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Postmodern View of the Hidden Curriculum

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A POSTMODERN VIEW OF THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

by

LINDA DICKERSON

(UNDER THE DIRECTION OF WILLIAM REYNOLDS)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation will address the hidden curriculum and the impact that it has on the contemporary classroom. In the twentieth century, America is facing a variety of crises, one being the state of the national educational system, and part of this crisis is the public image that the educational system presents to the public eye through the hidden curriculum. Every institution has a public image or the side of it which first meets the eye, but often these images are deceptive. Schools present a public image in that schools teach much more than they claim to teach and they complete this task through rules, curriculum, and responses to all events and situations. The hidden curriculum actually functions in the open through the practices of the school, and is only hidden in the fact that these practices go unacknowledged by teachers, administrators, parents and students. My research goal is to expose the hidden curriculum in my classroom and in the school where I teach in order to improve my teaching style and facilitate school improvement.

INDEX WORDS: HIDDEN CURRICULUM, PUBLIC IMAGE, DECEPTIVE

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POSTMODERN VIEW OF THE HIDDEN CURRIUCLUM

There is something of a paradox involved in writing about a curriculum that

does not exist. Yet, if we are concerned with the consequences of school

programs and the role of curriculum in shaping those consequences, then

it seems to me that we are well advised to consider not only the explicit and

implicit curricula of schools but also what schools do not teach. It is my

thesis that what schools do not teach is as important as what they do teach.

Eisner (1994, p.79)

CHAPTER 1: DISSERTATION INTRODUCTION AND FOCUS

This dissertation focuses on how the hidden curriculum functions in Wright High

School, which is a large high school in southeastern, Georgia. The theoretical perspective

of this dissertation is critical theory utilizing autoethnographic methodology. Information

on the hidden messages that students receive through the hidden curriculum was gathered

by examining classroom practices and personal reflection on the manner in which the

school functions in order to bring the messages imparted by the hidden curriculum into

focus. Through this study, I will examine and expose the hidden curriculum in my

classroom and the school in general in order to better serve the students that I teach. The

overriding questions for this research are: 1) How do I make decisions as I teach? 2) How

do I assess those decisions? 3) How does action research inform my practice of decision-

making? 4) In what manner does the hidden curriculum function in this school?

Why is it essential that all educators study and understand the impact of the

hidden curriculum on the contemporary educational system even though it has been

addressed in the past? In a postmodern society it is imperative to examine what

motivates educators to respond in a given manner and to determine if current conceptions

of curricula prepare students for the future. It is necessary to examine curriculum through

different modes of thinking and to inquire about this phenomena in our society. The

postmodern society is rapidly changing and becoming more and more complex,

fragmented and unsure; thus, students and teachers in the contemporary classroom have

very little stability and the subtle values that educators impart become more and more

relevant. Since it is impossible to teach without a hidden agenda surfacing and because

there are so many nuances in the act of teaching and learning, the hidden curriculum

needs to be addressed. Many controversial issues abound within educational circles and

students receive conflicting message in the process of everyday school life. The manner

in which the hidden curriculum functions is one such controversial issue. How these

subtle elusive messages are imparted through the hidden curriculum, and how these

messages impact the students, faculty and curriculum of the contemporary school system

is the emphasis of this dissertation. My goal is to study the hidden curriculum in different

areas and to expose the hidden curriculum in my classroom and in the school where I

teach.

   Key Terms: Hidden Curriculum, Postmodern, School Culture & Climate

Hidden Curriculum

   For the purpose of this dissertation I will utilize the 'hidden curriculum' as a

blanket term for the many different types of covert curriculum that operate outside the

stated curriculum. One of the most appropriate definitions for this purpose is that

provided by Sambell and McDowell (1998) who defines the hidden curriculum as, "an

apposite metaphor to describe the shadowy, ill-defined and amorphous nature of that

which is implicit and embedded in contrast with the formal statements about curricula and the surface features of educational interaction"(p. 391). In spite of the multiple meanings of the term, the study of the hidden curriculum is defined by a unitary goal which is to make explicit and visible that which was formally invisible.

Some of the different labels for the hidden curriculum are the null curriculum which Eisner's (1994, p. 97) states, "is simply that which is not taught in schools." Cortes (1981, p. 24) defines the unwritten or societal curriculum as: "...[the] massive, ongoing, informal curriculum of family, peer groups, neighborhoods, churches organizations, occupations, mass media and other socializing forces that "educate" all of us throughout our lives, and the political curriculum, that which functions to maintain the existing society." Each of the different types of the hidden curriculum functions in the school system in subtle ways and influence all participants in the school setting. Some of the teachings of the hidden curriculum are deliberate, but many of the messages come about through the exchange of students and faculty as they experience situations in the educational setting and are not overtly taught. This refers to the curricular context in which school practices are enacted, including the governance of the school culture and the relationships among those within it.

The hidden curriculum is implied by the very structure and nature of schools, much of what revolves around daily or established routines. Longstreet and Shane (1993, p.46), advocate a commonly accepted definition for the hidden curriculum as, " that which refers to the kinds of learning students derive from the very nature and organizational design of the public school, as well as from the behaviors and attitudes of teachers and administrators.... ." Examples of the hidden curriculum might include the

messages and lessons derived from the mere organization of schools, the emphasis on

sequential room arrangements, the cellular, timed segments of formal instruction, the

books that are chosen, teacher assignments, and even the architectural style of the school

building. The hidden curriculum may include both positive and negative messages,

depending on the models provided and the perspectives of the learner or the observer.

There are many different definitions of curriculum coined by curricular researchers

that incorporate the hidden curriculum as well. The following list cites only a few

examples: "Curriculum is a continuous reconstruction, moving from the child's present

experience out into that represented by the organized bodies of truth that we call studies . . .

the various studies . . . are themselves experience—they are that of the race" (Dewey, 1902,

p. 11). "Curriculum is the entire range of experiences, both directed and undirected,

concerned in unfolding the abilities of the individual; or it is the series of consciously

directed training experiences that the schools use for completing and perfecting the

unfoldment"(Bobbitt, 1918, p.43). "The curriculum is all the learning experiences planned

and directed by the school to attain its educational goals" (Tyler, 1957, p.79). "The

curriculum is not a tangible product, but the actual day-to-day interactions of students,

teachers, knowledge and the milieu of school life" (Cornbleth, 1991, p.36). "Curriculum is

all the experiences that children have under the guidance of their teachers" (Caswell &

Campbell, 1935). "The set of actual experiences and perceptions of the experiences that

each individual learner has of his or her program of education" (Glen Hass, 1987).

"Curriculum is the reconstruction of knowledge and experience that enables the learner to

grow in exercising intelligent control of subsequent knowledge and experience" (Tanner &

Tanner, 1995, p.45). As anyone can see, there are many different definitions of the

curriculum that speaks to the hidden curriculum, but one thread runs through each definition and that is that the hidden curriculum is definitely an elusive element of schooling.

Education offers so much in the way of educational aids today, and educators develop all of these wonderful educational theories, but this entire process still gets very poor results. Much of what educators address is the overt curriculum; however, there is a hidden curriculum that affects education in a very profound manner. The hidden curriculum represents behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge that are communicated without conscious intent, and it is also an accumulation of values communicated indirectly, through actions and words that are part of everyday life in a school. The set of unwritten rules that no one has been directly taught, but that everyone understands. Violation of these rules can make an individual an outcast; therefore, most students understand this unspoken system. As educators we need to be aware of this social phenomenon that has such a great impact upon our schools and what we teach. Teachers need to be aware, able to question, and challenge this set of dogmatic social constructions in order to guide students.

Eisner (1985, p. 90) refers to the "'null curriculum' as that aspect of curriculum which schools do not teach." He contends that, "subjects that are taught are part of a tradition, and tradition creates expectations, they create predictability, and they sustain stability." Subjects that are not taught teach a hidden agenda by simply being omitted. Administrators choose which subjects will be taught and by whom; therefore, these choices have predetermined outcomes. The teachers that are assigned to teach certain subjects are a part of the hidden curriculum because a different teacher might approach the same subject

in a totally different manner; therefore, the outcome of the course would be different. Curriculum bias occurs in the practice of content selection, analysis and utilization. Those who are choosing the books and curriculum are making choices based on their own personal preferences; thus, this is part of the hidden curriculum. The view of those choosing the curriculum is defined by the selections that they make, and how classes are scheduled is also part of the hidden curriculum.

Postmodern

The postmodern era, from World War II to the modern day, serves as a dynamic arena for the social and instructional changes that have occurred in the contemporary school setting. The schoolhouse culture reflects the effects of these changes on all of its participants. According to Lyotard (1984, p.14), "postmodernism is an ideological and political marker for referencing a world without stability, where knowledge is constantly changing and change is the only constant."

Postmodern theory espouses five overarching themes. The first of these is '*presence*'. Cahoone (1996) states that, "Postmodernism denies that anything is immediately present, hence independent of signs, language, interpretation, disagreement" (p.14). '*Origin*' according to Cahoone (1996) is "an attempt to see behind or beyond phenomena to their ultimate foundation" (p.14). '*Unity',* in postmodern thought determines that what has been thought as one, a unity, will ultimately be shown to be many. Cahoone (1996) said "that a text can be read in an indefinitely large number of ways, none of which provides the complete or true meaning" (p. 15*). 'Denial of transcendence'* that is norms do not exist- for example what is truth-beauty-love. Cahoone (1996) states that, "Ideas are created at a certain time and place, to serve certain

interest, and is dependent on a certain intellectual and social context" (p.5). '*Constitutive otherness* ',according to Cahoone (1996) is defined by "What appears to be cultural units-human beings, words, meanings, ideas, philosophical systems-; social organizations are maintained in their apparent unity only through an active process of exclusion, opposition, and hierarchization" (p.16).

Students in the contemporary classroom face change every day as the effects of the postmodern world continue to change all facets of teaching and learning. To further educate contemporary students and help them be successful, understanding their lives and how it affects learning becomes of immense importance. Teachers must be cognizant of the many problems that students face in their lives. "The effects of postmodernism have helped change the definition of these relationships: power and culture, representation and domination, and language and subjectivity" (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 28).

Postmodernism brings about many dilemmas in education because current practices of curricula do not prepare students to live in a world which is rapidly changing and becoming more and more complex, fragmented and uncertain. Postmodern philosophy emphasizes contextual construction of meaning and the validity of multiple perspectives. Wilson (2006) outlines some key features of postmodern thinking (liberally paraphrased for simplicity):

Key ideas include: Knowledge is constructed by people and groups of people; therefore, all interested parties must be included in the design and development of the educational process. Process design should move from the lab setting to a field setting and both teachers and students should be included in designing the program. All interested parties must have a voice contributing to the outcome of

the project. Reality is defined according to different perspectives; thus, truth is grounded in everyday life and social relations. Be willing to break the rules. Place principles above procedures, and people above principles. Key principles should be continually tested against the real needs of the people involved in the endeavor. Life is a text; thinking is an interpretive act, and must be viewed as such. Facts and values are inseparable; thus, all other human activities are value-laden. Don't believe your own metaphors because of the pervasive influence that labels and metaphors have on our thinking.

Some people are critical of postmodern ideas. "Critics of postmodernism argue it recognizes diversity: women, gays, and people of color, but fails to engage people in activities that lead to self/social empowerment" (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 63). These arguments present the view of public schools in chaos, teaching a minimum curriculum and barely maintaining control of their students. Parents whose children attended public schools either support the public school effort or are negative about what is happening in public school. Skeggs (1991, p. 259) defines postmodernism as:

The world according to postmodernists is opaque; it is all lived on the surface.
There is nothing that hides behind its surface appearances. It is not a case of people saying what they mean- rather they don't mean anything- for there is no meaning to be had; we are all just living simulacra, thus it doesn't matter.

