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By Margaret E Wu

Entitled

PREGNANCY IN THE CLASSROOM

For the degree of Master of Science in Education

Is approved by the final examining committee:

Tara Star Johnson

Chair

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Jake Burdick

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Approved by Major Professor(s): Tara Star Johnson

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PREGNANCY IN THE CLASSROOM

Master's Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of

Purdue University

by

Margaret E. Wu

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

of

Masters of Science in Education

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West Lafayette, Indiana

For my husband, Ning Wu. Thank you for your love, support, and sacrifice.

You are still worth a hundred cows.

And for our beautiful baby boy, Taotao, who gave me the idea for this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the lived experiences of four high school teachers who have taught while they were pregnant. The teachers' experiences are contextualized within a feminist psychoanalytic theoretical framework. Current maternity leave policy in the United States and popular culture texts provide additional contextualization for the women's experiences.

PREGNANCY IN THE CLASSROOM

The topic of this thesis came to me early in the first semester of graduate school. It was the beginning of November, less than a week after my thirty-fourth birthday and days after I learned I was pregnant. It was a typical dark Midwestern late afternoon turning to evening, and I was sitting in a cold basement classroom of the building where most of the education classes at my university are taught. Even though the infusion of hormones that accompanies pregnancy was already making me more nauseous and fatigued than I knew was possible, I was not thinking of the sources of my nausea and fatigue. The new life which was, mere days before, nothing more than a long-held and wild hope for a beloved child, was still a bit of an abstract concept for me wrapped within intense love and longing. Instead, I was thinking of the professor who was teaching the class that I was sitting in. What would it be like to be in her place feeling the way I did at that moment? I thought to myself, regardless of gender or profession, everyone has had to power through days at work when they¹ were feeling ill, but teaching while pregnant was a bit different from simply going to work while sick. Pregnancy, I was just discovering, can be a time when a woman can just feel “off” for long periods of time.

¹ Although “they” is grammatically incorrect here, I have used it due to the absence of an accepted gender-neutral third person singular pronoun.

Teaching, especially at the secondary and elementary levels, is a profession where one has to be “on” for hours with few breaks, making “toughing it out” untenable.

The professor whose class I was in is a top researcher in her field, and I was in my first semester of graduate school with no aspirations toward academia. Then I realized that if I were not in graduate school, I would be teaching English in a local high school, and suddenly an idea emerged that would become the work you are reading now. I wanted to know how teachers, specifically these women whose place I could possibly be in, resolve the tension of bringing their children into the world while simultaneously preparing other people’s children for the adult world. So, I decided to conduct a small qualitative research study examining the lived experiences of those who teach while pregnant. After interviewing four teachers, I then examined their narratives in the context of feminist psychoanalytic theory, popular culture, and the law. What follows is the result of my modest inquiry.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, I will discuss the work that guided this inquiry. The theoretical backbone upon which this thesis rests is the scholarship of Julia Kristeva and Madeleine Grumet. Both women draw heavily from psychoanalysis, which is not a coincidence. It is my personal belief that, for all of its imperfections, psychoanalytic theory speaks to the deepest truths of human existence. What follows is a discussion of their work as it pertains to pregnant teachers.

Kristeva's Abjection

When I first started to ask how pregnancy would impact teachers' practice, my thinking was very much focused on the physical aspect of that practice, on how a woman's body is affected by pregnancy. Reading the work of literary theorist and feminist Julia Kristeva made me begin to consider how others are affected, or feel they are affected, by the presence of a pregnant body. I devote the remainder of this section to a brief exploration of how Kristeva's conception of abjection fits within the traditional subject/object dynamic of psychoanalysis and how she identifies the abject with the maternal. Others have expanded upon Kristeva's work and applied to other contexts, such as film and literary criticism, but it is her source material that is most relevant to the material in this study. For that reason, I refer only to Kristeva's work.

In *Powers of Horror*, Kristeva (1982) inserts the concept of the abject into the traditional psychoanalytic relationship between the subject and the object. The abject, or

abjection, is a state in which the distinction between that which exists as a part of oneself, the subject, and that which exists outside of the self, the object, is blurred or lost. The abject can be experienced at the most basic level, Kristeva theorizes, with “food loathing” (pp. 2-3). For Kristeva, however, “Food becomes abject only if it is a border between two distinct entities or territories. A boundary between nature and culture, between the human and the nonhuman” (p. 75). Kristeva uses the image of a thin skin on top of milk offered to her from her parents as child to illustrate this lowest form of abjection. The skin signifies a separation from her parents, a separation that she does not welcome. Thus, the skin becomes abject.

The corpse, in Kristeva’s (1982) description, is the height of abjection. It is important here to remember that Kristeva is speaking literally of a corpse, and not using the word as a metaphor for death. To that point, she writes, “In the presence of signified death – a flat encephalograph, for instance – I would understand, react, or accept of death” (p. 3). In between food loathing and the corpse there are many ways to experience the abject. Waste products, like blood, excrement, urine, and vomit are all abject. However, these fluids do not reach the level of abjection of the corpse due to one distinction. In the process of excreting or spewing these fluids from the body, the subject, the body, removes itself from these abject substances, and continues to survive as something distinct from those products. A corpse indicates, as the following passage states, a complete removal of the subject: “If dung signifies the other side of the border, the place where I am not and which permits me to be, the corpse, the most sickening of wastes, is a border that has encroached upon everything. It is no longer I who expel. ‘I’ is expelled” (pp. 3-4).

Abjection is not limited to the unclean or the unhealthy, however. The abject can be found wherever identity, system, and order are disturbed (p. 4). In this way, abjection is constructed on a sociocultural level, as what constitutes disruptions of identity, system, and order vary across time and place. Through references to various works of classical literature and diverse cultures, Kristeva (1982) returns again and again to this theme of the sociocultural context of abjection. For example, she discusses certain rituals performed around cooking food in India and Polynesia. If these rituals are not performed properly, the cooked food can be as abject as excrement (p. 75). Additionally, she notes that for the Brahmin caste of India, food remains can be considered abject (p. 76). These examples around food practices and abjection illustrate the idea that what is considered abject is often dependent upon time and place. Brahmins do not exist outside of an India functioning under a caste system, so that example of abjection belongs to a very specific time and place. All cultures have their own notions of what types of food handling practices, if ignored, can lead to abjection.

In addition to the aforementioned sites of abjection, Kristeva (1982) also explores the mother-child relationship as another site of abjection. This should not be surprising given her background as a psychoanalyst in the tradition of Jacques Lacan². Among most strands of psychoanalysis, one of the key struggles of the subject is to differentiate

² What this means is that instead of adhering to the psychoanalytic categories and terminology of Freud, she uses the terminology of Lacan, who expanded upon and modified Freud's original conception of psychoanalysis. Further, Kristeva, in this work and in her body of work as a whole, has made critiques of and modifications to Lacan's notion of psychoanalysis. For more on the relationship between Lacan's and Kristeva's conceptions of psychoanalysis consult Chapter 1 of Beardsworth's (2004) *Julia Kristeva: Psychoanalysis and Modernity*. Albany, New York: SUNY Press.

oneself from the mother. With Kristeva's insertion of the abject into the traditional psychoanalytic paradigm of identity development, the mother becomes abject in the child's struggle to assert her subjectivity over her mother's subjectivity (pp. 12-13). On this struggle she writes,

The abject confronts us, on the other hand, and this time within our personal archeology, with our earliest attempts to release the hold of *maternal* entity even before ex-isting outside of her, thanks to the autonomy of language. It is a violent, clumsy breaking away, with the constant risk of falling back under the sway of a power as securing as it is stifling. (p. 13)

Kristeva asserts that taboos and rituals, particularly those of a religious nature, are an attempt to thwart the encroachment of the maternal abject:

This is precisely where we encounter the rituals of defilement and their derivatives, which based on the feeling of abjection and all converging on the maternal, attempt to symbolize the other threat to the subject: that of being swamped by the dual relationship, thereby risking the loss not of a part (castration) but of the totality of his living being. The function of these religious rituals is to ward off the subject's fear of his very own identity sinking irretrievably into the mother. (p. 64)

The rituals of defilement are focused on purifying the subject against two types of contamination, excremental and menstrual. Excremental contaminants are threats to the self from outside while menstrual contaminants are threats to the self from inside. Although both types of contamination can be associated with the maternal, only the menstrual can be exclusively associated with the maternal. For that reason, my focus and

interest in Kristeva's work in the context of teachers working while pregnant is with the menstrual. In contrasting the nature of the two categories of pollutant, Kristeva (1982) writes,

Menstrual blood, on the contrary stands for the danger issuing from within the identity (social or sexual); it threatens the relationship between the sexes within a social aggregate and, through internalization, the identity of each sex in the face of sexual difference. (p. 71)

Here it is important to note that Kristeva (1982) does not explicitly categorize breast milk or amniotic fluid, bodily fluids of particular interest to this study, as excremental or menstrual. One can argue reasonably, based on the entirety of Kristeva's text, that breast milk and amniotic fluid are menstrual as they are both bodily fluids meant to be internalized as sources of nourishment for the unborn and newborn child. Later in the text Kristeva will argue that "the cult of the virgin" is an attempt by patriarchal powers to obfuscate the power of the maternal, a power which is firmly established through the nourishment that only mothers can provide through these fluids. Although breast milk, amniotic fluid, and menstrual blood all have polluting value, Kristeva notes that not all bodily fluids have polluting value. Specifically, she notes that tears and semen are not considered polluting, although they originate from the body. These fluids do not cause the threat to the traditional subject/object relationship that other fluids can. This contrast between fluids produced exclusively by women and fluids produced exclusively by men is particularly relevant to this study given the composition of the teaching workforce.

In establishing the mother-child relationship as a site of abjection and identifying menstrual blood as a category of pollutant that threatens identity from the inside, Kristeva

(1982) lays the groundwork for an interrogation, through examples from literature ranging from the Bible to Dostoyevsky, of patriarchal systems that seek to purify the society as a whole from corrupting female influences. In the end, society must identify the maternal as abject and protect against or risk losing its identity, its structure.

To illustrate how Kristeva (1982) uses literary examples to support her interrogation of patriarchal systems, consider this example. Kristeva devotes a significant portion of Chapter 4, "Semiotics of Biblical Abomination," to a single book of the Bible, Leviticus. In particular, she discusses Chapter 12 and notes an interesting feature of that chapter. In between discussions of food prohibitions and procedures for dealing with the sick, Kristeva notes, is a discussion of how to respond to a mother's body post childbirth (p. 99). She is concerned with Leviticus's prescriptions for post birth purifying rituals differ depending on the sex of the baby. When a woman gives birth to a daughter, she must perform a ritual to purify herself. She will be considered unclean for two weeks and must provide a burnt offering to purify herself. When she gives birth to a son, however, it is the son who must be purified. His link to the maternal must be severed through circumcision. He has been defiled. This literary support that Kristeva offers is perhaps the exemplar of how patriarchal systems view the feminine as abject and seek to purify themselves against it. The feminine is so abject that once it comes into the world that which she is most intimately connected must be purified for bringing something so abject to into the world. For mothers and daughters, it is chain of interconnected links of abjection, defilement, and purification. For mothers and sons, the chain is broken once he is purified from the abjection associated with his mother's femininity.

