educators create, rationalize, justify, and often unknowingly reproduce these hegemonic ideologies through policy enactments (Gross, 2011). Thus, educational policies become discursive strategies constituting the student,

teacher, and the educational system itself by enacting practices, norms, controls, and exclusions that through repetition become truth regimes (Ball, 2015; Foucault, 1984). Arguably, the involuntary consent by children to these ideals prepares them to accept the authority and inequities within wider society (Leonard, 2016).

Inequities Due to Neoliberal Policies. According to Bowles and Gintis (2011), schooling mimics economic life and legitimizes inequality. The development of standards from a corporate mindset, as well as accountability measures through achievement testing, produces education from a meritocratic ideology producing vast inequities in schooling. Yet that meritocratic ideology is false in an economic structure that is inequitable, even "educational achievement brings no guarantee of economic success" (Anyon & Greene, 2007, p. 159). Through discourse regarding academic achievement test scores, a notion of racial and socioeconomic gaps in student outcomes are suggested furthering social injustices and reifying false discourses around children of color and children from low-socioeconomic status (Leonardo, 2009; Sleeter, 2008). One common term in this discourse is "achievement gap." Such discourse reinforces the idea of deficiencies based on individual choices, not on larger systematic designs. Discourse of a student's time in class, and work on standardized assessments, becomes directly related to performance, which turns student learning into an evaluative process of work outputs and outcomes (Roberts & Mahtani, 2010, p. 253).

Inequalities within schooling exist due to its continuous "denial of multiplicity and diversity" (Moss, 2006, p. 133). Therefore, schools reproduce current cultural and social inequalities as well as create inequalities through continuing to work from hegemonic practices. The consequences do not only impact students in the classroom, but

also have an impact on the larger economy and society. Testing measures, typically developed by and normed on Eurocentric customs, are biased toward white, English-speaking students, specifically in the middle and upper socioeconomic class (Klaf & Kwan, 2010; Leonardo, 2009). For students of color, the norming of education through hegemonic lens discursively outlines economic racial stratification and teaches that their role is as an underprivileged person (Lipman, 2006, p.67).

Agential Children within the Structure of Schooling and Hierarchical Relationships

Through social and material structures as well as hierarchical relationships, schools are viewed as institutions of control with the potential to constrain and enable the agency of children (Rainio, 2008; Rajala, et al., 2016; Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016). However, Foucault argued that "individuals are the vehicles of power not its points of application" (as cited in McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 89). Therefore, structural and relational power is not fixed or transcendental, it is in relation to the agentic subject requiring a certain degree of freedom to exist on all sides (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Although this inquiry is specifically focused on the educator, ideas of children's agency in relationship to controlling factors such as schooling structures and hierarchical relationships provides additional ways to think through the inquiry questions. In this section I think through studies that addressed both schooling structures and hierarchical relationships regarding the construction of the agency of children being both constrained and mutually constituted.

Schooling Structures

The hegemonic controls of schooling, through policy and practice, can be situated within the structural context of schooling as enacting agential constraints (Rainio, 2008;

Rajala, et al., 2016; Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016). Structure is understood as both social and material. According to Sewell (1992), structures are "sets of resources that empower and constrain social action and tend to be reproduced by that action" (Sewell, 1992, p. 27). This definition suggests agency and structure as being inseparable (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). The structuring of schools through age, gender, and ability is a form of hegemonic control. Add the controlling factors of space, time, resources, exams, standardized, and hidden curriculums as well as the surveillance of the body through punishment and reward (Foucault, 1977) – schooling is awash in structures. An example of time as a structural constraint can be found in Rajala et al. Roth (2016) study of a third-grade classroom. While viewing agential constructions within interactional moments of opposition such as disruption of activities, contesting content, and refusing to participate the researchers observed a tension between the educator wanting to interact with a child in the moment and having to move forward with instruction. The researchers viewed these oppositional moments as space for the agential children to be fully realized. However, due to structural time constraints, the educator did not pause in instruction to interact with the child. As Cullingford (1991) stated, "schools remain the world of teachers in which children are temporary guests" (p. 171) reaffirming hierarchical structures that have the potential to constrain the agency of children.

Agency within Schooling Structures. Despite the plethora of controlling structures within schooling, these structures can be viewed as points of opportunity for the agency of children (Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016). Children possess the agency to both manipulate and challenge normative structures within schooling (Tilly, 1991). The following studies show children's agency in relationship to the schooling structures of

instructional activities (Dorner & Layton, 2014; Siry, Wilmes, & Huas, 2016) and agency in relationship to policy enactment (Dorner, 2009). Although all three of these studies reify schooling structures as the domain of adults, children's agency is squarely present.

In Dorner and Layton's (2014) critical discourse analysis of a first-grade Spanish one-way immersion class, children both mimicked behavior as well as showcased agency. The children, within this study, mirrored behavior and language presented by the instructor while in whole-group instruction. When presented with a small group activity, the children became more creative in their speech employing agency in their choices. The children relied less on guided translations and instead employed code switching as well as bringing in "outside" (quotations in original) discourses regarding identity into the activities with their peers.

In Siry, Wilmes, and Haus's (2016) study of the dialectical relationship of agency and structure the researchers zoomed in on one 10-year-old boy, Leonardo, within a classroom during an inquiry-based science unit. In their study they found that open-ended structures allowing for choice in peer-groupings and selection of inquiry question provided occasions for Leonardo's agentic participation. Although Leonardo chose not to participate with his peer in the actual testing of their hypothesis, his actions allowed for his peer to shift into a role of leadership. Leonardo also showed active engagement through the reflective writings he contributed to his partner's work. Additionally, Leonardo chose to work outside of the teacher guided inquiry question producing his own path for engagement consequently forcing the teacher to adapt to his form of agentic participation. Based on their findings Siry, Wilmes, and Haus (2016) concluded that agency and schooling structures are not static but rather "fluid, dynamic and recursive"

(p. 14). Viewing children as social actors moves the discourse from one of becoming to one of social capacity in the here and now co-constructing the schooling process (Hearne, 2018).

Using a sociocultural, bottom-up interpretive approach to studying educational policy, Dorner (2010) identified children using agency in how they enacted and talked about policy regarding two-way language immersion despite having their voices left out of policy construction. The eight children in this study made choices in what language (English or Spanish) to use at times within the classroom as well as made decisions of when to extend their ability to translate between the two languages for their peers. Without being directly told by an adult, the children in this study showed that they grasped the political relevance of the English language through their agentic actions and discourse; this shows both their agency (in choosing a language) and also how the larger truth regimes of English-only schooling and testing shaped their choices. Differing from the adults, the children saw the importance of the English language within their current status, for example in standardized testing, whereas adults spoke about children and language acquisition through a future tense.

Hierarchal Relationships

From the dominant concept of the teacher over the student, the educator can be viewed as either enabling or disabling the agentic possibility of children within schooling through relational involvement and construct of structural forces (Malmberg & Hagger, 2009)**.** This hierarchal relationship is legitimized through the state giving adults' authority to socialize children within schools (Bardy, 1994). Legally, schools and educators act *in loco parentis*, performing the functions or responsibilities of parents such

as disciplinary measures and looking out for the best interest and welfare of children. Through the responsibility that the state affords schools and educators, children became objects of control (Foucault, 1977; Hearne, 2018). The separation created by this hierarchy cultivates the teacher as the doer, facilitating the students' learning and students as unconscious objects being acted upon (Freire, 2002) thus negating the agency of children. According to Dewey (1968), children are removed from an authentic educational experience that is constructed by adults on the behalf of children. Simply put, children's learning and physical being within schooling is the territory of adult educators through a view of developmentalism and socialization (James & James, 2004). However, knowledge and power are not solely an oppressive act placing limitations on a child's body and mind (Bevir, 1999; Foucault, 1977) in a benevolent manner but rather the self is constituted through relational practices with power. Below, I present studies that showcased that educators constrain children's agency through a lens of developmental control and conversely studies that argued that agency resides within the power relations of teacher and student.

Educator Constraining Agency. Within the following studies, educators are identified as gatekeepers to the possibility of an emerging agential child. This form of control is presented as an inevitable result of developmental discourse (Komulainen, 2007; Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011). In Komulainen's (2007) ethnographic research within a center for disabled children ages six and under, the credibility of children's voice is brought into question due to the notion of incompetency based on age and ability. Komulainen (2007) found that despite educational discourse granting a child "an individualistic status as subjects/agents and as intentional beings" that children are denied

this status due to the "tyranny" of the socially constructed developmental perspectives over children's lives (p. 21). These developmental stages do not address whom a child is in the moment, essentially stripping them of their subjectivity and denying agency. In Mashford-Scott and Church's (2011) article the prejudice of age is also addressed. Using conversation analysis, the researchers focused on teacher intervention within two early childhood education settings with three- to five-year-old children. The researchers' found that teachers positioned themselves as a necessary facilitator of students' agency essentially enabling or constraining the agentic self to emerge. In the above studies, educators are viewed as a gatekeeper to agential children based on developmental concerns. Through hierarchical control, educators are seen as constraining agency.

Agency within Power Relations. Other scholars argued that the presumed inevitability of agential control over children by hierarchical facilitators within schooling is not absolute (Barton & Tan, 2010; Caiman & Lundgård, 2014; Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011; Roth et al., 2004). Instead of a simplistic view of docile children being acted upon as mere objects, Foucault's concepts position children as vehicles of power and agential possibility. To consider power as relational ushers in a (re)thinking of the constituted agential subject beyond being formed hierarchically. Instead power is constant and circulating between and among people (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Within the following studies, the notion that a child's agency is inevitably controlled is countered through a notion of power being relational. All these articles, in different ways, rejected the binary of hierarchical control of teachers over students and opens new ways to view power and the agential subject as being iterative and not a top-down process.

In the following two articles children are viewed as developmentally capable to negotiate their own learning through agentic action in relationship with others. In Caiman and Lundgård's (2014) study, agency among four- and five-year-old children is shown to occur relationally rather than something that is possessed, controlled, and disseminated by the educator. Instead, the main educator in the study listens, confirms, and supports children as they interact amongst themselves to solve a problem. Furthermore, from a poststructural perspective, the authors positioned agency as an open-ended process that is constantly negotiated. Therefore, children's agency is not predicated on teachers' promoting; rather, "children achieve agency practically all by themselves" (Caiman & Lundgård, 2014, p. 454). In Barton and Tan's (2010) critical ethnography of youth at a local community club, the youth are not merely recipients of information but positioned themselves as knowledgeable experts without the intercession of hierarchical gatekeepers. The youth chose their learning directive, actively sought out information from adult figures, and constructed learning materials to show their comprehension to share with a broader community. The youth, in this study, acted as both learner as well as educator for themselves and others.

Although, as previously outlined, Mashford-Scott and Church's (2011) findings reified educational gatekeepers to children's agency within schooling, the authors also pointed out that the effectiveness of interventions or approaches toward conflict resolution were dependent on both teachers and children in relationship. Children's understanding, reflection, and response around the intervention is an act of agential subjects being co-constituted in relation to teachers. Conversely, Rajala et al. (2016) found in their study of a third-grade classroom, that resistance is a possible site for

agency to be constituted between children and educators. The authors found that when the teacher provided space for students to openly negotiate their opposition to an idea without the teacher responding with authority or disregarding the opposition altogether, there was greater opportunity for student agency to emerge within the dialectical relationship. Although this still positions the educator as the gatekeeper, it also opens a space for thinking around agency being manifested through resistance.

The caution within resistance as agency is that this type of agency can be viewed as "deviancy" (James & James, 2004). As Willis (1977) suggested in his study on working class "lads" in the United Kingdom, resistance by children within schools can be viewed as a threat to the adult interest. This is further supported within socialization theories, where children that defy adult norms are considered a reflection of inadequate socialization (Wyness, 2006). Since socialization is considered the responsibility of adults, deviant children are often met with greater control and punitive measures (Wyness, 1999). However, denaturalizing opposition by children as only a form of deviancy helps to interrupt the dominant socialized discourse toward new possibilities of recognizing children's resistance as creative acts (Moss, 2006).

Conclusion

The historical, philosophical, and sociopolitical discourse on children and childhoods within this chapter provides a macro-level conception as well as a genealogical understanding of how schooling ideology and practice has evolved. Integration of a thinking with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018) approach utilizing Foucauldian concepts creates multiple pathways for engagement with these discourses. It

is from an iterative process of studying the genealogy of power/knowledge around the agency of children and discursive formations of schooling that this inquiry took shape.

Discourses around children, childhoods, and schooling become a socialized norm through discursive practices; our behaviors are not original productions, rather they inhabit a linage of regimes of truth. Historically, numerous truth regimes have formed around children and childhoods. Each truth regime carried with it philosophies and disciplines that still influence schooling and conceptions of schooling today (Cocks, 2006, Danby & Farrell, 2004; James, Jenks & Prout, 1998; Kenway & Bullen, 2001; Soto & Swadener, 2002; Thomas, 2002; Wyness, 2000). Those truth regimes also have served to prejudice policy making and mold schooling structures. All those outcomes of the past still contribute and influence how educators discursively position children today.

Neoliberal federal education policies toward "commodifiable" children position education as an efficient economic tool (Sleeter, 2008), schooling as an institution of hegemonic control (Apple, 2007; Foucault, 1977; Freire, 2002), and legitimate power constructs that assign adults as experts of children (Prout & James, 1997). Through social and material structures as well as hierarchical relationships, schools are viewed as institutions of control constraining the agency of children. Additionally, educational policies prejudice educators' discourse and discursive practices. It is through a thinking of these historical, philosophical, and sociopolitical prejudices and policies with an educator – in conjunction with Foucault's concepts - that I identified opportunities already in existence as well as present, in following chapters, new possibilities in how educators and researchers construct children and childhoods within the schooling context.

Chapter 3: INQUIRY METHODS AND CONTEXT

This chapter elucidates my choices regarding inquiry methods and context. This chapter opens with an introduction of the inquiry's overarching questions and sub-questions that arose through engagement with Foucauldian concepts and thinking through literature. Next, I provide the context of the inquiry working from a macro-view of state level considerations to the district, building, and classroom level. Then I move on to describe the participant, Grace (pseudonym), and discuss ethical considerations that arose while working with the inquiry participant. I also describe what our interactions looked like on a typical day. I follow with data production, by first putting forth my emerging axi-onto-epistemology (axiology + ontology + epistemology) in relationship to Foucauldian thinking that guided my decision making and the way I viewed the inquiry. This chapter goes on to clarify the why and how I, as inquirer, chose my path into inquiry through a qualitative methodology and Jackson and Mazzei's (2012) thinking with theory approach to design. I then describe data production and analytical procedures using Foucauldian concepts. I end this chapter with overall limitations to the inquiry. As stated in Chapter 1, I am choosing to define my dissertation work as an *inquiry*. By choosing the term inquiry, I intend to position myself within my poststructural paradigm through the act of questioning and a collaborative doing with my participant.

Inquiry Questions

Based on years of working as a teacher and laboring toward better schooling practices I realized that my micro-level discourse and practices around education as an emancipatory process centered on the learner were at odds with the discursive formation of schooling within the United States that focuses on quantitative outcomes, efficiency,

and control. My time as an educator was often wrought with contradicting discourse. I would be told by administration to engage with students, build relationships, and make learning meaningful. At the same time, there was a heavy focus on policing hallways, keeping track of tardies, and an overabundance of paper pushing that falsely represented what was happening in the classroom with little regard to the realities of students' experiences. As a theatre educator I was not inundated with standardized testing expectations, but I was dually pressured to improve student grades in order to meet comprehensive school improvement plans. The percentages on the page were a false representation of the learning I saw in the classroom; learning that could not be indicated in quantifiable metrics. It was due to these tensions that I chose to step away from the profession to engage in deep thinking around the entrenched schooling structures that seemed to cause me distress. From my time immersed in the study of theory, education, and politics I proposed the following question for inquiry: *how does one U.S. educator construct children and childhoods within our historical and sociopolitical context?*

To answer this question, I began, as many inquiries do, by conducting a literature review. While constructing this literature review, I noticed a reoccurring theme of children and childhoods through developmental age-grading and socialization toward becoming adults emerging in both policy discourse and the academic disciplines of psychology and sociology. The past forty-years of federal education policies have mostly focused on measuring individual aptitudes and engaged in racialized discourses of competition and meritocracy (Morrow, 2011). Although still emerging, the new sociology of childhood attempts to move past a narrowed framing of children and childhood, yet still places children at the fringes of the discipline rather than at the center

(Leonard, 2016). Given the sustained focus of policies around academic achievement that affect the way schooling is structured as well as the centering of developmentalism and socialization in the study of children and childhoods, I have found myself interested in the notion of how these dominant discourses are reified as well as disrupted by educators. Therefore, the following sub-questions emerged:

1. *How does one U.S. educator reify or disrupt discourses regarding academic achievement through their constructions of children and childhoods and discursive practices?*
2. *How does thinking about the historical and sociopolitical discourses and discursive practices regarding the construction of children and childhoods through Foucauldian concepts produce new ways of thinking?*

I started this inquiry with these overarching questions. However, answering these questions was not the sole purpose of this inquiry. Through a thinking with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018) approach combined with my emerging axi-onto-epistemology, the questions served as a fluid guide for my thinking. In this way, the overarching questions allowed for a multiplicity of possibilities as well as made room for additional questions to emerge in the process.

Inquiry Context

In this section, I describe the context of the inquiry. I begin by describing my entry into the space of inquiry. The location of this inquiry emerged due to proximity, intimate knowledge of the district, and personal relationships with administrators and educators. Due to my close orientation with the district, it is important to note that despite using pseudonyms for individuals, the city, and the school one may be able to deduce the

school district though not the specific school building and classroom where the inquiry takes place. After discussing my entry process, I give an overview of the historic and present-day iterations of Missouri's mandated standards and assessments. Next, I move to a brief description of the school district and the elementary school where this inquiry took place. Then I give a description of the classroom setting in which this inquiry was specifically situated and a rationale for the classes I chose to observe.

Entry into the Space of Inquiry

When considering where to conduct my inquiry, I wanted to enter a space that was relatively familiar to me, as well as, to work with an educator I knew would be open to a reflective process. My association with the district is twofold, first as a student teacher and then as an employee. Eighteen years ago, I completed my student teaching in the district but in a different building and grade level than the school in this inquiry. Fourteen years after completing my student teaching, I returned to the district and worked as a teacher for two years at yet another building. These experiences and knowledge of the district provided me familiarity with the community making my entry more seamless.

There were also difficulties and burdens entering a familiar space. From a poststructural lens, I attempt to disrupt meaning and truth. Due to decades of acquaintance with Travers School District (pseudonym) I had to consistently be in an iterative process of reflection to not take for granted discourse and discursive practices familiar to me. My assumptions around Travers needed to be acknowledged, challenged, and at times unlearned to invite new possibilities. Therefore, the familiarity of the space was both positive and brought, with it, extra considerations for reflection.

Through the advice of my friend, one of the assistant superintendents, I secured the permission of both the building principal and educator prior to applying for inquiry to the district. I chose Bedford Elementary (pseudonym) as my building location due to my relationship with the principal and the educator I chose to work with as well as the overall positive working climate that many acquaintances have alluded to. The principal of Bedford and I met previously through professional development coursework, which afforded me time to gain his trust. The educator of this inquiry, Grace, and I have known each other for five years having met through our work in education. It was during that time that we established a friendship as well as spent many hours discussing our teaching ideology. Grace was excited about the possibility of working with me both as a friend, and toward enhancing her own practices as a reflective teacher. Once I secured permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Missouri-Columbia, the principal, and Grace the school district granted me authorization to move forward.

The choice to work within a "specials" class (Bedford's terminology for courses beyond the core curricular courses of science, mathematics, and reading/language arts) and not a regular content-focused or homeroom classroom may require, for some, explanation. Foremost, this inquiry did not require a specific type of content teacher or classroom to be successful. What the inquiry did require is the ability to engage with a reflective teacher and have access to a schooling context that provided the most robust data. By selecting an educator with whom I already have built trust and have engaged in reflective conversation regarding teaching was a benefit to the inquiry's needs.

Due to my work as a fine arts educator I am most comfortable within fine arts settings providing another rationale for locating the inquiry within a specials class. Grace and I shared a common language and ideology as fine arts teachers that can help eliminate misunderstandings. The common language is rooted in educational speak regarding fine arts. The common ideology is rooted in a student-centered approach that placed children as the subject of their learning and as doers. This similar thinking regarding education appeared in many of our conversations as colleagues but was always still spoken of within the context of a standardization of schooling due to our professional ties to those structures. How these ideologies and discourses manifested for Grace in the classroom is further explored in Chapter 4.

Lastly, discourse of academic achievement is not solely the property of educators who teach content covered on standardized assessments – as is shown within this inquiry. The academic achievement discourse exists historically, sociopoitically, and institutionally, leaving no teacher untouched. The myopia around academic achievement and schooling becomes institutionalized, often forming the way educators both think and construct children and childhoods through their discourse and discursive practices (Prout & James, 1997). Furthermore, placing my inquiry within a context that does not teach specifically toward standardized tests provided a unique perspective to the potential reach of dominant discourses within schooling as well as the opportunity to witness disruption around those discourses.

Missouri Academic Achievement Context

This inquiry took place in a medium sized city, Travers (pseudonym), situated in the state of Missouri where the compulsory attendance law (167.031) requires “a child

between the ages of seven and the compulsory attendance age for the district" to both be enrolled and regularly attend a "public, private, parochial, home school or a combination of schools for the full term of the school year" (Compulsory Attendance Law, 2017, para. 1). For those children enrolled in a public school, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), in alignment with federal education policies, determines mandatory achievement testing requirements. Below I will outline historic and present-day iterations of Missouri's state mandated standards and assessments (DESE, 2018a; see Appendix A for a comprehensive timeline of mandates).

In stride with the growing national trend towards testing, DESE has required assessment and accountability in Missouri (MO) since 1978 with the BEST Test, which assessed basic essential skills in the eighth grade. By 1987, with the passage of the *Excellence in Education Act,* the state mandated criterion-referenced testing in core content areas known as the Missouri Mastery Achievement Test (MMAT) in grades two through ten. With the adoption of the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) in 1991, public school district's accreditation began to include student performance on standard-based tests. The Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) is one of the mandated standardized assessments for all public-school students beginning in the third grade. The MAP testing began in 1997 and has gone through two expansions: one in 1998 and again in 2005 in response to the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001. In 2009, Missouri began requiring End of Course (EOC) assessments for students that complete specific content areas at the high school level. In alignment with the national trend toward universal standards and to qualify for Race to the Top funding, the Missouri State Board adopted common core standards in 2010. However, in 2015 the state legislature passed

HB 1490 requiring the state to develop their own academic standards called Missouri Learning Standards (MLS) as well as their own assessments for the standards replacing common core state standards by 2016. The MLS serve to "define the knowledge and skills students need in each grade level and course for success in college, other post-secondary training and careers" (DESE, 2018b, para. 1). Although these standards and course-level expectations place external pressure on educators, local districts are said to have autonomy in deciding on "curriculum, instructional strategies, materials and textbooks" (DESE, 2018b, para. 4). Due to the shift from common core and the multiple iterations of MLS over the past four years, the state lacks data that is comparable to measure outcomes that the achievement tests are meant to represent. The authorization of *Every Student Succeeds Act* in 2016 has had no effect on current MO assessment programs. However, DESE is in their sixth revision of the MSIP which has the possibility of affecting district testing requirements and educator practices.

District Context

Travers' (pseudonym) population, based on 2018 estimates, is roughly 120,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). As of July 2019, and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Travers' unemployment rate was at 3 percent (U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2019). The Travers Public School District (TPS, pseudonym) has roughly 20,000 students enrolled. According to the district's website, it employs over 3,000 people. The student and employment numbers put TPS in the top ten largest school districts in the state of Missouri. The district includes four high schools, less than 10 middle schools, and around 20 elementary schools as well as centers for gifted education, early childhood, and

vocational education. This inquiry took place in one elementary school within Travers School District.