Students live in a world where there are very few absolutes and because of our mobile society and the many technological advances their reality changes from day to day. Doll (1989) states that, "the postmodern curriculum should value uncertainty, spontaneity and provisionality to promote active learning." However, this is not the way

that curriculum today functions. Contemporary curriculum is often dull and locked into a rut because of tight controls placed on students and teachers alike. Curriculum in the contemporary classroom seems to be moving toward a prescribed curriculum. A spontaneous curriculum would mean that the contemporary curriculum should not be fixed but fluid to address the various needs of the students; yet, curriculum in the contemporary classroom becomes more and more static and less and less fluid, and it fails to address the various needs of the students because more and more governmental regulations are placed on curriculum which makes it dull and locked into a preconceived pattern. Students are often bored and become restless because the curriculum is not interesting or challenging.

School Culture and Climate

The impact of school culture and climate of the high school on students is of increasing concern to both professional educators and the general public because the high school is a central socializing institution whose effects are profound. Culture is a powerful influence on students and it cannot be ignored in the classroom because students are surrounded by culture. Culture provides an accurate way to understand a school's own unwritten rules, traditions, norms and expectations that seem to permeate everything in a school. Deal and Peterson (1990, p.3), discuss culture "as being the way people act, how they dress, what they talk about, whether they seek out colleagues for help and how teachers feel about their work and their students. The culture of a school is the single most important factor determining the extent to which educational success takes place". McBrien and R. S. Brandt (1997, p. 89) define school culture as:

The sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, and organizational structures within a school that causes it to function and react in particular ways. Some schools are said to have a nurturing environment that recognizes students and treat them as individuals; others may have the feel of authoritarian structures where rules are strictly enforced and hierarchical control is strong. Teaching practices, diversity, and the relationships among administrators, teachers, parents, and students contribute to school climate. Although the two terms are somewhat interchangeable, school climate refers mostly to the school's effects on students, while school culture refers more to the way teachers and other staff members work together.

There is little doubt that principals and teachers can lead the way to successful cultures where all students learn if given the opportunity. Culture is critical to understanding the dynamics behind the daily realities and deep structure of school life and culture is also a large factor in educational success. The school culture can affect student identity. Banks (2001) notes "the school culture communicates to students the school's attitudes toward a range of issues and problems, including how the school views them as human beings and its attitudes toward males, females, exceptional students, and students from various religious, cultural, racial, and ethnic groups" (p. 24).

Schools, like all organizations, have been determined to have different climates or cultures, and the kind of culture has a great impact on all those involved. "The essence of a group's culture is its pattern of shared, taken-for-granted basic assumptions that will manifest itself at the levels of observable behaviors; Culture is multifaceted, multidimensional and not easily understood" (Schein, 1992). "Some even believe that the

schools' effect on productivity is so powerful that creating a particular kind of school culture is essential to the effectiveness of the organization" (Deal, 1982). Schein (1992) believes that, "Culture can be analyzed as a phenomenon that surrounds us at all times, being constantly enacted and created by our interactions with others" (p.1).

"Public schools are spaces where various borders emerge. Borders refer to "the juxtaposition of difference, of cultural contradictions, [and] occur at the margins of societies but also at the disjunctive points within them" (Maynard, 2002, p. 29).These functions of promoting socialization goals and alleviating existing problem focus attention on the social environment of the school; thus, these functions become part of the hidden curriculum.

Statement of the Problem

In postmodern times, America is facing a variety of crises, one being the state of the national educational system. It is difficult to fully understand the complex organization called school without understanding the effects postmodernism has had on it. All educational practices came under scrutiny. Developmentally appropriate practices, cooperative learning, performance assessments and learning styles are all educational practices that sprang from the changing values of the postmodern era. Education is an inexact undertaking; it is not precise at a conceptual level and requires constant reflection and examination on the part of policy makers, parents, teachers, and administrators. When dealing with educational issues, there are few definite answers, and often educators face the quandary of which direction they should take in order to better serve students. Each student and each teacher brings to school, the varied elements of individual life such as experiences at home, the cumulative effects of previous schooling and individual

social intentions and interactions. No two people will react the same way in any given situation because they all arrive at the situation with different experiences and expectations. Since teachers and students have had different life experiences, each person will react differently to the same curriculum. Curriculum can be constructed in a way which either enhances or suppresses these individual differences, thereby enriching, or polluting and corrupting the educational experience. Slattery (1995) states that, "Curriculum development in the postmodern era respects and celebrates the uniqueness of each individual person, text, event, culture and educative moment, but all within the context of an interdependent cosmological view" (p.142). Educators should celebrate individual differences, but I am not sure at this time that, because of time constraints, the curriculum fulfills this function. Grumet (1988) describes curriculum as "artifice," suggesting that curriculum is "deliberately designed to direct attention, provoke response and express value, it reorders experience so as to make it accessible to perception and reflection" (p.79).

The postmodern era serves as a backdrop for the many social and instructional changes that have taken place in the school; thus, the school culture reflects the effects of these changes on all of its participants and it becomes of paramount importance that educators strive to help students be successful:

> To educate postmodern students and help them become successful, understanding their lives and how it affects learning becomes of paramount importance. Should students be allowed to take a major part in planning their education? How much does the school culture impact students? Recognizing and trying to change power

relationships, especially in complicated, traditional institutions, is among the most

difficult tasks human beings can undertake (Sarason, 1990, p.32).

What instructional strategies can the school utilize to promote student choice and assist

students with their learning? Attempting to answer such questions through the lens of the

day to day work of teachers, students, and administrators, is one way to help build vital

understandings regarding the hidden curriculum. These are all problems in the

contemporary classroom that must be addressed and these are the problems that are

addressed in this study.

The lack of critical attention to the hidden curriculum in contemporary schools

points to large gaps in the research literature and is a problem in educational reform. The

stated curriculum is often studied but little attention is devoted to the hidden curriculum

and the impact that it has on the contemporary school system. There have not been many

inquiries in contemporary schools that center on how the hidden curriculum functions in

the school and classroom; therefore, the informal or hidden curriculum of the school

warrants close examination. Making sense out of the complex school culture is a

prerequisite to maximizing its positive effect on students and helping them to succeed

when their school experience is over.

Research Site

Wright high school is the only public high school in Caring County, offering

 a comprehensive curriculum, nine through twelve, with a variety of classes for both

College Preparatory and Career Technology Preparatory. Grades ten through twelve are

housed in a beautiful modern building and there is a modern ninth grade center adjacent

to the main building.

The mission statement for the school is that the school provides educational excellence through dynamic programs and responsible partnerships with the community. We maintain safe schools and campuses. Technology is emphasized and assists in achieving the system's academic goals while offering opportunities for remediation and enrichment for our students. We believe that all students should have opportunities for learning which will help them reach their fullest intellectual, personal, and social potential. The school will be known as a world class quality school for all students, empowering every student to graduate prepared to enter the work force or pursue higher education.

The county has a large military base which makes the student body very diverse and somewhat volatile since families are transferred in and out of the area. Enrollment for the school is two thousand eight hundred and sixty five students. Five hundred and sixty one of the students are seniors. Class periods are approximately one and one half hours each on a four by four semester block schedule. Each teacher, unless working on extended day schedule, teaches three ninety minute classes and has one planning period. Sixty eight percent of the two hundred and fifty faculty members have earned Post-Baccalaureate degrees.

The marking periods are two 18-week semesters, with report cards issued every nine weeks. The record for continuing education of the 2006 graduates is thirty percent attended a public college, fifteen percent attended a technical school and fifty five percent other (military, work, other).

The school offers many vocational opportunities, honors and advanced placement classes. This program allows an opportunity for the brighter more motivated students to

excel in many different areas. The school also has a dynamic drama and music department. The school has a varied sports program which allows the students many opportunities for involvement. Students have the opportunity to compete in almost any sport that they are interested in. The school has teams that travel and compete in : football, soccer, cross country , track , swimming volleyball, softball (girls), baseball (boys), tennis ,wrestling, basketball, and golf,

Theoretical Framework

I utilized interpretive and qualitative methods in my research and took my teaching experience as a case study; therefore, the research process was my reflective thinking about my personal teaching experiences. I believe that qualitative research is the most effective way to study the hidden curriculum. Critical theory is my theoretical perspective and the research methodology is autoethnographic.

For this study I used an ethnographic approach to gather and collect data. Ethnographic analysis was completed through a narrative analysis. I looked for interpretive understanding of the narrative analysis through literature, previous academic writings, personal journals and letters, and both personal and professional life experiences. The narrative of this action research is in the form of an autoethnography, following the form of an ethnographic participant observation. I believe that action research itself is a kind of autoethnography, in that within the practice of action research, the researcher is studying his or her own practice. "This does not only include one's beliefs, one's philosophies, one's attitudes to and about what constitutes research practices but, as well, includes the specific relational organization of one's living conditions" (Carson and Sumara, 1997, p.16).

Research Goals

   The goal of this research of the hidden curriculum is to reveal and identify some

undisclosed issues of formal education in my class and in the school. To reveal the

hidden curriculum educators must have the capacity to critically look inward at the

school and how it functions and bring these actions to light for examination. Once

revealed, the hidden curriculum becomes negotiable and visible to all participants

(teachers, students, and administrators) allowing for change and improvement related to

the educational process and structure.

   Since very little work has been undertaken which applies postmodern ideas to the

hidden curriculum theory, examining what happens through lived experience of everyday

school life is an important aspect of guiding the educational system to function more

effectively. McLaren (1997, p.191) states that:

   The hidden curriculum deals with the tacit ways in which knowledge and behavior

   are constructed outside the usual course materials and formally scheduled lessons. It

   is part of the bureaucratic and managerial "press" of the school - the combined

   forces by which students are induced to comply with the dominant ideologies and

   social practices related to authority, behavior and morality.

 To reveal the hidden curriculum educators must have the capacity to critically look

inward at the school and classroom and determine how it functions and bring issues into

focus that have been previously ignored or hidden. Addressing the hidden curriculum is

imperative if educators are to better serve students.

Background of the Study

   While unseen, the hidden curriculum must be considered with the same seriousness

as the written, formal curriculum, because the everyday behavior of the faculty, staff, and other students cannot fail to have an impact on a student. Since teachers, students and administrators interact on a daily basis there is bound to be a hidden curriculum because of the many different personalities involved in this everyday interaction. The hidden curriculum functions in so many different areas that it is very hard to define and manage though it impacts every single person that is involved in the school system. The hidden curriculum affects teachers, students administrators, clerical personnel, custodial staff, lunch room workers, bus drivers and even parents.

The hidden curriculum is comprised of subtle messages that are conveyed to anyone involved in the school system and it unofficially teaches norms, mores, and the culture of the school. As John Gaughan (1997, p.23) states:

> School is a controlled environment. Educators condition students to behave in certain ways, to assume certain attitudes, and to become certain kinds of Americans. A hidden curriculum exists in every environment and this hidden curriculum changes according to location, situation, people, age, and culture.

The hidden curriculum brings out different responses in different people because they each have different experiences. Educators openly embrace the explicit curriculum; however, students are given many messages that are outside the explicit or stated curriculum but these messages are often ignored or not even recognized by the faculty of the school. There is a great amount of energy and effort expended on studying the stated curriculum, but little or no time spent on studying and controlling the hidden curriculum even though it is very powerful. The hidden curriculum is very elusive and, as a result, it can reinforce formal teachings or it may even contradict the formal curriculum.