Grumet and Mother/Teachers

To go back once again to my personal interest in this topic, the questions regarding teaching and pregnancy that were on my mind when I sat as a pregnant student in my class so long ago were directly related to Madeleine Grumet's work on the relationship between motherhood and teaching, the private and the public. I soon came to believe that any inquiry into the professional and personal lives of women who teach while pregnant must draw upon Grumet's scholarship. For that reason, this work is informed primarily, and by necessity, Grumet's (1988) seminal text, *Bitter Milk*, which presents a feminist theory of curriculum that is also influenced by psychoanalytic theory, in particular the work of Nancy Chodorow. Though Grumet doesn't explicitly state it in her text, she most likely chose Chodorow because she is a feminist sociologist and psychoanalyst who has written much on gender and gender theory, including a text entitled *Reproduction of Mothering*.³

While *Bitter Milk* taken in its entirety is certainly relevant to this inquiry, it is the first part of the book (chapters one through three) that is most relevant to the condition of teaching while pregnant. I will pay special attention to first chapter, entitled "Conception, Contradiction, and Curriculum," as this is where Grumet outlines her thesis and theoretical underpinning. She starts with a reference to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's pioneering work with embodiment. Referring to Merleau-Ponty's embodiment theory, Grumet (1988) writes, "[h]e called it knowledge in the hand and knowledge in the feet. It

³ For more information on Chodorow's influence on Grumet, consult Chapter 5 of Taubman, P. (2012). *Disavowed knowledge: Psychoanalysis, education, and teaching*. New York, NY: Routledge.

is also in the womb” (p. 9). It is in this fashion that she introduces the central theme of the text—reproduction—which she discusses in three senses: the biological, the ideological, and the critical. In the biological sense, she uses the term “reproduction” as one might expect, in reference to the process of human reproduction. In the ideological sense reproduction refers to Grumet’s assertion that parents and teachers, consciously or subconsciously, are engaged in reproduction of their beliefs, knowledge, values, and ideologies in the relationships with their children or students. Reproduction in the critical sense is Grumet’s synthesis of the biological and ideological senses of the word. In this sense the term refers to a production, or (re)production, of a new curriculum that is informed by the epistemologies a mother/teacher has gained through her dual identities as a teacher, who reproduces in the ideological sense of the word and a mother, who reproduces in the biological sense of the word. Here it should be noted that Grumet pays special attention to the tension that can emerge from a mother/teacher’s reproduction in the ideological sense. It is in the capacity in which she acts an intermediary between the men and children in her care, be they students or progeny. The tension lies in the fact that often the ideology the teacher/mother must transmit in her role as a teacher is patriarchal, reproducing the status quo of male hegemony.

Grumet (1988) turns to psychoanalytic theory, particularly object relations theory, to fully explain the source of this tension. Grumet argues that there are paternal and maternal ways of knowing and that these ways of knowing must necessarily be quite different because the nature of maternity and paternity is very different. Grumet uses the Freudian term “pre oedipal” to refer to the early stages of psychoanalytic development in her discussion. In this stage, the mother and child relationship begins with a physical

bond, which cannot be denied. Even after the physical bond is broken through the process of giving birth, the mother-child relationship remains extremely close as the relationship in this stage is marked by interdependence and attachment. In this stage, however, the relationship with the father is more detached and can be called into question. The mother and child, in the child's early stages of psychoanalytic development before she or he breaks away from the mother, are a compound subject, while the father stand separate as an object. As Grumet writes,

So long as it is women and not test tubes who bear children, conception, pregnancy, parturition, and lactation constitute an initial relation of women to their children that is symbiotic, one in which the subject and object are mutually constituting. (p. 10)

Next, Grumet (1988) discusses how the ways in which girls and boys begin the process of extracting their subjectivity from their mothers' subjectivity results in men and women having different ways of knowing the world, different epistemologies. She posits that the cultural norms regarding the performance of gender influence the extent to which a child will suppress or allow knowledge of his or her mother's subjectivity that they gained in the pre oedipal stage. Grumet writes, "The achievement of masculine gender requires the male child to repress those elements of his own subjectivity that are identified with his mother" (p.13). This is not the case for girls. As a result, these boys grow into men whose epistemologies are marked by a greater split between subject and object. Girls, on the other hand, grow into women whose ways of knowing are not split between subject and object. Further, girls separate from their mothers, as all children do when they transition to the post oedipal stage, in a different way than boys do. Girls do

not need to deny their mothers to make the transition, but boys deny their mothers to make the transition. Grumet also notes that these different ways of knowing are associated with different spheres of life in American society: Male epistemologies are associated with the public sphere, the realm of business and production, while female epistemologies are associated with the private sphere, the realm of nurturing and care.

With the theoretical framework she outlines in chapter one, Grumet (1988) then moves into a discussion of the contradictory nature of teacher work. Specifically, that contradiction is how the feminization of teaching has simultaneously “promoted and sabotaged the interests of women in culture” (p.32). She does this through an examination of the social conditions that precipitated the feminization of teaching. The process began during the industrial revolution when families began migrating from rural areas to the city. Men went to work in factories, while women remained at home with the children. At the same time, European immigrants were arriving in the United States in great numbers to work in these factories. The shift from agriculture to industry and the influx of immigrants raised questions about how to forge a new national identity. State sponsored schooling began as an attempt to reduce this instability. This new system needed teachers, but educated middle-class men were difficult to retain because they often chose higher paying professional jobs over teaching. Thus single middle class women began to fill the need that men would not.

Women were a convenient choice for this new generation of teachers because they could be paid less and could be counted on to uphold contemporary notions of female decorum while transmitting the culture and values of school administrators, who

were predominantly male. Grumet notes that although social conditions had changed considerably at the time of her writing *Bitter Milk*,

the contradictions that evolved in the nineteenth century between the doctrine of maternal love and the practice of a harsh and regimented authority, between women's dominance in numbers and our exclusion from leadership, between the overwhelming presence of women in classroom and the continuing identification of men as the only person with the capacity to know, are still present in the culture of schooling. (p.45)

While I could have easily chosen a more contemporary source—Grumet (1988) wrote that statement almost thirty years ago—it remains true at the time I am writing this, at least according to some recent National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data. In 2011-12, NCES reported that 76% of teachers within all schools in the United States were women, but in the same year they also reported that only 52% of administrators were women (NCES, 2015; Bitterman, Goldring, & Gray, 2013). While Grumet has continued to theorize since publishing her seminal text and while there are others who have taken up her work in the past thirty years, I have chosen to rely so heavily on this text in part because of its age. The fact that it is not outmoded, that it is still salient, indicates just how much more needs to be done regarding the contradiction she discusses in Chapter Two.

In the third and final chapter of part one, Grumet (1988) coalesces the points she makes in the first two chapters by using three personal narratives from one of her students, Jane. The three personal narratives are from different points in her life. In the first Jane recalls a memory from high school;, in the second narrative Jane recalls an

incident from her time as an elementary school teacher;, and in the third narrative Jane writes about her home life at the time of being a graduate student. The second narrative is of particular relevance to this inquiry. In this narrative, Jane has taken great care to create an orderly classroom in preparation for her first observation, designed to evaluate her competency as a teacher. The order is disrupted, however, when one of her students vomits. The order Jane had taken such care to achieve collapses “into this eruption of body, of intimacy, into the public space” (p. 71).

Although Grumet (1988) does not make the connection in her text, Jane’s anecdote also relates to Kristeva’s (1982) work with abjection and speaks to how Kristeva is correct to identify the abject as a source of fear in patriarchal societies. Jane’s student’s vomit belongs to the category of excremental pollutant, so it constitutes less of a threat to identity to other bodily fluids, such as breast milk or menstrual blood, that belong to the category of pollutant. However, the vomit still had the power to bring Jane, the teacher, into a space with her students where her students inhabit a subject identity closer to those they inhabited in a pre-oedipal stage of development. It is in this stage of development that a mother has the most intimate connection with the child, so by entering this space in her classroom, Jane is forging a more intimate, and possibly real, connection with her students than she had when the classroom was more ordered.

Grumet’s (1988) purpose in presenting this narrative and the other two that appear in this chapter is twofold. First, she returns to the idea of knowledge of the body that she introduced at the start of *Bitter Milk*. In each of the narratives something is revealed through examining the knowledge of the body. In the narrative quoted above, Grumet, through a reading of the text that goes beyond the phenomenological, reveals “the futility

of constructing a world that denies intimacy” (p. 72). When Grumet refers to the phenomenological in this section, she uses the term to describe experiences as they actually transpire. In this example Grumet’s emphasis on knowledge of the body dovetails with Kristeva’s (1982) notions of the abject. It is only when vomit, something indicative of abjection, enters the classroom space that the class becomes an intimate space.

It is through these revelatory moments that we see Grumet’s second purpose in presenting Jane’s narratives. It is to illustrate that a feminist reading of what takes place in the classroom cannot be achieved by focusing on the phenomenological aspect of a narrative. Our perceptions of what is happening in the world around us are too tainted for that. As Grumet writes, “The differences that mark us as male and female and shape our consciousness are patterns extended through our perceptions of the phenomenological world and inscribed in the philosophies, ideologies, and pedagogies that constitute our culture” (p. 74). To achieve a feminist reading, Grumet, asserts, we must get beyond what is experienced at the phenomenological level, unpack it, and examine in within a context where patriarchal notions embedded in that phenomenological level are interrogated.

In Grumet’s Footsteps. Before I conclude this section on *Bitter Milk* (1988), I want to give one example of some practical work that draws heavily on Grumet’s theorizing in *Bitter Milk*. Although the study I am going to discuss was conducted almost twenty years after *Bitter Milk* was published, it provides a concrete example of the gendered differences Grumet points to in *Bitter Milk* and speaks to the ongoing relevance of Grumet’s work. The study focuses on the experiences of a group of teachers in

Georgia and the sacrifices they make to prepare for the rigorous National Board Certification requirements (Johnson et al., 2005). What Tara Star Johnson and her colleagues found was that the teachers in their study, thirty-six women and six men, discussed the negative aspects associated with preparing for the exam in a gendered way. Specifically, more than two-thirds of the women indicated that they had made sacrifices around the family or the home while preparing their certification materials and only 17% of the men expressed the same. Johnson and her colleagues then go on to place that difference in the context of sacrifice, which they argue is a gendered expectation in our society. They argue that these teachers are analogous to the self-sacrificing Giving Tree of Shel Silverstein fame, and that they are socialized to self-sacrifice.