At the time of this inquiry, the district was in year four of a six-year process to implement a new grading practice, called standard reference grading (SRG), across all grade levels. According to Marzano (2000), SRG is a system in which teachers give specific feedback in relation to a student's proficiency on grade-level standards. The Traver's Public School District superintendent's explanation for the move away from "traditional grading" to that of SRG included the following:

> Improved communication and additional feedback for parents, students, and teachers. Teachers will know which standards they need to teach and/or re-teach. Students will know which standards will need additional learning opportunities and/or practice. Further, all schools will have the same expectations of what is proficient for each standard. The result is greater equity across buildings. (Leader Letter, 2018, p. 1)

At the elementary level, the district had integrated SRG scales into lesson planning and assessment for core courses but not specials, such as art. The new SRG scales for art was slated to begin at the start of the 2020-2021 academic year. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the timeline for SRG implementation was halted.

School Context

The elementary school where this inquiry took place is Bedford Elementary School (pseudonym). Bedford serves kindergarten through fifth grades with over 650 students making it the third largest elementary school in the district. The student population is roughly 75 percent white, 10 percent black, 10 percent multi-race with over

25 percent of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. Bedford Elementary has two administrators, around 30 full-time classroom teachers, and about 15 full- and part-time specialist including media, music, art, physical education, and English learner as well as various other support staff.

Classroom Context

This inquiry was specifically situated within one of the three art classrooms at Bedford Elementary taught by the only full-time art teacher, Grace. Entry into Bedford Elementary was always peaceful. I avoided morning drop off and would sign into the building once everyone was neatly tucked into their classrooms. Walking the halls toward Grace's room was meditative as I centered myself by silently repeating the inquiry question, I came there to explore, *how do U.S. educators construct children and childhood within our historical and sociopolitical context?*

When I first entered the classroom from the hallway the teacher's desk with original artwork on the front sat across the room. Counters ran the length of the two long walls with labeled drawers and cabinets and accessible wash spaces. One of the walls also had windows that looked out onto green space and the faculty parking lot, providing an abundance of natural lighting. On the farthest end of the room was a door leading to an art storage closet as well as a dry erase board and smart board hanging on the wall. In front of the smart board on the floor was a large gathering rug for students to sit on. Most of the space consisted of six long student tables with five chairs each. Above each table hung large cutouts of paintbrushes in faded colors used to specifically identify each table. The classroom was decorated with an array of original artwork and signage made by Grace. Signage made by Grace included a daily schedule of classes, a daily routine for

students to follow, “art jobs” for students grouped by table to perform, learning expectations, vocabulary words, the concept and artist of the month, as well as motivational statements. Some of these artifacts are explored further in Chapter 4. The room felt inviting, calm, and spacious even when filled with twenty-plus elementary students actively engaging in a project.

Grace taught four sections of each grade level, kindergarten through fifth, for a total of 24 sections. Each section met at least once a week. On average, each section had twenty students. In total Grace taught roughly 480 students for the 2019-2020 school year. Based on observations of Grace’s classes prior to the inquiry beginning as well as conversations with Grace regarding her pedagogical choices for each grade level, I chose to only observe grades three through five. Kindergarten through second grade focused more on behavioral aspects whereas instruction from third grade through fifth focused on content knowledge and skill. Therefore, observing grades three through five provided the best insight into instructional variations regarding academic achievement as it aligned to standards. Additionally, through thoughtful conversations with Grace, the building principal, and my advisors, I determined that the best path forward was to only choose one section of grades three through five to observe. This decision was based on the following rationale:

- Focusing on specific class sections instead of all the sections limited the amount of guardian notification letters (see Appendix B for sample IRB approved letter) that needed to be distributed and tracked from roughly 480 to 60.

- Limiting the number of sections allowed for more time spent in reflection rather than transcribing.
- Although district testing exists across all grade levels, mandatory standardized testing began in the third grade making it reasonable, based on the inquiry's focus on academic achievement discourse, to bind the inquiry to third through fifth grade.
- Grace taught the same basic lesson format to all sections.

The three sections I observed all met on the same day. These sections met 50 minutes each, with third grade meeting from 9:20 am – 10:10 am, fifth grade meeting from 10:10 am – 11:00 am, and fourth grade meeting from 11:00 am - 11:50 am.

Participant

In order to think effectively with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018) in an iterative process with data and to engage an educator in a reflective manner on a deep level, I chose to focus on one educator, Grace. By not including multiple educators I avoided a reductionist thinking through a comparative analysis. In this inquiry, the educator was the primary participant and focus of participant observation. Grace agreed to participate through an oral consent (see Appendix C for IRB approved script). To think deeply regarding the construction of children and childhoods by the educator, this inquiry also observed Grace's interactions with children as well as their responses. In this section I give a thick description of the inquiry participant, Grace. I then review ethical considerations and describe what our interactions looked like on a typical day.

Grace

Grace (pseudonym) is a white woman in her early forties and a graduate of a renowned art institute which positions her within the white hegemonic discourse of education. At the time of inquiry, Grace was returning to the classroom after maternity leave for her second child. Grace has been the full-time art teacher for Bedford Elementary since the school opened in 2016 and is currently in her ninth-year teaching public education. Prior to Bedford, Grace taught art at a public high school for three years and at a rural elementary school for three years. Grace has also worked as a community arts educator, a home visitor, and within various preschool settings.

When I close my eyes and envision Grace, the shape of her form comes into view first (see Figure 1 for visual representation). It is the form of a trapeze dress. Geometrically she took on the shape of a triangle with colorful patterned leggings. But the dress never held its shape long; it danced as Grace floated in and out of children. And at times, Grace and her dress became a tent as she stooped to enter a student's line of sight. The calm friendly expression upon Grace's face was genuine and soft; smile void of the harsh lines evoked by exaggeration. Eyes clearly engaged but without prodding questions. Voice gentle like a lullaby. Hands that glided between brush, pencil, and the fingers of an eager child.

Figure 1

Image of Grace produced by student (n.d.)

Ethical Considerations

As an invited guest in a position of questioning, it was important to be intentional around the requests I made of Grace and how I represented her. I often found myself reflectively processing throughout my time with Grace. Why am I asking this specific task of Grace? Does the task make sense for the time it will require of her? How am I presenting Grace within my writing? Is what I bring to this inquiry mutually beneficial to Grace, myself, and the community of researchers and practitioners it may reach? As an educator myself and as a friend and colleague of Grace, I respected her time and efforts to this inquiry. It was my ethical charge to not cause undue stress, potential interruption to student's learning, or misrepresentation of Grace. In making this a priority it was important that I was reflexive in my work and flexible to Grace's needs. It was important that I entered and left Grace's space with positive intent so to continue promoting thoughtful exploration between practitioner and inquirer, a growing necessary partnership that I discuss later in Chapter 5. Furthermore, I acknowledge that this close working

relationship, although providing ease for inquiry, could skew how I interacted and reported my thinking. Therefore, it is through a focus on intentionality and reflection I attended to these ethical concerns.

Time poised the most concerning ethical dilemma for me as inquirer. There were many unforeseen obstacles that tended to take time, but my emerging poststructural paradigm and methodology allowed me to pivot accordingly without destroying the legitimacy of the inquiry. There were several cancelations of classes due to snow days and sick days, creating extra work for Grace as she attempted to get her four sections back on a similar trajectory to ease her workload. Grace's duties also increased when she was asked to meet during her plan time every morning with a struggling student creating less time for informal conversations to take place. Additionally, Grace was unexpectedly asked to lead a kindergarten service-learning project. These obstacles threw off the sequencing of lessons and created an extra unit for Grace to teach. Add to the changing school landscape the barrage of daily life as a parent of a toddler with emerging special needs and to a baby still breastfeeding, time was quickly siphoned away from Grace.

Initially, both Grace and I intended to engage in readings of Foucault together so Grace could map her pedagogical thinking and discursive practices in relation to Foucauldian concepts. The mapping would take the form of various making activities. This mapping proved to be a daunting undertaking for Grace as she struggled to balance the demands of lesson planning, student needs, and building needs all while being a mother of two under two-years of age. As a former classroom teacher, I could see these pressures mounting and knew that I, as an inquirer, would cause undue stress if I pressed us to keep to our initial goals. As a teacher, one is always balancing what to prioritize –

planning, teaching, family, and self. From my personal experience something and/or someone always suffers leaving guilt to be a constant nagging voice.

The demands of engaging in theoretical readings and production of thinking in material form would mean Grace would have to adjust what to prioritize. I knew that Grace would do whatever she could to assist in my inquiry process, but I also knew that the time spent on data production by Grace would have to come from either her time preparing for class or from her time with her own children. I did not want to construct the children in Grace's life as less of a priority to my inquiry, so I was flexible and judicious in my requests regarding data production. Instead of continuing this path, I chose to recalibrate my questions in educational language that Grace was more accustomed and minimize activities that would require Grace's attention outside of the school day. Although, we chose not to explicitly engage with Foucault together, the concepts are implicitly embedded in everything we discussed and did. Furthermore, Foucauldian concepts were never removed from my own thinking.

Interaction with Participant

The first period of Grace's day always started with plan time. Grace and I spent plan time in conversation while setting up for the day. It was also during the morning that Grace would explore ways to approach her lessons and any other challenges while I asked her questions regarding the inquiry. It was a time of mutual support and reward; I garnered data for inquiry and Grace gathered possible new instructional techniques. As Grace stated in a text message, "having hours [with you] in my classroom has been such a reflective, creative experience for me" (personal communication, January 24, 2020). After plan Grace began three back-to-back 50-minute sections. The pace was briefly

interrupted for a quick lunch and to breast feed her infant brought to the school by her parents before dashing away again to three more sections and ending the day with bus-line duty. Once students arrived and instruction began, Grace and I spoke very little as Grace turned her full attention to the class and I took notes on my laptop at the back of the room. At times I would leave my note taking and walk the room engaging with students – a practice encouraged by Grace and the administrator.

Methodological Ruins

> The difficulty for the poststructural researcher lies in trying to function in the ruins of the structure after the theoretical move that authorizes its foundations has been interrogated and its limits breached so profoundly that its center no longer holds. Of course, *the structure had always already been ruptured, ruined* (italics in original). (St. Pierre, 2011, p. 613)

Becoming Inquiry

Qualitative research positions the researcher as the primary data collector placing them in a position of power and influence. Therefore, research standards recommend accounting for an investigator's positionality (Creswell, 2014). Through a positionality statement, a researcher brackets thinking so to account for potential biases from influencing the official data. This positioning of the researcher places one "in advance of the event" (Manning, 2016, p. 37) instead of within the emerging inquiry. The notion that a researcher can separate themselves from the research goes against my poststructural paradigm and emerging axi-onto-epistemological perspective. I position myself as "emerging" into a paradigm since I am still wrestling with the tenets, do not fully encompass the tenets within my writing, and feel that I will never be fully anchored

within a specific paradigmatic framework. From an emerging poststructural lens, I view my role as an inquirer producing data and analytical questions in collaboration with my participant.

An axi-onto-epistemological (axiology + ontology + epistemology) perspective recognizes that knowing, being, and valuation are not isolated from one another, but are mutually co-constituted (Barad, 2007). Ontology questions what reality is (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Epistemology ask how reality can be known (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Reality exists through our modalities of knowing which in turn effects our reality. From a Foucauldian lens, both ontology and epistemology are formed through knowledge/power relations (Foucault, 1980). Metanarratives around reality, or truth, have been historically and socially constructed into truth regimes and formalized into disciplines (Orellana, 2019). Combined with my emerging poststructural lens, I am constantly questioning knowledge in relation to power and its reifying discourses that shape our world. It is in the questioning that tensions emerge producing new power/knowledge.

My paradigm merges ontology and epistemology and intertwines axiology which questions what is valued. What I value guides what I seek to know. Therefore, my axiology guides my aims, goals, and opinions in how I methodologically approach this inquiry. Therefore, through this paradigm that intertwines axiology, ontology, and epistemology I understand that I can never know, or represent, the experiences of others without acknowledging that I am prominently situated within the inquiry process. It is through this positioning that methodologically I constructed this inquiry as a collaborative doing with my participant.

Like Foucault, I do not believe one can separate the knower from the known but there is agency in how one interacts within these socially constructed power/knowledge structures. We only know the world because we are in and of the world; one cannot exist without the other. Therefore, giving credibility to the empirical 'I' through practices of separating the inquirer's thinking, presence in the field, and their work as inquirer stops the thinking process (Guttorm, 2016; Manning, 2016). I do recognize that I stepped into the inquiry subjectively from multiple entry points including student, inquirer, and educator. I recognize that I am both an object of discursive formations and practices (O'Farrell, 2005) regarding schooling and I reproduce regimes of truth (Foucault, 1977). Instead of acting as a closure, my experiences as both a student and an educator became part of the iterative process with my role an inquirer within the space of inquiry (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018).

Resisting Closure Within Methodology

This inquiry acts as an assessment of "what can be known" based on Grace's discourse and discursive enactments (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018, p. 726). To avoid closure within my inquiry, I worked within and against a qualitative methodological approach. Qualitative research seeks to explain "how people make sense of their world and experiences they have in the world" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 15) through a meaning-making process. Within this methodology the voice often represents the truth. Additionally, many qualitative approaches privilege concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These qualities can produce rich in-depth research, but meaning is never stable. Therefore, a qualitative methodology within this inquiry can run the risk of acting as a closure through a reductionist approach. The

push to verify oneself and one's work toward a normative notion of objective reality and universal truth is a practice that can keep researchers, policymakers, and practitioners from (re)imagining schooling and constrains thinking around the children within schooling (Apple, 2014; Kozol, 1990). Furthermore, the massification of knowledge produces easily consumable metanarratives regarding schooling and children within schooling that needs prying open toward multiplicity (Graham, 2005).

By working within and against conceptual order, I attempted to unsettle the sediment from the ruins (St. Pierre, 2011). The ruins are what occurs when privileged practices are decentered producing an opening for a (re)thinking to occur. As Deleuze (1962/83, p. 103) stated, "One cannot experiment as long as one is tied to a 'dogmatic image of thought'" (as cited in St. Pierre, 2016, p. 121). I do not suggest that I am disregarding, replacing, or even admonishing scientific thinking, rather I am attempting to provide another way to engage educational inquiry. With respect to academic requirements that surround a research design, I weaved both qualitative boundaries around the field of inquiry, the participants, and data production with what is thinkable using Jackson and Mazzei's (2012, 2018) thinking with theory.

Thinking with Theory Approach

Instead of applying a research design or an analysis that privileged coding and the reduction of data into categories and themes, I chose, through an emerging poststructural paradigm, to step away from normative readings and pursue a thinking with theory approach (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018). Using a thinking with theory approach, as highlighted in Chapter 4, I allowed my readings around Foucault, children, and education to refine my lens affecting how I interacted with the data in the field. Utilizing this

process allowed me to think deeply about the various discourses circulating within a classroom that construct children in specific ways. I recognize that data production and analysis from a thinking with theory approach is not tied to saturation or a frequency count but rather thinking deeply with data and theory. Furthermore, I understand data and analysis from this methodology to be emergent and iterative (Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Jackson & Mazzei, 2018; Nordstrom, 2017; St. Pierre, 2018). Below I lay out how I thought and worked with data production and analytical procedures from an emerging poststructural paradigm and through a thinking with theory approach.

Data as Lines of Flight

The field and participants within this inquiry are not stable constructs; I chose to see them as points of intersection producing new "lines of flight" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). This thinking brings into question what counts as the field and who counts as participants from which data is produced. In addition, I am mindful that during the inquiry emerging historical, sociopolitical, and institutional points expanded the field and its participants. Furthermore, the production of data is still conceptualized within a neoliberal context which is rooted in racialized ideologies (Bowles & Gintis, 2011; Leonardo, 2009; Lipman, 2006; Sleeter, 2008). It is in this thinking around the field and the participants that I attempted to decenter a privileging of what is. With that decentering, I sought to position myself and the inquiry squarely within the making as well as opening the field of inquiry toward the assemblage of past, present, and future (St. Pierre, 2018). Therefore, in this inquiry, I specifically utilized the notion of *producing data* instead of collecting data. From a position of producing data, I opened the inquiry process to emergent ideas and content to take shape in relationship to what can occur

between the participants, inquirer, theory, and data within the field. Collecting data evokes the notion that the truth is out there to be collected and often forces a predetermination of what will be collected prior to entering the field. As previously stated in Chapter 1, through changing how I viewed data, I opened the field of inquiry for a multiplicity of possibilities.

Data points were both predetermined and emergent through the iterative process of thinking with theory (see Table 1 for an account of data production). Prior to entering the field, Grace and I discussed what my presence would resemble as well as ways we could work together to produce data. Data included participant activities outlined within a playbook, formal observations, informal communication, and artifacts as well as my own readings of theory and relevant content. Within a thinking with theory design, no one data point is privileged over the other, so I examined each at the same level of importance (O'Farrell, 2005) and viewed data and theory as agential within the process (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018).

Table 1

Inquiry account of data production (January – March 2020)

Data Source	**Dates Produced**	**Total Number**
State policies regarding academic achievement obtained from https://dese.mo.gov/	Obtained prior to entering the field.	4

Table 1 (continued)

Inquiry account of data production (January – March 2020)

Data Source	Dates Produced	Total Number
Classroom observations including field notes for 3 different classes per day and corresponding reflective memos.	• January 10 • January 16 • January 23 • January 29 (shorter class) • February 10 • February 18 • March 2 • March 6 • March 13	• 9 observation days • 27 total class observations • 9 reflective memos
Recorded and transcribed informal conversations with Grace.	• January 23 (x2) • January 29 (x2) • February 10 • March 2 • March 6	• 7 total transcribed conversations
Playbook activity documentation.	From January 10, 2020 to March 19, 2020.	8 total documents from 4 different activities including journaling, a scavenger hunt, blackout poetry, and conversations around theory
Artifacts: • Signage • Activity sheets • Student work • Classroom communication	From January 10, 2020 to March 19, 2020.	86 total artifacts

Field Observations. I observed one third-, one fourth-, and one fifth-grade art class taught by Grace from January through March 2020 for a total of nine observation days and a total of 27 class observations (see Table 1 for an account of time spent in the classroom). I entered the field as an active observer taking notes during the class periods, but allowing my note taking and thinking to be interrupted if Grace or a student required

my assistance. While in the field I recorded any salient discourse and discursive practices that informed the overarching inquiry questions (see Appendix D for an observation template). Acknowledging the "bidirectional nature of research" (Deutsch, 2004, p. 889), I positioned myself and the participants as subjects, objects, and actors within the inquiry. Therefore, salient information included the verbal utterances and interactions of participants, including myself and anyone else that entered the field of inquiry, such as the principal. Additionally, I recorded basic information such as physical setting and characteristics of participants. The template also had a place to list artifacts I collected. Each class period I would start a new observation form. Additionally, I would use my cell phone to take pictures of any artifacts that drew my attention.

Informal Communication. I chose not to conduct formal close-ended interviews with Grace, instead relying on having informal conversations during Grace's plan time. Interviews are often considered a truthful representation with a heavy reliance on language and interpretation which is rooted in systems of power/knowledge (Foucault, 1969). Therefore, a heavy reliance on language can constrain what can be known. In the spirit of poststructuralism, I attempted to avoid the notion of truth making and instead welcomed the ambiguity that presented itself in informal conversations as an opening toward what this methodological approach creates.

Out of respect for the educator's time, Grace and I engaged in informal conversation each morning during her plan time. I often was given the task of sharpening pencils and laying out materials while Grace reviewed aloud the lesson and crafted physical models of the artwork students would be making. While moving through the room, we would catch up on personal going-ons and move in and out of conversation

regarding the inquiry. Every day I came with a few prepared questions to ask but would allow our dialogue to organically go where it may; relinquishing my prepared questions when necessary. The questions I prepared were to further clarify or expand on the previous field day's notes. The questions would also serve to encourage Grace to think about the inquiry question from her own localized space and position. I utilized my cell phone to record these formal conversations which I later transcribed and utilized to produce reflective memos (see Table 1 for an account of transcribed conversations).

Playbook. The playbook came to fruition after the proposal phase when my dissertation committee encouraged me to play around with differing ideas on how to produce data with Grace beyond formalized observations and informal conversations. Through discussion with Grace, I produced six, large overarching activities prior to moving into the field (see Appendix E for the playbook). These activities included journaling, a scavenger hunt, blackout poetry, conversation starters around theory, and a collage. I chose not to formally place these activities within the data collection timeline but rather allowed the field work to dictate when, if at all, to present the activity to Grace as well as how to present the activity. Grace and I completed all the activities except for the conversations around theory and the collage (see Table 1 for an account of activities). The three other activities were pared back to attend to the rising demands Grace faced, such as a service-learning project, morning check-ins with a struggling student during her plan time, and personal demands of being a parent. Below I outline the various activities in the order and final iteration in which they were presented to Grace.

Journaling. The journal, a physical small bonded notebook, served to pose questions or assignments for Grace as well as a place for both Grace and I to memo

whenever we felt moved to do so. What I posed in the journal functioned to clarify what I saw and heard as well as directives for Grace to map out her thinking through various prompts. Three entries within this journal became central in my thinking through the data. Those entries spoke to the tools and ideologies relating to academic achievement which Grace employed discursively (see Figures 2, 3, and 4) and which I put into conversation with other data points. The entries will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4. The journal was crucial since Grace did not have a stopping point in her day to review with me before leaving work. The notebook stayed in Grace's classroom during the entirety of the field work.

Figure 2

Communal journal reflecting the tools Grace used to guide assessment (January 16, 2020)

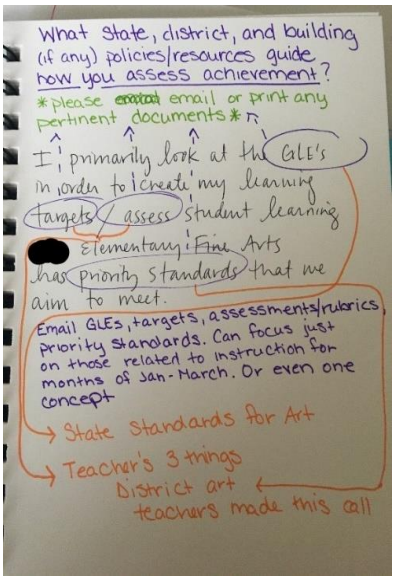


Figure 3

Communal journal reflecting how Grace assessed students for achievement (January 16, 2020)

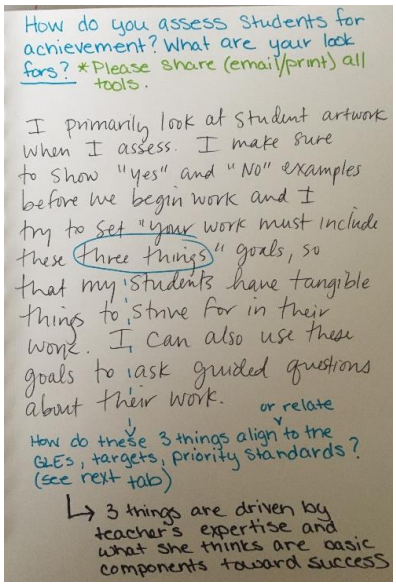
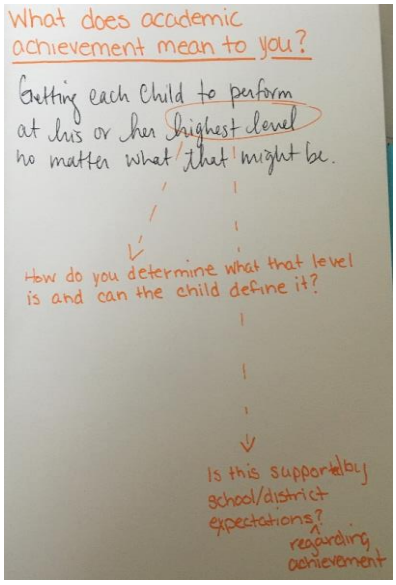


Figure 4

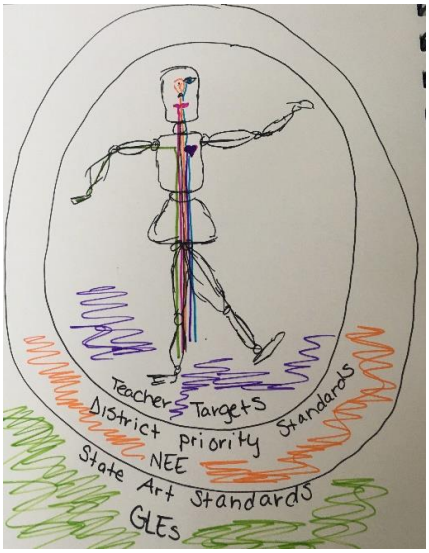
Communal journal reflecting what academic achievement meant to Grace (January 10, 2020)



Scavenger Hunt. I asked Grace to think about what tools she utilized to guide her ideology and practices around academic achievement. Grace was instructed that these tools could include any type of discursive formations such as policies, practices, and industry standards. Furthermore, the tools could come from a federal, state, district, building, profession, and individual level. Grace was asked to collect any documents and then to use these tools to build a visual road map of how the documents were constructing her pedagogical practices. Due to time, Grace spoke through what the road map would look like with me during her plan time. I in turn created a visual representation (see Figure 5) to put into conversation with other data points. These tools are discussed further in Chapter 4.