It is impossible to teach without personal values determining the method in which the teaching occurs. Curriculum can be instrumental in celebrating the differences of the individual and the differences of cultures, but it can also be damaging to students. Many ideas and issues that are addressed through curriculum are a part of the hidden curriculum; therefore, curriculum can celebrate or stifle the individual. When curriculum is interesting and beneficial students rejoice and take an avid interest in their education, but curriculum is often dull and uninteresting and students are unmotivated because they believe that what they are being taught is useless.

Curriculum has its origins in the running/chariot tracks of Rome. As Pinar and Grumet (1976) have developed this term, it refers (from Latin) to education as the running of a course, or a course of study. Curriculum was, literally, a course to be run. In Latin curriculum was a racing chariot; currere was to run. Today, students must be encouraged to run the race, and to do this effectively the varied differences of each individual must be celebrated.   In today's contemporary classroom, educators must provide students opportunities to exercise thinking skills and encourage them to reach meaningful, well thought out conclusions if they are to function in a postmodern society. Curriculum today is often dull and unexciting but if students were given more choices then they would be more interested in what they study. Many controls are place on curriculum, thus, this is one reason that the hidden curriculum needs to be addressed.

Our culture is changing at such a rapid rate that students must learn how to function in a time of flux. Students must learn the skills that will help them to effectively run the race, but many times there are hidden agenda's interwoven in the curriculum that serve the interest of special groups and thus the needs of the individual student are overlooked.

Noddings (1992) states that, "there are few things that all students need to know, and it ought to be accepted for students to reject some material in order to pursue other topics with enthusiasm" (p.19). Students maintain a higher level of interest if they have some choices in their curriculum. In the contemporary classroom, there is very little time to allow students much of a choice in the curriculum that they study, and to explore areas of personal interest, since the curriculum must be so structured to cover the material that will be assessed on state mandated tests.

Education should be about building lasting and enduring interest, but this does not seem to be an important goal in today's educational circles and as a result many students become frustrated and fail to run the course. Foucault (1983) defines curriculum as a, "silkily subtle, complex and highly individualized source of power." These qualities are what make the hidden curriculum so difficult to define and study. While completing this dissertation research, I became more and more puzzled by the fact that teachers, administrators and other school personnel did not understand or even recognize the concept of the hidden curriculum; therefore, teachers who are on the front line may not even understand the concept of a hidden curriculum, and those who do recognize the hidden curriculum do not have the time or the support of administration to delve into the hidden curriculum and change its impact If the hidden curriculum is not identified and addressed then it continues to perpetuate the same outcomes.

According to Seddon (1983, p.3), " the hidden curriculum involves the learning of attitudes, norms, beliefs, values and assumptions often expressed as rules, rituals and regulations." These values and rules are rarely questioned and are integrated into the school culture through everyday experiences, but students and teachers accept these rules and

values with little objection. Sometimes there will be a student who stands up against the system, but they are quickly removed, likewise with a teacher who thinks outside of the box.

Questions about whether aspects of the hidden curriculum are positive or negative will change depending upon the value stance of the persons concerned, and upon different situations. Meighan (1981) expresses this idea thus: "The hidden curriculum is taught by the school, not by any teacher...something is coming across to the pupils which may never be spoken about in any lesson but is still pervasive in the school culture. They (students) are picking-up an approach to living and an attitude to learning". It is impossible to attend school without learning ideas, mores, and values expressed in everyday activities that are taught unintentionally. Habermas (1991) sums-up these ideas thus: "The hidden curriculum consists of those things pupils learn through the experience of attending school rather than the stated educational objectives of such institutions". Students learn values, mores and attitudes about people, ideas and issues that are not actually taught in the overt curriculum, but they learn these as if they were deliberately taught. Students learn a great deal from the unspoken day-to-day activities in which they participate in school.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the concept of the hidden curriculum in Wright High School and to develop a plan that will better help teachers, administrators, and students to understand the concept of the hidden curriculum. The impact of the hidden curriculum is often ignored in educational research. This research is aimed at illuminating my experience and the experiences of my students which "conveys a subject's sense of educational experience…to disclose what has been hidden from the

normative discourse of the curriculum" (Grumet, 1990). Even in relation to my personal teaching practices, I am sure that there are issues that pertain to the hidden curriculum.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This research has personal meaning: therefore, I have attempted to be fair and just while conducting the research even though it is difficult to separate ones self from a topic that is so vital to every aspect of the school and classroom. The research reflects the thoughts, feelings, and the experience of the participants and researcher; therefore, it will be impossible to leave out personal values and ideals.

Personal subjectivity is one of the main limitations of any research project. Peshkin (1988, p. 17) pointed out the impossibility of conducting "totally objective" research is impossible. "Each researcher no matter how hard they try to be subjective brings their own set of subjectivity to the research project." The researcher would not have chosen this particular research if they had not had some feeling or interest in the issue; therefore, these feeling will certainly color how the researcher presents the findings though I have attempted to be as objective as possible.

Since my perceptions of the research process played a major part in the findings of the study, it was important that I attend to the idea of subjectivity. Peshkin (1988) defines subjectivity as "the quality of the investigator that affects the results of observational investigation" (p.17). Peshkin (1988, p.18) points out that an individual's subjectivity is not something that can be removed, and it is therefore something researchers need to be aware of throughout the research process. Peshkin (1988) identified the various facets of his subjectivities through a series of I's, for example, the "justice-seeking I" (p. 18) and "the community-maintenance I" (p. 18). Though Peshkin

does not view subjectivity as necessarily negative, he does feel it is something that researchers need to be aware of as they complete their research. It was important to examine my own subjectivities throughout the research process so that I was aware of how these subjectivities could influence my interpretations of events.

Significance of the Study

Educators frequently overlook the importance of school culture and the hidden curriculum when addressing educational issues. Teachers and administrators need to gain a more complete understanding of the school environment through an exploration of the symbolic nature of the hidden or implicit, curriculum since the environment is so important to everyone in the school system. The school environment impacts everyone in the school. In order to better understand the school, administrators need to become cognizant of the powerful influence of institutional culture/climate, but sometimes they are not cognizant of the impact that culture has on the overall atmosphere of the school. School culture affects every part of the school. School culture is what staff talks about, the type of learning in a classroom, the professional development of staff and the emphasis placed on the importance of learning for all students. It is an important component of what makes a school functions well. A schools culture stems from its vision and its established values. Whether the culture is strong or weak depends on the actions, traditions, symbols, ceremonies, and rituals that are closely aligned with that vision of the school. Many educators do not realize the importance of the culture and it often overlooked. Yet, despite its importance the hidden nature of the school organizational culture is possibly the least discussed element in plans for school development and improvement.

Odysseus: a Metaphor for Education and the Hidden Curriculum

The journey of Odysseus might serve as a metaphor for the quest of educational excellence and the hidden curriculum. Just as Odysseus was close to home many times on his journey home, but was blown off course by powerful winds so are we in education blown off course by prevailing societal and political groups as they challenge one another for control. On his journey home one of the many hidden challenges that Odysseus encountered was the "Lotus Eaters", and in the same manner that Odysseus' sailors became trapped on the Island of the lotus eaters, once they had partaken of its fruits, so it is that students may find their journey through school halted by the use of drugs.

Drug use is a huge problem; schools are immersed in a drug culture, and literally thousands of substances are used extensively. The medical system itself is likewise a drug-oriented system; thus, the use of both illegal and prescription drugs is a major problem in the postmodern society. Students consume billions of pills yearly and spend many billions of dollars on them. Many postmodern students are on various drugs and some of these are legal prescription drugs. While the prescription drugs are accepted by society, many times these very substances are used for control in the classroom as opposed to teaching the student self-control. This is also how parents can buy into the hidden curriculum. They are told that the student cannot function in the classroom environment and a referral to a physician is strongly recommended. The physician will take a social history from the parent, look at the student, and prescribe a medication. Many parents do not have, or do not want to take the time to use behavioral controls and buy into the idea of controlling their student with drugs. According to Friedman (2000):

Teens are abusing prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs in an effort to get high—the same kind of high obtained from illegal street drugs like marijuana or cocaine. Teens and substance abuse experts say that there are many different reasons for the rise in prescription drug abuse by young people. There is a misperception that prescription and over the counter drugs are medically safer, and therefore the abuse of such drugs in order to get high is not as bad as abusing street drugs.

Some students are so drugged that they cannot properly function in the classroom, and behave much like zombies. Everyday use of caffeine, alcohol, and nicotine continues to escalate. Odysseus represents the teacher who continuously attempts to bring the students back to reality. In fact the continued and repeated use of these powerful substances may, in a manner similar to the effects of the mythical Lotus, cause the students to fall into a chronic stupor and loose their desire for education and even causes some students to forfeit their life.

Another challenge that Odysseus faced was the Cyclops, Polythemus, who with his one large eye might represent those in education that have tunnel vision and are only concerned for personal agendas. Many issues in education are thought provoking but our schools often deaden this kind of thought because powerful groups are not interested in what students are inspired to think, they are interested only in the fulfillment of an agenda conceived with no thought about how it interacts with students. The pervasive idea in schools is a hierarchical structure in which students have very little freedom to make decisions about their education because all choices are made for them. Polythemus was also easily fooled just as students are sometimes fooled by peers and the educational

system and as a result they loose sight of their personal educational goals. Some are lost and never find their way home.

Odysseus also faced Charybdis, who swallows the sea in a whirlpool, then spits it up again, just as some students are sucked into a whirlpool of bureaucratic red tape and state mandated tests. Odysseus' ultimate goal was to return to his home on the isle of Ithaca to be with his beloved Penelope and our educational goals should be to investigate both the overt and covert curriculum so that it adequately serves all students equally. Odysseus survived every obstacle that was thrown in his path to discourage his journey home. His courage, determination, wit and endurance enabled him to survive each and every difficulty and to finally arrive home safely. Some students survive the system also through perseverance and hard work, but others are lost in the turmoil and confusion. According to the Alliance for Excellence in Education:

> Every school day, seven thousand students become dropouts. Annually, that adds
> up to about 1.2 million students who will not graduate high school with their
> peers as scheduled. Lacking a high school diploma, these individuals will be far
> more likely to spend their lives periodically unemployed, on government
> assistance, or cycling in and out of the prison system.

Goodlad (1984, p.161) believes that, "schools mirror the surrounding society and many people want to be sure that they continue to do so." Educational policies are blown from place to place, as these different groups vie for power in the school system. Odysseus encountered many hidden trials and surprises on his journey home just as we do in educational circles. Educators try one strategy for a while but before they can determine whether a particular strategy is of value or not something new is thrust upon them and

educators are off and running with the new concept. It would appear to me that we need more stability and cooperation in education then educators could better identify hidden characteristics and work toward improving student achievement. Those who set educational policies strive to set goals that will guide teachers on the journey toward better educational planning, but there are numerous obstacles that serve to obstruct the path for school reform. These obstacles are the issues that cause educators to lose sight of their goals, and as we know, this often happens in the educational quest. Educators must closely examine the classroom setting, and the overall school setting to improve their procedures so that they can better address the various needs of their students.

Personal Reflection

As I researched and thought about the hidden curriculum in relation to my own tudies and to my teaching experience in teaching high school, I began to question the controls that are placed upon me as an educator. Some of these controls are external while others are internal; however, both are controls that limit my ability to impart critical thinking skills to my students and limit ways in which I can help my students to be successful. How these constrains or restraints work in my life depend on the people and the situation that I encounter. Many times there are extreme outside pressures that control what I teach, but sometimes I place those constraints on myself because it is easier to follow what I am told even though I know that what I am doing is not the best for my students. By examining my personal educational philosophy, I can better understand my educational viewpoint and hopefully overcome the obstacles placed in my path. "The study of identity enables us to portray how the politics we had thought were located 'out there,' in society, are lived through 'in here,' in our bodies, our minds, our everyday speech and conduct"

(Pinar, 2003, p. 10). Self examination is one of the hardest goals to achieve because it is necessary to be totally honest with ourselves and to face problems in our teaching. It becomes necessary to address how hidden agendas work in our personal life.