The majority of the women in the study were worried that their professional aspirations was causing them to neglect family obligations or obligations to their students. This concern speaks to one of the key ideas that Grumet is trying to challenge throughout *Bitter Milk*. Children are socialized to view the public sphere, the professional sphere, as being associated with men and the private sphere, the home and the relational, as being associated with women. When those spheres collide, as they do in Johnson et al.'s (2005) study and with pregnant teachers, there is a tension, and women often resolve that tension by sacrificing themselves.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although the preceding theoretical framework is helpful in understanding the lived experiences of those who teach while pregnant on a conceptual level, it does not provide a full picture of the conditions a pregnant teacher might face in the classroom. My first thought was to consult empirical studies regarding the experiences of women who have taught while pregnant, but that proved to be difficult. While there have been a few studies regarding the working conditions of pregnant women, or women who are posing as pregnant women, published in the past ten years, none of them involve teachers who have taught while pregnant (Gatrell, 2013; Gatrell, 2009; Halpert, Wilson, and Hickman, 2006; Hebl, King, Glick, Singletary, and Kazama, 2007).

In the absence of any empirical research regarding the experiences of women who have taught while pregnant, I turned to two sources of literature: legislation regarding how employers may treat pregnant workers and popular culture representations of women who teach while pregnant. What follows next is a brief exploration of the two sources.

Legal Rights of the Pregnant Worker

One of my personal hobbies for most of my adult life has been following the Supreme Court of the United States. I remember shortly before I conducted the interviews included in this study that I began to hear reports about a case involving workplace accommodations for a pregnant woman was being petitioned for a writ of certiorari with the Supreme Court. The Court would eventually hear and decide on this

case, which I will write about in a moment, but the initial reports regarding this case were what made me consider how legislation could affect the lives of those who teach while pregnant. It was what led me to examine the brief history of maternity leave law in the United States.

In 1978 Congress enacted the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA). PDA expanded the definition of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, to include any discrimination based on childbirth, pregnancy, or related health conditions (The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978). Interestingly, the PDA was created in response to several lawsuits brought by teachers against school districts who required them to take mandatory maternity leave (Brake, 2015; Cox, 2012; Stewart, 2003).

While the PDA granted pregnant women equal treatment, it was soon proven inadequate as courts deciding on litigation related to the PDA found it did not cover parental leave to care for an infant or any leave beyond pregnancy or delivery (Stewart, 2003). Despite this inadequacy, it took roughly thirty years before Congress would pass legislation regarding accommodations for pregnant women. The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 grants women 12 weeks of unpaid, job protected maternity leave to care for their newborn children (U.S. Department of Labor). This twelve weeks of unpaid, job protected leave also applies to fathers or newborns and to parents who adopt a child. Here it should be noted that employers with fewer than 50 employees are exempt from the FMLA. Additional exemptions from the FMLA, including those based on the number of hours an employee works per year, mean that the act applies roughly to only 56% of all employees in the United States, regardless of gender.

The passage of the FLMA did not mean the end of litigation surrounding the rights of pregnant workers in the United States. In the previous paragraph, I referenced litigation related to the PDA. One of the legal questions that arose from this litigation was whether employers should be required to provide workplace accommodations for women who may have physical limitations, due to pregnancy, that affect job performance. From the passage of PDA to 2014, pregnant women have brought lawsuits against employers on the basis that they should be granted accommodations in the workplace just as temporarily disabled workers have been under the 2008 amendments to the Americans with Disabilities Act (Cox, 2012; Stewart, 2003).

The decisions in these lawsuits have been so conflicted and ambiguous that in 2014, The U.S. Supreme Court was moved to settle the case law surrounding this issue (The United States Supreme Court, 2015). At issue was whether an employer, United Parcel Service in this case, who refused to provide workplace accommodations for a pregnant employee, was in violation of the PDA. In April of 2015, the Court ruled in a six to three decision that an employer's refusal to provide pregnant women accommodations does not constitute discrimination.

To contextualize the preceding section, consider that a recent report from the Pew Research Center indicates that among 37 other developed nations, the United States ranks last for the amount of paid maternity leave and unpaid protected maternity leave it mandates for its citizens (Livingston, 2013). Further, the United States was the only of the 38 nations included in the data set that did not mandate paid maternity leave. While there is much speculation regarding the reasons for this discrepancy and regarding why it took thirty years for the Court to decide of the issue of accommodations for pregnant

women, I believe the reason lies in the current trend within the United States of finding free market, employment based solutions to problems such as retirement, healthcare, and family leave. My opinion is based on several recent articles written about the state of maternity leave in the United States. For example, a recent article in the United Kingdom publication, *The Guardian*, states that much of the opposition to expanding maternity leave in the United States so it more aligned with its peer nations originates from lobbying from trade organizations such as the National Restaurant Association (Popvich, 2014).

Even in articles that are intended to be more descriptive and less critical of the problem with maternity leave in the United States, there is a definite undercurrent of pro-business solutions. For example, in a recent article in the admittedly business-oriented *Bloomberg Business Weekly*, the author describes how a handful of states have enacted or are trying to enact more comprehensive maternity leave legislation than what is mandated by the FMLA (Suddath, 2015). In at least one of those states, California, the state's teacher unions are key backers of the movement to expand what FMLA offers (Beltran, 2015). The teacher unions' support for this legislation is not surprising considering that California recently ranked in the top ten in a recent report describing which states have the strongest teacher unions (Northern, Scull, and Zeehandelaar, 2012). Beyond noting predictions of doom from the business communities in the states where these expanded policies have been enacted have not come to fruition, the author does little else to interrogate the origins of the problem and spends the bulk of the article focusing on how some companies have taken it upon themselves to update their maternity leave policies.

Popular Culture Texts

As a child who spent a fair amount of the 1980's parked in front of a television set and as an English education major and life-long voracious reader, popular culture texts were the first place I turned when I began this research. It may seem like an unfitting site from which to start a scholarly inquiry, but it has long been argued that popular culture texts about teachers and schooling influence and shape teachers and schools in the "real world." As Henry Giroux (2001) wrote of film's influence on his own teaching practices and beliefs, "it now represents a new pedagogical text, one that does not simply reflect culture but actually constructs it, one that signals the need for a radically different perspective on literacy and the relationship between film texts and society" (p. 589). Further, Sandra Weber and Claudia Mitchell (1995) describe the collection of images of teachers we amass from years of consuming popular culture as a "kaleidoscopic collage of fuchsia shirts, hairnets and buns, bulging biceps, long shapeless dresses, scowling faces, sparkling eyes, magic wands, tender smiles. And always, the eternal chalkdust, pointers, apples, and numbers" (p.128).

But how many baby bumps, swollen ankles, and overflowing breasts can we include in that collage? Not many. Despite my familiarity with television and films, I was at a loss when I tried to name a television show, film, or novel that featured a teacher who happened to be pregnant. The two texts I will discuss in the remainder of this section in no way represent an exhaustive list of every film or television show that happens to include a teacher who is pregnant. Instead, they represent the only popular culture depictions of a teacher whose pregnancy actually advances her narrative, rather than the narrative of a student.

Beyond the Blackboard. The 2011 made-for-television movie *Beyond the Blackboard* is based on the true story of Stacy Bess, a Salt Lake City teacher whose childhood ambition of becoming a teacher was delayed due to her own teenage pregnancy. She is so eager to enter the classroom that when she interviews for the teaching assignment that will be the setting of the saccharine bio-pic that follows, she does not ask any questions regarding the administrator's need to fill the post immediately. Predictably, the assignment is not what Mrs. Bess expected as she is teaching in a dilapidated warehouse that is the hub of a temporary housing center for homeless families. She wants to quit after the first day because her six years of schooling did not prepare her for this assignment, but her husband reminds her that her eight years of motherhood is more than enough experience for her to teach these kids. From this point on, the film follows the typical savior narrative that we see in so many films about teachers. Mrs. Bess decorates the classroom, using her own money, and the once surly students grow to love her. Mrs. Bess's pregnancy is not a prominent plot point until at least three quarters into the film. Before she goes on maternity leave, which is indefinite because she plans on staying home with her baby, her students are worried that they will not enjoy school without her. The baby arrives after a classic middle of the night "honey, it's time" scene of rushing to the hospital. When her students and some of their parents come to visit her in the maternity ward, the nurse remarks, "You've got a lot of family." When she arrives home, Mrs. Bess doesn't want to put her baby in daycare, but she also tells her husband that she is not done teaching yet. The movie concludes with what first appears to be a mother and baby visit to the classroom in which Mrs. Bess announces to her class that they will be taught by a team of teachers whom she will introduce. It turns

out that Mrs. Bess herself will be a member of the team because her young daughter is such an “easy baby” that Mrs. Bess is able to attend to her right there in the classroom.

American Teacher. The documentary *American Teacher* (2011) illustrates the challenging working conditions of American teachers by profiling several teachers in different areas across the country. Interspersed among the profiles are comparisons of the working conditions of teachers who teach in the three countries whose students consistently perform in the top three on standardized tests and brief interviews with talented American teachers who have left the profession due to poor working conditions and compensation. One of the teachers the documentary profiles is Jamie Fidler, a first grade teacher at a New York City public school. Fidler comes from a family of public school teachers, and she describes teaching as a calling. She is also portrayed as a very dedicated professional as she leaves for school at 7:00 in the morning not to return until 6:30 p.m. and spends her own money on supplies for the classroom. Fidler also happens to be very pregnant. In one segment of her profile we see her spending the majority of her 20-minute lunch break trying to connect with someone from New York City Public Schools who will explain how much time she is entitled to take off for maternity leave. Eventually she learns she will have a total of six paid weeks off from the first day of her leave. If those six weeks happen to fall during a scheduled holiday during which she would not be teaching, such as winter break, that holiday is included in the six week maternity leave, and she will not get any additional time off. Fidler is conflicted about how much maternity leave she should take, and we get the sense she is weighing the emotional costs as well as the financial costs of taking a longer or shorter maternity leave. Though the decision is a very difficult decision for Jamie to make, the fact that she has

paid maternity leave, however short it may be, puts her in a privileged position compared to other workers. Undoubtedly Jamie's relatively good situation is due to the fact that New York State has one of the top ten strongest teacher unions in the country, according to a recent study conducted by the conservative leaning Thomas B. Fordham Institute (Northern, Scull, and Zeehandelaar, 2012). School districts with higher union activity tend to offer teachers higher wages and more benefits relative to school districts with lower union activity (Winters, 2011).