Figure 5

Road map of tools informing Grace's enactments created by inquirer (journal, January 29, 2020)



Blackout Poetry. To plug-in the identified discursive formations enacting on the educator, Grace's thinking and discursive practices as well as my own thinking and Foucauldian concepts I asked Grace to participate in a blackout poetry activity. This activity utilized those resources Grace identified within the scavenger hunt as guiding her enactments of academics and achievement. The objective of blackout poetry is to rearrange words in order to create new meaning. Grace was asked to organically engage in one cycle of blackout poetry using the printed documents of the tools she identified by isolating words that spoke to her one way or another. In addition, Grace was asked to take those words and place them in a sequential order to construct a poem. No additional prompt was provided with the intention to not overly guiding Grace's thinking. The resulting "blacking out" by Grace revealed only a few key words and phrases boxed in black marker on the printed resource pages (see Figure 6 for an example and Appendix F for the final production).

Figure 6

Blacking out of fourth grade district priority standards by Grace (February 10, 2020)

The remaining text was “blacked out” using colored marker. Behind the colored sections text was still visible. The “blacking out” felt playful and frenetic. Only on one page did the participant connect the boxed words and phrases with black lines. When I inquired how Grace approached the blackout poetry she responded, “I really didn’t have a process. I didn’t over think it. I just did it” (personal communication, February 10, 2020). The poetry produced follows with all the original formatting from Grace’s submitted document. All punctuation is from Grace and not carried over from the documents themselves (blackout poetry, February 10, 2020):

Teacher

Thinking continuously

Positive emotions

Identify,

create,

and define;

The content engages student’s lives?

Tailored to individual learners?

On-the-spot assessment of learning?

Student

Generating ideas

Making mistakes

focused on an original artwork

Simple, complex

and the balance

In order to elucidate Grace's discourses, in Chapter 4, I place Graces' blackout poetry into conversation with other data and Foucauldian concepts through a process of plugging in.

Conversation Around Theory. Based on weekly observations and memos, I intended to pull quotes from theoretical readings I was engaging in to use as a focal point for the week. How the educator interacted with the selection would be determined by what was happening in the class. After attempting to do one round of working with Foucauldian concepts, I found that my participant did not have the time to think deeply and create on a weekly basis around concepts that she had never studied before. I decided that Grace's ability to interact with theory directly was not necessary. Instead, I relied on observations and conversations to produce new questioning and thinking.

Collage. At the end of field work, Grace and I were to spend time taking all the data we had collected to create a mixed media collage to represent our thinking. Before we could embark on our creative endeavor the COVID-19 pandemic caused the school district to shut their doors on March 20th for the remainder of the semester. Suddenly, Grace, like many other educators across the country, was facing the daunting task of creating an online curriculum overnight while managing homeschooling and care for her own children. The final project, to my dismay, had to be scrapped.

Artifacts. Items (written, visual, digital, or material) that discursively position children through a lens of academic achievement were considered (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A pre-inquiry search of state, district, and building policies, practices, and

procedures regarding academic achievement helped to situate the macro-discourse as well as a backdrop to what I observed within the classroom. While in the field, I took note of any classroom items that discursively positioned children through a lens of academic achievement or resulting productions from such discourse as well as items that positioned children agentially. Items of consideration included signage on the walls, activity sheets as well as student work, and classroom communication shared with students and parents (see Table 1 for an account of data production). This inquiry is centered on one educator's discursive constructions of children and childhoods, so I did not interview children or analyze children's work toward an understanding of their perspectives or knowledge. However, I utilized children's words and work as a prompt during informal conversations with Grace. I relied on Dorner's (2015) lessons from her ethnographic study with children to remind me that adult culture is difficult to suspend, so I was conscientious to not speak for children while analyzing data produced by them. Although this inquiry does not focus on representation of children by children themselves, it does speak to Dorner's cautionary advice. In this inquiry the discourse around and about children is solely through an adult lens, which often neglects the ontology of children. This purposeful mirroring of discourse is intended to question the familiar in order to (re)imagine research and educational practices that are done to children toward something that is in relationship with children.

Analytical Procedures

A thinking with theory approach for analyzing data has no pre-defined absolute rules. Rather, without privileging one over the other, it focuses on readings of data with theory and theory with data to create a space for new(ness). Thinking with theory

provides a “vehicle for ‘thinking otherwise’…to de-familiarize present practices and categories, to make them seem less self-evident and necessary, and to open up spaces for invention of new forms of experience” (Ball, 1995, p. 266). This iterative process between theory and data is what Jackson and Mazzei (2012) call *plugging in* (p.1). Through a process of plugging in analytical memos and questions arise that can produce new ways of thinking.

Using Jackson and Mazzei’s (2012, 2018) thinking with theory, I worked with Foucault’s concepts to think through the macrolevel pedagogical discourses around student academic achievement that can inform the microlevel discursive practices by the educator that construct children and childhoods within schooling. Through my readings of Foucault, I found concepts that helped me to uncover specific modes of operating that appear rational and unified within schooling, such as academic achievement. The overarching concepts from Foucault that I “thought with” were power/knowledge, discourse, and the agentic subject. Rather than use Foucault’s concepts as a framework or process of analysis, I think of these ideas as a conceptualization of discourse. In this way, I approached discourse not as meaning making but as an entry point for thinking about dominant ideologies and what these discourses do. As Foucault (1977) stated, “Theory does not express translate, or serve to apply practice: it is a practice” (p. 208). Additionally, to avoid an oversimplification or misrepresentation of Foucault’s shifting thoughts, I utilized Foucault’s concepts as a proposition for my thinking instead of static theoretical truths. As Foucault (1971) stated, "I don't write a book so that it will be the final word; I write a book so that other books are possible, not necessarily written by me" (as cited in O'Farrell, 2005, p. 9).

Plugging In. As addressed earlier in Chapter 1, the process of plugging in places data and theory hierarchically on the same level to be read through and with one another instead of applying one over another (Barad, 2007; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018; Mazzei, 2014). In this way, new(ness) may emerge instead of a reflection of what is already known. Rather than a production of meaning-making, this process decenters theory, philosophical concepts, and qualitative practice. For example, in Kuby and Fontanella-Nothom (2018) the researchers, through a progression of plugging in, utilized Derrida's concepts as "analytical tools" when thinking about writing in a writer's studio in an elementary classroom (p. 4). What the concepts produced were not findings, they said, but rather insights and analytical questions regarding "theory/practice" (Kuby & Fontanella-Nothom, 2018, p. 13). From these analytical questions the researchers' intention was to produce "aporias," contradictions, in the way readers and researchers think about writing, in order to usher in new ways of thinking about writing (Kuby & Fontanella-Nothom, 2018, p. 15).

Utilizing the same intention of producing new ways of thinking, I used my readings of Foucault's concepts including power/knowledge, discourse, and the agentic subject with data to identify tensions "that unsettle what has already been said or remembered" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 22). Using Foucault's concepts through a thinking with theory approach I attempted to move beyond a close textual analysis, truth making, or criticism. Instead, I looked for reproduction of predominant discourse and discursive practices around children and childhoods through a lens of academic achievement by the educator. Since social constructs are not absolute nor without disruption, I also looked for tensions around the discourse and discursive practices that

may unsettle what is held to be generally accepted as true. From a Foucauldian perspective, discourse is a product of power/knowledge that is imbued with historical and sociopolitical truths that are normalized through repetition of use and associating practices. As Jackson and Mazzei (2017) point out, theory keeps knowing and being in the "thresholds" (p. 721). Specifically, I chose to work with Foucault's concepts of discourse (1981), discursive formation (i.e. specific statements) (Foucault, 1972; Kumaravadivelu, 1999; O'Farrell, 2005), and discursive practices (i.e. pedagogies) (Foucault, 1972; Hook; 2001; Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005) as a map of a system (schooling - specifically the neoliberal bent of academic achievement) (Graham, 2005) that forms particular subjects such as children.

Figure 7 through Figure 9, I provide examples of several attempts to seize my thinking through plugging-in. Although I attempted to map, overlay, and piece together a coherent picture of plugging-in field notes and artifacts, theory, and literature the figures do not fully capture my thinking; thinking that was often tornadic in nature. These images instead reduced my thinking into a process or formula that could not adequately describe how the multiple layers interacted with one another. No matter how hard I tried, I could not keep my thinking in place both materially on the board and within my own mind; even the sticky backing of the post-its on the white board refused to remain adhered. I attempted to secure these notes to the board with tape, but every morning when I entered my make-shift home office I found post-its on the floor. Clearly my thinking, in material form, refused to be still. Furthermore, through this realization I determined that I would not try to secure my thinking any further by placing it into diagrams or the like within Chapter 4.

Figure 7

Inquirer's attempt to represent a grid of analysis with a Foucauldian lens (journal, January 1, 2020)

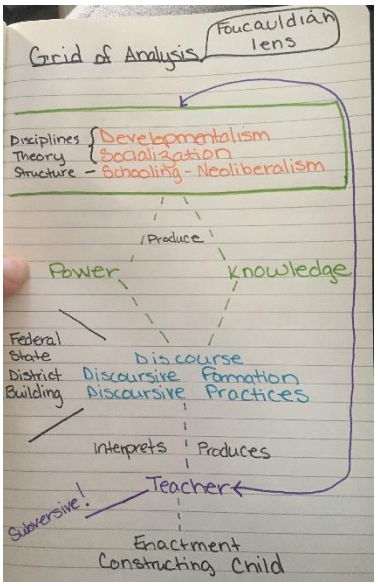


Figure 8

Inquirer's attempt to represent the interaction of Grace's discursive tools (journal, March 13, 2020)

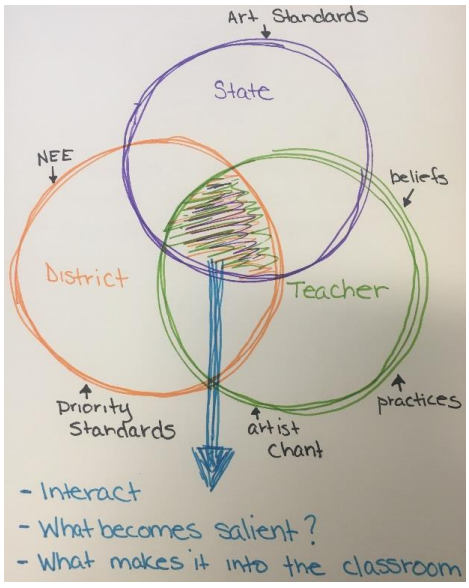
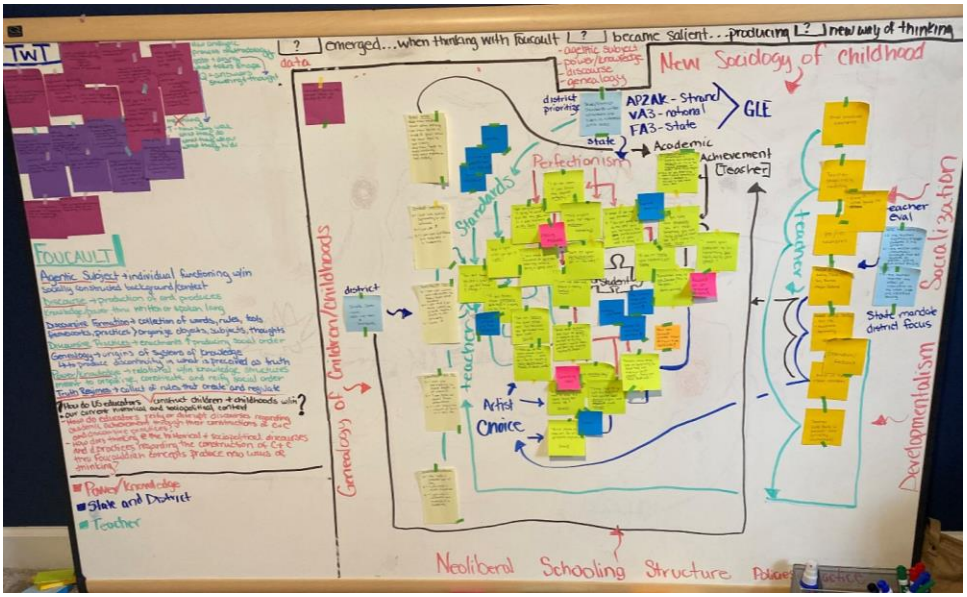


Figure 9

Inquirer's attempt to seize data and theory (April 5, 2020)



Analytical Memos. Coding in the traditional qualitative sense (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), from my axi-onto-epistemology, can stifle through an orientation to a process that uses signifiers to produce meaning that is then stretched over multiple pieces of data. From a thinking with theory approach, "concepts are not labels or names that we attach to things; they produce an orientation or a direction of thinking" (Colebrook, 2002, p. 15). Therefore, I chose to move away from a formal production of findings and instead, used analytical memos that emerged throughout the plugging in of data and theory to guide thinking. For example, in Aguayo and Dorner's (2017) study of Spanish-speaking families in Spanish language immersion schools, the researchers' use of thinking with theory not only helped them think through data but also gave them insight into the research process itself. The researchers used a process of plugging in of data, an ecologies of parental engagement framework, and Foucauldian concepts.

Through their thinking with data and theory, the researchers became aware of their own "deficit-driven norms" (Aguayo & Dorner, 2017, p. 1). This insight did not function to limit the research but brought into focus and acceptance the centrality of the researcher in producing knowledge.

Analytical memos were produced by Grace and me as we thought through interview transcripts, observation notes, theory, and artifacts. Memoing occurred both independently and in tandem, depending what we found to be most conducive to our process. Since Grace and I are both fine arts educators, I was open to memos taking on various forms whether they be in text, audio, or graphics. Most of these memos were placed within our communal journal.

Analytical Questions. Within the unsettling of plugging in and memoing, analytical questions emerged producing new and multiple pathways in which to engage the inquiry. For example, in Kuby, Rucker, and Darolia (2017), the researchers used a thinking with theory approach to look at posthuman agency in a video of an elementary student in a writers' studio working with materials. There was no formal overarching research question, rather the researchers allowed analytical questions to emerge through plugging in of "thinking/reading/creating" (p. 361). The researchers then used those analytical questions to think further with data.

As addressed above, this inquiry led with the overarching question, *how does one U.S. educator construct children and childhoods within our historical and sociopolitical context?* Additionally, there were two sub-questions:

1. *How does one U.S. educator reify or disrupt discourses regarding academic achievement through their constructions of children and childhoods and discursive practices?*
2. *How does thinking about the historical and sociopolitical discourses and discursive practices regarding the construction of children and childhoods through Foucauldian concepts produce new ways of thinking?*

These questions served as a loose guide; one that focused my gaze on the educator and constructions of children and childhoods within schooling from an academic achievement lens. The answer to this question alone was insufficient since it will only serve to reify dominant discourse which I already explicated within Chapter 2. An answer to the question is an end point, whereas my intention is to unsettle truth regimes through emerging analytical questions that arose while in the field in order to continue disrupting hegemonic construction of children and childhoods within schooling.

Limitations as Thresholds

This inquiry has several limitations. I view each limitation as a shortcoming within this inquiry as well as a threshold for pathways beyond this inquiry. The first limitation is my overall post-structural approach to engaging and writing this inquiry. The second limitation discussed is how this inquiry continues the privileging of dominant adult voices. The third limitation regards the lack of discussion around the implications of race and racism within Grace's construction of children.

Unlearning dominant ways of thinking is, in part, what this inquiry is attempting to encourage. I endeavored to work within and against the methodological confines of

more traditional ways of researching. For example, I engaged in a post-structural approach to inquiry through thinking with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018), placing the genealogy of discourses regarding children and childhoods into an iterative conversation with the inquiry questions and Foucauldian concepts. Post-philosophies do not attempt to make meaning of a phenomena but rather look at *how* and *why* phenomena occur. I found that the dominant interpretivist approach to explain *what* is happening was in constant conflict with the emerging post-structuralist within me. Most notably the traditional five-chapter dissertation that I had spent the past four years attempting to cultivate was in direct contradiction to my paradigmatic shift which occurred late in my academic journey. I struggled to disrupt these deeply engrained structures. I was not yet comfortable in my emerging axi-onto-epistemology to break completely from traditional boundaries. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic halted further creative explorations I had planned with my participant that may have unlocked a new path forward. In the end, this dissertation is not only about one educator's tensions but also an illustration of my own personal tensions in becoming an inquirer.

One of the criticisms around the new sociology of childhood research is a continued preoccupation with adults defining children and childhoods without proper representation of the subjects' voice (James & James, 2004). Throughout this inquiry I continue to reify the dominant discourse situated at the macro-level of the collective, structural, and institutional rather than the micro day-to-day interactions of children. This inquiry privileges the voices of those that are often centered within educational research; that of the adult participants, the inquirer, theoretical framings, and educational truth regimes. However, it is in that unveiling of the privileged voices and discourses that this

inquiry highlighted tensions as opportunities that allow for a (re)imagining of schooling. In so doing, it is my hope that the tensions produce a critical consciousness that begin to dismantle what the dominant "adult" voices believed to be true in order to usher in new truths; truths that are told by and focused in the lived experiences of children within schooling.

The U.S. educational system is steeped in institutionalized racism (Leonardo, 2009; Orfield, 1999; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010). I broadly explored racism within education in Chapter 2 both from a historical and a sociopolitical lens. Furthermore, I acknowledge that the U.S. educational system still perpetuates racialized discourse and oppression (Bowles & Gintis, 2011;Leonardo, 2009; Orfield, 1999; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010). Within this inquiry I did not choose to focus on race specifically in Grace's construction of children. Some, including myself, would see this as a limitation within this inquiry. However, Grace never explicitly introduced race in her discourse. I purposefully chose to only attend to what was present within Grace's discourse and discursive practices. The recognition of my shortcomings in this area is a space for self-reflection and a (re)thinking in how I engage in future inquiries and writings.

Chapter 4: THINKING WITH DATA AND THEORY

This chapter intersects the preceding perimeters of thought from the first three chapters with that of field data and Foucauldian concepts in order to think through the following inquiry questions:

1. *How does one U.S. educator construct children and childhood within our historical and sociopolitical context?*
2. *How does one U.S. educator reify or disrupt discourses regarding academic achievement through their constructions of children and childhood and discursive practices?*
3. *How does thinking about the historical and sociopolitical discourses and discursive practices regarding the construction of children and childhood through Foucauldian concepts produce new ways of thinking?*

These questions were investigated with Grace, an elementary art educator. I called into discussion Grace's schooling context and ideology of teaching art to students in grades three through five. Additionally, I brought forth my own subjectivities and methodologies to explore each of the above questions.

In previous chapters, I mapped out the genealogy and discourses of children and childhoods theoretically through developmentalism, socialization, and the new sociology of childhood. I highlighted the genealogy of schooling in the United States through neoliberal policies and practices. I discussed the agency of children within the institution of schooling. I also attempted to arrest Foucault's concepts through defining and positioning those concepts within the literature. In producing my thinking within this chapter, I did not want to draw attention to the truth regimes found within academic

educational disciplines and neoliberal education policies if they did not exist within Grace's discourse and discursive practices. Rather, I wanted Grace to surface that which is most salient to her construct of children within academic achievement. In order to do this, I relied not only on field notes and personal communication but also the communal journal and Grace's blackout poetry, which were discussed in Chapter 3.

What proceeds in this chapter is a delineated documentation of data as well as a creative interplay of my thinking with Foucauldian concepts to produce analytical points. The first analytical point, The Standardization of Children, outlines the power structures that standardize learning through a neoliberal and developmental lens which construct children as objects of production through linear schooling practices within Travers School District. The second analytical point, Power is Relational, disrupts the notion of hierarchical power in schooling and constructs both Grace and her students through a Foucauldian lens as co-constituting power within the socially constructed backdrop of schooling. The third analytical point, Tensions in Pedagogical Enactments, highlights the dichotomy in both Grace's pedagogical enactments and ideology around students as learners. Within these tensions, Grace both reified and disrupted truth regimes around the standardization of schooling. Despite a hierarchical and centralized educational institution, through a thinking with theory approach, Grace's discontinuity reveals that power is circulated between individuals, teacher and student, in relationship with the socially constructed background of schooling.

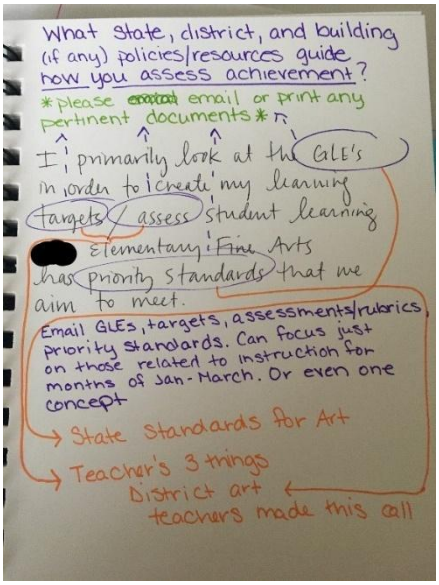
The Standardization of Children

To drill down the overarching inquiry question, *how does one U.S. educator construct children within our sociopolitical context*, I chose to first discover what sources

informed how Grace assessed student achievement. Within our communal journal (see Figure 2), I poised the following question to Grace, "What state, district, and building (if any) policies/resources guide how you assess achievement?" The journal served as a place to communicate back-and-forth with Grace as well as a place for both of us to memo. Grace responded to my journal question with the following, "I primarily look at the GLE's [Grade Level Expectations] in order to create my learning targets/assess student learning…. elementary fine arts has priority standards that we aim to meet" (journal, January 16, 2020).

Figure 2

Communal journal reflecting the tools Grace used to guide assessment (January 16, 2020)



Within Figure 2, I circled the words that stood out to me in Grace's response. Through further conversation with Grace I was able to delineate these circled words as seen in orange pen and arrowed lines. The "GLEs" referred to the Missouri state standards. The

"priority standards" are district level decisions around which state GLEs to utilize. The "targets/assess" referred to how Grace delineated the priority standards into what Grace defined as "look-fors" that students could use to achieve the standards through a more concise step-by-step process. Each of these responses by Grace are further explored throughout this chapter.