The hidden curriculum is a complex subject to understand because of its flexible and elusive nature; therefore, to address the hidden curriculum requires more than understanding a set of concrete rules since the rules change from person to person and situation to situation. In order to understand the hidden curriculum it is necessary to look at the school setting closely in order to determine how the hidden curriculum is functioning in each area of the school. In determining my personal understanding of the hidden curriculum I would have to agree with Cornbleth (1991, p.31) on the hidden curriculum when she states that:

> The hidden curriculum is that set of implicit messages relating to knowledge, values, norms of behavior and attitudes that learners experience in and through educational processes. These messages may be contradictory, non-linear and punctuational and they vary drastically from situation to situation.

 The purpose of my personal examination is to explain the evolution of my teaching philosophy and ever-changing pedagogy. Throughout my twenty two years of classroom teaching, I have learned many things that have ultimately shaped me as a teacher. I continue to learn every day that I enter the classroom. I realized the importance of having a student-centered classroom, challenging my students to be critical thinkers, encouraging students to apply the course material to their own lives, maintaining academic rigor, and being a compassionate teacher. In order to complete each of these tasks I learned that applying instructional research helps me become a better teacher, and that I can continue to improve.

Over time, I began to view teaching as an ongoing developmental process where I will not always be perfect and may often make mistake. These mistakes have been an excellent source of information to help me become a better teacher through examining ways in which I could have avoided the mistakes. It was at these times, when I felt ineffective in the classroom that I was moved to higher levels of teaching because I am always interested in improving my art. I quickly realized that if I wanted to become a better teacher that I needed to think carefully about teaching. As with any skill, better teaching is a product of practice and reflection .These moments required me to reflect on the choices I have made, whether bad or good, rethink the best option and attempt to improve my teaching as a result. Therefore, much of what I have learned about teaching occurred from mistakes I have made. As I have stated, teaching is an ongoing process where I continue to examine my teaching practices and learn each and every day.

This research has become an act of personal examination as defined by Cole (1996, p. 185), "that as a classroom teacher engaged in action research I am studying what I am doing in the present, while at the same time I am looking back to understand the history of my actions, as well as anticipating how the present activity will support my future activity as a teacher educator."

<center>Summary of Chapter One</center>

In chapter one I defined the hidden curriculum and introduced terms that are pertinent to understanding the study. I explained my research topic, introduced the participants and defined the school setting for the study. In the next chapter, I elaborate on the ideas introduced in chapter one and I also set the stage for the study with a review of the literature pertaining to attitudes and beliefs regarding the hidden curriculum.

In the following chapter, I address major researchers of the hidden curriculum and examine issues that impact the hidden curriculum. Researchers, particularly those interested in educational reform, have increasingly come to recognize the importance of understanding social contexts such as the hidden curriculum of schooling and how it affects the actions and attitudes of those who are involved in it.

Furthermore, I address my personal view of the hidden curriculum and discuss why I chose this subject to study. I have addressed the prominent researchers, and in the process of this study I will study the following in relation to the hidden curriculum: Societal and Political Power over Curriculum-Diversity and the Hidden Curriculum-Popular Culture and Educational Issues-Mass Media: Function in Education-Dress as Popular Culture-Popular Culture and Stereotypes in Education-The Hidden Culture of Technology in Education-Curriculum Issues of High Stakes Testing-Teacher Behaviors and the Hidden Curriculum.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter explores the different perspectives for addressing the hidden curriculum and school culture, as well as the major theorists and their views on the hidden curriculum. These researchers have explored the importance of the hidden curriculum in respect to education and have determined that the hidden curriculum exerts much more power on students and teachers than many people realize.

I have chosen to address the following areas in relation to the hidden curriculum because I understand that they have a dynamic impact on students and teachers. I do not claim that these are the only issues involved in the hidden curriculum but these are some that have a great impact on the school system. These issues are (1) Societal and Political Power over Curriculum (2) Diversity and the Hidden Curriculum (3) Popular Culture and Educational Issues (4) Mass Media: Function in Education (5) Dress as Popular Culture and Education (6) Popular Culture and Stereotypes in Education (7) The Hidden Culture of Technology in Education (8) Curriculum Issues of High Stakes Testing (9) Teacher Behaviors and the Hidden Curriculum.

Many different perspectives on the hidden curriculum have been defined over the past two decades. Certain important aspects of the hidden curriculum are as intrinsic to the nature of schools as a cultural institution that they might be seen as constants. Schools can not function apart from the pervasive hidden curriculum because it permeates every aspect of school life. The depictions of those constants have been influenced by a close reading of several authors: curricular reconceptualist such as Apple (1979), Pinar (1992), and Giroux (1983); sociologists such as Dreeben (1968), and educational researchers such as Jackson (1968) and Goodlad (1984). These men have made great contributions

to the study of the hidden curriculum and because of their research educators better understand school culture and climate.

<div align="center">Functionalist, Liberal, and Critical Perspective</div>

The functionalist, liberal and critical perspectives are defined in this chapter in relation to the hidden curriculum and how it impacts the school system. Each of these researchers represents different perspectives of the hidden curriculum, and advocate that the hidden curriculum also manifests very different outcomes in the educational system. These researchers have brought into focus the various issues of the hidden curriculum

Functionalist Perspective

Those who advocate the 'functionalist' perspective view schools as vehicles through which students learn the social norms, values and skills that they require to maintain the existing society and put emphasis on the ways in which pupils are overtly socialized into future adult roles. According to Livesey (2006), "the emphasis is upon social consensus, involving shared norms, values, and beliefs. Society, in this respect, is interpreted as a functioning system that operates for the ultimate benefit of all."

Functionalists are not interested in looking at individual behavior, since they believe that this behavior represents the outcome of some form of social stimulation. Functionalists also believe that behavior is conditioned by socialization and that the socialization process is largely a passive, one-way, process. That is, the individual is subjected to various socializing influences and pressures and responds to them accordingly.

There is little interest shown in the analysis of how and why particular individuals succeed or fail within the educational system. Functionalists do not look in detail at

individual social behaviour because they believe that the causes of human behaviour are to be found by looking at the larger and wider picture of the way in which societies are organised institutionally.

Liberal Perspective

The 'liberal' perspective (for example: Dewey 1904, Dreeben, 1968; Jackson, 1968), viewed schools as vehicles through which students learn the social norms, values and skills that they need to function and contribute to society. Emile Durkheim, Phillip Jackson and Robert Dreeben, were a group of fundamentalists whose work formed what is known as the consensus theory and provides the foundation for the general definition of the hidden curriculum as the element of socialization that takes place in school, but is not part of the formal curricular content. These include the norms, values, and belief systems embedded in the curriculum, the school, and classroom life, imparted to students through daily routines, curricular content, and social relationships. As Giroux (1983, p.48) states, "The hidden curriculum is explored primarily through the social norms and moral beliefs tacitly transmitted through the socialization process that structure classroom social relationships."

The liberal theorists view the hidden curriculum in a very different manner than the functionalists. Liberal theroists consider the hidden curriculum to be those taken-for-granted assumptions and practices of school life which although being created by various actions that occur within the school, take on an appearance of accepted normality through their daily production and reproduction. Those who approach the hidden curriculum from a liberal viewpoint strive to make clear the assumptions on which everyday practices

come to light and describe the process of how these practices are created and maintained in classrooms. Dewey points out the way in which education can assist this process:

> A society which makes provision for participation in the good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder (1914, p. 99).

Jackson and Dreeben are liberal theorists who advocate that the hidden curriculum promotes effective learning in the classroom. They do not look at the hidden curriculum in terms of its ideological and political significance in sustaining class society. The main emphasis of the liberal prospective is the question of how meaning is produced in the classroom. Liberal theorists address issues such as the hidden content of schooling, principles that govern the form and content of teacher-student interaction and the importance of the hidden curriculum as commonsense categories that students and teachers use to prove and give value to their actions. An important ethnographic study focusing on these issues is Phillip Jackson's (1968) study of *Life in the Classroom* which brought the hidden curriculum under close scrutiny.

Critical Perspective

The critical perspective defines the controlling effects of social forces on students and teachers. The focus of early critical research relating to the hidden curriculum focused on a particular form of social inequality, and according to Giroux (1993, p.56), the

following question must be addressed: "How does the process of schooling function to reproduce and sustain the relations of dominance, exploitation, and inequality between classes?" Schooling serves the purpose of protecting those in power and maintaining the power structure that is in place. The primary characteristic of a critical theorists is the belief that research should play a significant role in changing what is wrong in a system, not just recording information.

Michal Apple, Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren are some of the influential representatives of a critical perspective. Others have also been involved in critical theory. During the eighties Ted Aoki examined the gaps between curriculum-as-planned and the lived curriculum. Teachers plan lessons, but the lived experience in the classroom may be different from what the teacher expected since the student population of each class is different. Bill Pinar (1996) and Madeline Grumet (1996) contributed to curriculum theory by highlighting the silences and unspoken elements of curriculum, calling attention to the multiple decisions, and complex layers of social, cultural and gendered engagement and relationships that influence curriculum development and delivery. Klein (1990) states that, "the reconceptualists often emphasize the development of self as the major function of curriculum, and the interrelationships of the norms, values, and expectations of the broader society in schooling" (p.9). Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (2002) are leaders of the curriculum reform movement and acknowledge that curriculum is a field of study which is influenced by the entire world: history, politics, life, and death. If one is to understand the contemporary thought it is necessary to understand the curriculum field as discourse, as text, and most simply but profoundly, as words and ideas" (p. 7). Pinar captures this notion of, "Curriculum as a de/constructed

intentionality whose meaning is never fully realized in ways we can expect or can define by calling curriculum a "tissue of lies" (Pinar, 1992, p.95), a web of tentativeness." Curriculum is certainly a "tissue of lies" because so many things happen that are not articulated. Students bring into the classroom their own joys and fears, teachers bring belief systems, and the stated curriculum gives a false view of what transpires in the classroom. Every person that takes part in the school (ex: teachers, administrators, custodians, clerical personnel, bus drivers and lunch room workers) influences what students are thinking or feeling on any particular day. What the student experienced at home along with what they may have been exposed to in the media, all contribute to the tissue that makes up the curriculum. Students are affected by every person and events that happens to them as they enter the school each day. Norman (1995) narrates a wonderful literary definition of curriculum using the thoughts of some of these reconceptualist:

> "Curriculum is artifice" states Madeleine Grumet (1978, p.45). Pinar captures this notion of curriculum as a de/constructed intentionality whose meaning is never fully realized in ways we can expect or can define by calling curriculum a "tissue of lies" (Pinar, 1992, p. 95), a web of tentativeness. Such phenomenological and post-structural considerations of curriculum move it in directions that we cannot always clearly see, in ways we may not be able to predict. One does not have to look at curriculum in just one direction in order to see it, but we may still hope for possibility in curriculum without a reliance on predictability. Curriculum becomes a dream, and as such, a vision somehow of a better world. Through curriculum we can hope and look for a better tomorrow.

Theorists Who Have Studied the Hidden Curriculum

Each of the following researchers has studied the hidden curriculum and its impact on students and the school system. These men and women understand the importance that the hidden curriculum plays in education. They may look at the issue of the hidden curriculum in different ways, but they all agree that the hidden curriculum is a very real phenomena and that it is pervasive in the school system.