In a scene that illustrates the nature of the conflict she feels toward her unborn child and her classroom children, she leads her class in an activity where they make a map of their hearts on heart shaped pieces of paper. In modeling the activity for her students, Fidler divides her heart into separate compartments, one housing her family and the new baby and another housing her students.

In the end, Jamie leaves work one week before her due date and returns to work six weeks after giving birth to her daughter. Fidler is clearly exhausted when she returns to work; yet, she expresses feelings of regret as she must have another teacher to cover her class every two hours for the 20 minutes it will take for her to pump what looks to be about eight ounces of breast milk, roughly two feedings for a newborn who will require, on average, about ten feedings in a 24-hour period during the first two to three months. Before she can pump, however, she must find a suitable place to do so, as there is no designated place, and she does not appear to have her own office. When she finally finds a place to pump, she remarks, with a smock draped over her breasts, that she has not been taking care of herself. She also notes that many people have commented with great surprise about how quickly after having the baby she returned to work. Her response to

those comments are “Well, what am I supposed to do?” The documentary winds down with a small fast forward in lives of each of the profiled teachers, including Fidler. When her story is fast forwarded, she seems much happier and much more rested-looking; she remarks that when she stopped pumping “the whole world changed” for her.

Analysis of the Two Films. So what message does the viewer receive from this two very different films? *Beyond the Blackboard* is clearly meant to be an uplifting and sentimental movie-of-the-week affair, while *American Teacher* is meant to be a frank portrayal of the working conditions of American teachers and the impact they have on education as a whole, yet the teachers featured in both movies face the challenge of how to balance work and family. The women meet the challenge in different ways, of course.

Stacy Bess simply circumvents the challenge completely by bringing her newborn into the classroom. This solution, however, leaves the question of how she is balancing her role as wife and mother to two other children with her work unanswered, not to mention how she is finding time for herself. Jamie, unsurprisingly, is a bit different from Stacy. She faces the challenge and ultimately fails in that she accomplishes everything that must be done by simply not taking care of herself, which is something she states explicitly in the final interview segment featured in the documentary.

The different ways in which they meet the challenge is mostly likely due to the fact that their stories are being told in different mediums, documentary and drama. The filmmakers’ intents were clearly very different. To use the language of the film critic here, *Beyond the Blackboard* is schmaltzy while *American Teacher* is gritty. However, one characteristic bridges the chasm between schmaltz and grit. Both Stacy Bess and Jamie Fidler are portrayed as making enormous sacrifices in their personal lives to have a

career as a teacher. Further, neither of them questions the sacrifices they make. It is completely normal and just what one does. As Fidler said herself, what else are they supposed to do? Like the teachers in Johnson et al.'s (2005) study, Jamie and Stacy are Giving Tree teachers.

METHODOLOGY

As the literature regarding women who are pregnant and teaching is not very robust, the best way for me to form some understanding of what it means to teach during pregnancy would be to have conversations with women who have lived that experience. My hope in selecting teachers was to interview at least one woman who taught, while pregnant, in the school district in which I lived at the time. After all, this inquiry began with a thought about possible other lives I could be living while pregnant, and were I not in graduate school with an assistantship covering my tuition, I would have been teaching in a local school. Fortunately, three out of the four teachers who so generously spoke with me met my criteria as they had all taught at a high school located in my district, Smith High School (a pseudonym—as are all people and place names).

Although the fourth woman in my study, Heidi, did not teach in a high school located in my district, I decided to include her in this study because I thought that her life circumstances at the time of interview might lend a unique perspective to this study. Unlike the three Smith High School teachers, Heidi was a first year teacher, and she was actually pregnant at the time of data collection. Additionally, Heidi and I were members of the same pre-service teacher cohort, so I could quite easily picture her as another possible self, which was how this inquiry began.

Context and Participants

I was able to connect with the teachers from SHS due to a working relationship I had developed with Gina, a well-respected teacher in the English department. Although Gina is not included in this study (because she is not a mother), she introduced me to the three SHS teachers. SHS is classified as a rural high school located in a metropolitan statistical area in the Midwest. With 88% of the student body reported as white, data available on the state's department of education web site, the school does not have much racial diversity. However, SHS is economically diverse as it is located in an area with housing ranging from "McMansions" to trailer parks, from farms to modest homes, and from large family homes to apartments. Despite that diversity, only 30% of the district's students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Ina. Ina was, at the time of our conversation, a 35-year-old mother of three children under the age of five. She had been a teacher of special education for ten years. At SHS, she taught English to ninth through twelfth graders with special needs. During her first pregnancy, she taught at an alternative school serving three local school districts, including the one in which SHS was located. She taught at SHS during her second and third pregnancies. I found Ina to be a warm, no-nonsense type of woman. Many of her responses were informed by the value her Catholic faith places on life, which is something she stated explicitly during her interview.

Kelsey. Kelsey was a 39-year-old mother of two children under the age of five and a teacher of chemistry for 15 years. Prior to her career at SHS, Kelsey taught chemistry in another state. She taught tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders at SHS during both pregnancies. During her first pregnancy, she was the sole source of income for her

family as her husband had gone back to school to continue his education. I saw a lot of myself in Kelsey as she came across as the type of person who just wants to do everything the “right” way.

Jessie. At the time I interviewed Jessie, she was a 33-year-old mother of two children under the age of six. She had been a teacher of English at the secondary level for a total of twelve years. During those twelve years she taught in two high schools located in the same school district. Jessie taught students with varying abilities in grades nine through 12 at SHS. At the time of her first pregnancy, she was unmarried but in a committed relationship with a coach at the high school. By the time of her second pregnancy and at the time of our conversation, she was married to the father of her first child. Jessie taught at two high schools during different points of her first pregnancy. Jessie presented as an athletic and vivacious woman of compassion.

Heidi. The fourth teacher who spoke with me was quite different from Ina, Jessie, and Kelsey. Heidi was a first-year teacher of English who was pregnant with her first child at the time of our conversation. She was 27 years old, unmarried, and the pregnancy was a surprise. Although Heidi is a native of the area in which SHS is located, she taught English at City High School, which is located in another part of the state. Sixty-one percent of CHS’s students identify as Hispanic and 81% of students in the district receive free or reduced lunch. At CHS she taught general freshman English and advanced placement English. Heidi is also different from the other teachers in that she was the only woman I knew prior to our conversation. Heidi and I did our student teaching together and were very friendly with each other during that time. Heidi is an

intelligent and thoughtful woman who can give the impression of being aloof; however, she is an amusing conversationalist and deeply compassionate.

I should note here that Heidi's situation at CHS was a bit strained. She felt that the teachers whom she taught with as a team viewed her as an inexperienced outsider. She had also begun teaching one month into the school year as her predecessor was promoted. She described her classroom as still being full of the previous teacher's belongings. That atmosphere combined with her pregnancy and being two hours away from her family and friends made for a particularly challenging first year for Heidi.

Research Design

In the absence of any literature regarding the phenomena of teaching while pregnant, conducting interviews seemed to me to be the most ideal way in which to find out more about what it is like to teach while pregnant. I chose individual interviews over a focus group or a group interview because I felt that a group setting would make the teachers self-conscious and thus less likely to be open with me. It was only when I began to write my interview questions that I consulted texts on qualitative research methods. The interview process was guided by the techniques Seidman (2006) discusses in *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*. Seidman takes a phenomenological approach to qualitative research, meaning that he is concerned with revealing the lived experience as closely as possible to what it actually is. For that reason, he suggests a series of three of interviews for each participant. The first interview should focus on the life history of the participant, the second on the details experience itself, and the third on reflecting on what the experience means. I did not schedule three interviews with my participants for two reasons, first I

was eight months pregnant when I began to schedule my interviews. Second, the women who participated in my study were exceedingly busy people. It was very difficult to schedule a single block of time with each of them. Instead, I structured my interview questions so that their content would mimic the three-interview structure Seidman favors.

Data Collection

Each semi-structured interview lasted 50 to 95 minutes and was guided by an initial set of questions (Appendix A), but extemporaneous topics were encouraged to gather a rich picture of their experiences. My final question for each teacher was “Is there anything you’d like to add or want people to know about teaching while pregnant?” In addition to the parameters I just discussed, my interview style would be best described as “loose.” I preferred to let the women expand on the topics I raised and to limit my responses to clarifying questions. Given the fact that 3 of the 4 teachers were women whom I had never met before, and the fourth was an acquaintance I had not seen in over a year, I was surprised at the candor with which all these teachers discussed what can be a sensitive topic.

Data Analysis

I listened to the recording of each interview to ensure each of them contained the entirety of the interview, but I did not transcribe the recordings until after I conducted all four interviews. Further, I listened to each recording immediately prior to transcribing it. I transcribed the data myself for several reasons. First, I did not see the value in spending a considerable amount of money on something I could do myself. Second, I needed the experience in transcribing because I had no experience in qualitative research when I began this study. Transcribing my own work was a perfect opportunity to gain that

experience. Third, and most importantly, transcribing the interviews myself allowed me to be close to the data in a way that was necessary if I were to envision these women as other possible selves as was my plan at the start of this process.

After I finished my transcription, I reviewed and coded the transcribed interviews to identify recurring patterns and themes using the constant comparison method of content analysis (Merriam, 2009; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The first pass through the transcribed interviews involved me recording personal and demographic variables into a Word document, in which I also noted initial impressions of what themes could be used as possible codes. Next, I highlighted recurring phrases or themes and copied excerpted blocks of comments into the Word document, and labeled them with headings and subheadings (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Similar sentences, themes, ideas, experiences, and phrases were grouped together and content with more than one element was recorded under more than one group. I created category and subcategory names that were descriptive of recurring language, feelings, perceptions, or experiences and I aggregated them into larger themes (Charmaz, 2006). As I reviewed the interview transcripts repeatedly, I revised the headings and subheadings to reflect the accumulated content, experiences, and themes using the constant comparison method (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The purpose of the use of repeated constant comparison content analysis was to identify codes that reflected participants' experiences in a manner that promoted insights into the underlying phenomena. The Word document that resulted from this process is entitled "Codes."

After I finished the process outlined above, I left the document entitled "Codes" open and simultaneously opened a copy of my transcribed interviews. Then, with the two

documents displayed on two different computer monitors, I cut and pasted the codes from the “Codes” document into the transcript document after each response in each teacher’s interview. I chose to go back and add the codes after each response in the interview transcript document purely for my own personal preference for contextualization. I needed to see the data in a single document with the interviews appearing in the order in which they occurred and codes appearing after each relevant statement so that I could see how the overall experience of conducting the four interviews unfolded. See Appendix C for an excerpt of a transcribed interview with codes pasted in after each response.