Applying Foucauldian concepts as I reflected on the standards Grace utilizes, I addressed an emergent analytical question, *what new ways of thinking around how children are standardized is produced in this process*. I posit that educational standards, such as the GLEs and priority standards that Grace outlined as informing her pedagogy, serve as a truth regime – a way to socially objectify and regulate children (Foucault, 1977; Kumaravadivelu, 1999; Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005). In previous chapters, I highlighted that in order to produce a *discontinuity* in the truth regimes that education reifies, it is important to bring to the surface the genealogy of the systems of knowledge/power that created these regimes (Foucault, 1977). To briefly review, a discontinuity are breaks or gaps in what is believed to be true, while a genealogy of systems outlines the creation of social regulation and social institutions that govern our ontology – our being in the world (O'Farrell, 2005; Peters, 2003). The truth regimes present within standards are co-constituted through power/knowledge structures and the subjects within these structures. I identified in Chapter 2 that these knowledge/power structures exist within educational policies and the institution of schooling shaped by a neoliberal context and discourses of developmentalism. Here, too, I posit that these power/knowledge structures have discursively formed rules, tools, frameworks, and practices in which to organize objects, subjects, and thoughts in order to reproduce social

order (Foucault, 1977, 1980; Graham, 2005; Hook, 2001; Lazaroiu, 2013; O'Farrell, 2005). Through these discursive regimes a standardization of learning has dominated educational practices effectively objectifying children.

The next section digs deeper into standards as a truth regime that function as the socially constructed background Grace occupied as a teacher, which informed her pedagogical choices and construction of children through a lens of achievement. I first delineate the national, state, and district standards, and then, how Missouri applies federal policies that require a standardization of learning. Using a genealogy of knowledge/power systems, I then propose that children are constructed as objects rather than agentic persons through this standardization of learning.

Delineating the National, State, and District Standards

Public schooling functions through a set of policies and practices that over time have formed truth regimes around what schooling is and how schooling functions. One such formation is the standardization of curriculum and assessments, which have been shaped by federal law (Hursch, 2007; Lipman, 2006; Morrow, 2011; Nichols & Berliner, 2007) and ultimately leads to an objectification of children. In 2001, the federal government passed *The No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) requiring states to create assessment systems to test students in reading, language arts, mathematics, and science. The fine arts were not included in the language of NCLB and are not part of standardized testing in the state of Missouri. However, the fine arts are included in the state curricular Show-Me Standards, which Missouri adopted in 1996 to define high school graduations expectations (Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2019).

Missouri's Grade Level Expectations (GLEs), that Grace specifically referenced by name, take the Show-Me State Standards and scaffold those standards by grade-level benchmarks. The state of Missouri's GLEs, which were recently updated in 2019, are sequenced in strands. For art education, those strands are aligned to the National Core Arts Standards put forth by the National Art Education Association (1994/2014). Public schools are required to meet local and state standards, while national standards such as those within the National Core Arts Standards are voluntary and used by some states, like Missouri, to inform development of state standards (National Visual Arts Standards, 2020, para.2). There are four strands within Missouri's visual arts GLEs (see Table 2), the subject that Grace teaches: create, present, respond, and connect (Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2019, p. 1).

Table 2

Strands for the Missouri visual arts grade level expectations

Strand	Essential Learning
Create (Cr)	Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.
Present (Pr)	Realizing, interpreting and sharing artistic work.
Respond (Re)	Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.
Connect (Cn)	Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.

Adapted from Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). (2019). *Visual art grade level expectations*. Retrieved from https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/curr-mls-standards-fa-visual-arts-sboe-2019.pdf

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's visual art guide to GLEs states, "It is expected that 80% of students will demonstrate proficiency at the GLE level" (Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2007, p. 1). However, with no state mandated standardized testing for art education, there is no state accountability

for teaching to the standards. This does not imply that children will not be standardized through visual arts education. However, it does evoke an emerging analytical question, *if there is a lack of accountability for implementation of standards within the visual arts is there space for a new way of teaching art to emerge?*

The Travers School District's elementary visual art curriculum aligned to district priority standards. As Grace explained, the district priority standards are those GLEs that the "art teachers of the district and the [fine arts curriculum] coordinator feels are important" (personal communication, January 23, 2020). At the time of this inquiry it appeared that the district standards had not been updated from the 1996 version to the newest iteration, at the time of this inquiry, of the state's GLEs in visual art education (2019) that has 15 standards for each grade level three through five. Instead, Travers School District's GLEs included: 19 visual art learning standards for third grade; 15 visual art learning standards for fourth grade; and 12 visual art learning standards for fifth grade (see Appendix G for a complete list of district priority standards for visual arts).

Grace was expected to enact, in good faith, the district priority standards through her pedagogical decisions. The district's academic calendar gave Grace roughly 40 sessions (not factoring in interruptions, school cancelations, sick days, etc.) with each class she taught. Utilizing an average of 15 learning standards per grade level and 40 class sessions, Grace would have just under three class periods to teach, model, guide activities, and assess students on a single learning standard. There was no official accounting among administration or among other art teachers as to whether Grace taught each standard, or if 80 percent of Grace's students met the standards (Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2007, p. 1). Rather, the

implementation of standards was an implicit agreement that was socially constructed; one that gave Grace space for agency in interpretation and enactment. How Grace used her agency to enact standards and consequently construct children within schooling will be explored throughout this chapter.

Standards Construct Children as Objects

By looking at the genealogy of educational policies, and more specifically Travers School District's enactments of policies, I delineated the institutional construction of children before specifically looking at *how Grace utilizes these tools to construct children herself* which is discussed under the heading Power is Relational. In Grace's context, the district priority standards and coinciding GLEs served to construct children as objects to move along a hegemonic linear line of schooling toward economic viability in the visual arts. From a genealogical view, the district priority standards and GLEs collectively privilege specific knowledge/power structures, such as neoliberalism and developmentalism. For instance, as reviewed in Chapter 2, previous research has found that national and state standards are situated in decades of neoliberal thinking through foregrounding industry expectations toward economic viability (Au, 2011; Lissovoy, 2013; Moss, 2006; Savage, 2017; Sleeter, 2008). In Missouri, and therefore at Travers School District, the GLEs scaffold those standards through age-grading and use developmental discourses that view human growth and learning as a linear progression (Kenway & Bullen, 2001). In order to move on this standardized line of learning, children are discursively constructed through constrained measures of success formed by others – predominantly adults. The educational truth regimes become an iterative part of

children's agentic selves, thus affecting how children then choose to interact and reason within their given social context (Bevir, 1999).

The verbiage, such as, "80% of students will demonstrate proficiency" in standards produce students as an object, reducing children to either meeting or not meeting a standard negating their subjective learning and being(Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2007, p. 1). This is also true of the verbiage within the priority standards Travers School District applied. The production required from students through these standards is meant to determine mastery level of the objective. For example, the Travers School District's visual art priority standards for grades three through five included such verbs as "define", "identify", and "explain". These verbs are followed by specific responses such as, "define form as a three-dimensional object". The Travers School District's standards also included verbs such as "create," "model," and "respond". These verbs apply a more agentic nature to learning expectations by presenting knowledge production options that are open-ended. Rather than regurgitating a definition, students are provided an opportunity to interject their thinking and their creative selves. For example, one standard stated, "create an original artwork of a figure in an action pose". This example implies more agentic properties with the word "original," yet that agency is still bounded by how students are asked to enact the learning expectation. The standards in this way, construct children as an expectation of academic achievement and inevitably label them as either achieving or failing. Furthermore, the Travers School District's grade card only utilized two options to show a student's level of success on visual art standards. As Grace pointed out the grade card read, "meets the standard or does not meet the standard" (personal communication,

January 29, 2020). There were no indicators on the grade card that spoke to children as a learner in action but rather children were cast as objects with only one of two final outcomes.

Additionally, these standards move on a rigid developmental age-graded line that determine what content and skills students will engage with at each grade level constructing children through a homogeneous lens of development (see Appendix G for a list of district priority standards for visual arts). A third-grade expectation read, "create a container". The state determined, based on a normative developmental lens, that children at the third grade should be able to manipulate material to form a container. What this standard is accessing is the physical ability of children, not artistic ability or the artistic expression of children. The standard fails to acknowledge the unique developmental variations of children, thus conforming all children to one narrative of success. In this manner, children through the enactment of standards are constructed as objects created in schooling's own hegemonic image. It is reasonable to believe that Grace constructs children similarly since her pedagogical choices are drawn from the discursive practices of standards. This deduction applies if Grace implemented the standards as intended. Next, I think through the preceding rationale and how Grace interacted with the discourses that construct children as an object of standardization.

Power is Relational

Within this section I attend to the question, *what is produced around the construction of children when thinking with Foucauldian concepts*? In doing so, I apply Foucault's (1980) concept of power being relational. Foucault's conception of power as relational forces a more micro-level consideration requiring a (re)thinking of subjects

through an agential lens. To think of relational power positions subjects – such as the educator and students - as both the embodiments of power and enactors of power (Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016). Through this position, power is constantly being circulated between and among subjects, discourses, and institutionalized structures such as the district priority standards (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012).

In this inquiry, the subjects were Grace and the students she taught. Using Foucault's conception of power as relational, I viewed Grace and the students as functioning agentially within the background of schools and schooling, which have been socially constructed. In applying this concept, I present Grace as a co-constructor of power/knowledge as well as Grace constructing students relationally through a positioning of co-constituting power. This positioning implies a disruption of assumed normative hierarchical power constructs. I first attend to the concept of power relations through Grace's (non)enactments of the district's priority standards. I then explore power relations within Grace's (non)enactments of assessments. The use of the word "enactment" with the prefix "non" in parentheses, is my way of indicating that Grace both chose to acquiesce *and* not comply to schooling practices within her pedagogical enactments. These (non)enactments highlight her agency and power as relational within the structures of schooling. Grace's (non)enactments of the educational structures of standards produced different forms of structural powers within the classroom such as Grace's production of "look-fors" and "yes-no" examples. These productions, look-fors and yes-no examples, developed from Grace's own lens of what it means to be successful as a visual arts' student. Therefore, in this section, I also attend to *how Grace reified or disrupted dominant discourses regarding academic achievement*. By studying how power

circulates among subjects, such as teachers, and discourses, such as standards of learning and its embedded truth regimes, I highlight the relational aspect of that power.

Power Relations in the (Non)Enactments of the Standards

I previously outlined above, within the heading The Standardization of Children, that the district-level priority standards descend from federal, state, and professionals within education and visual arts privileging specific types of knowledge. These knowledge/power constructs center around a neoliberal gaze of what skills and content is important to teach for economic growth through a developmental lens of advancement. Through a macro-level genealogical view, power such as priority standards appear to descend onto Grace, forcing her to enact policies or processes that objectify children within schooling. From a top-down notion of power, Grace and the students are positioned as docile subjects – but that is not what was revealed in this inquiry when applying Foucault's concept of power as relational. Instead of docile subjects, both are actively presented as enacting and responding to power/knowledge structures. This nonhierarchical view of power invites *new ways of thinking around the construction of children* that takes place within schooling.

The decision on which standards would take priority at each grade level occurred before Grace joined the district in 2014. It was Grace's assumption that Travers School District's high school art teachers had a lot of input as to what basic knowledge students needed to have prior to taking high school level art classes. Grace initially appeared dismissive about not having input on the priority standards: "I just follow along with it because it doesn't matter to me" (personal communication, January 23, 2020). In this statement Grace implied that she uncritically attends to the enactment of priority

standards within her classroom. However, Grace's actions are not just that of a passive recipient of hierarchical power structures in the form of district priority standards. Instead Grace works actively within the structures by rewriting the standards into specific process-oriented look-fors.

Grace followed schooling expectations and taught to the district's priority standards even restructuring the standards into look-fors. For example, a fifth-grade district priority standard read, "show the illusion of form in still life" (field notes, January 10, 2020). The look-fors Grace produced from this standard for students to follow included three primary indicators: (1) the image fills the page, (2) the drawing shows the table line, and (3) the objects are not lined up along the bottom of the paper (field notes, January 16, 2020). According to Grace, the simplification of standard statements allows for a more objective way of measuring success. This process is considered "good" practice in education (Marzano, 2000). In this practice of clearly defining expectations, Grace actively constructed students as objects that must achieve a specific outcome to achieve success. In so doing, she reified the neoliberal structures of standardized learning which is meant to produce an economically successful contributor to the workforce. In this case an artist.

Grace also enacted power relations by working against the hierarchical constructs of educational standards and its inherent truth regimes through (non)enactments. Grace chose not to teach all the district priority standards. Grace shared that due to time constraints she was not able to teach each priority standard, but rather chose specific standards that best aligned with her instructional units. To better understand Grace's choices, I zoom out for a more holistic view of what institutional structures were at play

in Grace's decision making. As stated earlier, the district's academic calendar and number of standards per grade level gave Grace on average under three class periods to teach to each learning expectation. Facing this realization Grace stated,

> I probably don't cover all of them [district priority standards]. I try to, but probably don't because there are so many. I feel like if you teach a few things really, really effectively it is better than cramming in a lot of things they [students] don't know a lot about. (personal communication, January 23, 2020)

Grace chose to focus on "effectiveness" centered around student's learning rather than the district's expectation of "cramming in" each priority standard. For Grace, effectively teaching a standard is predicated on having enough time for students to comprehend a concept. From this perspective, Grace constructed students' learning as central to her pedagogy rather than an outcome of her choices. Furthermore, at the time of this inquiry, there were no state mandated standardized assessments of proficiency for art education, as well as a lack of district oversight on whether every standard was taught at each grade level. Grace's pedagogical decision making provides the opportunity to see how power circulated between and among implied district priority standards, institutional structures such as time and a lack of oversight, and Grace's own ideology. The hierarchical discursive formations, such as standards, are superimposed but are not guaranteed. Power/knowledge, in this example, is an opportunity for agential interaction that (re)produces power/knowledge. It is a cyclical process that both collapses in and expands outward.

When I inquired how Grace determined which standards to teach, she indicated that for this academic year she did not start with the standards but rather worked

backwards with “types of art making” like landscape, portrait, etc. (personal communication, January 29, 2020) and then selected which standards may fit. Grace’s instructional units included a *concept of the month*, which reflected an artistic form or method, and a corresponding *artist of the month*. Once the concept and artist of the month was decided, Grace would then align one to two corresponding standards. During my fieldwork (January-March 2020), Grace covered three concepts and artists of the month and at least four standards for grade levels three, four, and five (see Table 3).

Table 3

Grace’s instructional outline and corresponding standards for January through March (field notes, January - February 2020)

Month	**Concept**	**Artist**	**Grade Level Expectation/Priority Standard**
January	Still life	Audrey Flack	3: *I can** use overlapping to create depth in an artwork.; *I can* use warm and cool colors to show light and shadow. 4: *I can* draw an object from observation.; *I can* mix two or more colors to create neutral colors in an artwork. 5: *I can* show the illusion of form in a still life.; *I can* mix two or more colors to create neutral colors in an artwork.
February	Sculpture	Rick Bartow	3: *I can* make a container. 4: *I can* make a relief sculpture. 5: *I can* use two different art materials in a sculpture.
March	Symmetry	Mayan Culture	3: *I can* use radial symmetry in an artwork. 4: *I can* use radial symmetry in an artwork. 5: [Never put on the board during observations.]

*The phrase “I can” is italicized to represent Grace’s own words.

Even though Grace did not explicitly attend to the standards when developing her units of instruction, she still constructed children as objects within her pedagogical decisions. This construction is made evident by the types of artistic forms Grace chose to

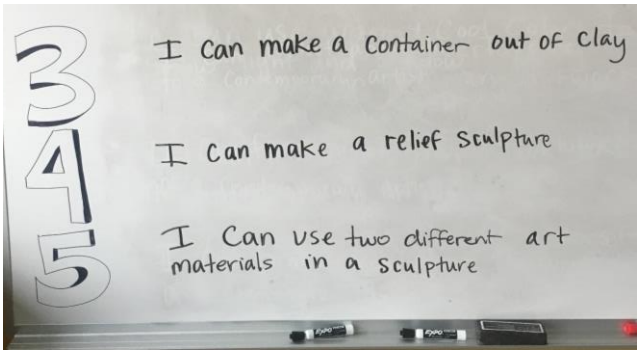
teach. These artistic forms are driven by the marketplace, what makes a viable artist, which is a neoliberal construction. Additionally, Grace's choices were focused on what she thought students could developmentally physically (re)produce. Children were not central in deciding what types of art *they* wanted to learn and make; instead being constructed as a singular unit for the application of Grace's pedagogical choices and potential economic good.

Grace not only enacted agency by choosing which district priority standards to attend to, she also placed those standards instructionally in the background despite the standards being visually displayed. The standards were conveyed through written text on a dry erase board at the front of the room; a practice mandated by the building principal and highly encouraged by the district. Typically, the priority standards remained on the board throughout the month or until a new standard was introduced, at which point the previous standard was erased and replaced with the new standard. Below, Figure 10, provides an example of textually visible priority standards relating to sculpture for grades three, four, and five from the month of February 2020.

Figure 10

Grace's textual representations of the priority standards for February

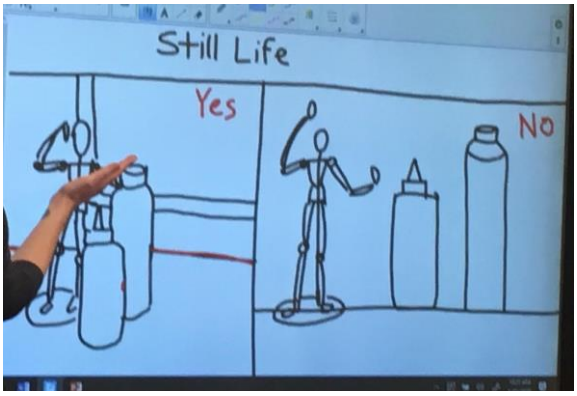
(field notes, February 10, 2020)



The perceived purpose of writing the standard on the board is so students would be aware what they are being asked to learn and ultimately be assessed on. However, students were never asked to connect the standard written on the dry erase board to their learning or artistic productions. The closest students ever came to discursively exhibit knowledge of a standard was when they would repeat the look-fors Grace produced from the standards. In Figure 11, Grace is showing a yes-no example of a still life and asked fifth grade students the difference between the images.

Figure 11

Grace's representation of yes-no examples for still life (field notes, January 23, 2020)



Students identified the differences in the two images through the look-fors, and not in reference to the priority standards. As a reminder, the displayed fifth-grade standard for still life read, "I can show the illusion of form in still life" (field notes, January 10, 2020). The look-fors Grace produced for students to follow included: (1) the image fills the page, (2) the drawing shows the table line, and (3) the objects are not lined up along the bottom of the paper (field notes, January 16, 2020). In response to Grace's question regarding how the two images in Figure 11 differed, one student stated, "The line…the images are all lined up on the line on the left side." While another student responded,

"The yes has overlapping and the no is all spread out" (field notes, January 23, 2020). While using the look-fors allowed for concise instruction and student responses, the look-fors were never directly connected to how a student creates "illusion of form". Students success in responding was solely tied to Grace's breakdown of the district standards.

With the knowledge that not all children are able to read or comprehend the verbiage of the standards that Grace visually displayed, I questioned the efficacy of writing the standards on the board without direct coinciding instruction. Grace confessed, "I always want to get better at referencing them [the standards] when I'm teaching but I often forget" (personal communication, March 13, 2020). Therefore, writing the standards on the board was a performative act intended for the benefit of other adults, like administrators. Grace's instructional (non)enactment of the standards was not an intentional push against hierarchical constructs but rather a pedagogical preference. This ability to work within and against the standards shows that Grace is enacting relational power to construct learning in her classroom.

In contrast, students daily demonstrated their knowledge around the concept and artist of the month. Grace posted the artist and concept of the month on a board at the back of the room. Below, Figure 12, provides an example of Grace's discursive formation of the artist and concept from the month of February. Grace's depiction of the concept and artist of the month is more artistic in comparison to the more simplistic text of the standards. This further represents Grace highlighting her own pedagogical creations while placing the district's standards in the background.

Figure 12

Grace's artistic representation of the artist and concept for February

(field notes, February 18, 2020)

During my observations, I never heard students refer to the standards, but they did speak directly about the concept and artist of the month. At the beginning and end of every class Grace would review the artist and concept of the month with students through various pedagogical approaches, like call and response. For example, Grace asked the following regarding the artist of the month, "Tell me one fact you know about Audrey Flack?" A student correctly responded, "She does still life" (field notes, January 10, 2020). As another example, Grace asked the following regarding the concept of the month, "What is a still life?" A student responded, "You would line objects up and paint it" (field notes, January 16, 2020).

Grace's (non)enactments of the standards served to both reify *and* disrupt the power structures around the district priority standards which construct children as an outcome. Within this inquiry, Grace enacted power relations through the acceptance and pedagogical enactments of hierarchical constructs of educational standards. Grace also

employed relational power to privilege her own discourse through look-fors and instructional focus on a concept and artist of the month. As was shown, Grace's verbal acceptance of the standards, saying, "it doesn't matter to me", was contrary to her actual pedagogical enactments in relation to these power structures. Although Grace chose to comply with the most basic structures of aligning standards to curriculum and discursively displaying standards, she did not centralize the standards within her pedagogical choices. However, Grace enacted her own form of standardization through look-fors that reified children as objects. Grace's (non)enactments of standards showcases how hierarchical structures are not inevitable. The implementation of these structures, such as district priority standards, is a co-construction of multiple power relations. In Grace's example, relational power was an interaction between, but not limited to, schooling expectations, time constraints, and Grace's ideology and pedagogical choices. Power as relational provides a better understanding of how children are constructed and reconstructed by multiple power players and structures within schooling. These multiple layers and pathways allow for numerous entry points for a (re)imagining of schooling and children within schooling. One such entry point is the classroom teacher and their choices to either push against the standardization and objectification of children and choices that reify educational truth regimes.

Power Relations in the (Non)Enactment of Assessments

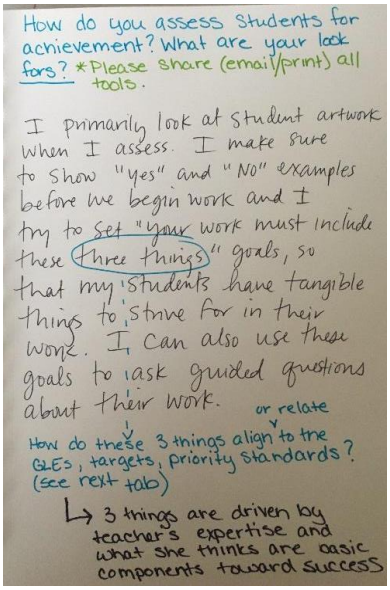
Attending to the inquiry question, *how does Grace reify or disrupt discourses regarding academic achievement*, I now turn to Grace's purposeful disruption of hierarchical forms by not grading student's artwork, but rather allowing students to stray away from the processes she herself presented through standardized expectations. The

way Grace chose to assess or rather not assess students positioned power as relational. By constructing Grace's actions as relational within power structures, I also continue to address the analytical question, *what new ways of thinking around the construction of children can be produced by utilizing Foucauldian concepts*. Below I outline Grace's power relations regarding her (non)enactments of assessments among both social and district-level power constructs as well as her (re)enactments of truth regimes.

When I asked Grace in our communal journal (see Figure 3) what and how she assesses, her response was, "I primarily look at student artwork when I assess" (journal, January 16).