Talcott Parsons- Phillip Jackson- Robert Dreeben- Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis- Michael Apple- Elizabeth Valance

Talcott Parsons (Functionalist Perspective)

Talcott Parsons viewed educational practices from the functionalist perspective , and the majority of his work focused on the general theoretical system for the analysis of society, and attempts to explain social structures such as schools as institutions that have evolved to fill social needs; for instance, one of the fundamental goals of education is to impart culture across the generations; hence, education serves to establish certain values and ideals in students as they move through the school system. Talcott Parsons is a functionalist who advocated focusing attention on the structural relationships that exist within a society. Parsons thought that the education system represents one of a number of interrelated and inter-dependent institutions in society. Each institution has a different set of purposes and education serves as a cushion between family and work

The social system was Parsons' (1951, p.35) main concern. This is society as a whole, or the various institutions such as the family and school within society. Parsons' definition of the social system is:

A social system consists in a plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation which has at least a physical or environmental aspect, actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the "optimization of gratification" and whose relation to their situations, including each other, is defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols (The Social System, pp. 5-6).

Talcott Parsons taught that education is like a bridge between the family and wider society preparing us for our adult roles in society. The family is the primary agent of socialization in our present day society. We are judged on particularistic terms because we gain ascribed status from the family. That is to say we are judged in terms of our status as brother, sister, daughter, or son. Education is the main secondary agent of socialization. We are judged in terms of what we achieve and schools attempt to prepare us for this transition. At school our conduct is measured against the universal school rules and our status is achieved through examination in relation to others.

Phillip Jackson (Liberal Perspective)

Phillip Jackson is one of the most influential of the contemporary writers who encourages educators to strive at understanding curriculum and other forces that impact curriculum. Phillip Jackson, a politically oriented curriculum scholar wrote *Life in Classrooms (1*968**),** which shows how the classroom functions and how the curriculum, both implicit and hidden affects the students and the curriculum. Jackson explained the social relationships of the school-the nature of the teacher-student relationship, the organization of classes, streaming, and so on. *Life in Classrooms* (1968) is a classic

ethnographic study of how school life functions, and defines what occurs in daily classroom activity.

Philip Jackson's "The Daily Grind" (1997, p.99) encourages us to stop and think about what our students are really learning because what they are learning is often very different from what we expect. When educators think that they are teaching students one thing they may be actually teaching them something entirely different:

> As he learns to live in school our student learns to subjugate his own desires to the will of the teacher and to subdue his own actions in the interest of the common good. He learns to be passive and to acquiesce to the network of rules, regulations, and routines in which he is embedded. He learns to tolerate petty frustrations and accept the plans and policies of higher authorities, even when their rationale is unexplained and their meaning unclear.

Jackson (1997) states that "both the state of affairs" and "recurrent mood" in the field today is "confusing", and he identified features of classroom life that were inherent in the social relations of schooling (p. 3)). Jackson further (1968) focused upon psychological aspects of schooling which socialize students in very powerful ways. Jackson (1968) typified classroom life as impersonal and competitive, where students likely learn more about "crowds, praise, and power" than about academics (p.10). Jackson labeled this aspect of schooling the "hidden curriculum," and contrasted it with the official or academic curriculum. He stressed that while it was unstated, the hidden curriculum was clearly taught and learned in school, and was, in fact, a systematic and powerful way to teach

students about themselves, their place in the world, and what learning might be like."Curiosity, as an instance, that most fundamental of all scholarly traits is of little value in responding to the demands of conformity" (Jackson, 1997, p. 99). No teacher would come right out and say that teachers teach conformity over curiosity but just what are we teaching when we redirect a student who has strayed from a lesson, or is not doing what we want them to do? Yet the nature of the educational institution dictates that we must teach conformity in order to survive in that very institution! Without conformity an institution cannot survive.

The crowds, praise, and power that combine to give a distinctive essence to classroom life collectively forms a hidden curriculum which each student (and teacher) must master if he is to make his way satisfactorily through the educational system. The demands created by these features of classroom life may be contrasted with the academic demands- the "official" curriculum, so to speak-to which educators traditionally have paid the most attention. As might be expected, Jackson (1968) typified classroom life as impersonal and competitive, where students likely learn more about "crowds, praise, and power" than about academics (p.10). Jackson stated (1968, p.166) that:

> Teaching is an opportunistic process. That is to say, neither the teachers not his students can predict with any certainty exactly what will happen next. Plans are forever going awry and unexpected opportunities for the attainment of educational goals are constantly emerging. The seasoned teacher seizes upon these opportunities and uses them to his and his students' advantage….. Although most teachers make plans in advance, they are aware as they make them of the likelihood of change……They know, or come to know, that the path of

educational progress more closely resembles the flight of a butterfly than the flight of a bullet.

Jackson pointed out that, "the hidden curriculum emphasized specific skills such as learning to wait quietly, exercising restraint, trying, completing work, keeping busy, cooperating, showing allegiance to both teachers and peers, being neat and punctual, and conducting oneself courteously" (Jackson 1968, p. 10). These features of school life and requirements for conformity to institutional expectation had little to do with educational goals, but were essential for satisfactory progression through schooling, and are certainly part of the hidden curriculum.

Robert Dreeben (Functionalist Perspective)

Robert Dreeben (1968, p.32) presents a portrait of classrooms as impersonal and harsh. For him, classrooms are places in which children must learn (a) to be independent, (b) to accept treatment as a member of a class rather than as a unique person, and (c) to compete with one another. Robert Dreeben (1968, p.32) maintained that "the experience of formal schooling not only taught the overt curriculum, but indirectly conveyed to students values such as independence, and achievement, useful for their later indoctrination in adult society." Without this indoctrination students would not understand how to function in our society.

Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis (Functionalist Perspective*)*

Samuel Bowles & Herbert Gintis (1976) completed *Schooling in Capitalist America* which is an influential study of the process by which schools reproduce dominant interest groups. According to Bowles and Gintis, "School acts to furnish the economy with a labor force provided with the appropriate skills personalities and

attitudes; thus, schools are involved in the production of a submissive, obedient and disciplined workforce". This is a 'hidden' function of schooling because it is contrary to the prevailing ideology of schooling which views the school as a device to promote social reform and social mobility; yet, students are usually locked into a specific social strata. The hidden curriculum operates through a 'correspondence' between the structure of schooling and the economic system. The nature of work and social relations fostered in the education system mirrors those in a capitalist society.

Students are trained in school to be efficient workers when they graduate.   When teachers use cooperative learning practices in the classroom; they are teaching students how to work together in the workplace. Students are forced to work together to complete activities so that they will be able to cooperate in the workplace. This is one dimension of the hidden curriculum because teachers never articulate that the purpose of this activity is to train students for the workplace and in truth they may not even realize that this is the purpose themselves.

Michael Apple (Critical Perspective)

Another prominent advocate of the hidden curriculum is Michael Apple critical theorist and one of the main proponents of the hidden curriculum in school. Apple and other scholars resist the deskilling of teachers through some of the practices of the traditional approach, such as imposing a common curriculum on all teachers and students. Apple and others document the effect of curricular and schooling practices on students and our society. Beane and Apple (1995) share a democratic vision for schools but, in addition, offer a challenge against social injustice:

While democracy depends upon caring for the common good, too many

schools, stimulated by the influence of political agendas imposed from

outside, have emphasized an idea of individuality based almost entirely on

self-interest. While democracy prizes diversity, too many schools have

largely reflected the interests and aspirations of the most powerful groups

in this country and ignored those of the less powerful (p. 12).

Critical theorist help raise our consciousness about the assumption we make and

the values we hold about curriculum and the relationship of these to the broader society-

as it exists now and as it might exist in a more ideal form. Apple (1986) asks "how power

operates in our society…..Who Benefits? In what ways? How are relations of domination

and subordination, reproduced and challenged in existing cultural, political, and

economic forms of interaction" (p.14)? Apple also defines the struggle between the

power of dominant ideologies in a society and the curriculum, and between the

curriculum form of social and economic structures that prevail in the society.

Apple (1993) advocates that, "democratic schools are communities of learning

where the vision of purposes extends beyond improving school climate, enhancing

students' self-esteem, or lessening the harshness of social inequities to the possibilities of

changing the conditions that created them." Apple focuses on issues that will bring about

school reform. Furthermore, a "democratic curriculum invites young people to shed the

passive role of knowledge consumers and assume the active role of meaning makers. It

recognizes that people acquire knowledge by both studying external sources and

engaging in complex activities that require them to construct their own knowledge"

(Beane & Apple, 1995, p. 16).

Apple addresses issues such as those involving race and gender – that cannot be "reduced to the automatic workings out of simple formulas. We need a much more nuanced and complex picture of class relations and class projects to understand what is happening" in relation to "racial dynamics" as well as those involving gender (2006, p. 116). Some of the questions that Apple addresses in his research are: "How and why do particular aspects of collective culture come to dominate or pervade the knowledge taught in the schools? What is treated as high-status knowledge in the curriculum and who is allowed access to it and why? Is equality of educational opportunities denied to certain populations of students (e.g., minorities, children from economically poor families, students' with disabilities)?" Apple strives for equality for each individual in educational circles, and he works to answer the questions that he poses. The answers to these questions have a great deal to do with ethical and political principles facing administrators and practitioners of curriculum in our schools and are often exhibited through the hidden curriculum. "The hidden curriculum is the ideological and subliminal message presented within the covert curriculum, as well as a byproduct of the null curriculum" (Apple, 1993).   Apple (1993, p.67) focuses on ethical and political perspectives and states that:

> The hidden curriculum in schools serves to reinforce basic rules surrounding the nature of conflict and its uses. It posits a network of assumptions that, when internalized by students, establishes the boundaries of legitimacy. This process is accomplished not so much by explicit instances showing the negative value of conflict, but by nearly the total absence of instances showing the importance of intellectual and normative conflict in subject areas.

Elizabeth Valance (Liberal Perspective)

Elizabeth Valance is another researcher who has completed work on the hidden curriculum and has determined the impact that it has on the school system. According to Elizabeth Valance (1980), "the hidden curriculum is a deliberately vague term, referring more to an after effect (hiddeness) than to any particular process (of hiding) or content of what is hidden)". Valance seems to suggest that the hidden curriculum is just a part of the process of school, and that it occurs through the interaction that occurs in daily school activities Valance advocates a curriculum of personal commitment which she states (1986, p.27):

> Encompasses academic rationalism and the self-actualizing perspective……It is the conception of education that we may hope the student carries with him or her when formal schooling is finished….. It is the conception which sees the purpose of schooling as creating a personnel commitment to learning……..I mean instead an underlying passion for the hard work and joys of intellectual exploration, whether it be in the humanities, mechanical engineering, nutrition science or even curriculum theory.

Vallance advocates making students lifelong learners by opening up areas of interest that will be of interest into adulthood, but in order to reach this goal, students need to have more choice in what they study than they do in the contemporary school system. Educational policies in contemporary times narrow the scope of student choices instead of broadening them. Over testing and other constraints limit student choice. Students would become more involved in the learning process if they were given more choices in their curriculum.

Issues That Relate to the Hidden Curriculum

In this research, I have addressed only some of the areas in which the hidden curriculum functions within the classroom and the school. I have chosen theses issues to address because I believe that they exert enormous impact on students and faculty. Each of these areas has a major impact on the school system and portions of these areas function through the hidden curriculum.