The top five most frequent codes among all teachers derived from content analysis were (1) pregnancy’s influence on the teacher student relationship, (2) work and family balance, (3) pregnancy’s influence on practice, (4) obligation to students/profession, and (5) modeling pregnancy and motherhood. The table below lists the frequency of codes for all teachers combined; the data for each teacher individually can be viewed in Appendix D.

Table 1: Frequency of Codes for All Teachers

Code	Frequency
Pregnancy's influence on teacher/student relationship	29
Work and family balance	29
Pregnancy's influence on practice	22
Obligation to students/profession	18
Modeling pregnancy/motherhood	14
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with colleagues	13
Parents	13
Initial reaction to pregnancy – students	12
Physical discomfort/fatigue	12
Biohazard	12
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with administrators	11
Protective behaviors / concern	11
Physical appearance	10
Initial reaction to pregnancy - administrators	9
Pregnant students	8
Sacrifice	8
Boundaries	7
Breastfeeding / pumping	7
Pregnancy's influence on content	6
Emotional distress	5
Pregnancy's as a presence in the classroom	5
Initial reaction to pregnancy - colleagues	4

FINDINGS

Before I began my research with teachers, I expected that negative experiences with administrators would emerge as one of the most dominant themes of our conversations. Perhaps my expectations came from my own stereotypes regarding men's insensitivities to pregnancy and my perception of administrators, especially at the secondary level, as being predominantly male. Regardless of my reasons, my expectations were incorrect as everyone described their administrators as exceedingly supportive. Ina, Jessie, and Kelsey taught at the same school during at least one of their pregnancies, and all three of them commented on the family atmosphere that the predominantly male administration, particularly the male principal, encouraged. Heidi, as stated earlier, was in a difficult situation at her school, but she also indicated that her principal, also a man, was very supportive of her.

So, when I looked at my data to see what I actually had, I turned to my top five list of most frequently occurring codes, but I found that it needed a little bit of modification in order to capture the corpus of data in my representation. My primary rationale for this was that the most frequent codes among each teacher individually vary, so the overall count is not representative of the teachers as a whole. Second, some of the most compelling content of my interviews is associated with the breastfeeding/pumping and biohazard codes, both of which are not in the top five most frequently occurring codes.

Third, one of my top five most frequently occurring codes, pregnancy's influence on the teacher/student relationship, frequently co-occurred with pregnancy's influence on practice and obligation to students/profession.

With reasons outlined in the previous paragraph in mind, I chose to focus on the following codes: work and family balance, obligation to students/profession, modeling pregnancy and motherhood, breastfeeding/pumping, biohazard, and pregnancy's influence on practice. Additionally, I have grouped breastfeeding/pumping and biohazard into a larger group called Maternal Fluids. This grouping was inspired by readings of Kristeva (1982).

Work and Family Balance. Work and family balance was not included on my list of topics to discuss because it seemed inherent that the topic would permeate, as it did, many of the topics I wanted to address. Most of the comments the teachers made regarding work and family balance indicated that there was not much space in their lives for them to inhabit any other role than that of mother or teacher. The following comment from Kelsey is typical of this observation:

I feel like my husband is the one who has suffered the most. I mean I leave school you know and I'm mom then until the kids go to bed and then maybe I do a little laundry and then I'm grading papers or I'm lesson planning until I go to bed and so I feel like that's where probably he is suffering. Our relationship is suffering more than the others because I've put the kids first and my students second and I know it's not good.

Even though Heidi was not married at the time of our conversation, she also remarked on not having any space to be anyone other than a pregnant woman or a teacher, as stated below:

My personal concern was with my level of fatigue. I couldn't stay up and lesson plan. Being a first year teacher, there is so much extra to do. I mean especially as far as curriculum, and I just didn't have the energy anymore. I mean there were nights I'd come home and just sleep. My poor dog wasn't even getting attention.

It is interesting here that Heidi's dog and Kelsey's husband are in similar positions in the two anecdotes I have included above. It seems that no matter what shape a pregnant teacher's home life takes, she must make some sacrifices on that front to function.

Though sentiments like this are certainly painful and disquieting to hear, they are likely not anything surprising to any working mother or mother to be, regardless of her profession. They also echo Stacy Bess's and Jamie Fidler's experiences in the popular cultural texts and the Giving Tree teachers of Johnson et al.'s study. Sacrifice, be it time with you husband or time with your dog, is just what pregnant teachers do.

It is also interesting to note that both Heidi and Kelsey reference a duty to someone other than themselves, a dog or a husband. Self-care was not something either of them commented on, which suggests it wasn't even on their radar. For Heidi and Kelsey, for Stacy and Jamie, and for the teachers in Johnson et al.'s study, dereliction in the duty to care for others is a matter of concern, but not when it comes to the self.

Obligation to Students/Profession. The way obligation to students most commonly manifested itself in my conversations with the teachers was in concerns about what would happen during their maternity leave, and sacrificing family time in the

immediate post-partum period for the sake of students' needs. Kelsey, who spoke the most candidly and eloquently about the struggle of balancing work and family as a pregnant teacher, made the following statement that is indicative of the unique way in which pregnancy can deepen a teacher's commitment to her students and her profession:

Some of the kids were upset because they wanted to have me as their teacher the whole time and that was because especially the first time around being due in February that was a lot longer time being off then, and they didn't know who the sub was going to be, and so there was some fear from their point on that and some of those kids, they were my second year kids, so I had already had them for a year and so we had a different relationship. With that group, it was like fifteen of them, and they actually ended up coming to the house once a week to have a little study session and the baby would be there, and so it was kind of a neat thing from that standpoint.

After hearing Kelsey's anecdote, I had two thoughts. First, I thought of Stacy Bess in *Beyond the Blackboard*. When I watched that film several months before interviewing Kelsey, I remember having an incredulous reaction to the scenes where Stacy Bess brought her newborn in the classroom as she taught. I thought that was just too much of a sacrifice for someone to make, but Kelsey made a similar sacrifice by hosting a weekly study group in her home during her maternity leave.

Second, I wondered if I would have heard a similar story if I had interviewed a group of women who are in different professions. Would a psychiatrist feel obligated to meet with patients during her maternity leave? Would an architect blur the lines of her

professional and personal identities to consult with clients during her maternity leave, or would she leave it to someone else at her firm?

This willingness to meet with students speaks again to the structural support that women lack following pregnancy. Particularly as teachers, women are pressured to continue in their profession at a time when they should have the freedom to focus on their new baby if they so choose. Kelsey's story emphasizes a critical point about maternal leave and the way it is structured in the U.S. As stated earlier, new mothers in America are guaranteed only 12 weeks of unpaid maternity leave, but Kelsey has paid maternity leave. While I noted in my literature review that there is opposition among trade organizations regarding expanding federally mandated maternity leave, I also noted that in at least one of the few states that are moving to create state legislation that provides more than what FMLA offers, teacher unions have influenced that decision. Despite the fact that teacher unions in Indiana are only of average strength, it is reasonable to assume, based on the research I cited regarding the positive correlation between teacher benefits and union activity, that the fact the teaching is a unionized profession plays some role in the fact that Kelsey has paid maternity leave (Northern, Scull, and Zeehandelaar, 2012).

Jessie's reality was similar to Kelsey's, but she did not have the angst that Kelsey seemed to be plagued with. When I asked her how she felt about balancing her commitment to her students with the fact that she would be taking a maternity leave, Jessie described how she did not have time to consider "those things" during her pregnancies. It was worth noting that most of what was occupying her time was her duty as a track coach, a position for which Jessie was only nominally compensated for:

I am a very organized person, so I wasn't taking the time to think about those things, especially in my first pregnancy. I was planning, and this is insane, ten days after I gave birth I was in charge of a track meet that had over one thousand people competing in it, so my brain was so focused on tasks ahead of me and everything else I had to do that I just didn't worry about it. With my second child, I had a huge cross-country meet. I gave birth the day before it, and so I was fixated on that day before because I had a feeling it [the birth] was coming, and we were panicked trying to get some stuff done at the last minute, so I didn't have time. I just never had time to think about those things.

What is evident from Jessie's comments is that even though thoughts about how to balance work and pregnancy did not occupy space in her mind, in a sense her body was divided. While her body was engaged in internal preparation for birth, she was frantically moving that body through the world in preparation for birth, preparation for the internal to become external. And like Kelsey, she found the boundary between home and work blurred. Would this boundary have been as blurred if the United States had a more adequate and realistic approach to maternity leave?

In contrast to Kelsey and Jessie, Heidi seemed the most able to create boundaries between her personal and professional selves. She described facing some challenges in her personal life that necessitated creating some boundaries, but I also got the sense that regional differences between her hometown and the school in which she taught played a role in her ability to set some boundaries. Although differences between two regions within the same state may be imperceptible to non-natives, Heidi spoke directly about how she felt out of place in the region where her high school is located. Her feelings of

displacement may have left her feeling emotionally depleted, thus limiting her ability to be as engaged with her students as she would have liked. Despite these circumstances, even Heidi made comments that showed that her students and her desire to be an effective teacher were never far from her thoughts:

My concern really is for my child now. Because he's going to be in daycare. I scouted out a few daycares and feel comfortable with the caregivers, but I guess I personally never thought I'd have to work my first year being a mom. Of course, then again, I didn't think I'd be unmarried. Life hits us with curve balls. I just have more personal concerns. I mean I do have concerns as far as if I have to miss work for some reason due to myself or the baby, like with our health for example. You know I do not want the kids missing out because they'll have to start the year with a sub. We're hoping to select a particular sub who is known with the corporation, so hopefully it will help with the transition and I can still ensure that they're getting a quality education, but my concern is how effective I will be in that way because of absences.

Out of the four teachers, Ina discussed work and family balance the least, but her comments about preparing for maternity leave during her three pregnancies struck me because she spoke in a different tone while discussing this experience than she did during most of our conversation. Ina seemed to reserve this tone, which was devoid of her frequent easy going laughter and jokes, for discussing challenges and obligations particular to teaching students with special needs:

I picked my sub all three times and made sure it was somebody who was going to get along with them, or made sure they [the administration] went ahead and

assigned them [the students] to someone who was here, one of my good friends.

I've made sure to take care of students who may not get along with who I picked for my sub and that the sub would know what is going on with this one, so if something goes wrong [the sub could] contact mom right away.

Like Heidi, Ina was able to create a boundary between her personal and professional selves during her maternity leaves; however, it is interesting that she references “mom” in her comments about ensuring that the students are cared for during her maternity leave. Ina defaults to “mom” as the caregiver, which indicates that she has internalized the ideology that women are the primary caregivers of students.