Figure 3

Communal journal reflecting how Grace assessed students for achievement (January 16, 2020)



While in the field, I witnessed many examples of Grace utilizing individual and whole group formative assessments of student's knowledge and artistic production to guide and

inform her pedagogical decisions. However, I never witnessed Grace conducting a summative assessment that placed a formal and final grade on a student's knowledge or skills. At the end of January, I pointedly asked if summative assessments took place. Grace responded,

> I don't formally assess right now. I just walk around while they are working, and I try to pull the best work I can from them. And then for me when I see their finished work that is my assessment. I am always giving them suggestions along the way for things they can change so they can achieve those things I want them to focus on. (personal communication, January 29)

In Grace's response, there is mention of formative assessment in the way of feedback and suggestions based on observation. Grace also suggested that she does visual assessments of student's final products inferring that there is a formal assessment. Yet, at no time did Grace make a notation of a student's progress or that a student had even finished their artistic product.

To not "formally assess" is not supported by district policy, which requires Grace to provide three progress reports annually for all the students she teaches. Furthermore, the institution of schooling and socialized discourses around academic achievement privileges documented grades. I prodded Grace further to understand why she was not doing summative assessments. Grace's response placed the fault on the district's grading system, with her stating, "As of right now, the way our grade card is setup, it is not functional. It [grade card] says meets the standard or does not meet the standard. And it is not specific at all. It is super general" (personal communication, January 29). Not only does Grace find the grade card insufficient based on the limited reporting options, she

also deemed the notion of a student completely not meeting a standard as an improbability, “If you didn’t meet it you weren’t there. So, I just feel like that, it doesn’t function” (personal communication, January 29). In this statement Grace positions the option “does not meet the standard” on the report card as only probable for a student that has not been to class. Grace believes that if a student is present in class, they would have met the standard to some degree; thus, requiring additional options on the report card to distinguish a student’s level of progress. Due to Grace’s ideology and interaction with the grade card’s lack of options, all of Grace’s students for the 2019-2020 academic year received a mark of “meets standard” on their progress reports no matter their level of mastery on each learning expectation.

From Grace’s positioning, the grade card has material agency. As Barad (2007) stated, “Matter is neither fixed and given nor the mere end result of different processes. Matter is produced and productive, generated and generative” (p. 137). Using Barad’s definition, the grade card, however, is not at fault nor alone in the resulting outcome, rather it is a production of circulating power between and among Grace, the district, and the grade card, which is an institutional tool producing students as objects. Rather than focusing on blame or fault, I have chosen to utilize Barad’s (2007) nature of matter and Foucault’s (1980) power relations to acknowledge Grace’s agency in how she chose to interact with the grade card disrupting normative notions around academic achievement. Like Grace’s choices around implementing the district’s priority standards, her grading practices appeared to be merely a mark of compliance rather than a true summative indication to students, parents, or others of a child’s academic achievement. In this way, Grace diminished normative indicators of academic achievement within her assessment

and chose not to construct children's success in art through formalized summative measures. Grace's choices reflected relational power within schooling structures. It would also appear through these choices that Grace constructed children not as objects but as makers of art elevating the role of doing as more indicative of success than that of reaching a specific standardized expectation.

The assumption that Grace's (non)enactments around the grade card disrupted normative discourses is challenged through further inquiry. When I asked Grace how she would assess if the grade card was open to any type of entry Grace responded, "I would look for whether or not students are demonstrating elements of art and how a child manipulates art materials with control as well as list tangible ways to work on a child's fine motor skills" (personal communication, January 29, 2020). Breaking down Grace's statement, an adequate reporting tool would include: (1) a more in-depth reflection of a student's mastery level of "elements of art," which is just another way of saying learning standards, and (2) would add an indication of fine motor skills. Both the physical benchmarks and the standards of art Grace spoke of reify the truth regimes of developmentalism and neoliberalism. Grace's indicator of fine motor skills reproduces the hegemonic ideals of normative biological development. Grace's indicator of elements of art are structured through a neoliberal lens that formalizes a curriculum through age-grading. Both of Grace's indicators reflect the truth regimes of developmentalism and neoliberalism, further reifying the standardization of schooling.

To further support the notion that Grace's grading practices reified truth regimes, I turn to her additional practice of leaving comments on the grade card. Grace chose to leave comments on grade cards, instead of relying on the standardized grade card

reporting options to communicate level of success. These comments were intended to be informative tools for students, guardians, and those with administrative access, but did not hold any weight over a student's actual grade. Grace indicated that her comments included information about an individual student's behavior, motor skills, and ability to reach the learning expectations (personal communication, January 29, 2020). These categories (behavior, motor skills, and ability) tend to reify developmental discourse around age-grading. However, the comments Grace alluded to placing on the grade cards were not provided as data for this inquiry. With roughly 600 students, Grace shared she would write at least one to three original comments per student annually, which roughly equates to 600-1800 comments. Grace did not leave a comment for each student for all three grading periods. Therefore, a student may have a comment first grading period but no comment for the final grading period at the end of the year. This practice could result in no follow-up information between grading periods to indicate a student's growth. It could also result in the lack of any indication prior to the final grading period of a student's progress. Since these comments are the only formalized construction of a student's knowledge and ability within art, the comments can become the final statement of a student's achievement, potentially resulting in a student's achievement being discursively incomplete.

The over standardization of schools and the industrialization of large box schooling for economic gain has led to an oversimplification of the agentic learning taking place. Chances for dialogue are left unfulfilled, as seen through Grace, because of the number of standards, the size of classrooms, and the pressures of the schooling experience for students and teachers. Students check boxes - as do teachers - both to

account for completion and not to cultivate agency or growth. The tyranny of checking boxes has silenced the creative acts that are occurring among students and teachers. Minimizations of authentic learning and misrepresentations of how individuals learn, misconstrue the process of teaching and lead to unsound policy and procedural choices at the school and state level.

Grace worked within and against the structures of district grading practices and socially constructed notions of academic reporting. Grace chose to push back on institutional practices by not formally assessing students. Even Grace's practice of marking every student as "meets standard" is a subversive act to existing power structures. However, through further inquiry, Grace's acts of disruption appear to be less an indictment of truth regimes and more a frustration with the lack of choices in the institutionalized reporting mechanisms. Grace's ideology around what a grade card should report along with the context of her grade card comments can be viewed as upholding both developmental and neoliberal truth regimes through a focus on standardization. It is quite possible that the years of socialization within schooling both as a student herself and a professional educator made it difficult for Grace to see different possibilities outside of standard schooling structures around achievement. As Narayan (2012) stated, "Professional training narrows the color and range of possible tones. Too many outer demands brick up a flowing voice, forcing it so far underground you may forget its sounds" (p. 86). Viewing the relational power at work in Grace's (non)enactments of assessments provides a better understanding of how a student's learning is discursively reduced to simplistic and incomplete terms. Through identifying the ways in which assessment produces outcomes that inadequately represent students, a

(re)imagining of how children are constructed within schooling becomes glaringly urgent.

Tensions in Pedagogical Enactments

In the previous section I positioned Grace as an agential subject embodying and enacting power relationally in context to assumed hierarchical schooling structures; specifically, standards which produce students as objects through developmental and neoliberal lens. I now turn my attention to the tensions that arose between Grace's pedagogy and those truth regimes that are embedded within schooling. Through a focus on Grace's discourse and discursive enactments from a Foucauldian lens, I attend to all three inquiry questions reflecting the dichotomy present within Grace's ideology and pedagogical enactments that construct children as both an object and agential within the background of schooling. By delving into the tensions, a space for (re)imagining how children are constructed within schooling emerges. In the following sections, I outline tensions in how Grace constructed students as both objects and as agential subjects central to their learning. Through these tensions I highlight how Grace's pedagogical enactments served to both reify and disrupt the neoliberal and developmental discursive formations within schooling. From these tensions a discontinuity, a break or gap in what is understood as truth, arose that allows for a place to (re)imagine schooling.

Pedagogical Tensions Constructing Children as Objects

To help deconstruct Grace's practices around academic achievement and how she constructed children, I poised the following question within our communal journal (see Figure 3), "How do you assess students for achievement? What are your look-fors?" Grace indicated she "primarily look[s] at student artwork" when assessing. In practice,

Grace discursively utilized yes-no examples to orient students to “three things/goals” giving students “tangible things to strive for in their work” (journal, January 10, 2020). The look-fors standardized the artistic process. The yes-no examples created a binary in what is “good” art. These pedagogical choices constructed children as objects creating a tension in how Grace positions students as central decision-makers in their level of academic achievement.

As stated previously in the section on Power is Relational, Grace’s instructional units centered around types of art, such as landscapes, still life, pinch pots, etc. rather than a specific district priority standard. Grace first determined which art concept she wanted to teach each month and then aligned one or more district priority standard(s) to that concept. Each instructional unit required students to produce a final product aligned to the concept of the month. Although Grace did not explicitly apply the standards, she did imbue them within the final product through look-fors and yes-no examples.

When I asked Grace how she determined the look-fors, she responded, “It’s kind of based on the common problems that seem to happen with young artists” (personal communication, January 23, 2020). When I pressed further to understand what Grace meant by “common problems” she responded, “I decided that these are the things [the look-fors] based on…don’t draw that way, draw this way. I have always believed in doing that because it is so much more tangible because art is so intangible” (personal communication, January 23, 2020). In this statement Grace establishes that there are right ways of doing art that can be simplified using look-fors.

Grace constructed students’ capacities as a binarized – yes-no – outcome in artistic achievement. The yes-no examples were either communicated through Grace’s

own drawings or physically modeled by Grace using the materials. Often while in the classroom I heard Grace state, “Keep it light until you get it right”. The purpose of this statement is so students do not use dark pencil lines on their paper until it is “right”. But what is “right”? Can “right” be something other than an industry standard? How can a standard even simplified into look-fors contextualize into real form something that is artistically “right” for the individual child? When I broached this topic with Grace, she responded that with each piece of artwork there are some things that either are true or not (personal communication, January 29, 2020). For example, a still life with every item lined up at the bottom of the page does not display the ability to overlay items. Another example is that materials often dictate how one can manipulate them into a piece of art. If a student does not follow the look-for in the thickness in their clay, then their products may break. Even so, the binaries in the look-fors and yes-no examples produced exclusionary normative discourses. The binaries produced left the student with only two possible results in their learning and production: satisfactory completion of the steps or failure, whether by not completing all the steps or by not completing them satisfactorily.

Grace does not dismiss standard-led assessment through the application of look-fors and yes-no examples. As Grace stated,

> They [the student] know they have done a good job because [pointing to the priority standards written on the board] is not enough for assessment. You [the student] need to be able to do this [the priority standard] but how do you know that you did that, and it is effective? (personal communication, January 23, 2020)

In this statement, Grace implies that the standard(s) needed additional tangible indicators for a student to execute it properly. Breaking down the statement further, the word “job”

equates a student's artistic production as an economic construct evoking neoliberal ideals. Grace's statement also utilized the qualifier "good" which implies the possibility of something other than "good". Essentially Grace, using her professional knowledge as an artist and as an educator of young artists, developed look-fors to better communicate the standards which serve as power/knowledge constructs within art education. The knowledge/power constructs in this case creates social order around what art is, what makes great art, and positions students within developmental measures.

As Grace shared above, without the look-fors, the specific qualities of a standard are nebulous. Take relief sculptures, for example. February's standard for fourth grade stated, "I can make a relief sculpture" (field notes, February 10, 2020). But what is a relief sculpture? And what qualities distinguish a "good" relief sculpture? Grace called on her own professional expertise and defined a relief sculpture through providing look-fors. The look-fors for a relief sculpture included being flat on one side, containing both an additive and subtractive component, and that the additive component does not rise higher than the thickness of one's thumb (field notes, February 18, 2020). The look-fors for a relief sculpture provided students a clearer path to successfully completing a clay product that would not fall apart in the kiln as well as instruction on the different types of reliefs that needed to be included – additive and subtractive. With the use of her professional expertise, Grace predetermined the learning for students before they ever stepped into the classroom and displayed their aptitude level for sculpting. She, here, reified the process of learning that is readily accepted within schooling.

Grace felt that look-fors and yes-no examples made art tangible, therefore more successful. As Grace stated,

> …in art when you show them [students] something like this [points to a still life image] and don't give them any guidance that is when you have kids shutting down….If you follow these directions [look-fors] it is going to be fine (personal communication, January 23, 2020)

Grace's predetermined look-fors imply that children need adult intervention in the form of directions that help them to successfully represent their learning through artwork.

Grace showed me drawings from two different classes, referred to as "A" and "D" day, and pointed out how D days products were more detailed and distinct:

> My A day kids, I didn't yet think to show them that [yes-no example] so you can see the difference in the A day drawings versus the D day drawings where I showed them what to do and what not to do. (personal communication, January 23, 2020).

I could see what Grace was pointing out; there did seem to be more refinement in the still life drawings from the class that received the yes-no instruction over the other. The student's process of attending to the yes-no examples produced better quality work and was more "right" in Grace's professional opinion. However, within Grace's example, the binary constructs, "what not to do", and right or wrong, still exist.

Grace's enactments of the look-fors and yes-no examples can be viewed as both a tool constructing students as a specific outcome and as a helpful tool for students to be more successful in completing a project. Grace positioned the look-fors and yes-no examples through a standardization of learning to simplify the nebulous quality of producing and evaluating art through the district's priority standards. The look-fors and yes-no examples provided a common language and a tangible process to get from a

concept to a final product. Although Grace's intent for using look-fors and yes-no examples was to provide students with a more concise – and potentially more successful – process for production, Grace's tools also produced right and wrong answers.

In contrast, the look-fors and yes-no examples can be viewed as not constructing children as an outcome since Grace does not formally assess students in their ability to successfully follow the tools. As Grace stated,

> To me the assessment is not that big of a deal, because if I am giving them the information and guiding them through it and their thinking about it, I am happy. Even if they tried to do it and they didn't get there…. But I just feel like if they are thinking and creating, I am happy. (personal communication, March 6, 2020)

The above statement constructs children academically through the "thinking and creating" rather than a standardized outcome. Furthermore, as I describe more fully in a later section on the artist of the month centering the student, Grace positioned students as already becoming artists as shown in a handwritten sign stating, "YOU are an artist!" (field notes, January 10, 2020). Therefore, Grace's pedagogical use of look-fors does not appear to reflect children as unknowing; rather, the look-fors function as a guiding tool that a student can chose to apply. The standardized nature of look-fors and its actual application highlights one of many tensions within Grace's pedagogical enactments that construct children.

Pedagogical Tensions Constructing Children as Agential Subjects

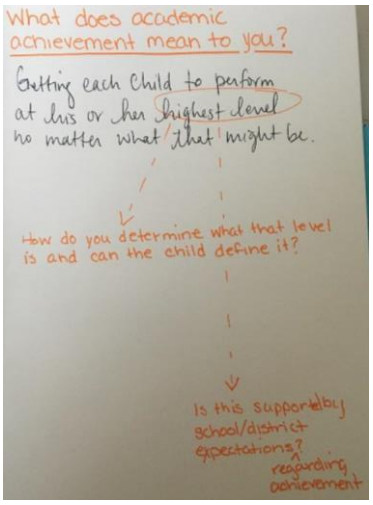
Grace's standardization of learning within the classroom through her look-fors and yes-no examples were often contrary to her ideology around academic achievement and other discursive practices she used to center students as agential subjects in their

learning. When utilizing Foucault's (1980) concept that power is relational as a lens, both Grace and the students are positioned as agential subjects contributing to the socialized background that power/knowledge regimes within education have already and continuously (re)produced (Bevir, 1999). Grace's contradictory pedagogical choices that centered on the agential rather than student as an object included: positioning students as the final determination of their level of success; utilizing the look-fors and yes-no examples as a function of building student's self-efficacy; and the thoughtful selections around the artist of the month; and discourse that centered the student in their learning. I end this section in recapping the tensions through Grace's blackout poetry.

Agential Markers of Success. To help deconstruct Grace's practices around academic achievement I posed the following question (see Figure 4), "What does academic achievement mean to you?" Grace responded, "Getting each child to perform at his or her highest level no matter what that might be" (journal, January 16, 2020).

Figure 4

Communal journal reflecting what academic achievement meant to Grace (January 10, 2020)



This application constructs students as agential subjects through a lens of doing art rather than an outcome of standardized learning. Furthermore, Grace positioned achievement as a shared responsibility of both teacher and student – reiterating Foucault's notion that power is relational. Unlike neoliberal and developmental responses which tend to focus on achievement toward satisfactory completion of a homogenous standard through some form of an assessment, the phrase "getting each child to perform" implies a need for student activation by Grace. The phrase "highest level" focuses on individual student's agency in achievement rather than a collective push for every student to meet grade level expectation as outlined through standards. However, the phrase "highest level" is nebulous within Grace's reply and required more context to fully materialize.

When I posed the question of how Grace determined each student's highest level, she responded, "When a student is excited to take home their work" (journal, January 23, 2020). Within this response there is no mention of external expectations such as standards, formal assessment, or grading. Instead, highest level is assessed on an emotion to evoke an intrinsic desire within children to determine that their work is finished and worthy to take home. Grace, however, never formally took note of whether students took their products home nor kept note of their emotive reflections on their artwork. Even if a student did not finish their work, did not take home the finished product, or even threw away their project, Grace did not assign a formal indication of this occurring or verbally condemn the inaction. Grace's intentional lack of assessment placed the process of doing art at the forefront of achievement. In this way, students are made central to their own learning.

Grace modeled the notion of every piece of art being worthy in how she determined which pieces of student art to spotlight in class as well as which pieces to display in a case outside the classroom. Grace attempted to spotlight a few students' artwork at the end of every class. The spotlights often centered around student's process and perseverance rather than achieving the look-fors. For example, Grace spotlighted a student for being focused during class and being done ahead of schedule (field notes, January 12, 2020). In another spotlight, Grace praised a student for letting go of their perfectionist voice and being ok with "happy mistakes" (field notes, February 18, 2020). Grace also commended a student for choosing to *not* follow the outlined look-fors, and instead taking a different direction in a project by instilling parts of themselves into their artistic choices (field notes, March 13, 2020). The display of artwork outside the classroom functioned as a snapshot of what was also being produced in the classroom. Pieces were not selected based on Grace's perception of quality. Instead of Grace evoking her authority over selection, children chose pieces to display. By not selecting pieces for spotlighting or display based on some standardized measure of success, Grace constructed all the art students created as worthy of being showcased and put in front of an audience. Such actions supported Grace's construction of academic achievement, which placed students' agency as her criterion for highest level over that of some type of formalized assessment or standard of worth.

Although Grace reproduced a standardization of schooling through look-fors and yes-no examples, her notion of academic achievement did not hinge on those constructs. While truth regimes produce policies, mandates, standardized testing, or even the age-graded priority standards so prominently displayed on Grace's dry erase board, Grace's

definition of academic achievement and her enactments within the classroom implied that achievement, to Grace, is not predicated on truth regimes. Instead, Grace constructed academic achievement through her own assessment of a student's level of potential. Furthermore, potential, in Grace's classroom was not a hierarchical standard to be applied across all students or to be formally measured. Rather, potential was individually constructed by the students themselves. In this way, Grace constructed students as proprietors of their own success - a success dependent on children's internal recognition of worth and pride in their artistic productions. This notion of children determining and recognizing their own educational growth and then placing it at the forefront of what it means to academically succeed is a (re)imagining in how children are constructed within schooling.

Standardization to Build Self-Efficacy. Grace used the standardized language of the look-fors and yes-no examples to build self-efficacy within students through informal observations and feedback. Grace relied on feedback to "pull the best work" possible from students (personal communication, January 10, 2020). Most of the feedback Grace gave focused on the language of the look-fors and yes-no examples but she did so while emphasizing student's individual artistic processes. For example, Grace stated to a student, "I love all the details in your still life," which focused on the individual student's creative process, "but make sure you do not line up objects across the bottom" (field observation, January 23, 2020). The latter comment by Grace indicated a specific look-for in the production of still life. Although the look-for is a defined process presented as the "right" way, by not incorporating a formal assessment of the "right way," Grace is

more concerned about the doing rather than successfully achieving the standardized expectations.

Grace positioned perfectionism within students as another rationale for using look-fors and yes-no examples to build self-efficacy. At times, Grace constructed students as being their own barriers to achieving their defined level of success: “Don’t let your perfectionism get in the way” (field notes, March 6, 2020). At one point a student asked, “What if we are bad drawers?” To which Grace responded, “You are going to do the best you can because the perfectionist voice in your head is wrong” (field notes, March 6, 2020). Grace tried to offset the notion of perfection through a focus on following the look-fors instead:

> I will probably have some kids with this [referring to still life project] shutting down but I’m going to emphasize with them a hundred times that I don’t care that they are drawing the objects perfectly. I care if they are trying to follow the steps and showing me overlapping [of objects] and trying to show me the element of still life. If the objects don’t look perfect, I don’t care. But they are so hung up on trying to make it look perfect. (personal communication, January 23, 2020)

At times Grace evoked her own personal struggles with producing artwork to help students alleviate the perfectionist voice. As Grace stated,

> Not every drawing is going to come out the way you want it. It even happens to [me]. I have made a thousand of terrible drawings before doing a good one…Artists make mistakes and have to erase. It happens to me. (field notes, January 10, 2020)

In the above statement, Grace appeared to construct the notion of mistakes as an inevitable part of the process of becoming an artist. Grace attempted to provide instruction which offset students' internal notions of perfection. However, the tool she applied also contributed to a right or wrong dichotomy and examples that students sought to replicate "perfectly". For example, below in Figure 13, Grace projected an image of still life that students were all asked to reproduce. Grace also modeled replicating the image on the dry erase board as seen in the same figure. Students, as seen in Figure 14, worked to do the same.

Figure 13

Grace's use of imagery to communication yes-no examples (field notes, January 10, 2020)

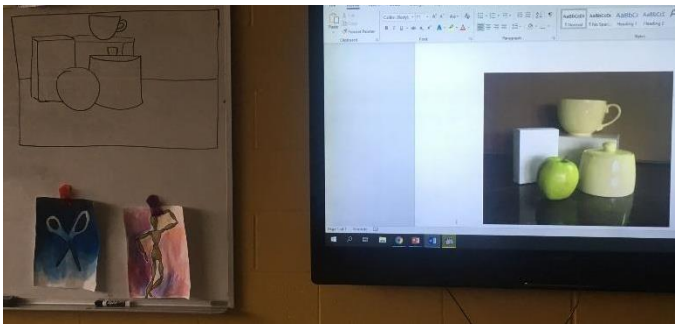
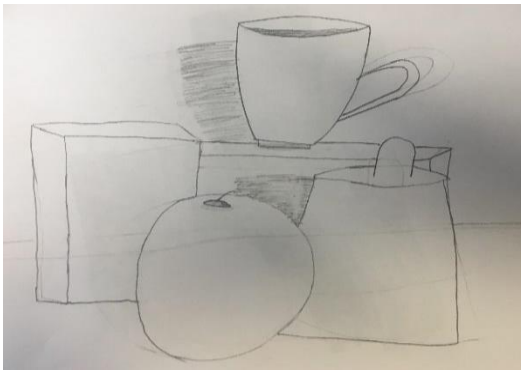


Figure 14

Example of student production of still life (field notes, January 10, 2020)



No matter the institutionalized discourse of a right or wrong, Grace was focused on finding ways to not allow that script to negatively affect a student's approach to doing art. I mentioned to Grace that this notion of perfection has been engrained through a neoliberal script within education; that there is an inherent wrong or right answer within any standardized approach to learning which is difficult to undo. To this, Grace was unrelenting in her focus on the perfectionist voice: "We can still work on it" (personal communication, January 23, 2020). Grace wanted students to identify their mistakes, make corrections, and achieve their own level of success. For Grace it was about helping the student work to their own defined highest level instead of an assigned standard: "I'm always telling them I don't care if you can draw perfectly realistically" (personal communication, January 29, 2020). In this instance Grace focused on building student's efficacy in doing rather than gauging student's artistic prowess based on some societal definition or through a standardized assessment. In the same way, Grace tried to mitigate student's own internalized scripts of a socialized ideal of artistic perfection and schooling's notion of there being a right or wrong way. But she also stated in the same sentence, "What matters to me is if you are following the things, I ask you to do [look-fors] and you are pushing yourself." This circles back to the tension within Grace's pedagogical constructions that reify a structured yes-no process while trying to build self-efficacy.