- Societal and Political Power over Curriculum

- Diversity and the Hidden Curriculum

- Popular Culture and Educational Issues

- Mass Media: Function in Education

- Dress as Popular Culture and Education

- Popular Culture and Stereotypes in Education

- The Hidden Culture of Technology in Education

- Curriculum Issues of High Stakes Testing

- Teacher Behaviors and the Hidden Curriculum

Political and Societal Power over Curriculum

As we all know, teachers are the agents of education and students are the recipients of education. Knowledge of the hidden curriculum is of advantage to both students and teachers so that they can address the issues of power and control that concern them. This hidden curriculum is an issue of power and becomes an instrument for controlling students, teachers, administrators, and others concerned with education. "Ways of thinking and behaving are developed as part of a social process, interaction and feedback determines what is acceptable and what is not. Strict controls are placed on

teachers and students alike" (Dewey, 1914). Dewey believed that learning was

fundamentally a social process and that in order for students to attain their natural

potential they needed to interact with a rich environment rather than endure a process

akin to filling empty minds in static bodies with information. Dewey (1914) wrote:

> ……I believe that the individual who is to be educated is a social individual,
>
> and that society is an organic union of individuals. If we eliminate the social
>
> factor from the child we are left only with an abstraction; if we eliminate the
>
> individual factor from society, we are left only with an inert and lifeless mass.
>
> Education, therefore, must begin with a psychological insight into the child's
>
> capacities, interests, and habits (p.46).

Students cannot be considered in isolation from their social context; therefore, it is

necessary to look at the society and the developments occurring at a given time.

Political Power and the Hidden Curriculum

> The year was 2081, and everybody was finally equal. They weren't
>
> only equal before God and the law they were equal every which way.
>
> Nobody was smarter than anybody else. Nobody was better looking
>
> than anybody else. Nobody was stronger or quicker than anybody else.
>
> All this equality was due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments
>
> to the Constitution, and to the unceasing vigilance of agents of the
>
> United States Handicapper General.   (Vonnegut, 1997, p.98)

> Political groups are always vying for power in any institution and the

educational system is no different. In a discussion forum, Vonnegut stated that he

was prompted to imagine the world in "Harrison Bergeron" because today's society

is quickly approaching this dystopia. Educational practices are definitely developing

into conditions that are dreadful for students and teachers alike. More and more

groups struggle for power over the educational system so that they have more

control over society. Pinar (2003) states that, "educators live in the "nightmare of the

present", as he calls it, a time in America when teachers have effectively lost control

of the curriculum, the very organization and intellectual centering of schooling"

(p.5). Political powers work for control and many times the true purposes of

education are lost in the struggle for control of the system. Saltman & Gabbard

(2003, p.72) state that, "The corporatist dimensions of compulsory schooling focus

on "incorporating" everyone into the same collective body of persons who share the

values of the market and who equate those values with secular salvation- the

American Dream". The educational system seems to operate in much the same

manner as it did in Kurt Vonnegut's satirical short story where each student is given

a handicap in order to insure equality.   Many educators are convinced that equality

is the answer to all of our problems; thus, they strive to make every one equal. Every

student should have equal opportunity to develop their talents, and to pursue careers

and positions that utilize those talents, but forced equality as experienced in schools

makes for a repressed society and undermines motivation in students. Everyone is

created unique, with strengths and weaknesses, which we learn to develop or to

defeat as we face obstacles in our life. When students are artificially made to appear

equal they do not strive to better themselves; thus, our students are oppressed and

not encouraged to grow intellectually. Striving to make everyone equal does not

seem to be a realistic goal because there is no one to encourage growth within a

society where every student is equal. There needs to be competition for the society to be healthy and functioning. In order for every student to appear equal, the curriculum must be constantly dumbed down so that every student can achieve success, and no one's self esteem will be damaged in the process; however, true self esteem comes from a job well done. Dewey believed that learning was fundamentally a social process and that in order for students to attain their natural potential they needed to interact with a rich environment rather than endure a process akin to filling empty minds in static bodies with information; however, contemporary political interference strives to make everyone equal.

The political context reinforces the historical purpose of educating students to take their place in the democratic process since students are stakeholders. The lab where they are supposed to learn skills is the largest public social institution remaining in the United States, the public schools. This lab could be enhanced if political groups would allow students some choice in what and how the curriculum is developed but, to do this power must be diminished, and those who have control are not willing to relinquish this power even for the good of the students.

Students live in an ever changing world, one that is evolving faster than they can internalize the drastic changes; thus, there is very little stability in the lives of many students; therefore, students must be given power over their lives to encourage stability. McLaren (1995) further states that, "Students live in a world where the prospect of living has become more fearful than the mystery of death such questions can only engender the dystopic ridicule and mockery that comes with the times" (p.259).

If students are to function in our society they must have a frame of reference on which to function. "Narrative provides us with a framework that helps us hold our gaze, that brings an economy of movement to the way we survey our surroundings and the way we survey disparate images and reading of the world into a coherent story, one that partakes of continuity, of a fiction of stasis in a world that is always in motion" (McLaren 1995, p. 92). In many areas these grand narratives are no longer in place and students struggle with power issues, as government control of the school system becomes stronger and stronger.

The overt agenda of school is to give students the chance to excel, but actually the system strives to make them all the same. In 1933, John Dewey criticized "schools where the chief aim is to establish mechanical habit and instill uniformity of conduct and the conditions that stimulate wonder and keep it energetic and vital are necessarily ruled out" (p.53). This type of environment is certainly true of the contemporary classroom. In many school districts, "School to Work" programs have been adopted that guarantee a corporate model in schools as well as society. These programs bring with them the work emphasis curriculum, and the culture of the corporate entity. Apple (1986) illuminates the situation by explaining:

> Currently considerable pressure is building to have teaching and school curricula be totally prespecified and tightly controlled by the purposes of efficiency, cost effectiveness and accountability. In many ways, the deskilling that is affecting jobs in general is now having an impact on teachers as more and more decisions are moving out of their hands as their jobs become even more difficult (p.155).

Much of the agenda of the public school system is hidden from view of the public so there will not be a loud outcry concerning the abuses of this entrenched system. The public does not realize to what extent the school system is a money making business. Public education has become a wolf in sheep clothing; thus, it has become an institution of tyranny and enslavement to honor those in control. Education is the hope for groups who want to indoctrinate and shape tomorrow's future at the expense of the people; therefore, the tentacles of government wrap and squeeze students and teachers in our schools regardless of how much we protest. Modern American students are the most disruptive, illiterate, drugged, unhealthy and intellectually malnourished students that America has ever produced all in the name of educational reform.

> The aim of public education is not to spread enlightenment at all; it is simply to reduce as many individuals as possible to the same safe level, to breed a standard citizenry, to put down dissent and originality. School days, I believe, are the unhappiest in the whole span of human existence. They are full of dull, unintelligible tasks, new and unpleasant ordinances, and brutal violations of common sense and common decency. - H.L. Mencken (1996)

But wait, all is not lost because these students have been trained in how to be good citizens through mind control and civil obedience, and they are certainly all equal because the school system strives to make them equal. Schools have to maintain some control but they could allow students some curriculum choices. "Schools are sites of cultural production; they embody representations and practices that construct as well as constrain the possibilities for social agency among students" (McLaren 1995, p. 39). Just

as Harrison Bergeron was forced to be obedient and weighted down so that he was equal so are students forced to be obedient and equal in the contemporary school.

Societal Power and the Hidden Curriculum

Those who support a societal curriculum advocate that schools are a major perhaps the principal force for social change and social justice. Since the societal curriculum is such a force in social change it is a dynamic part of the hidden curriculum because much of this change comes about through the daily activities in school. This social process is a powerful medium of shaping human thought and behavior. Understanding the hidden curriculum demystifies it, and as educators we should allow students and ourselves the opportunity to look critically at the world. This would require a great deal of honesty and would drastically change the dynamics of student teacher relationships, but this would open up new opportunities for students to learn. The teacher becomes a listener, reflector and mediator instead of just a dispenser of knowledge, and is genuinely interested in students as individuals. Relationships become more equalized and school becomes a place of social change rather than a transmitter of entrenched beliefs.

The societal curriculum addresses corruption and vice, inequalities of race and gender, and the abuse of privilege and power directly with the aim of raising a new generation equipped to deal effectively with these abuses. These are all issues that are a part of the hidden curriculum. Foucault's writings, though they are not defined as addressing the hidden curriculum, give considerable insight into issues that involve the hidden curriculum. Foucault writes about the role of education in social control; student/learner resistance; the exercise of power and the relationship between power and

knowledge. Social control, student\learner resistance, and power are all part of the hidden curriculum. Foucault refers to school as a 'disciplinary institution' which produces 'power knowledge' (Foucault, 1980). Through the use of this power knowledge policy makers strive for educational excellence and control.

Foucault helps us to understand the subtle, complex and harmful effects of power relations that shape and control educational institutions. Power is exercised rather than possessed. It is relational in nature and "is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another" (Foucault, 1990, p.93). Power operates in every transaction, as a relationship of forces. Power is everywhere and determines the outcome of the events that it controls. "In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen, their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able to always be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection" (Foucault 1977, p.187). Students are always being watched so that the power structure is always in control. For Foucault, this point is illustrated by "the fascinating and subtle way the panoptic prison constitutes the obedient "consciousness" of the inmates" (Foucault 1977, p.201). Like the inmates in the Panapticon, students are constantly aware that their behavior is subject to surveillance and observation. Since students are surveillanced by cameras that are removed from them, they are unaware of when and how this surveillance occurs. For this reason students internalize the gaze of power, and do not object to being under continuous surveillance. Students are under constant surveillance from cameras, teachers, administrators, and even peers; therefore, surveillance becomes an accepted part of their life, and they never object to being watched. There are no private places for students, and

there is never any private time for they are always disciplined through surveillance.

Foucault's view of power is different from Dewey who determines that:

> Discipline means power at command; mastery of the resources available for carrying though the action undertaken. To know what one is to do and to move to do it promptly and by use of the requisite means to be disciplined, whether we are thinking of an army or a mind. Discipline is positive because it brings order to any situation (Dewey 1914, p.129).

In some ways discipline has a positive side because without discipline individuals cannot function efficiently, but to function adequately students must be taught self-discipline not constraint from outside forces. The educational process would be hindered if students were not disciplined; but schools could discipline without constant surveillance. Students don't have any freedoms that would encourage them to make sound decisions, and there are no consequences for inappropriate choices. All decisions are made for students and when they are faced with decision-making they do not have the skills to make good choices because they have never been called upon to make these choices. This power to control what students think allows teachers to determine which students will be successful and which will not. It gives teachers unlimited power over the students.

Discipline is an important aspect of school life because we cannot function in a society without some control, but teachers should be teaching students how to look at a situation, sum it up and make sound choices instead of maintaining strict control themselves. According to John Gatto (2000), "Schools don't really teach anything but how to obey orders. Although teachers do care, and do work very, very hard, the

institution is psychopathic; it has no conscience. Students are shaped through the coercion of power, but they are unaware of this shaping." According to Fisk (1993, p. 17):

> Discipline systematically works to emphasize its effective and benign productivity while disguising its repression, so a disciplined social formation or a disciplined body is one that complies with the system which controls it because it has been persuaded that its benefits are greater than its costs, that what it includes is better than what is excluded. This persuasion often involves not recognizing that, although all social formations are subject to the same systems of discipline, they are not equally subject; some formations benefit much more and give up less, whereas others give up much to benefit comparatively little.

One example of this type of discipline is censorship in schools, which seems to become more and more pervasive in some contemporary schools. Many things are censored; therefore, if students choose to defy the system then some are severely censured. Books are censored, the Internet is censored, clothing is censored, and language is censored. Through censorship students loose many educational opportunities to explore and express themselves and some student's rebel when educators begin to censor everything through power control then productivity and creativity are repressed and many of the benefits of discipline are lost because students will defy the system. There needs to be some discipline, but not to the point of oppression as it has become in some educational circles. This on going struggle for control is a vital part of the hidden curriculum.