This idea of defaulting to mom touches back on the Grumet’s discussion of socialization and gender roles. Grumet notes that girls are socialized to associate their gender with the domestic sphere and the private sphere, so it is no surprise here that Ina is defaulting to mom in this example. The mother, under Grumet’s description of how boys and girls learn gender roles through their psychoanalytic development, would naturally be the one who must be responsible for the child.

Modeling Pregnancy and Motherhood. When I included students’ reactions to pregnancy on my list of topics, I expected the idea of modeling pregnancy and motherhood could arise, but I had no idea the extent to which the teachers, two of them in particular, would talk about this subject. All four of the teachers explicitly or implicitly expressed a desire to be a “good” model of pregnancy; however, Ina and Jessie discussed the topic in terms of their obligation to help students who may also be pregnant and to present a realistic picture of pregnancy to those who may be considering getting pregnant.

Both Ina and Jessie discussed having students in their classroom who were pregnant during their pregnancies, thus their comments on modeling pregnancy and motherhood were informed by this experience. The way both Ina and Jessie introduced the experience of teaching students who were pregnant while they were pregnant was matter of fact and, in Ina's case, humorous. Ina commented, "I've had, in all three pregnancies, students who were pregnant either with me or right before me, you know I was pregnant, and they had it before I did or after, right after, and I think it made them feel like maybe they could talk to me about stuff. I've had several girls come to me and say you know I think I am [pregnant]."

Jessie initiated the topic in a fashion similar to Ina, but also added her characteristic brand of no-nonsense humor to the topic by sharing an anecdote about a student with a due date close to her own. Like many women who have been pregnant, Jessie was ready to give birth and be done with her pregnancy. She then commented that "She'd [the pregnant student] be absent and I told the kids 'if she's gone into labor before me, I am going to be livid!'"

While their initial comments about modeling pregnancy did not go beyond a simple statement of being someone the young women could talk to, both Ina and Jessie would later expand on these comments. In so doing, both women revealed a deep commitment, for different reasons, to being a realistic model and resource for young women who may be pregnant themselves, young women considering motherhood, and young men whose partners may be pregnant. Ina's commitment was rooted in her faith:

Partially, part of my faith comes into to play here because I'm Catholic, and I don't believe in any abortion at any stage. And maybe that's part of the reason I react

rather well, even though they're teenagers and they technically maybe shouldn't be having babies, but I'm always so happy to hear that they are going to go ahead and take the responsibility and see the thing through and that they felt comfortable talking to me about that. They're just happy to have someone not say to them you know you shouldn't have gotten pregnant, or 'are you going to have it?' I'm happy they're taking responsibility. And I've seen a lot of girls who are terrible students, maybe not even good to themselves so much, be wonderful mothers. . . . It's not all roses and sunshine and rainbows. It's hard work, both pregnancy and being a mother, and so I feel like they need to hear that. Now, I don't act like it's terror. I try not to give off the vibe that it is a bad thing, or it's terrible or it's a burden or it's a curse, or anything like that, but I try to be realistic about it when I talk about or tell them stories.

Although she did not explicitly state this, I got the sense that Jessie's commitment was rooted in her political convictions regarding sexual health education:

The kids know that I am pretty outspoken. I have made comments before how important I think it is that there be comprehensive sex education in the schools, and I think that's one of the biggest downfalls that [her state] has. You know we don't go over that, and abstinence only education does not work. I am not afraid to tout that. I am in a liberal building with liberal administration that is supportive of their teachers, and so it's not like I am standing up on a pulpit preaching that on a regular basis, but in my speech class when people are talking about persuasive speeches, it's something that I am like we'll do this. Some kids I've had to take on the topic, but I don't stand up here and talk about it, but I've had boys tell me before 'well my

girlfriend is pregnant.’ If somebody has a question, they know that they can come to me. I am not embarrassed to answer if people have questions because somebody needs to talk to these kids.

Additionally, both Ina and Jessie discussed bringing their outgrown baby gear into their classrooms for students who needed it. Their comments and actions speak to an interpersonal dimension of teaching that seems incongruous when juxtaposed with the conditions under which these women are expected to do their job. Considering the amount of time beyond the school day that teaching is required, teachers are not compensated in salary or benefits, in a manner consistent with other professionals. Even in supportive schools, like Smith High School, the working conditions are not ideal for pregnant women or new mothers.

Yet, these women are tasked with not only teaching other people’s children the academics they need to prepare for college or the workforce, but also with serving as role models for young women and men dealing with situations they may not be emotionally equipped to handle. This speaks to the maternal role women are socialized to feel is appropriate. For teachers, it is a seemingly natural extension, as demonstrated by the types of behavior that Ina and Jessie exhibited. They brought their nurturing, maternal role into the classroom. Despite being two different spheres of life, professional and private, the socialization process leads females to bring caregiving into workplace roles where it is suited, and a school setting seems to be a natural extension of caregiving to others. However, as Grumet notes, there is a tension when women bring the maternal, the intimate into the classroom. As teachers, they are tasked with delivering a patriarchal curriculum into the classroom that does not honor feminine ways of knowing. When Ina

and Jessie are using their pregnancies as a sort of curriculum in their classrooms, they are using knowledge they have gained through their pregnant bodies to teach others about a topic that is typically taboo in the classroom.

Maternal Fluids. All of the teachers discussed the difficulty of negotiating breast-feeding and the need to pump breast milk while being in the classroom. For Kelsey and Heidi, the discussion was theoretical because neither one of them had to make that negotiation. Kelsey's pregnancies and maternity leaves coincided with the end of the school year, and she felt her children would be old enough to be weaned by the start of the next school year. Heidi, on the other hand, had chosen not to breast feed, so she could resume anti-anxiety medication post-partum. Although she did have some guilty feelings around this decision, she stated that she knew she would be a better mother with the medication than without. Both women expressed relief that they did not have to be in that position and explicitly stated that they did not know how they would have made it work. Based on Ina's and Jessie's comments about their lived experiences in negotiating the time and space needed to pump breast milk, Kelsey and Heidi's concerns were not unfounded.

Ina, who describes herself as being so open about pregnancy and the body that her husband said she had pregnancy Tourette's, had to abandon breast-feeding with her third child because she knew she would have to pump. She was not comfortable with the conditions in which she would have to pump, and stated:

With the third, I think if I would have pushed on with the breast feeding, my administration would have found me some place to pump, but there is no real place here for us to pump. I know one lady they tried to tell her to go in the bathroom,

and I am not comfortable going into a bathroom and pumping. Some other people said they use their classrooms and I share this classroom, so even if I didn't share this classroom and I could lock myself in here that would be odd for me to sit over here in the corner and pump.

She added that she probably could have breast fed her child, without pumping during the school day, but she decided against that idea because she would have to devote about an hour and a half to every morning and every evening of her day. Unable to drop any of her other commitments to find those three hours every day, she would have to get up earlier and go to bed later every day. She simply could not afford to lose those three hours of sleep, and so she decided not to breast-feed.

What does the fact that the only place that Ina was offered to pump milk, nourishment for her children, was the bathroom? The bathroom is where we rid ourselves of feces and urine, some of the strongest signifiers of abjection. One of Ina's few options for places to pump breast milk, nourishment for her children, is a site of shit and piss. Although, as stated earlier, Kristeva (1982) does not address breast milk directly, it clearly can be seen as a source of abjection. However, in designating the bathroom as an acceptable place for a professional woman to pump, the breast milk, or the act of producing it, reaches a level of abjection that is not commensurate with what it is, simple food for a young life.

Jessie, who described pumping in her car while at a track meet weeks after the birth of her first child, also decided that breastfeeding and teaching was something that would not work for her and her family. "We found pumping was an impossibility with the second child because with a toddler there's only so many hours in the day. You only

have two hands. And so pumping, my husband and I made the decision we cannot keep up like this.” This is not an easy decision for any woman, and while there are many stories in the media about breastfeeding women lacking the societal support to breast feed, there is a stigma in certain communities attached to women who do not breast feed. Based on my own experiences living in the same community that Jessie and Ina lived in, the stigma is present here. Shadows of that stigma can be seen in the following defensive comment Jessie made immediately after discussing her decision to stop breast-feeding with her second child: “So we stopped and my children are healthy as can be. They're athletic. They're good eaters. They're smart boys. They have not suffered because mommy had to go to formula. It's okay.”

Jessie and Ina's discussions of breastfeeding and pumping simultaneously echo Jamie Fidler's narrative in *American Teacher*, and highlight how idealized the depiction Stacey Bess's experience in *Beyond the Blackboard* is. Ina, Jessie, and Fidler's breastfeeding narratives all illustrate how teaching is perceived, or not perceived, as a profession. Ina's decision to stop breastfeeding with her third child indicates that teachers are devalued as professionals because of the conditions in which they must work. I informally questioned women in other professions, particularly the legal field, if there were specific places that enabled them to pump while at work. Most of them indicated they could use their own office or other empty office space. Additionally, the university where I am both a graduate student and a staff member provides space for students and staff to pump. Although these spaces are spread across the campus, they are not bathrooms, and they are lockable, private spaces. Of course, my informal inquiries and personal experiences are not indicative of the state of affairs in the workplace writ large,

but they are telling. All the Smith High School teachers described the school and its administrators as supportive and family oriented, but it seems that orientation only extends so far.

Jessie's quick follow up comment regarding the health of her children illustrates the guilt she has surrounding the issue of breastfeeding. Again, the expectation in the community surrounding SHS is that women should breastfeed, which is especially true among educated professionals like Jessie. This context indicates what an enormous sacrifice Jessie had to make in order to pursue her career. Would she have had to make that sacrifice if she had the time and space to work pumping into her daily routine at Smith? What would her daily routine look like if she were leaving in another country with more generous family and maternity leave policies?

Breast milk was the only fluid I thought the teachers would discuss during their interviews. The thought that each of the teachers would discuss another maternal fluid, amniotic fluid, did not occur to me. For that reason, one of the most surprising themes I found in my conversations with these four teachers was the fear of a woman's water breaking. It was not something that any of the women discussed at great length, but it was an unexpected commonality among the four women. Additionally, the theme was always mediated by humor. For example, Heidi joked that she was glad that the school year would end several months before she would have her baby because she would not have to worry about her water breaking in class. In contrast, the other three teachers all had the experience of being in the classroom close to their due dates, and thus received jokes in passing from colleagues or students regarding fears that the women might give birth in the classroom. The following comment from Jessie is typical of these comments:

“Then the second time around, which three weeks, I was here before I went on maternity leave, of course it was constant jokes. ‘Oh wait, is she ok?’ ‘Is she going to go into labor?’ ‘Is her water going to break in the middle of class?’ It was all those kind of jokes.” Jessie, and the other two teachers who also mentioned these kinds of jokes, said that they took no offense to them, but they were amused by the students’ misconceptions about labor and delivery. Jessie even speculated that their misconceptions were likely based on what they had seen on television. Whatever the source of the misconceptions, it is interesting that they always expressed them in the guise of humor.