Through the tensions that emerged between the doing and the process, Grace produced a discontinuity; a break or gap in what is understood as truth. At one side of the tension, Grace constructed students through self-efficacy. Grace was determined to get students to make art by ridding them of formalized assessments that would qualify their

art. She also sought to communicate that an ideal of perfectionism has no place in the process of doing. At the other side of the tension, Grace also clung to the standardized processes to produce self-efficacy through look-fors and yes-no examples; processes that could be contributing to the perfectionist voice shutting down students and paralyzing self-efficacy. Despite placing student's self-efficacy at the forefront and attempting to disrupt the construction of children as objects, the normalized process of standardizing learning was still ever present in Grace's teaching.

Artist of the Month Centering the Student. Grace constructed students as central to their own learning within the socially constructed background of schooling through the artist of the month and her explicit discourse centered on students. As Grace shared,

> I think that some kids have an easy time doing art. Other kids, art is hard for them. Learning about an artist anyone can do. It is tangible. Anybody can pay attention and learn about the artist. And I talk about the artist's lives and that is really what they connect with. That is what they remember. (personal communication, March 6, 2020)

Grace strongly believed that connecting the concept of the month to an artist and sharing pieces about the artist's life helped students to connect whether they personally found the process of making art accessible or not. Grace attempted to draw a connection between the concept and artist of the month to students' lives. This was done intentionally so students could see themselves whether through the stories about the artists or through the work of the artists. This demystification of artists helped children view themselves

becoming artists as something that is already happening. Through this connection, Grace evoked children as artists and not through standardized reproduction.

In her classroom instruction, Grace talked about the artist of the month every day in some manner, whether it was in review or connecting to the artist's process of making a product. It is important to note that Grace did not teach an artist of the month because it was mandated by a priority standard, curriculum, or policy but rather through her own choice. Additionally, students were never formally assessed on their knowledge of the artists of the month. When introducing a new artist, Grace shared a short power point with the students that included a photo of the artist, when they lived, where they were from, a few personal pertinent facts connecting the artist to their artwork, and examples of their artwork over time. Students appeared to display comfort in recalling facts about the artist of the month. In contrast to Grace's own valuation of intrinsic expression through the doing of art, this pedagogical choice supports educational trends of a binarized response to learning. Grace would often play a quiz game and award points to students who answered questions about the artist correctly. These points were make-believe points never factoring into a student's academic grade. Despite this fact, the students enthusiastically participated as evident by the many hands that would shoot up to answer the quiz questions. This type of formative assessment helped Grace to know that her pedagogical choices were engaging students. As a prior educator, I was personally amazed by the students' retention of information that held no tangible recompense such as a grade – a motivational tool often utilized within schooling practices. As Grace put it,

> I think what it is, is I do things I am interested in and when I present it I do it in a way that is exciting because I am excited. I don't know why but when they hear

about their [artist's] lives I think they get really interested in that part. (personal communication, March 6, 2020)

Grace's pedagogical framing around the artist of the month appeared to create intrinsic motivation around the students' learning versus one centered around standards constructing the student as central to their learning.

To help students connect with the selected artists of the month, Grace attempted to be diverse in her selection, "I'm trying to find contemporary people, older people, women, men" (personal communication, January 23, 2020). Additionally, Grace included artist of differing race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, and physical ability among other various identifiers. These distinctions were explicitly stated in relationship to art making. For example, Grace introduced Rick Bartow a Native American artist. She spoke of the contributions he made in representing indigenous people's culture in his work (filed notes, February 10, 2020). In this way Grace attempted to disrupt the Eurocentric content often privileged within the curriculum.

Through representing the diversity in artists and their work Grace hoped to show students that "there are a lot of different ways to make art…This is one way, and this is one way. Which way resonates with you [the student]?" (personal communication, January 29, 2020). During one field observation, students were asked to review all the artists from the academic year, recalling personal attributes as well as identifying artist's work from a photo. Grace incorporated the following question when showing each photo: "Who here sees themselves as a [insert type of artistic rendering] artist?" Students raised their hands connecting to those pieces or artist that they most identified with.

Grace extended the artist of the month outside the classroom to a bulletin board in the hallway which connected artists as a way for students to understand themselves. Each artist of the month from first semester was named and represented with a photo of their work and statement that identified the artist in some way (see Figure 15 & Table 4). All these artists were connected to the phrase, “How can famous artists show us how to be ourselves?” (see Figure 16).

Figure 15

Bulletin board that Grace displayed previous artists of the month (field notes, March 13, 2020)

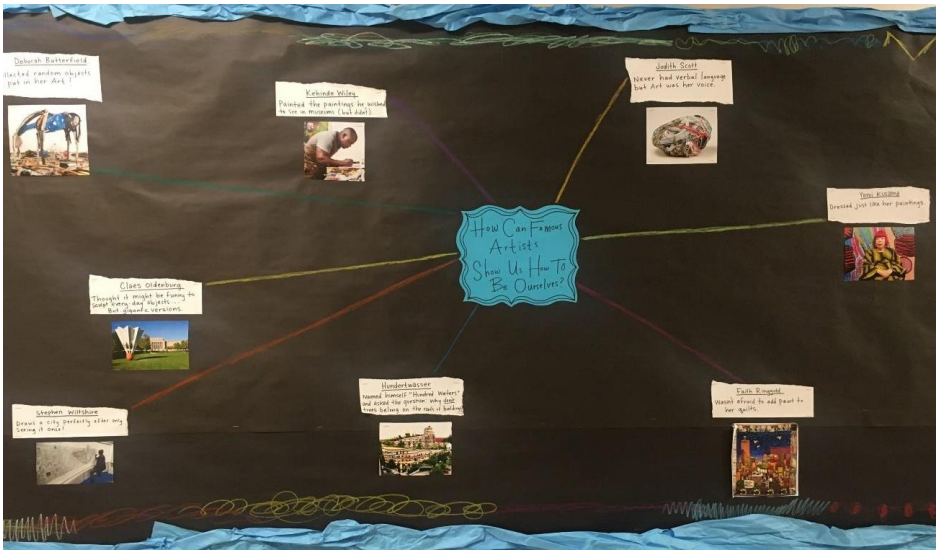


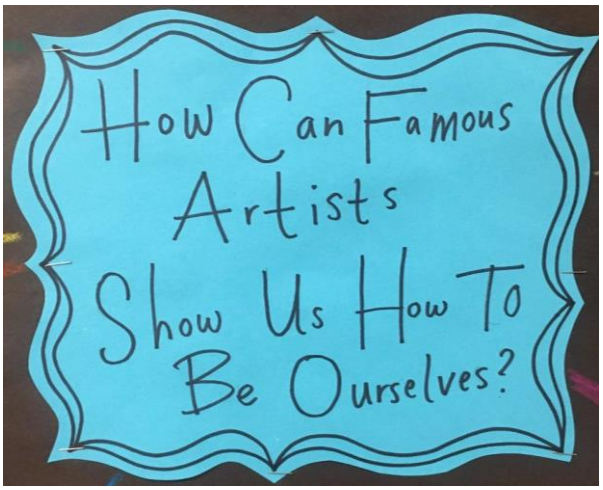
Table 4

List of artists and their qualities pulled from the above bulletin board that Grace displayed previous artists of the months (field notes, March 13, 2020)

Artist's Name	**Artist Quality**
Deborah Butterfield	"Collected random objects to put in her Art!"
Kehinde Wiley	"Painted the paintings he wished to see in museums (but didn't)."
Judith Scott	"Never had verbal language but Art was her voice."
Yayoi Kusama	"Dressed just like her paintings."
Faith Ringgold	"Wasn't afraid to add paint to her quilts."
Hundertwasser	"Named himself "Hundred Waters" and asked the question: why don't trees belong on the roofs of buildings?"
Stephen Wiltshire	"Draws a city perfectly after only seeing it once!"
Claes Oldenburg	"Thought it might be funny to sculpt every-day objects…. But gigantic versions."

Figure 16

Bulletin board question Grace constructed (field notes, March 13, 2020)



Grace discursively pushed the notion that the artist can help students discover things about themselves including that they are indeed already artists becoming. That notion further centralized students within their learning. To ensure this, Grace repeatedly

constructed students through an individualized discourse of “you”. Along the walls hung handmade signs that read, “YOU are an artist! What’s YOUR story? YOU belong!” Grace used discourse that pushed away from the teacher owning student production such as, “Remember this is not for me. This is for you” (field notes, January 10, 2020). Such statements were made often constructing the student’s learning as the rationale for making artwork. Grace would also make statements such as, “I want your container to be something you really, really care about” (field notes, February 10, 2020).

Even in the written text of the standards on the dry erase board, Grace interjected the student as central to their learning. Grace wrote each standard as an “I can” statement, even though they were not formatted as such by the state or district. This addition of first-person text, “I can”, positioned the students as active and primary agents toward fulfilling the standards. Conversely, the formation of the standard in first person also had me questioning, what happens when the student cannot or chooses not to fulfill the “I can” statement? But since Grace does not formally assess or punish students who wish not to participate, the “I can” is more focused on discursively constructing students as agentic subjects within the forced context of schooling. These types of discursive statements – centered on the student attempts at artwork – encouraged students to connect to their work. It is from this connection Grace believed children could more readily access their own artistic selves rather than merely within the standardized steps for completing a project.

Through diverse representation of artists and Grace’s discourse, there is a focused attempt to invite, awaken, and support the agentic student within their artistic endeavors and learning. Grace’s use of the artist of the month attempted to centralize the individual

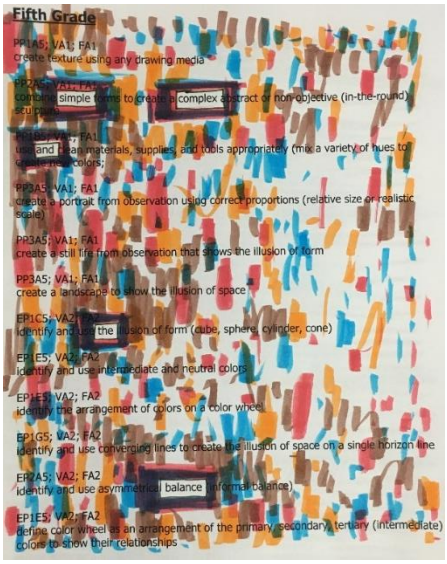
student within their engagement and learning of visual arts. Through the artist of the month and discursive focus on the individual, students are not being asked to construct themselves as another artist reproducing specific standards such as the look-fors. Rather, students were encouraged to find themselves in becoming an artist. In this way, students were made central to their own learning.

Tensions Revealed in Blackout Poetry

The tension in Grace's ideology and pedagogy that resulted in discourse and discursive enactments that produced a discontinuity where verbalized through Grace's blackout poetry. During our time together, I asked Grace to engage in an exercise called blackout poetry (see Appendix F for the final production) – the activity is outlined in Chapter 3. Through this activity Grace took hard copies of tools she used to guide her pedagogy around academic achievement and highlighted on each document the word or phrases that resonated with her while blacking out all others. By blacking out hierarchical discourse within these documents, Grace silenced, if even for just a moment, those constructs that she did not identify with, placing them on the margins. Figure 17 is an example of the process using the fifth-grade district priority standards.

Figure 17

Blacking out of fifth grade district priority standards by Grace (February 10, 2020)



Below are the words Grace isolated and then strung together to create her poetry (February 10, 2020). The poetry appears with all the original formatting from Grace's submission including punctuation, lack of punctuation, and stanza breaks.

Teacher

Thinking continuously

Positive emotions

Identify, create, and define;

The content engages student's lives?

Tailored to individual learners?

On-the-spot assessment of learning?

Student

Generating ideas

Making mistakes

focused on an original artwork

Simple, complex

and the balance

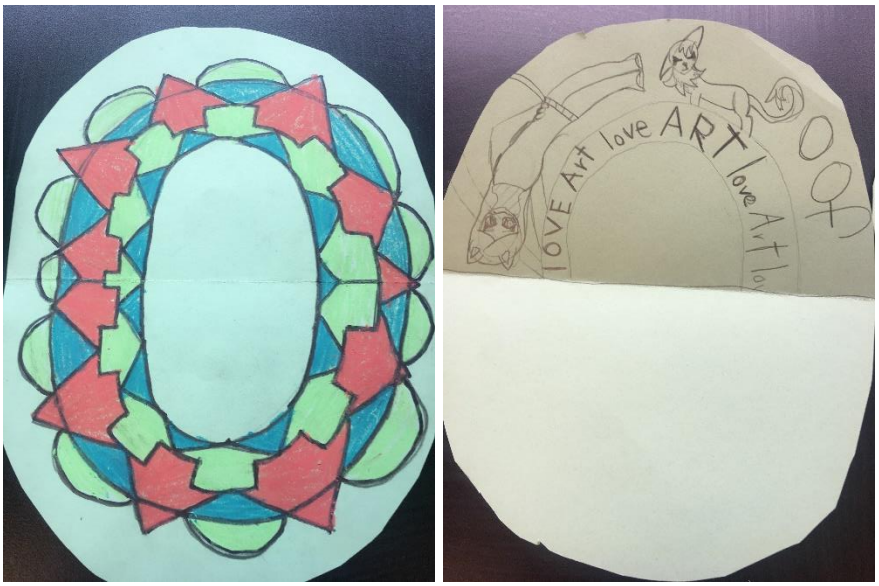
In Grace's blackout poetry, she attended to hierarchical structures by separating teacher from student but positioned both as active participants in the "complex" schooling process. Both teacher and student, through Grace's poetry appeared to be in a constant state of co-creation: the teacher through pedagogy centered on the student and the student in production of knowledge. First, when considering the teacher, Grace structured the educator as the proprietor of the classroom space through determining what content is taught, how content is taught, and the ways in which students will be assessed for academic achievement. Poetically, Grace positioned herself as in a constant state of pedagogical creation. In the next stanza, Grace elucidated that these creations were centered on the students with the questions, "The content engages student's lives? Tailored to individual learners?" (blackout poetry, February 10, 2020). Grace attended to these questions, highlighted in her poetry, through constructing the lived experiences of students as essential in her decision-making around utilizing diverse artist of the month. Additionally, Grace provided individualized feedback as well as allowed students to deviate from the look-fors when producing artwork. The last question highlights assessment, "On-the-spot assessment of learning?" In this question Grace focused on

assessing in the moment which correlates with her not implementing formal summative assessments. In this manner, assessment is continuously constructing students as becoming artists rather than an outcome of a standard.

Through Grace's blackout poetry, students are constructed as separate from the teacher but as decision makers through the phrases "generating ideas" and "focused on an original artwork" (blackout poetry, February 10, 2020). This notion was apparent in Grace's classroom. Students chose how they attended to the standards through compliance, refusal, or even the construction of their own processes for creating knowledge and skill production. In every field experience there were students in Grace's class that chose not to participate for one reason or another. There were also students that chose different ways to interact with the materials and assignments from what Grace had instructed. For example, during a symmetry lesson, students were instructed to draw simple shapes using heavy lead that could then transfer to the other half of the paper when folded and rubbed (see left side of Figure 18). Instead of following the procedural look-fors, one student chose to draw complex shapes and instead of transferring the image they later drew them imperfectly on the opposite side (see right side of Figure 18).

Figure 18

Contrasting student symmetry projects: left side utilized the look-fors while the right side did not follow the look-fors (field notes, March 13, 2020)



Although not perfectly symmetrical and despite not following instructions, Grace highlighted the student's original work at the end of class as a, "creative interpretation of the project" (field observation, March 13, 2020). Although Grace gave precise instructions on how to make the artwork, she also encouraged flexibility in the process: "Artists, when they look at something to draw, they are making a lot of choices…they can leave stuff out" (field notes, January 16, 2020). This notion of choice is mirrored in Grace's poetry through the words "original artwork"; constructing the student's own interpretation and doing as more important than the standardized learning expectations.

Yes/And

In summary, educational policy and practices attempt to place hierarchical expectations on teachers and tends to objectify children in forms of measurable outcomes

based on neoliberal standards of academic achievement. Due to intentional – or unintentional – ambiguous policies, or simply poor management, a top-down power structure did not exist within Grace's classroom. Policy and procedures were tertiary to many of Grace's pedagogical decisions and focus. Despite the lack of direct hierarchical oversight, Grace did construct children as objects. Grace reified the developmental standardization of children through her enactment of look-fors as well as reified neoliberal notions through yes-no examples that created a wrong or right way of creating art. However, Grace positioned those decisions as tools to help students develop self-efficacy as artists.

Despite some direct reference to compliance, Grace – whether actively aware or not – enacted subversive practices in relation to district and building expectations. Grace disrupted the standardization of children by not formally assessing academic achievement. She instead centered students and their self-efficacy as indicators of their success. Furthermore, Grace superseded her own instructional expectation when students employed agency and chose to interact in other ways. Despite a hierarchical and centralized educational institution, Grace's classroom reveals that power is circulated between individuals, teacher and student, in relationship with the socially constructed background of schooling and all the educational truth regimes that exist.

Through a thinking with theory approach the discontinuity within Grace's discourse and discursive enactments were made visible. These tensions provided a glimpse into how an educator makes sense of a disarray of information within educational truth regimes and the ensuing expectations around academic achievement. The discord that arose within the discontinuity of how Grace constructed children

produced a break in what is thought to be one truth; that schooling is a hierarchical institution that enacts a one-sized standardized learning outcome on children. Grace's agential acts and (re)construction of students as both objects and agents of learning opens a space to think differently about schooling's power structure. Within this inquiry schooling is seen as a circulation of power between hierarchal structures, truth regimes, teacher, and children. Within the backdrop of an educational system that privileges neoliberal and developmental standards, there are actors subverting and reifying these constructs. It is in the discontinuity that these acts produce space for a (re)thinking of how children are constructed and conversely schooled. Maybe to view these tensions through a dichotomy of either/or limits the possibility within schooling whether within a teacher's pedagogy or a student's agentic production of learning. Instead of an either/or, maybe it is a yes/and. Grace identified pedagogy that evoked both self-efficacy in the doing and a reproduction of standardized learning and processes. This is neither wrong nor right but a balancing of the simple inherent act of learning within the complexities of the socially constructed background that is schooling. As Grace pointed out in her blackout poetry (February 10, 2020), teaching is,

Simple, complex

and the balance

Chapter 5: INSIGHTS GAINED

"I believe the freedom of the reader must be absolutely respected. Discourse is a reality which can be transformed infinitely. Thus, he who writes does not have the right to give orders as to the use of his writings." (Foucault, 1978 as cited in O'Farrell, 2005, p. 55).

This inquiry led with an overarching question, *how does one art educator construct children and childhoods within our historical and sociopolitical context?* The neoliberal and developmental truth regimes considered in this inquiry promote policies focused on standardized learning and accountability measures that often position students, and even teachers, as objects that can be reduced to numerical scores (Close, Amrein-Beardsley, & Collins, 2018; Nichols & Berliner, 2007; Ranson, 2003; Webb, 2005). Accordingly, I encourage readers to think through the tensions within the power relations of educational truth regimes, schooling structures, children, and one art educator. The purpose is to compel researchers and educators to pause, think, and question the multiple ways academic achievement may construct children and childhoods. To think through the co-construction of power provides a multiplicity of ways we may reconstitute ourselves – students, educators, policymakers, and researchers – within the socially constructed backdrop of schooling.

In this final chapter, I begin with a (re)telling of the analytical points made in Chapter 4. I then move to the contributions the analytical points from this inquiry make to research. I also make recommendations for continuing research within the study of children and childhoods and schooling. After revisiting the inquiry insights, this chapter outlines my thinking around potential contributions to methodology and theory. Although

recommendations are labeled separately as research, methodology, and theory, they do not function in isolation. To fully appreciate what is brought forth in this inquiry one must see these sections as a holistic commentary. Therefore, I end with concluding thoughts that bring these recommendations together through forward-facing actions.

Review of Analytical Points

In this inquiry I merged Foucauldian concepts with established truth regimes such as developmentalism and neoliberalism that have theoretically reduced children into age-graded stages (Morrow, 2011) and bodies for social assimilation into a capitalist economy (Hursh, 2007; Morrow, 2011; Nichols & Berliner, 2007). The insights of this inquiry produced three overarching analytical points which include the claims that standardized learning constructs children as objects and that power is relational as well as highlighted the dichotomy in one educator's pedagogical enactments and ideology around students as learners. The first analytical point positioned the discursive tools Grace called upon to inform her pedagogical choices as being rooted in truth regimes. As stated in Chapter 2, Locke positioned children as "tabula rasas," blank slates, needing adult guidance such as an educator (Androne, 2014, p. 75). This notion that children are incomplete, requiring intervention, is the basis of developmental language that positions children as objects to be moved on a linear line to adulthood. Educational policies, as outlined in Chapter 2, have reified developmentalism as well as neoliberalism, the notion that schooling is for economic gain, through a standardization of learning and an emphasis on high stakes testing. These truth regimes produced hierarchical formations that Grace then enacted, which constructed children as objects.

By revealing the discourses used and the discursive practices that result in maintaining social order in relation to power and agency, I revealed the discontinuity within Grace's own discourse and discursive practices regarding academic achievement. On the one hand, Grace employed structures that reified the standardization of content through age-grading and the notion that an adult must facilitate the appropriate learning for children. This enactment echoes that of developmental discourse, discussed in Chapter 2, that assumes a biological universality within "normal" developmental patterns (Woodhead & Montgomery, 2003) with little to no recognition of children's specific social context as well as creates a hierarchical binary between student and teacher (Epstein, 1993; Kenway & Bullen, 2001; Prout & James, 1997; Woodhead & Montgomery, 2003). Conversely, Grace discursively constructed students as central in determining their own achievement. In this way, Grace recognized students in an agential manner. This act echoes that of the new sociology of childhood that states children are not "passive subjects of social structures and processes" (Prout & James, 1997, p. 8). Grace also chose not to engage in formal assessment beyond complying to district performative tasks such as posting the standards on the board and filling in grade cards.

From a genealogical view, the Travers School District's priority standards and grade level expectations collectively privileged educational truth regimes. The standards were a delineation of state and national expectations around what and how children should learn within visual arts based on age-grading, which objectifies children rather than centering children as subjects of their learning. Grace, the art educator in this inquiry, was implicitly expected to enact these standards onto the children in her class. The question was whether Grace would be compliant in reproducing these truth regimes

despite her contrary ideology, which projected children as agential learners. Exploring this question revealed discontinuities within discourse and resulting discursive practices providing a threshold where change can occur.

The second analytical point explored Grace's discourse and discursive practices through Foucault's (1980) concept of power being relational. By viewing Grace's (non)enactments as a circulation of power among subjects (such as educators and students), and discourses (such as standards of learning and its embedded truth regimes), I highlighted the relational aspect of power. Based on the district's implicit requirements, Grace chose to enact the standards within her lessons as well as through written text on the dry erase board. Additionally, Grace took the spirit of standardized learning and created her own expectations in the form of look-fors and yes-no examples. Grace's delineation of the standards continued what Apple (2007) called an "audit culture" through comparative measures (p. 112). In education, an audit culture relies on standardized tools, such as achievement tests, and discourse to organize schooling from a hegemonic lens. Auditing is a way to govern and regulate what school is and how we do school. As stated in Chapter 4, Grace's language around yes-no examples promoted what some educational research identifies as a neoliberal lens of productivity with a discourse of winners and losers (Au, 2011; Lissovoy, 2013; Savage, 2017). This discourse, whether in an art classroom or not, implicitly privileges white and higher socioeconomic status students. Within Grace's classroom, depending on the artistic styles being learned, the demographic of the artists being studied, and the focus of Grace's pedagogical choices, the privileging of white hegemony may come into play, even unconsciously.