Power, Censorship and the Hidden Curriculum

Censorship is a main area of the hidden curriculum because the educational system and those in control can control what students think by maintaining censorship over what they can study. The most common examples of book censorship are in schools and public libraries…

Political groups attempt to remove books from library shelves because those books use 'naughty' words, do not have happy endings... or because they have too many rainbows. Rainbows are considered a sign of 'New Age' religiosity. Little Red Riding Hood was the 24th most banned book in the early 90's mostly because she had a bottle of wine in her basket. Many organizations demanded a non-alcohol Little Red Riding Hood. They were successful sometimes in their efforts, by the way. Foerstel (1994, p.78).

One major area of the hidden curriculum is censorship because it limits what and how students are taught. "Educational materials are governed by an intricate set of rules to screen out language and topics that might be considered controversial or offensive. Some of this censorship is trivial, some is ludicrous, and some is breathtaking in its power to dumb down what students learn in school" (Ravitch, 2003, p.3). Textbooks are designed to avoid language, symbols, gestures, words, phrases, or examples that are in anyway offensive, inappropriate or negative toward a group:

Textbooks cannot contain any subject matter that might upset any particular group. The goal of the language police is not to just stop us from using objectionable words but to stop us from having objectionable thoughts. The language police believe that reality follows language usage…with enough

censorship; the language police might create a perfect world (Ravich, 2003,

p.159).

This is an unrealistic goal because schools cannot control every aspect of the student's

life since students are influenced by many other sources, such as families, friends,

communities, church, and popular culture. Schools can never accomplish the task of

complete censorship, even though they attempt to censor much of what the students say

and do. This kind of censorship violates freedom of thought and action and stifles

student interest and creativity. The censorship in American education lowers the literacy

level; it restricts language and ideas and reduces the student's interest because issues that

are controversial cannot be discussed. Students do not have to make any choices since

they are all made for them. This censorship is a major function of the hidden curriculum.

If all choices are censored, then controlled students will not learn to make sound

judgments because they will not be exposed to alternatives. Students must be given

opportunities to make choices and then receive either rewards or consequences for their

choices. According to Churchland (2000, p.146), "no child can learn the route to love and

laughter entirely unaided, and no child will escape the pitfalls of selfishness and chronic

conflict without an environment filled with examples to the contrary." If students are to

be well educated they must be given the chance to make choices and suffer appropriate

consequences when they don't choose well. Students learn best from doing meaningful,

self-directed, purposeful work, and it would appear that education does not offer any of

these advantages. In order to successfully educate our students we must give them an

array of choices from which to choose. One they are given the opportunity to make

appropriate choices then they will lean to make better decisions.

Imperializing Power and the Hidden Curriculum

Imperializing power is one form of power that functions through the hidden curriculum, and is another means of oppression that operates to control education. Dominant power is no longer exercised simply by physical force but through social psychological attempts to dominate through cultural institutions such as the school. Students are shaped through imperializing power even though they are unaware of what is happening.

The problem is that imperializing power is not good at listening…. The power of surveillance rests upon its ability to see and document all that it is necessary to know to individuate and control those whom it monitors. The surveillance serves to foster conformity, but never curiosity.

> Knowledge that originates among and serves the interest of the monitored is repressed by silencing it, by anthologizing it, by trivializing it-the control strategies are numerous and flexible-but the outcome of them all is that power has developed a finely tuned capacity for looking, but is retarded in its ability to listen: It wears earplugs with its eyeglasses (Fisk 1993, p.301).

Since the imperializing power does not listen, students don't have a voice in any of the controls that affect their lives. Some students conform; some may stretch the limits while others outright defy the system. Imperializing power is always in action and its effects are limitless.

> The aim of imperializing power is to extend its reach as far as possible-over physical reality, over human societies, over history, over consciousness. Imperializing power strives constantly to extend the terrain over which it can

exert its control to outer space and the galaxy and intensively to people's most

mundane thoughts and behavior (Fisk 1993, p. 11).

Every aspect of the present educational system is contrary to students learning,

emotional, social, physiological and developmental needs at all ages. As Reynolds (2003,

p.10) stated, "We are training students from a modern prospective for a world that will

not be there when they graduate." Educators must teach students how to survive in a

postmodern world with all the modern changes that go with our changing, turbulent

world. Our students will have to adjust to machines that have feeling and emotions as

exhibited in Richard Powers (1995) Galatea 2.2. Powers addresses some of the modern

implications of living in a post-modern society. Because of rapid changes in technology

our world changes from day to day, but we are not preparing our students to function

efficiently in this changing society. Educational reform is a must if education is to meet

the needs of our students.

Localizing Power and the Hidden Curriculum

Yet another area of study in relation to the hidden curriculum is localizing power

where students and teachers attempt to gain some power over the educational system.

Localizing power only acts at particular moments and is not an ongoing phenomenon.

The curriculum is one area of the control and contestation of knowledge by the localizing

power, because it is concerned with strengthening its control over the immediate

condition of everyday life. There is always a new reform initiative on the horizon, but it

is difficult to find creative and innovative plans that are different from the old patterns of

policy making that were based on a rigidly prescribed curriculum, state regulations, and

testing programs; however, through localizing power students and teachers manage to

manipulate the curriculum so that they have some control over their lives. In some small way through localizing power teachers can choose how they present a lesson, and they have some choice about what they will teach; however, most of the curriculum is set by the state or the local system and teachers have little choice as to what they teach. Students also attempt to control their situation by what assignments they complete and what ones they ignore.

Resistance to Change and the Hidden Curriculum

Another area of the hidden curriculum is the school systems resistance to change because the world is constantly changing and to be effective the school system must keep up with these fast paced changes. If there is one characteristic that defines today's schools, that characteristic is certainly a resistance, if not an immunity, to change. Schools have remained the same for hundreds of years and they continue to defy change. Educators hear all this rhetoric about school improvement and endless lists of noble goals and standards, but educators need to use some common sense about the purpose of schooling and the essential ingredients needed to make learning efficient and satisfying. Educators also need to have practice precede policy so that they can adopt what works rather than what politicians and others try to foist upon them. There are always different groups that are attempting to get the schools to try some new idea, and often these new tactics have not been tested and therefore they fail. Schools are always at the mercy of some new fad, but it seems that educators always return to the "basics." This element of resistance is part of the hidden curriculum because the educational system espouses the fact that they are open to change and innovative ideas, but in truth schools are not open to change.

Seven Lessons that Schools Teach

The seven lessons that Gatto (2000) advocated that schools teach are definitely a large part of the hidden curriculum because these lessons define hidden lessons that students are taught on a daily basis. In his speech "The Seven-Lesson Schoolteacher," Gatto (2000) describes the seven lessons that are taught in all public schools by all teachers in America, whether they know it or not. These lesson are not spoken, but are imbedded in daily school activities. These seven lessons are: confusion, class position, indifference, emotional dependency, intellectual dependence, provisional self-esteem and lack of privacy. These seven lessons are repeatedly taught through our curriculum choices, textbooks, and programs that our schools utilize. Every day that I teach I realize that Gatto (2000) is right and that teachers have very little choice. He explains:

> The sociology of government monopoly schools has evolved in such a way that a premise like mine jeopardizes the total institution if it spreads….But once loose the idea could imperil the central assumptions which allow the institutional school to sustain itself, such as the false assumption that it is difficult to learn to read, or that kids resist learning, and many more.

Eisner (1991) confirms that "the most powerful forces influencing the priorities and culture of schools, is the hidden curriculum."According to Gatto there are seven lessons that educators teach each day that are ways of handicapping students to maintain control and to keep them oppressed. More than what educators say, more than what they write in curriculum guides, evaluation practices tell both students and teachers what counts. How these practices are employed, what they address and what they neglect, and

the form in which they occur speak forcefully to students about what adults believe is important.

Confusion is one of the main problems in today's educational system and confusion is thrust upon the students on a daily basis. The students must adjust to a variety of adult personalities who do not interact with one another for the good of the student but are attempting to impart dis-connected knowledge to the students. This knowledge itself is confusing for the students because they do not see the relationship of this knowledge to the real world, and believe that most of what they learn is useless. "Knowledge in its articulable forms, impacts human consciousness, engages the intelligence, and lodges in the memory of a learner through processes of parenting and education. This diffusion of articulable knowledge is achieved through increasingly fragmented offerings, as knowledge gets more and more specialized" (Mathur 2000, p. 146).

Class position is another lesson that educators teach each day by the manner in which we respond to our students. This relates to the "Harrison Bergeron" story where everyone wears a weight to make them equal. Educators do the same in keeping our students equal in defined classes through applying the curriculum differently for different socio-economic groups. Educators define students by working class, middle-class, and affluent class, and of course the job of the teacher is to make the students like being associated with others of the same class. The teaching methods and philosophies are different for each class, which becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy; thus, students of different economic backgrounds are trained to occupy particular places on the social ladder. When responding to the working class students, teachers train them to respond to

steps in a procedure instead of letting them make any decision about what they study. They are trained to respond in a rote manner and they are given very little decision-making opportunities. Students are required to complete worksheets, where they just fill in the blank and are graded on whether they complete the work and not whether it is right or wrong; thus, instilling in the students the mindset of total obedience. Students are not given any choice in decision-making and the teacher never explains the basis for any decisions affecting the students. According to Kuykendall (2004, p. 21), "teachers can enhance student achievement regardless of home influences or socioeconomic status. Yet there is evidence that many educators, administrators, and policy makers still view class and family status/income as indicators of student potential."

The two major assumptions underlying the 1994 Goals 2000: Educate America Act educational reform policies are:

(1) increasing educational standards will improve the educational quality of the potential work force and in turn decrease economic inequities through increased wages as all Americans become trained as symbolic analysts, and

 (2) all students will have equal access to the necessary elements (e.g. trained teachers, technology, support, and adequate facilities) that will enable their meeting national or state academic standards (Ferneding 2003, p. 32).

According to Donna Haraway (1997, p.6), "Science was and remains the purview of white, males, from the privileged social classes. Science has historically excluded social, gender, and racial minorities. Now education, in the name of being scientific, is doing the same. Education is serving many masters." Class position is defined by

separating the gifted and talented from the vocational to insure a large workforce; therefore, it is very difficult to break out of your assigned class. The students in the middle class are given a little more autonomy and are encouraged to figure out directions. When teachers respond to middle class students they stress getting the right answers and most lessons are based strictly on the textbook but creativity is not valued. Students are not given the opportunity to express their own feelings and ideas. Students in this group are given a small amount of input into the decision-making process, but are not allowed to make any important decision concerning their future.

When teachers respond to the affluent, professional group of students their work is creative activity carried out independently. The students are allowed to express and apply ideas and concepts. Work involves individual thought and expressiveness, expansion and illustration of ideas, and choice of appropriate method and material. Students are allowed to negotiate with the teacher, and she/he rarely gives direct orders. These students are given the option of making choices that are important in their life, and the emphasis is on developing one's intellectual powers. Students are asked to reason through a problem, to produce intellectual products that are both logically sound and of top academic quality. Schoolwork for this group helps one to achieve, to excel, and to prepare for life. These students are usually interested in education because they have more choice in what and how they carry out their educational goals.

Indifference Taught by the Hidden Curriculum

Indifference is certainly fostered in today's educational system through standardization and testing, media, and other policies, and as a result becomes a function of the hidden curriculum. Classes must run on a bell schedule which teaches students that

no matter what they are doing or what they are discussing that they must move on to the next teacher and class to begin something new. Students have very little opportunity to get really vested in any discussion; thus, educators breed indifference in their students even though it is not their intention to do so. Students become much like zombies, and as a result they demonstrate what they have learned in order to move on to the next grade, but often do not take pride in educational issues. They take very little interest in the curriculum, and students are indifferent to school because it is difficult for teachers to compete with the super toys and television. Gatto (2005) states:

> That rich or poor, school children who face the 21st century cannot concentrate on anything for very long, they have a poor sense of time past and time to come, they are mistrustful of intimacy like the significant parental attention; they hate solitude, are cruel, materialistic, dependant, passive, violet, timid in the face of the unexpected, and addicted to distraction."