The humorous remarks about the possibility of water breaking, or going into labor, opened the door to more serious questions. In fact, Ina remarked on giving advice to some of her younger male colleagues, colleagues who had made the kind of jokes Jessie describes above, when their spouses became pregnant. For those reasons, these jokes lead me to believe that the humor is masking a fear of the biological realities of pregnancy. Not having access to the colleagues and students who made the comments and jokes to the teachers I spoke with, I cannot confirm this, but it would be an interesting line of inquiry in the future because it is fear that is based solely on the functionality of the female body.

Clearly these fears, whether the commenters are aware of it or not, are the result of a culturally engrained disgust at the feminine. Returning again to Kristeva’s (1982) work with abjection, the amniotic fluid that would enter the classroom would a teacher’s water to break represents a breakdown of order that is just a little bit too uncomfortable to deal with. For that reason, colleagues and students, make jokes about the situation to deny what that fluid actually means. It is a signifier of female power, the power to give life

and nourishment, so it is considered too disgusting to fathom. Thus, the disgust and discomfort is minimized through humor. In these sense, the humor is acting as the sort of ritual warding against abjection that Kristeva discusses. Colleagues and students truly fear the possibility of the abjection that a teacher's water breaking would induce, so they seek make humorous remarks to purifying themselves against it. The humor also serves the purpose of setting the pregnant teacher apart from the commenters, thus minimizing that blurring of the subject/object relationship that occurs in abject states.

Returning again to the comments on pumping, when these comments are viewed in concert with the comments regarding teachers' water breaking, it becomes clear that there is some level of fear of the biological realities of the female body at play. Why is the bathroom the only place Ina is given to pump? Why did Kelsey feel the need to wean her children before she returned to school? Why did Jessie have to pump breast milk in her car? Why did Heidi, who chose not to breast feed, express gratitude that she did not have to deal with being a breastfeeding mother in the classroom? Why did all of the teachers receive some sort of friendly joking regarding their water breaking in class? I contend because, whether individuals or society realize it on a conscious level or not, the female body is something to fear.

Kristeva's (1982) work speaks to this fear. As I stated in my theoretical framework, fluids such as breast milk and amniotic fluid are considered menstrual, which are the most disturbing types of bodily fluids that cause abjection because they are pollutants that come from within the body. All instances of the abject cause a threat to identity, a breakdown in societal norms, but the threat and the breakdown is augmented when the cause comes from within, when it comes from what can only be identified as

female. Breast milk and amniotic fluid remind people a little bit too much of where they come from, of a time when they were intimately connected with the mother. When the connection surfaces in the school, a public sphere and thus a masculine space, it must be identified as abject. And where there is abjection, Kristeva states, there are rituals to ward against it. In the modern secular context of the public school in the contemporary United States, the space for ritual is limited, so banishment and humor take the form of ritual. Banishment to the bathroom, to the car, or to the home for the breastfeeding mother. Humor at the notion of water breaking in the classroom.

Pregnancy's Influence on Practice. People may not realize just how physical teaching can be if they have never taught. They may realize that teaching often requires a lot of time on one's feet, but unless one has taught in the classroom for a period of several months, they may not realize how much teachers use their bodies in the classroom. The simple act of walking around the classroom, rather than simply standing or sitting in the front of the room, can serve as a means to connect with students, monitor students' academic progress, and redirect negative behaviors. Simply put, the body is one of many tools a teacher uses to get work done. So, what happens when that tool, the body, is not functioning in the way it usually does due to pregnancy? How do pregnant teachers compensate, and how do their students perceive their bodies, which show irrefutable evidence of sex, a topic that is usually taboo in the classroom?

As a first year teacher and single expectant mother, Heidi felt this tension the most keenly out of the four teachers. As she was struggling to find her own identity as a teacher professional, she dealt with the constant imposition of her identity as a young pregnant woman. She felt her changing body would not allow her to wear clothes that

conveyed the professional image she wanted to present, and the further her pregnancy progressed the more it became a presence in the room, despite the fact that her body had not become very large. In the following comment, Heidi discusses the reality of being the pregnant teacher rather than just the teacher:

Although I am small and not very pregnant, it's still, like we discussed that presence is there. And so, I feel that that's almost become my master status. I'm this pregnant teacher, not just, you know, a teacher or even a first year teacher. So, I am this young, pregnant woman in the classroom. Whereas next year, there won't be that. I don't even know, you know, how many students would even be aware that I'm a mother, unless they see personal images or something. So, I could go back to just projecting just the teacher persona that I like to project.

Although Heidi shared that she did not receive any judgment for being a single expectant mother from any of her colleagues, students, or their parents, the fact that her pregnancy became her “master status” brings her sexuality as a young woman into the classroom, whether it is explicit or not. Interestingly, Heidi would, later in our conversation, credit her pregnancy as “humanizing” her to her students with whom she was having a difficult relationship due to being a new teacher in a less than ideal school placement.

Grumet argues that knowledge gained through the body is one of the ways in which teachers can transcend the patriarchal curriculum and create a space for a feminist curriculum. Certainly this example Heidi's status as a pregnant woman accelerating her students' acceptance of her as their teacher speaks to the idea of knowledge gained through the body. Just as the incident with the vomit in Jane's narrative made space for

the intimate in her classroom, Heidi's pregnant body made space for the her and her students to form a solid relationship. She then used knowledge she gained as a pregnant woman, to strengthen this relationship and teach her students, which is one of the first steps toward (re)producing feminist curriculum,

Although Jessie was a single expectant mother during one of her pregnancies, she was in a committed relationship with a man she would later marry, so she did not experience typical identity issues related to being the pregnant teacher like Heidi did. However, she did have an experience that also changed the dynamics of her relationship with one of her students. She relayed an incident in which she had to rebuff one of her students for touching her very large stomach in class during her pregnancy. This was not just any student; she was a student who had served as Jessie's classroom aid and whom Jessie had coached in two sports. Jessie describes the student's reaction to her rebuff and how it set the tone for how she expected the rest of the class to treat her. "She was shocked, and I said, 'Would you touch my stomach if I weren't pregnant?' She said 'no,' and I said, 'Then, don't do it now.' So at that point, the kids were like ok, so there is still a boundary."

Ina also discussed an incident in which a student touched her stomach, but she described it in terms of the student mediating an awkward situation due to the restriction on movement that can take place when a very pregnant woman is in a small classroom with many students. The restriction of movement and how that limited their practice was something that all four teachers, even Heidi who had not yet become very large, discussed at length. The following quote from Ina illustrates the type of awkwardness the teachers felt as a result of their changing bodies:

I did have trouble with movement because I'm kind of short and so when my stomach got big enough, I could clear the desks if I turned around. The aisles aren't very wide and I'm short, but I'm not exactly thin. So, there were times when I would walk through to hand something back to them, and I couldn't get myself turned around or I would turn around real quick and they were standing right there and they would be embarrassed. One boy one time said, 'Well, Ms. Ina, there's the baby!' He patted my stomach, which was a little odd, but it wasn't. It didn't bother me.

Jessie and Ina describe situations that many visibly pregnant women have experienced, yet they reacted in very different ways. What could be the source of the difference? Certainly some of it has to do with individual differences regarding personal space boundaries. Of course, as we have seen from the discussion of work and family balance, both Jessie and Ina do have somewhat permeable boundaries regarding personal time they will devote to their students. Further, both women spoke passionately about being a positive model of pregnancy for their students and a source of support for students who may be pregnant, thus indicating a permeable boundary as far as talking about pregnancy. Although nothing in their responses led me to this conclusion, I believe that the difference in their reactions lies in the difference in their appearances. Jessie is a very fit woman who conforms more to current "acceptable" standards of female beauty than Ina, who is overweight, does. Thus Jessie is more likely to be seen, by anyone who may be looking, as a sexual being than Ina. The women have been navigating the world in these bodies that are perceived differently by society, so they have been conditioned to calibrate their reactions accordingly. To prevent her sexuality from creeping into the

classroom, Jessie, the more conventionally attractive woman, had to thwart her students' attempt to touch her. Ina did not need to worry that the same touch would be perceived as remotely sexual because her appearance has, to some extent, neutralized the perception of her as a sexual being. The difference in their responses relates to how teachers who are pregnant complicate the idea that a teacher's sexuality must be excluded from the classroom.

CONCLUSION

I am prone to outrage and indignation. My sympathies lie with the underdog, the oppressed. It is who I am. I disclose this fact about myself because it speaks to my mindset when I began this project. I expected to find something to be outraged about. I expected that at least one of the experiences the teachers would describe to me would leave me indignant. But, that is not what happened. In the midst of our conversations, I was struck by how normal almost everything the teachers were saying was to me. Of course I was surprised at how supportive their administrators were and by the stories about colleagues and students joking about labor in the classroom. But these unexpected themes did not outrage me, nor did the more expected themes, such as lack of a place to pump breast milk or the struggle for work and family balance. Nor did the teachers seem outraged or anything more than slightly annoyed. Like the Giving Tree teachers in Johnson et al.'s study and like Stacy Bess and Jamie Fidler, the teachers and I thought, "It's just what you do."

Why wouldn't we? Why wouldn't anyone? Looking at Madeleine Grumet's (1988) and Julia Kristeva's (1982) work in this context has given me a deeper appreciation of what a threat maternal power and maternal knowledge is to the patriarchal status quo. These teachers are women who are working in a system that is fundamentally distrustful of their womanhood and thus not designed to accommodate them during one

of the fullest expressions of that womanhood, pregnancy. So, of course the teachers in this study would see the sacrifices and compromises they have made while pregnant as just part of the job. This, again, is not surprising, as meager legal guarantees regarding maternity leave in this country almost demand that working women, such as these teachers, make significant sacrifices. As I stated in the introduction, I saw the four teachers who generously lent their voices to this study as possible versions of myself; now as I write this conclusion I see myself as a possible version of them, a version who has, just by virtue of removal, a small measure of leeway to put a name to the sacrifices, compromises, and inequitable work conditions that should be unacceptable for professionals engaged in the critical work of educating young adults.