In contrast, this inquiry also found that Grace's (non)enactments through power relations disrupted truth regimes. Grace, her pedagogical enactments, the district priority standards, educational truth regimes, and the students functioned relationally within this inquiry to both reify and disrupt the objectification of students through standardized learning. Grace did not enact all the standards expected by the district to be taught at each grade level. Grace also did not formally grade students on the standards despite district expectations. Furthermore, Grace constructed students as agential subjects and gave students space to choose how they attended to the look-fors and yes-no examples; even supporting students who did not follow the standards at all.

The third analytical point looked more closely at the tensions in Grace's (non)enactments and resulting construction of children which highlighted a dichotomy in how Grace reified and disrupted educational truth regimes. From these tensions a discontinuity, a break or gap in what is understood as truth, arose. As stated above and in Chapter 4, Grace employed both district and self-produced pedagogies that reified educational truth regimes. Grace's contradictory pedagogical choices that centered on the agential rather than student as an object included: positioning students as the final determination of their level of success; utilizing the look-fors and yes-no examples as a function of building students' self-efficacy; and the thoughtful selections around the artist of the month and discourse that centered the student in their learning. Grace, through power relations and her own pedagogical enactments, produced a tension between constructing children as agential and constructing children as an object within the background of schooling.

Contributions to Research

In this section I readdress the analytical points made in Chapter 4 as well as position how they contribute to the study of children and childhoods through the structures of schooling and its inherent truth regimes. Through a thinking with theory approach (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018), this inquiry created pauses from the discontinuity within Grace's discursive practices related to schooling, students, and academic achievement. Within these pauses analytical questions arose regarding the construction of children as agential beings within schooling's standardized structure. I, as inquirer, thought deeply about and with the participant, Grace, regarding schooling and the construction of children through the lens of the standardization of academic achievement. By using theory as both an analytical tool and as data, this inquiry contributes to the body of educational research that identifies the neoliberal and developmental truth regimes within schooling (Au, 2011; Hursh, 2007; James & James, 2004; Leonard, 2016; Lissovoy, 2013; Morrow, 2011; Nichols & Berliner, 2007; Savage, 2017; Sleeter, 2008), constructing students as objects (Freire, 2002; Foucault, 1977, 1980; Hearne, 2018; Hook, 2001; O'Farrell, 2005).

Foucauldian Concepts Intersect Truth Regimes

Foucauldian concepts are applied to educational research regarding power, agency, and discipline. As outlined in Chapter 2, research in education often explores these concepts (power, agency, and discipline) through binaries and structural hierarchies. For instance, some research points to the social and material structures found within schooling that create a teacher and student hierarchy (Bardy, 1994; Cullingford, 1991; Komulainen, 2007; Malmberg & Hagger, 2009; Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011;

Rainio, 2008; Rajala, et al., 2016; Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016). Other research, questions, as discussed in Chapter 2, the notion of a top-down power structure positioning students agentially within the power/knowledge constructs (Barton & Tan, 2010; Caiman & Lundgård, 2014; Dorner, 2009; Dorner & Layton, 2014; Rajala et al., 2016; Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016; Tilly, 1991). The insights of this inquiry started with an identification and explanation of the truth regimes and discursive formations at the forefront of Grace's pedagogical enactments, which highlighted developmental and neoliberal ideologies producing a standardization of learning and an objectification of children. However, within this inquiry, the hierarchical structures, from a Foucauldian view, only hold power based on how they are co-constituted relationally.

Reifying Hierarchical Controls Through a View of Inevitable Force

This inquiry provides a unique micro-level example of how entrenched educational truth regimes are even within a subject that has flexibility and even with an educator who does not fully prescribe to those truths. It is quite possible that the years of socialization within schooling both as a student herself and a professional educator made it difficult for Grace to see different possibilities outside of standard schooling structures around achievement. Despite the loose regulations and Grace's own ideology centering children as agential in their learning, the discourse and discursive formations of these truth regimes were still readily apparent within Grace's own discourse and pedagogical enactments such as look-fors and yes-no examples.

The tensions in this inquiry revealed how the truth regimes rooted in developmentalism and neoliberalism are deeply entrenched not only within educational policies and structures but across disciplines and at least one teacher, Grace, who has

conflicting ideologies and pedagogical practices. As discussed in Chapter 2, researchers have argued that educational policies, rooted in truth regimes, place educators as a dominant force over children within our current educational system (Apple, 2007, 2014; Foucault, 1977; Freire, 2002; Giroux & Giroux, 2006; Prout & James, 1997). As previously stated in Chapter 2, these hierarchical controls that position the educator as a gatekeeper to children based on developmental concerns are also considered inevitable (Cocks, 2006, Danby & Farrell, 2004; James, Jenks& Prout, 1998; Kenway & Bullen, 2001; Komulainen, 2007; Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011; Soto & Swadener, 2002; Thomas, 2002; Wyness, 2000). This inquiry reifies those notions as shown through Grace's use of top-down standardized pedagogical practices as well as her own instructional tools that objectify children.

The objectification of children within a subject such as visual arts and through an educator such as Grace highlighted the inevitability of hierarchical control and truth regimes. Core subjects such as reading, language arts, and math are audited through federal and state mandated testing policies whereas visual arts have very little federal and state oversight regarding standardized curriculum and testing. Even though Travers School District had priority standards for visual arts, there were no methods to measure efficacy of teacher implementation of those standards. Grace repeatedly stated her indifference regarding the standards and the use of them, "I just follow along with it because it doesn't matter to me" (personal communication, January 23, 2020). Furthermore, Grace stated that her ideology around children and academic success is rooted in children's own individual connection to their work and to themselves as artists. Grace's construction would appear dissonant to that of the hierarchical controls of

standardized teaching, and in some of her pedagogical decisions such as artist of the month and no formalized assessments, that positioning is lived out. However, through further inquiry, Grace's acts of disruption appeared to be less an indictment of truth regimes and more a frustration with the lack of clarity and choices in the institutionalized mechanisms as well as the constraints of time. Grace's ideology around how standards should be delineated, what a grade card should report, along with the context of her grade card comments, do not uphold her ideology around children and academic success. In fact, Grace's discursive enactments can be viewed as upholding both developmental and neoliberal truth regimes through a focus on standardization.

Disrupting Hierarchical Controls Through a View of Relational Power

This inquiry also disrupts the notion that these truth regimes are inevitable by viewing power as relational. Through this construction Grace and the students are viewed as agential subjects reifying and disrupting knowledge/power structures through power relations. In so doing, this inquiry contributes to the body of educational research that disrupts the notion of hierarchical power as being one-way. This supports educational research, explored in Chapter 2, that questions the top-down inevitability of power within schooling (Barton & Tan, 2010; Bevir, 1999; Caiman & Lundgård, 2014; Foucault, 1977; Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011; Roth et al., 2004).

As stated in Chapter 4, the macro-level policies produce educators as implementors of power structures. However, Grace's actions show that she acted with agency through compliance *and* subversive actions. Grace continued the discourse around standardized learning through her process-oriented projects using look-fors. Additionally, Grace promoted a right and wrong way of production through her yes-no

examples. Grace also invited agential space within the classroom through a focus on children's agential choices and connection to doing artwork rather than following her processes. The focus on student self-efficacy within the doing of art, disrupts the developmental and neoliberal conceptions of education. Rather, it supports other educational research, explored in Chapter 2, that views teachers and students as co-creators within schooling structures (Caiman and Lundgård, 2014; Dorner & Layton, 2014; Kuby & Fontanella-Nothom, 2018; Kuby, Rucker, & Darolia, 2017; Malmberg & Hagger, 2009; Siry, Wilmes, & Huas, 2016; Tilly, 1991).

The dichotomy within Grace's enactments also echoes Mashford-Scott and Church's (2011) findings that teachers both identify that students have agency within schooling but also tend to position themselves as a necessary facilitator for that agency to occur. Due to the tug of an entrenched focus on developmentalism and neoliberalism with that of Grace's student-centered ideology, the discourse and discursive enactments appeared disconnected at times. This inquiry contributes to these tensions by revealing them as an interaction between and within various power structures. Instead of strictly viewing power hierarchical or something that is done to children, from a Foucauldian lens of power being relational, this inquiry provides another pathway of understanding how children are constructed and (re)constructed by multiple power players, including themselves, and hierarchical structures within schooling.

Recommendations for Research

Through the thinking within this inquiry, I propose four recommendations for research within the fields of children and childhoods, educational policy, schooling and practice. I present these recommendations separately as they each must be looked at from

a micro-level, but I do so with the understanding that they are intricately intertwined. The first recommendation is a call for a continuation of research around a thinking with theory approach in order to produce a multiplicity of thought toward a (re)imagining of schooling and children within schooling. The second recommendation is a continuation of action-based inquiry promoting critically conscious practices. The third is a recommendation toward research inquiries that form a collaboration with teachers. The fourth and final recommendation is a call to increase the direct voice and participation of children within research. Holistically, these recommendations lead to actively recognizing the diverse ontology of children which, in turn, demands a (re)envisioning of schooling.

A Multiplicity of Thought within Schooling

What schooling is and how schooling is done is a powerful kind of engrained ideology due to the socialization most of our society experiences through public schooling. This idea is echoed in this inquiry through Grace's own dissonance. To think beyond the structures of current public schooling structures and its inherent truth regimes is not a new conception. Many scholars and writers have contributed to counter-discourse around hierarchical control and the ideology of a standardization of learning. In Chapter 2, I shared the thoughts of Counts (1889-1974), Dewey (1859-1952), Illich (1926-2002), Holt (1923-1985), Kozol (1936-), Friedenberg (1921-2000), Apple (1942-), and Freire (1921-1997). These counter-discourses even led to various alternative approaches to schooling within the United States such as Free Schools, Freedom Schools, and the Reggio Emilia approach. However, these ideas have never fully taken root on a large scale within our public schools. I view a thinking with theory around schooling as an

ability to find what lies in-between and what can be a steppingstone to new ways of schooling instead of grand leaps.

Therefore, I recommend a continuation of research around thinking with theory toward a multiplicity of thought. For example, in this inquiry a thinking with Foucauldian concepts allowed for the dichotomy present within Grace's discourse and discursive enactments to be *both* reifying educational truth regimes *and* disrupting those regimes. Instead of viewing these tensions as Grace's ineffective implementation of hierarchical controls, this inquiry viewed them as openings. The tensions are a threshold to doing schooling differently as well as a (re)conceptualization of children within schooling through a lens of power being relational. Research that continues to use theory to think through a multiplicity of ideas invites space, even at the micro-level, for new thought and thus new action. As Rose (2009) stated, "It matters a great deal how we collectively talk about education, for that discussion both reflects and, in turn, affects policy decisions about what gets taught and tested, about funding, about what we expect schooling to contribute to our lives" (p. 5). If children are spoken of as objects, then schooling structures and adult interactions with children will continue to ignore their diverse ontology.

Critically Conscious Action-Based Inquiry

As discussed in Chapter 2, Paulo Freire's Critical Pedagogy posits teaching as an inherently political act where knowledge is not neutral, making issues of social justice and democracy intimately connected to the exercise of teaching and learning (Freire, 2013). Grace's ideology and discursive enactments both reified and disrupted normative schooling through a lens of measured academic success. Despite the tensions, Grace did

not actively reflect on her discursive knots toward pedagogical change. Instead, Grace unconsciously consented to the dominant ideology (Gramsci, 1971) by never truly questioning her beliefs and practices.

In order to build critical consciousness around the historical and sociopolitical discourses surrounding education, inquiries must place theory and practice in tandem. This inquiry engaged one educator in conversation regarding children and academic achievement through a thinking with theory approach. Although our conversations often spoke about practice, which Grace considered within her own pedagogical choices, the goal was not an inquiry to assess those implementations. While in the field I began to see how an action-based inquiry within our discussions and theoretical workings could be beneficial not just to the field of research around children and schooling but also for Grace in practice. It is within a more intentional reflective practice that educators and researchers can begin to understand children beyond a social construction of being incomplete but with full ontology. In order to promote the fully recognized ontology of children, I recommend a continuation of action-based inquiry that promotes educators engaging in reflective practices regarding their discourse and enactments regarding children as well as youth participatory action research. Through action-based inquiry opportunities exist for critical consciousness to arise within both researcher and participant(s).

Collaborative Inquiries

Teaching is not neutral. As such, teachers must be reflective in their practices. Additionally, schools must afford the space to be critical and to embrace research within practice. In doing so truth regimes that are passively absorbed within the profession can

be critically engaged. This process requires a commitment to time and discomfort. One such form of assessment can include professional learning communities in collaboration with educational researchers.

This inquiry situated the inquirer within a classroom with access to the educator, students, and district resources. This model of inquiry is not unique, but rather continues to showcase the mutual benefit to collaborations between public schools and universities. Educators and school districts provide a contextually rich field for researchers to think through analytical questions. Researchers provide access to tools and resources that educators and districts could benefit from in practice. Not only is a collaboration between districts, educators, universities, and researchers mutually beneficial, its resulting effects on what kind of space children occupy within schools could be vastly affected. Like with this inquiry, researchers and educators can identify the multiplicity and dissonance in how educators' approach, interact, communicate with, and involve children in a construct of academic success.

Children Doing Inquiry

For over six decades, a rigid scientific approach to education has forced educational leaders and researchers into oppressive discourses and practices that alienate students from their own learning (Freire, 2013). This inquiry contributes to the educational research that questions the educational discourse around student-centered learning within institutions that standardize learning (Leonard, 2016) by presenting the tensions within Grace's own pedagogical enactments. It encourages a (re)conceptionalization of children as being ontologically complete within policy and

schooling as well as childhoods to be understood as a "cultural phrasing" subject to change (James & James, 2004, p. 13).

Within the new sociology of childhood, children must be active agents in their own construction rather than passive recipients (Prout & James, 1997, p. 8). However, this inquiry failed to elevate children's voices as well as elevate the cultural tapestries of children such as class, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and so forth that effect how they are socially constructed. This inquiry placed Grace as the central subject of inquiry. Grace was a conduit to talk about children rather than talk with children. In order to continue to advance research in children and childhoods, I recommend inquiries give children direct voice and participation (Prout & James, 1997, p. 8).

Although student agency is interwoven into educational speak through various monikers such as student voice, student choice, being student-centered, and student-led, these terms are often a way to co-opt children's voices to champion new educational practices toward a specific institutional outcome (Rainio, 2008). If we want to elevate children agentially, then they must be placed in positions to be a co-constituting force within schooling policy making and practices, not merely an object for application. Additionally, more attention must be placed on the implicit biases that educational policy and schooling perpetuate leading to childhood being divorced from demographic variables thus creating a hegemonic phenomenon. *No Child Left Behind* distinguished subgroups such as race and socioeconomic status among other demographic markers. In so doing, these categories must be explicitly recognized when inquiring into the lived realities of children within schooling. This inquiry fails to highlight the distinction in how Grace speaks about children and academic achievement from this perspective. In follow-

up work, to continue to push for the full ontological recognition of children, educator's discourse and discursive practices should be disaggregated through these variables in order to find ways to disrupt knowledge/power structures that speak to these identities from a deficit lens.

Recommendations for Methodology

From a poststructural paradigm, I chose to engage in a thinking with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018) approach using Foucauldian concepts, which places literature, inquiry data, and theory, non-hierarchically, into conversation through and with one another. I constructed "permeable" boundaries around the field of inquiry, the participants (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, 2018) allowing for a multiplicity of possibilities in data production and analysis. Within this inquiry, three themes emerged toward a recommendation for methodology. Those themes included taking a micro-level approach to inquiry, nuanced ethical considerations regarding participant(s), and the flexibility of an inquiry playbook.

Micro-Level Considerations

As with Foucault's later work, this inquiry moved past the macro-level of power seen as oppressive into the subtler moments of power relations within Grace's discursive practices. In so doing, I viewed the inquiry's subjects, such as the educator and students, as both the embodiments of power and enactors of power (Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016). I positioned this inquiry in an elementary art classroom with the art educator and corresponding students as participants. The classroom resides within a familiar district, providing me with a strong working knowledge of the policies and procedures that have historically and sociopoitically taken root. To avoid reductionist thinking (either/or)

through a comparative analysis, I chose to work with only one educator. I also found it important for this inquiry to select an educator willing to engage in a deep iterative reflection. The educator I chose to work with is an art teacher with whom I have a strong working relationship. I found this micro-level perspective had two benefits and is why I recommend it for future consideration in methodological choices.

First, a micro-level view produced a discontinuity for a (re)imagining of schooling. From a macro-level there is an assumption of efficacy in implementation of hierarchical structures that is clearly not met within this inquiry. This speaks to how important it is not to oversimplify power within schooling from a hierarchical and oppressive manner and rather view the daily micro-levels of power relations that swirl through, around, and in-between teachers and students. Through a micro-level view this inquiry was able to reveal the tensions in how one educator makes sense of a disarray of information within educational truth regimes and the ensuing expectations around academic achievement. From the tensions I highlighted how Grace's pedagogical enactments served to both reify and disrupt the neoliberal and developmental discursive formations within schooling. In the ensuing discontinuity, the notion that schooling can only be a hierarchical institution that privileges neoliberal and developmental standards began to break apart. By zooming in on the discourses and discursive practices of one educator, I highlighted the familiar in order to question its common sense; suspending my own academic voice and truths to see differently in order to create something new in my thinking. It is in this space a (re)imagining around how children are constructed within schooling emerged.

A second benefit of a micro-level researcher and teacher collaboration is the mutual assistance that can occur. As researcher, my needs were one driven by inquiry whereas Grace's needs included assistance preparing the classroom, guiding students through independent work, and problem-solving through lesson planning. By breaking free from our typically siloed conditions (observing and teaching), we had the ability to think aloud with one another in order to build multiplicity in both our work.

Acknowledgment of Participant(s)' Truths

Researchers must be conscientious of the demands of participant(s) and balance individual needs in respect to participants' realities. Acknowledging the lived realities of participants as well as their truths within an inquiry's methodological approach is the second recommendation. For example, Institutional Review Boards have clear guidelines regarding protection of research participants including minimization of risk, equitable selection, informed consent, monitoring of identifiable data, and, when necessary, protection of rights and welfare. What I found in this inquiry is that the specific context of an inquiry reveals more nuanced ethical considerations beyond that of review boards. Within this inquiry the participant was an educator so the following recommendations will be positioned from her specific context. However, the basic ethical principles would apply to any research participant.

Educators, like Grace, are constantly being asked to negotiate schooling expectations within their lived realities. Educators must daily navigate the demand of the profession both historically and socio-politically with that of their own ideologies and student and teacher power relationships. Historically there are established truth regimes such as developmentalism and neoliberalism that function within educational policies at

the federal, state, and district levels. Socio-politically there are socially constructed notions of schooling, learning, and the teacher and student relationship. Furthermore, the daily deluge of an ever-changing landscape within a school building and classroom poise additional realities within the life of educators. All these components merge into the pedagogical decisions Grace and other educators make, resulting in discursive enactments.

With the above understanding and as an educator myself and a friend and colleague of Grace, I felt a great responsibility in how I represented her as an educator. I understood that my words would never fully represent Grace's reality or that of the children in her classroom or all the power relations at play. The retelling I did in this dissertation reflects my personal interpretations. Therefore, when there was dissonance in Grace's discourses and practices I attempted to not disavow, but rather listen and reflect on these dichotomies theoretically and as a practitioner. I did not point to inconsistencies in order to discredit or refute Grace's reality. Rather, the times that Grace's words and practices were in conflict illustrated, to me, Foucault's conception that the agentic subject does not work in isolation but within a historically and socio-politically constructed context. These contradictions, instead, reflected, for me, the multiplicity of thinking within power relations - schooling and the truth regimes that flow both through and around Grace.

Instead of focusing on the origin of power, but rather its effects, I produced new ways of thinking, being, and doing within schooling. For example, I brought into conversation those more apparent power sources, such as hierarchical structures, that placed expectations on both Grace and the students with the notion that Grace and the

students themselves are sources of power. Furthermore, from a post-structuralist viewpoint, I contend that in order to challenge truth regimes multiple truths must be considered. As a form of ethical consideration, I challenge all researchers to acknowledge (not necessarily accept) the truths and lived realities of their participant(s) no matter how contrary. Additionally, I encourage researchers to ethically question their choices and what they ask of their participants not solely based on review board policies but also in relationship with their participant(s) truths.

Inquiry Playbook

One of the benefits of the methodological approach I took, and a recommendation I want to posit, is an inquiry playbook which afforded fluidity in practice without completely unraveling the inquiry. Researchers approach projects with specific expectations. I too entered the field with a vision of what may come. To be prepared in an ever-changing environment fraught with interruptions and a world that does not pause so research can conclude, being a creative and thoughtful researcher was key. One such creative production was a playbook of potential activities for data production with my participant (see Appendix E for the playbook). Instead of formally constructing a timeline for these activities to take place, I allowed the field work to dictate data production. This process allowed me to be present within the moments of the inquiry process and provided quick pivot options when necessary. Furthermore, coupled with acknowledging my participant's lived reality, I was able to develop more feasible and creative makings of data that did not disrupt my participant's life or that of the children in her classroom. This type of analytical tool fit well within my emerging poststructural paradigm inviting a

multiplicity of thought versus one formulated solely by the researcher and is recommended for similar inquiries.

Contributions/Recommendations: Working with Foucault

Thinking with Foucauldian concepts produced constructions of children that not only reified genealogically delineated educational truth regimes, but also unveiled space to think of power/knowledge differently within the context of schooling. By looking closely at Grace's discourse and discursive formations in relationship to truth regimes Foucault's concepts of power relations and agency emerged. Educational research, as described in Chapter 2, argues that the presumed inevitability of agential control over children by educators, although very much present due to hierarchical controls and sociopolitical constructions of schooling, it is not absolute (Barton & Tan, 2010; Caiman & Lundgård, 2014; Mashford-Scott & Church, 2011; Roth et al., 2004). As stated in Chapter 2, research points to children possessing agency in schooling structures and its coinciding hierarchical relationships (Dorner, 2009; Dorner & Layton, 2014; Siry, Wilmes, & Huas, 2016; Tilly, 1991). Within this inquiry, Grace and the students consistently produced creative acts within the classroom. These acts were not autonomous. Rather they were in relation to one another within the socially constructed background of schooling.

Educational policy and processes are often believed to be a top-down hierarchical power placed on both educators and children essentially (de)centering them as agential subjects (Rainio, 2008; Rajala, et al., 2016; Siry, Wilmes, & Haus, 2016). However, through a Foucauldian lens, Grace and the students are not merely benign objects being acted upon. Whether or not Grace and the students were aware of their agential power is

not known based on this inquiry. But what this inquiry does provoke and contribute to theory such as agency and power, is that power/knowledge structures within education are not impermeable. Applying Foucault's notion of power relations, the linear mapping of power becomes less concrete once we zoom into individual classrooms and subjects. Power/knowledge enters, is exercised, and has its effects not despite subjects but because of subjects. So, as stated at the end of Chapter 4, this inquiry encourages a thinking with Foucault through a both/and lens. Can power/knowledge be hierarchical and relational? How do the tensions of context, materiality, and subjects (re)produce power/knowledge circumstantially? In answering the analytical questioning around power/knowledge and agency the theory of education becomes less rooted within hierarchical nature of structures and people but rather a questioning of how structures and people relationally circulate power/knowledge. This inquiry, in questioning how children and childhoods are constructed found that the constructions are relational and that within the tensions there is possibility to (re)think constructions.