So what name can be put to the situations described above? If we look at the teachers' experiences, it is clear that much of what the sacrifices, compromises, and unsuitable working conditions I have referred to are the result of (1) a feminized work force operating within a patriarchal paradigm in which those who hold power are (2) socialized to see pregnancy as a gross, in both senses of the word, manifestation of feminine power. Though this is appropriate and proper academic language to describe the situation, somehow, as much as I value this language and how transformative it can be, it falls short. After spending time with the data and doing the research I have done for this thesis, the best descriptor I can put to their experiences is outrageous. Maybe the truth of the matter is not that the teachers' experiences themselves are truly outrageous, although they are unacceptable. The greater truth, in my opinion, lies in the lack of outrage regarding their working conditions as pregnant teachers, with the sense of

normalcy and complacency that they, and society as whole, regard the lived experiences of these teachers.

This lack of outrage is why I have written this thesis and, more importantly, why the content I discuss is important. It is important for pre-service teachers, in particular, to read about the conditions in which these woman work. They need to know what a tricky position they will be in as caretakers of other people children. It is important for parents of students to read about how the professionals with whom they entrust their children negotiate the challenges of work and family balance. It is important for the public writ large to read about what these woman face in laboring to educate our children as they labor to create new life. It is only with more awareness and understanding of the working conditions these women face can we move to the point of outrage and then, hopefully, to action.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A INTERVIEW PROCEDURE

Interview Outline

Before recording each interview remind each participant of the following:

I will record our interview, but I will be the only one to listen to it. I will transcribe the interview, assign it an anonymous code, remove any identifying data, and then destroy the recording. In the interval between recording and transcription, the audio files will be stored on two separate flash drives (one for back up) that will be stored in a locked desk drawer in my office at Purdue and in a locked file cabinet in my home. When I write my thesis, I will refer to you by a pseudonym and omit any information that could be used to identify you.

Demographics

Questions will vary depending on whether the participant is currently pregnant or has taught while pregnant in the past.

What is your age?

- How many months pregnant are you? / How many pregnancies and for how long during each pregnancy did you teach?
- What is your marital status? / What was your marital status at time of teaching while pregnant?
- How many children do you have?
- How many years have you taught?
- Which grades do/did you teach?

- What subjects were you teaching? / What subjects do you teach?
- What type of school do you /did you teach at while pregnant - Rural? Urban?
Affluent? Poverty? Public? Private?

Administration / Supervisors and Colleagues

Questions:

- Were your administrators/supervisors male or female? What was you/administrators'/supervisors' reactions to your pregnancy? Did they act differently toward after they learned you were pregnant? Were they supportive or unsupportive? How? How did your colleagues react?
- Follow up questions

Students

Questions:

- Did you tell your students formally, or did they find out some other way? Did any students ask if you were pregnant before you were ready to tell? How did you handle that? How did your students' reaction to your pregnancy?
- Follow up questions

Parents

Questions:

- How did parents respond to your pregnancy? Did you perceive your pregnancy effected their perceptions of your efficacy/professionalism as a teacher? (This would

be especially relevant for anyone who was a relatively new or young teacher when they taught while pregnant.)

- Follow up questions

Practice/Classroom

Questions:

- How did pregnancy influence your classroom practice? This can be in small or big ways, such as maybe you dressed differently or maybe you were weary to approach certain texts or topics. What did you do differently due to your pregnancy? Did your pregnancy influence any discussions of texts or topics? Which texts and topics?
- Follow up questions

Self

Questions:

- What were your feelings as a pregnant woman in the classroom? Fears? Frustrations? Joys? Did you feel any pressures unique to being pregnant?
- Follow up questions

Work and Family Balance

Questions:

- Did you take a maternity leave and for how long? What were your concerns about being a new mother in the classroom? How did you balance your roles as teacher and a new mother?

- Follow up questions

Ask the participant if there is anything else she would like to discuss.

Thank the participant for her time.

APPENDIX B LIST OF CODES

Background information/demographics

Biohazard

Boundaries

Breastfeeding/pumping

Emotional distress

Initial reaction to pregnancy – administrators

Initial reaction to pregnancy – colleagues

Initial reaction to pregnancy – students

Modeling pregnancy/motherhood

Obligation to students/profession

Parents

Physical appearance

Physical discomfort/fatigue

Pregnancy's influence on content

Pregnancy's influence on practice

Pregnancy's influence on teacher/student relationship

Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with administrators

Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with colleagues

Pregnancy as a presence in the classroom

Pregnant students

Protective behaviors / concern

Sacrifice

Work & family balance

APPENDIX C EXCERPT OF TRANSCRIBED AND CODED INTERVIEW

The following is an excerpt from of the transcribed interview with Ina. The codes are added in after each response.

Margaret: What were your colleagues' reactions to your pregnancy?

Ina: I've had different colleagues almost every time it seems. Um, the women that I work with seemed to be fine with it. With my first pregnancy, I was three weeks over, and um I worked with some younger gentlemen, and they were a little freaked out by the fact or not understanding that your due date does not mean that the baby comes directly on that due date and that is when [...]. So, every day for the three weeks after that I showed up they were like "What are doing?," and they were genuinely nervous about having me here because, again, I think they've seen too many movies and they thought that like water would break and come gushing everywhere and then they would have to get hot water and towels and someone would have to deliver [...] you know. Like, not the reality of what labor is, so [...]

Codes: Biohazard, Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with colleagues

Margaret: So the biological aspect?

Ina: Yes ... freaked them out

Codes: Biohazard

Margaret: The potential of the biological realities, let's say ...

Ina: Well, yes, just the idea of that freaked them out, but they weren't mean to me, or there wasn't, you know never any animosity or any of that there. It was just a little more

of nervousness about me being here and me being pregnant. I was very pregnant. I had a lot of swelling, and I was very [...] I mean three weeks over and this and that, so [...].

Codes: Biohazard

Margaret: And these were maybe new teachers?

Ina: Well, they had only been teaching for a few years. One of them was newly married. He had been only been married for about three years. One of them wasn't even married, so they were kind of young guys, coach types.

Codes: Biohazard, Pregnancy's influence on professional relationship with colleagues

Margaret: So that must have been a nice learning experience for them?

Ina: And it ended up being [...] yes for especially for the one because the one ended up being pregnant. I had [my baby] in August. They had theirs, I think, in May. We might have even been pregnant a little bit together, his wife. She was a speech pathologist here, so I knew her as well. So, it did end up being [...] he ended up coming to me and asking me things. Like "hey...this one time [...]." You know. "Remember that day [...]" and so yeah.

Codes: Modeling pregnancy/motherhood, pregnancy's influence on relationship with colleagues

APPENDIX D FREQUENCY OF CODES

This appendix contains frequencies of codes for all four of the teachers in this study combined and frequencies of codes for each of the four teachers individually. Two codes from the original list of codes in the transcribed and coded interviews are not included in these tables of frequencies because the content associated with them did not factor into my discussion of the data for the following reasons. First, content associated with the code “Background information/demographics” was not considered for analysis because this content including information, such as school culture and teacher and student demographics, that provided context for the teachers’ discussions of teaching while pregnant but did not relate directly to their experiences of teaching while pregnant. First, content associated with the code “not coded” was not considered because that code was reserved for comments that were simply short utterances of agreement or acknowledgement and for comments that were not related to teaching while pregnant at all and did not provide any background information about a teacher’s school or students.

Frequency of Codes for All Teachers

Code	Frequency
Pregnancy's influence on teacher/student relationship	29
Work and family balance	29
Pregnancy's influence on practice	22
Obligation to students/profession	18
Modeling pregnancy/motherhood	14
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with colleagues	13
Parents	13
Initial reaction to pregnancy – students	12
Physical discomfort/fatigue	12
Biohazard	12
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with administrators	11
Protective behaviors / concern	11
Physical appearance	10
Initial reaction to pregnancy - administrators	9
Pregnant students	8
Sacrifice	8
Boundaries	7
Breastfeeding / pumping	7
Pregnancy's influence on content	6
Emotional distress	5
Pregnancy's as a presence in the classroom	5
Initial reaction to pregnancy - colleagues	4

Frequency of Codes for Heidi

Code	Frequency
Pregnancy's influence on teacher/student relationship	21
Physical appearance	8
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with administrators	7
Parents	7
Initial reaction to pregnancy – students	6
Pregnancy's influence on practice	6
Pregnancy as a presence in the classroom	5
Work & family balance	5
Emotitonal distress	4
Obligation to students/profession	4
Physical discomfort/fatigue	4
Protective behaviors/concern	4
Initial reaction to pregnancy - colleagues	3
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with colleagues	3
Breastfeeding / pumping	2
Boundaries	1
Initial reaction to pregnancy – students	1
Pregnancy's influence on content	1
Biohazard	1
Modeling pregnancy/motherhood	0
Pregnant students	0
Sacrifice	0

Frequency of Codes for Ina

Code	Frequency
Modeling pregnancy/motherhood	10
Biohazard	6
Initial reaction to pregnancy - administrators	4
Pregnant students	4
Initial reaction to pregnancy – students	3
Protective behaviors / concern	3
Boundaries	2
Obligation to students/profession	2
Physical appearance	2
Physical discomfort/fatigue	2
Pregnancy's influence on content	2
Breastfeeding / pumping	1
Pregnancy's influence on practice	1
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with administrators	1
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with colleagues	1
Sacrifice	1
Parents	1
Work & family balance	1
Emotional distress	0
Initial reaction to pregnancy - colleagues	0
Pregnancy's as a presence in the classroom	0
Pregnancy's influence on teacher/student relationship	0

Frequency of Codes for Kelsey

Code	Frequency
Work and family balance	17
Pregnancy's influence on practice	11
Obligation to students/profession	6
Pregnancy's influence on teacher/student relationship	6
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with colleagues	5
Sacrifice	4
Boundaries	3
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with administrators	3
Biohazard	2
Initial reaction to pregnancy - students	2
Pregnancy's influence on content	2
Protective behaviors / concern	2
Parents	2
Breastfeeding / pumping	1
Initial reaction to pregnancy - administrators	1
Modeling pregnancy/motherhood	1
Physical discomfort/fatigue	1
Pregnant students	1
Emotional distress	0
Initial reaction to pregnancy - colleagues	0
Physical appearance	0
Pregnancy as a presence in the classroom	0

Frequency of Codes for Jessie

Code	Frequency
Obligation to students/profession	6
Work and family balance	6
Physical discomfort/fatigue	5
Pregnancy's influence on practice	4
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with colleagues	4
Biohazard	3
Breastfeeding/pumping	3
Initial reaction to pregnancy – administrators	3
Modeling pregnancy/motherhood	3
Pregnant students	3
Sacrifice	3
Parents	3
Pregnancy's influence on teacher/student relationship	2
Protective behaviors/concern	2
Boundaries	1
Emotional distress	1
Initial reaction to pregnancy - colleagues	1
Initial reaction to pregnancy - students	1
Pregnancy's influence on content	1
Physical appearance	0
Pregnancy as a presence in the classroom	0
Pregnancy's influence on professional relationships with administrators	0