Closing Thoughts

Educators may be constructing children in isolation behind their classroom doors but there are many contributing discursive formations that play a role. In Chapter 2, I explained how the philosophies of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau created a hegemonic understanding of children removed from adults. This understanding has been and continues to push developmental discourse which requires adults to intervene in the growth of children. Locke's ideals such as "empty vessels" and the educator as the "gatekeeper of knowledge" is a pedagogy that is present through neoliberal policies

within schooling that focuses on standardized curriculums and achievement testing (Apple, 2014; Freire, 2002; Giroux & Giroux, 2006).

Once the veil of uncritical action is lifted and the why of schooling is (re)established from multiple lenses there can be a (re)imagining of education where children are active participants; beyond doers of tasks to framers of their own learning and move from a space of children as incomplete. Learning within public education is a fluid process dependent on so many variables. If children are only seen through one lens, opportunities are missed to really develop new pathways that can substantially change education. “Discursive change, whether social, political, or cultural, can therefore be effected only when an entire community, not just an individual, changes its ways of thinking and knowing, speaking and doing” (Kumaravadivelu, 1999, p. 460). Schooling can be and should be understood as both a space of social reproduction and a space for radical transformation.

Although this is intended to be a conclusion, it is not the end of thinking around the multiplicity of schooling and subjectivity within schooling. Rather, these are the last words before the next precipice. For Grace, this inquiry was a place of deep introspection and problem-solving. When I entered the field with Grace her next large endeavor was a district mandate to switch to standard-referenced grading (SRG), which focuses specifically on proficiency through grade-level and district wide proficiency scales. Grace and I discussed how the district were attempting to be more intentional in their grading practices, albeit still tied to standards. The burden in visual arts for Grace is attempting to collect artwork for 600 plus students in order to show growth and learning on each standard. It was our intention to work together in developing mechanisms for

Grace to produce a more agential classroom within this new directive. Moving to SRG would require a huge ideological shift for educators and parents in the district especially since the grading scale is 1 to 4 reflecting levels of proficiency rather than based on a percentage. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic the Travers School District has determined to pull back from SRG implementation to focus on issues around safety and different learning models. Myself, I was looking for an academic teaching and research position. However, the pandemic changed the landscape of college and university's departments and hiring practices. Instead I applied to return to public school, and I will, like Grace, be headed back into the classroom in the middle of a pandemic. As an individual that values a continuous questioning around ideology and practice, I intend to turn this inquiry's overarching question into an auto-ethnographic journey as I battle the multiple complexities of teaching in a public school during a time of crisis. Furthermore, I will continue to utilize a thinking with theory approach to my work as well as the paradigm of the new sociology of childhood.

This inquiry does not finalize thought or produce a definitive inference. Nor was this inquiry the beginning of new thought. This inquiry occurred in the middle of a content area that is pocked full of academic craters. As Foucault stated, "to show that things are not as self-evident as one believed, to see that which is accepted as self-evident will no longer be accepted as such…since as soon as one can no longer think things as one formerly thought them, transformation becomes both very urgent, very difficult and quite possible" (as cited in Moss, 2006, p. 128). Our society has a very defined understanding of schooling and construction of those within schools. Socio-politically U.S. public education is still very much tethered to a neoliberal lens regarding schooling

toward economic gain. What if we as educators and researchers challenged these constructions? How could it be different?

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Appendix A

A History of Missouri Assessment and Accountability

Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE). (2018a). *A history of Missouri assessment and accountability*. Retrieved from https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/A-Missouri-History-of-Assessment-and-Accountablity-2018.pdf.

1978 BEST Test testing begins

1985 Excellence in Education Act mandates the development of criterion referenced tests in core content

1987 Missouri Mastery Achievement Testing (MMAT) grades 2-10 begins

1991 Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) 1 Begins

1993 Outstanding Schools Act mandates development of process and content standards, primarily performance-based assessment of student progress toward standards

1996 MSIP 2 Begins

1996 Show Me Standards implemented

1997 MAP testing begins with math in first year, English language arts follows a year later (1998) (grade span testing)

2001 MSIP 3 Begins

2001 Federal Requirements for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) begins, with new testing and reporting requirements

2004 Grade Level Expectations implemented

2006 MSIP 4 Begins

2005 MAP testing expands in MA, ELA grade level testing (response to NCLB)

2007 Course level standards written for high school content by Missouri educators

2009 End of Course (EOC) assessment testing begins

2010 State Board adopts common core state standards as a requirement to apply for Race to the Top funds allocated under NCLB

2012 MSIP 5 Begins

2015 Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium testing begins

2015 State legislature passes HB 1490 requiring Missouri to develop their own academic standards (Missouri Learning Standards) and their own assessments aligned to these standards

2016 Missouri Learning Standards (MLS) implemented to replace common core state standards

2016 Assessments from leased item pool aligned to college and career readiness from Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) utilized to bridge gap from SBAC to new MAP assessments

2016 ESSA begins (does not require any changes to MO assessment program)

2018 New assessments in math and English language arts based on implementation of the Missouri Learning Standards, field tests in science (grade level and end-of-course)

2019 Administration of new science assessments in 2019, field test in social studies

2020 Administration of new social studies assessment

Appendix B

IRB Guardian Notification Letter

Hello. This letter is to inform you that your child's teacher, Grace (pseudonym), has agreed to voluntarily participate in a study. This study aims to understand the ways children are constructed in schools based on spoken and written discourse and educational practices around academic achievement. I am, Sarah Hairston, the doctoral student from the College of Education at the University of Missouri-Columbia that will be conducting the study.

I will be sitting in on one section of Grace's 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade classes each week from January 6th, 2020 through March 13th, 2020. I will be observing Grace's interactions with the students in these classes and writing down my observations. No alteration or interruption will be made to the curriculum or curricular activities of the students within Grace's class. No video or photographs will be taken of your child. Student's classroom work may be photographed for data but will not contain any identifiable details to link the student to the work. Students will not be interviewed, their grades will not be accessed, and they will not be identifiable in the study's findings.

If you have a question about this study at any time, you can contact me, Sarah Hairston, at @missouri.edu. You may also contact my University advisor Dr. Lisa Dorner at @missouri.edu or by calling ###. If you want to talk privately about your child's rights or any issues related to their participation in this study, you can contact University of Missouri Research Participant Advocacy by calling 888-280-5002 (a free call), or emailing MUResearchRPA@missouri.edu.

Thank you, Sarah L. Hairston

Appendix C

IRB Oral Participant Consent Script

I invite you to take part in activities that involve research. You are being asked to allow the researcher to observe your interactions with students between January 6th, 2020 through March 13th, 2020. This includes three hours of observation a week during one section of your regularly scheduled 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade classes. You are also being asked to partake in weekly one-hour long debriefs that will involve informal conversations regarding what the researcher observed for the week. Additionally, you are asked to memo your thinking post the debrief for extended exploration. There are no foreseen risks for participating in this study. Participation is voluntary. If at any time you no longer want to participate in the study please send written notification to the researcher, Sarah L. Hairston, at @missouri.edu. Choosing to opt-out of the study, at any time, will not result in adverse penalty or loss.

Appendix D

Classroom Observation Template

Principal Investigator: Sarah L. Hairston

Observation Number: **Date of Observation:**

Class Section: **Time In/Out:**

Inquiry Questions

How does one U.S. educator construct children and childhood within our historical and sociopolitical context?

1. How does one U.S. educator reify or disrupt discourses regarding academic achievement through their constructions of children and childhood and discursive practices?
2. How does thinking about the historical and sociopolitical discourses and discursive practices regarding the construction of children and childhood through Foucauldian concepts produce new ways of thinking?

Key:

Artifacts Collected:

Descriptive Data: (Physical setting and participant demographics)

Observation:

- Discourse (i.e. utterances and text)
- Discursive formation (i.e. specific statements)
- Discursive practices (i.e. pedagogies)

Appendix E

Field Work Playbook

Principal Investigator: Sarah L. Hairston

Inquiry Questions

How does one U.S. educator construct children and childhood within our historical and sociopolitical context?

1. How do U.S. educators reify or disrupt discourses regarding academic achievement through their constructions of children and childhood and discursive practices?
2. How does thinking about the historical and sociopolitical discourses and discursive practices regarding the construction of children and childhood through Foucauldian concepts produce new ways of thinking?

Journaling

The educator is asked to use the provided physical journal to record her thinking, reflections, and questions as it pertains to the inquiry. The inquirer will also utilize the journal to leave prompts and answer questions, as needed. The journal will remain in the educator's classroom for easy access.

Scavenger Hunt

The educator is asked to think about what tools she utilizes to guide her ideology and practices around academic achievement. These tools could be policies, practices, and/or industry standards. The tools can be from a federal, state, district, building, profession, and/or individual level. The educator is then to use these tools to build a visual road map of how the documents are constructing her pedagogical practices.

Blackout Poetry

Utilizing documents that are identified as guiding enactments of ideology and practices around academic achievement the educator is to organically engage in one cycle of blackout poetry by isolating salient words and blacking out all others. Next, take the isolated words and place them in a sequential order to construct a poem. Read the poem aloud. Reflect.

Conversations Around Theory

Based on weekly observations and memoing the inquirer will pull quotes from theoretical readings around Foucauldian concepts, developmentalism, and neoliberalism as weekly focal points. How the educator interacts with the readings will be determined by what is happening in the class. For example, if the class is working on still life drawings the educator is to take the reading and create a still life image inspired from the reading.

Collage: Thinking through Art

Using the below prompts the inquirer and educator are to make visual their thinking in one collaborative collage. The inquirer and educator should allow their thinking to collide, interact, and reshape their creative expressions. Additionally, any artifacts from the inquiry can be utilize in the collage.

- Inquirer prompt: Power/knowledge produce truth regimes that standardize how children are essentialized within public schooling. However, children are not merely innate objects being acted upon. Children, in relationship to their socialized backgrounds, are agential beings. How does this thinking through Foucauldian concepts open new pathways for what schooling is and how schooling is done?
- Educator prompt: How have your interactions between discourse and discursive practices around academic achievement during this inquiry reify and/or disrupt truth regimes?

Appendix F

Blackout Poetry

Principal Investigator: Sarah L. Hairston

Blackout Poetry Prompt

Utilizing documents identified as guiding enactments of academics and achievement, organically engage in one cycle of blackout poetry by isolating words. Isolate words that evoke something within you or are salient to your pedagogical choices. Next, take the isolated words and place them in a sequential order to construct a poem.

Guiding Tools

Guiding tools, as identified by Grace, included district priority standards and the district's teacher evaluation indicators acquired from the Network for Teacher Effectiveness.

Figure 19

Blacking out of third grade district issued priority standards produced by Grace (February 10, 2020):

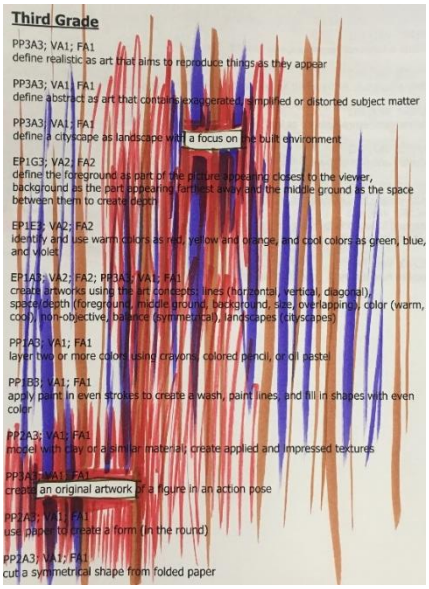


Figure 6

Blacking out of fourth grade district issued priority standards produced by Grace

(February 10, 2020):

Figure 17

Blacking out of fifth grade district issued priority standards produced by Grace

(February 10, 2020):

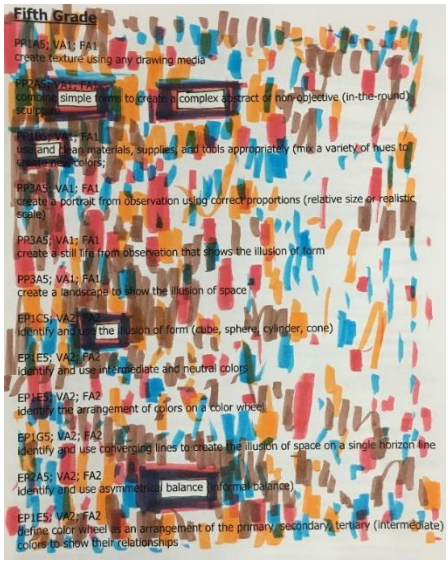


Figure 19

Blacking out of NEE indicator 4.1 by Grace (February 10, 2020):

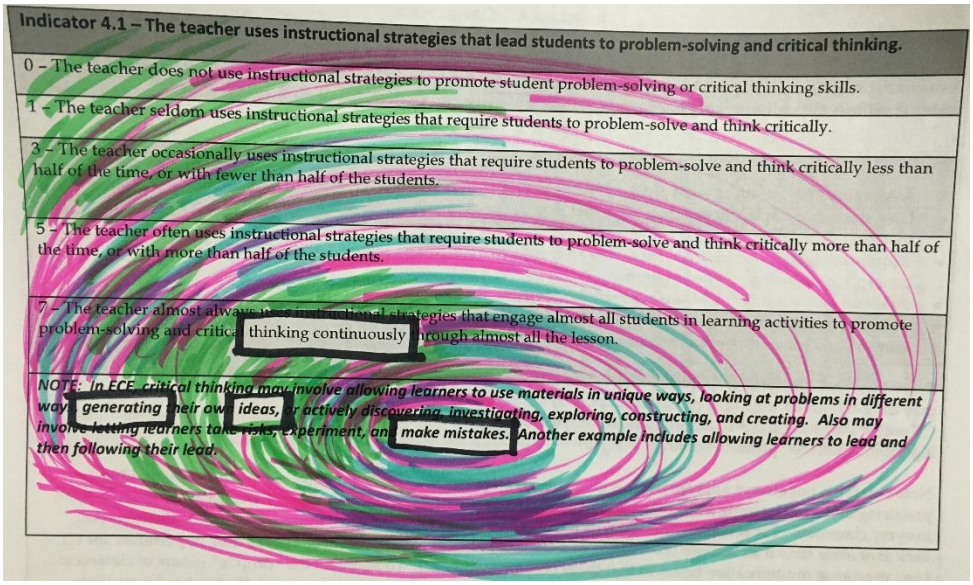


Figure 20

Blacking out of NEE indicator 5.3b by Grace (February 10, 2020):

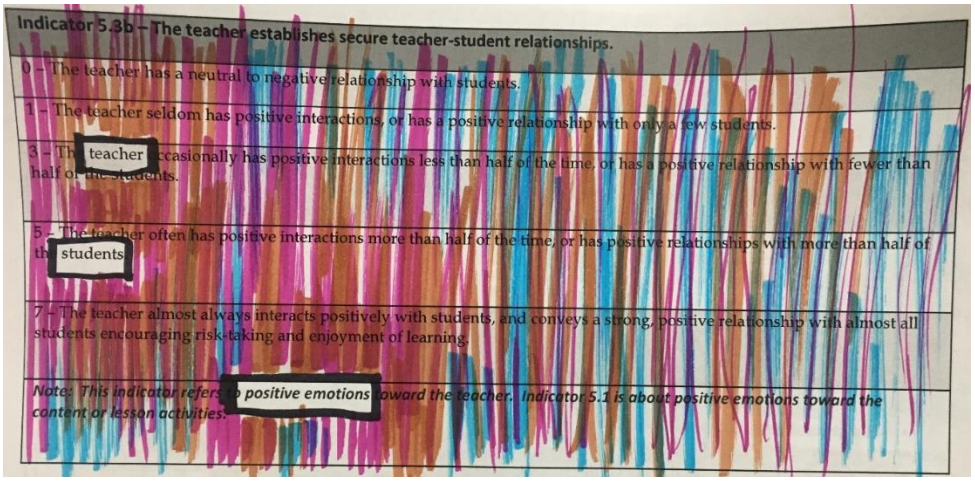
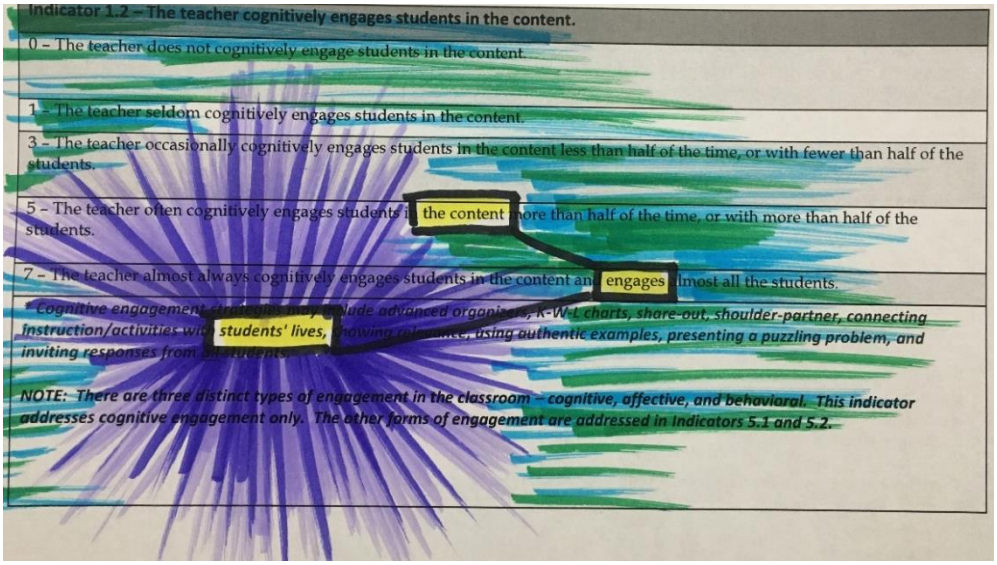


Figure 21

Blacking out of NEE indicator 7.4 by Grace (February 10, 2020):

Figure 22

Blacking out of NEE indicator 1.2 by Grace (February 10, 2020):



The poetry produced follows with all the original formatting from Grace's submitted document. All punctuation is from Grace and not carried over from the documents themselves (blackout poetry, February 10, 2020):

Teacher

Thinking continuously

Positive emotions

Identify,

create,

and define;

The content engages student's lives?

Tailored to individual learners?

On-the-spot assessment of learning?

Student

Generating ideas

Making mistakes

focused on an original artwork

Simple, complex

and the balance

Appendix G

Travers School District – Visual Art Priority Standards by Grade Level

This list was given to me by Grace (January 10, 2020) which I converted to a table. Listed are the codes for the visual art strand, the code for the corresponding National Standard, the code for the corresponding Show-Me Standard, and the district priority standard.

Table 5

Travers School District's visual arts priority standards for third, fourth, and fifth grade

Third Grade			
Strand	**National**	**State**	**Learning Expectation**
PP3A3	VA1	FA1	define realistic as art that aims to reproduce things as they appear
PP3A3	VA1	FA1	define abstract as art that contains exaggerated, simplified or distorted subject matter
PP3A3	VA1	FA1	define a cityscape as landscape with a focus on the built environment
EP1G3	VA2	FA2	define the foreground as part of the picture appearing closest to the viewer, background as the part appearing farthest away and the middle ground as the space between them to create depth
EP1E3	VA2	FA2	identify and use warm colors as red, yellow and orange, and cool colors as green, blue, and violet
EP1A3 PP3A3	VA2 VA1	FA2 FA1	create artworks using the art concepts: lines (horizontal, vertical, diagonal), space/depth (foreground, middle ground, background, size, overlapping), color (warm, cool), non-objective, balance (symmetrical), landscapes (cityscapes)
PP1A3	VA1	FA1	layer two or more colors using crayons, colored pencil, or oil pastel
PP1B3	VA1	FA1	apply paint in even strokes to create a wash, paint lines, and fill in shapes with even color
PP2A3	VA1	FA1	model with clay or a similar material; create applied and impressed textures
PP3A3	VA1	FA1	create an original artwork of a in an action pose
PP2A3	VA1	FA1	use paper to create a form (in the round)
PP2A3	VA1	FA1	cut a symmetrical shape from folded paper
PP3B3	VA1	FA1	create a container (paper box, clay pot, fiber basket)
EP1C3	VA2	FA2	define sculpture in-the-round as freestanding sculpture, completed on all sides
EP2A3	VA2	FA2	define symmetrical balance as that in which two sides are the same (mirror image)
EP1C3	VA2	FA2	identify and demonstrate in-the-round in reproductions and student works
EP1B3	VA2	FA2	differentiate between shapes and forms
HC1B3	VA4	FA5	respond to artworks by comparing and contrasting all of the following: media, meaning, subject matter, value, space, theme, purpose , place
IC2A3	VA6	FA4	explain how the math principle of symmetry is used in art

Table 5 (continued)

Travers School District Visual Arts Priority Standards for grades third, fourth, and fifth

Fourth Grade			
Strand	**National**	**State**	**Learning Expectation**
EP2F4	VA2	FA2	identify facial features and the relative proportions of each
PP3A4	VA1	FA1	
PP2A4	VA1	FA1	create a relief sculpture
PP3A4	VA1	FA1	create artworks using the art concept of facial proportions
PP1B4	VA1	FA1	apply watercolor paint using the wet on wet technique
PP3A4	VA1	FA1	create an abstract portrait and still life by exaggerating, distorting, or simplifying the subject
PP3A4	VA1	FA1	create an original seascape
EP1G4	VA2	FA2	identify and use positive and negative space
EP2A4	VA2	FA2	identify and use radial balance
PP1D4	VA1	FA1	define weaving as decorative art made by interlocking one material into other materials
PP1D4	VA1	FA1	create a fiber weaving using a loom
EP1C4	VA2	FA2	define relief sculpture as sculpture that is flat on the back, and three-dimensional on the front
PP1A4	VA1	FA1	create light, medium, and dark values using pencil
EP1C4	VA2	FA2	define form as a three-dimensional object
EP2C4	VA2	FA2	identify and create tints and shades using tempera paint
PP1B4	VA1	FA1	
PP2A4	VA1	FA1	model with clay or a similar material; make organic forms
EP1C4	VA2	FA2	

Fifth Grade			
Strand	**National**	**State**	**Learning Expectation**
PP1A5	VA1	FA1	create texture using any drawing media
PP2A5	VA1	FA1	combine simple forms to create a complex abstract or non-objective (in-the-round) sculpture
PP1B5	VA1	FA1	use and clean materials, supplies, and tools appropriately (mix a variety of hues to create new colors;
PP3A5	VA1	FA1	create a portrait from observation using correct proportions (relative size or realistic scale)
PP3A5	VA1	FA1	create a still life from observation that shows the illusion of form
PP3A5	VA1	FA1	create a landscape to show the illusion of space
EP1C5	VA2	FA2	identify and use the illusion of form (cube, sphere, cylinder, cone)
EP1E5	VA2	FA2	identify and use intermediate and neutral colors
EP1E5	VA2	FA2	identify the arrangement of colors on a color wheel
EP1G5	VA2	FA2	identify and use converging lines to create the illusion of space on a single horizon line
EP2A5	VA2	FA2	identify and use asymmetrical balance (informal balance)
EP1E5	VA2	FA2	define color wheel as an arrangement of the primary, secondary, tertiary (intermediate) colors to show their relationships

VITA

Sarah L. Hairston has always been a consummate learner. Sarah graduated with a B.S. in Speech and Theatre from Culver-Stockton College. She continued her education at the University of Missouri, graduating with a M.Ed. in Learning, Teaching and Curriculum with a secondary emphasis through the fellowship program. She then went on to complete an Ed.S. in PK-12 Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis before pursuing a doctorate in philosophy. For the past two decades Sarah has shared her passion for learning through teaching speech and theatre for all grade levels in the public, private, academy and college settings. Through the fine arts, Sarah seeks to help others find their voice. Through her research, Sarah seeks to eliminate structural violence that creates inequitable schooling and affects the spirit of the learner and educator.