Emotional Dependence and the Hidden Curriculum

Students are taught to be emotionally dependant on teachers and other students because they are not taught to stand on their own standards. Students who know how to think for themselves are not valued because they spoil the harmony of the collective society, which depends on everyone being interdependent. According to Lyotard (1997), "a self does not amount to much, but no self is an island. Each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than before. The private self is almost non- existent, and students become totally dependant on others for their emotional stability."

Students experience intellectual dependency in school because they must constantly wait on the teacher to tell them what to study, write, read or do next. They are not allowed any freedom to choose the material that they would like to study. Students must be trained to listen for someone to tell them what to do because our entire political system depends upon students learning to listen and obey what they are told. This is also training for the workplace/industrialized society that demands a steady stream of workers who do not have to think to do the job and do not question authority. One of the negative implications of this type of training is that technology is quickly changing our society and the robot-like workers of the past are being replaced with true automated robots, leaving the worker out of a job.

Students are also taught provisional self- esteem not unconditional acceptance. Watson (2003), states that:

> Teachers can make it clear to students that certain actions are unacceptable while still providing a very deep kind of reassurance….that she/he still cares about them and that she/he is not going to punish them for bad actions. This posture allows space and support for them to reflect and to autonomously engage in the moral act of restitution.

In most instances students must rely on progress reports, report cards, praise from the teacher or peers to determine their worth. In the educational system self-evaluation is not important because students must wait to be told what they are worth. Students are at the mercy of the educational system to define their self-worth, and many times they end up damaged because schools often can not provide the feeling of self worth that they value. Students are tracked through the use of standardized tests which many times place them

in inappropriate groups because they performed badly on one test. The poem "Dreams" by Langston Hughes speaks to the way students feel because they realize that many of their dreams are lost: Life is a broken-winged bird

> That cannot fly.

> Hold fast to dreams

> For when dreams go

> Life is a barren field

> Frozen with snow.

Because the dreams of so many students are destroyed in the name of education, the American educational system needs a major overhaul. The needs of the students must be addressed in a more efficient way so that they will be better prepared when they graduate from school. Educators do have choices in the way in which education is structured if they would stand up for a new improved plan of education and voice their opinion that in its present state education is a failure; however, most educators just go from day to day doing the same thing in the same way but expecting different outcomes, but change will not happen without hard work. The present educational system is broken, and because of strict governmental control educators are not meeting the needs of the students.

<div align="center">The Hidden Curriculum and Current Issues in Education</div>

Diversity and the Hidden Curriculum

> Racism, sexism, classism - those deeply internalized social values - are at the
> root of our problems. They are deep in our psyches, and they cause our liberal
> reforms to fail because they treat the symptoms and not the causes. Even

humanistic education… tacitly accepts the class system with its racism, it's

gross commercialism, it's male chauvinism, it's institutionalized violence,

it's imperialistic wars—accepts them by failing to mention them, by pretending

that they do not exist.

Bateman (1994, p.118)

Teachers of today enter into dynamic classroom environments because they are

so diverse and often teachers have problems understanding the many different cultural

backgrounds; this misunderstanding of cultural mores leads to the hidden curriculum.

Teachers engage in interactions with students from many different socio-economic

backgrounds. No longer is the nuclear family the norm because there are many blended

families and the differences in family structures have created new challenges for both

educational institutions and society. The family structure itself is now vastly different

from even 20 years ago. There are many interracial couples whose children must cope

with their role in society. Many families lack stability and these students bring these

problems to school, and as a result students cannot function in the educational

environment as their focus is on the family. "Young people live in a severely fractured

world—families are less stable, divorce has become common place, neighborhoods tend

to be in flux and less community-minded, schools are less personal and more

competitive, and peer groups set up conflicting loyalties" (Van Manen 1991, p.2).

Students come to school with extreme cultural differences and the teacher is

expected to understand the cultural differences that impact the student's ability to

comprehend. Many teachers come from a middle class background and have difficulty

relating to some of the situations that occur in the lives of their students. Many of these

teachers have never known poverty and cannot relate to issues in the lives of their

students.

According to the dictionary, "diversity" means "difference." Given this definition,

the critical question becomes, "Different from whom, or what?" In current educational

discourse, the terms diverse and diversity most commonly refer to students who are

different from what the literature describes as the "mainstream" of U.S. society, i.e,

students who are not white, middle-class, native-born, and/or native English-speaking.

Educators must make a concerted effort to understand and respect the cultural differences

of their students and of each other. Whenever possible, teachers must incorporate their

students' language and culture into learning activities, and they must also help students

see how that what they are learning will benefit them in real world situation. Schools

need to be the stabilizer in the lives of these students, but often it works in just the

opposite manner, since many times the school presents more stress for these students.

Schools can change the climate of the school to one that supports high

expectations for all students by providing opportunities for all students to achieve, by

fostering self-confidence, and by highlighting student strengths rather than weaknesses.

As Dewey states the imagination is very important in education and students no matter

what background they come from should be able to use this imagination to better

understand their environment. Dewey (1990, p.61) felt imagination had a fundamental

role in education:

> The imagination is the medium in which the child lives. To him there is
>
> everywhere and in everything which occupies his mind and activity at all a
>
> surplusage of value and significance. The question of the relation of the

school to the child's life is at bottom simply this: Shall we ignore this

native setting and tendency, dealing, not with the living child at all, but

with the dead image we have erected, or shall we give it play and

satisfaction?

If education is to serve all students then educators must evaluate the role of

the hidden curriculum in education, particularly as it pertains to multicultural education.

When educators look at and understand how the hidden curriculum functions it is

apparent that it enables educational institutions to argue in support of multicultural

initiatives while simultaneously stifling the possibilities of multicultural education.

Through its failure to appreciate the challenges posed by the hidden curriculum,

multicultural education gets appropriated as a "hegemonic device" that secures a

continued position of power and leadership for the dominant groups in society.

The hidden curriculum refers to messages and signals that are covertly sent to

students about themselves and others as it relates to their gender and race. This covert

behavior is projected through talk, diagrams, reactions and material in books, films, and

other multimedia. The ways in which teachers, school counselors, and school

administrators communicate with students give them messages about themselves and

determine the self esteem that students feel. Many times students are damaged by the way

that teachers and peers respond to them. Students develop self-esteem by actually

achieving and being "excellent" at one thing, and if this one thing is not something that

the school system recognizes then the student is damaged.

When the school distributes awards to every student, no matter what, the student's

self-esteem is diminished. The student who has truly achieved success is equated with

the student who is given a cursory award; thus, the achieving student wonders why they put all that effort into the assignment. Michael Apple (1979, p 26) suggests that, "schools function to distribute to select students, the "high status" knowledge and cultural resources that separate them from other students because only a few students are allowed this privilege." Some assert that one goal of this hidden curriculum is also the replication of the country's economic structure and status quo in other words; there is a deliberate attempt to maintain inequality based on race and class (Apple 1990, p. 84) contends that, "groups of students, sorted largely on race and class differences, receive different educational and social experiences." This is such a covert practices that students accept their position without even realizing that they are being placed in a particular group.

Diversity signifies the simple recognition of the existence of different social group identities, and America is becoming more and more diverse. Educators must never allow this growing diversity to limit our ability to meet the needs of such a diverse population. Diversity includes a wider variety of social groups than race and ethnicity alone. Social group identifications such as home language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, social class, age, and disability, as well as race and ethnicity are all a part of diversity. According to Oakes (1985):

My hunch is that, given the circumstances of placement decisions, factors often influenced by race and class dress, speech patterns, ways of interacting with adults, and other behaviors often do affect subjective judgments of academic aptitude and probably academic futures, and that educators allow this to happen quite unconsciously. We know that these kinds of recommendations often result in more disproportionate placements of students from various racial groups and

social classes than do placements by test scores alone. Poor and minority kids end

up more often in the bottom groups; middle and upper class whites more often are

at the top (p. 13).

Diversity and multiculturalism are major issues that must be addressed in the

contemporary school system. James Banks (2001) defines multicultural education as:

An idea, an educational reform movement, and a process. As an idea,

multicultural education seeks to create equal educational opportunities for all

students, including those from different racial, ethnic, and social-class groups.

Multicultural education tries to create equal educational opportunities for all

students by changing the total school environment so that it will reflect the

diverse cultures and groups within society and within the nation's classrooms.

Multicultural education is a process because its goals are ideals that teachers and

administrators should constantly strive to achieve (p. 2).

The existence of school racism in our society cannot be ignored because it often

subtle, but quite pervasive throughout the school system and operates through the hidden

curriculum. Educators articulate the fact that racism does not exist, but it is often

exhibited in the classroom and other areas by administrators, teachers and peers. Racism

has its roots in the culture as defined generations back and is still passed down from

parent to child. There are many cultural differences that teachers of different ethnic

origins cannot understand because it is outside of their life experiences. Often these

teachers think that the student of the opposite culture is being inappropriate when they are

simply responding in a culturally different manner. Misunderstanding of cultural

differences is definitely a part of the hidden curriculum and fosters much confusion in

educational circles. Webber (2003, p.58) suggests that the failure of U.S. democracy to bring about real equality might be considered a source of violence. Webber (2003, p. 59) also states that:

> The pretense of democratic equality and the equalization of all social values give students the impression that [students] deserve prestige and power at the school," an expectation which is unfulfilled in practice. "Raging boys" want the respect of a leading clique or something to take its place. The public does not give them a chance to see how they might unite against the society in order to change it in constructive ways; it blocks them from seeing how they turn their frustration onto each other.

This frustration at not being treated as equals lead students to engage in gang activity as well as other inappropriate behavior. Much energy is expended in trying to fit in and have some control over one's life. Kuykendall (2004) stated that:

> Institutional racism can be covert, indirect, and sometimes unconscious. The origins of institutional racism are in our most established and respected institutional norms, societal values, and beliefs. This prejudice against groups of people is based on the belief that members of some racial groups are better and therefore more deserving than others (p.49).

There are other types of abuse that occur daily in the school system, but are often ignored by those in power because they are subtle and occur among students. The student, who is perceived to have more in terms of material items, is often treated differently from the student who comes from a lower socioeconomic group. The student from the lower socioeconomic group may be shunned or teased because they do not have

the financial backing to fit in with the preppy crowd. The student who is being shunned

will respond in many different ways including dressing or acting out in order to attract

attention or by withdrawing into themselves while trying not to attract any negative

attention. According to the Gale Group (2002):

> While school curriculum typically emphasizes democratic political systems and
>
> principles, these principles are not always practiced in public school classrooms.
>
> Hidden curriculum can support or undermine official curriculum. Prominent
>
> displays of athletic trophies in the hallway near the school's main office - but not
>
> recognition for debate or music or scholarship - communicates a hierarchy of
>
> valued accomplishments that puts sports ahead of academics. It is likely that
>
> hidden curriculum has the most impact when there is an aggregate or a pattern of
>
> consistent messages. When hidden and explicit curricula conflict, it may be that
>
> hidden curriculum, like nonverbal communication, carries more weight.

Some students find that their culture and learning styles conflict with the

instructional system; therefore they have trouble achieving in school. Teachers must

understand that the role of culture plays an important part in determining a student

learning styles. According to Reynolds (2003):

> Educators need compassion for the child as child. The curriculum should allow
>
> both teacher and student to develop a critical, caring, compassionate conversation
>
> rather than human being as objects to be manipulated by prescribed and pre-
>
> fashioned technical rationales that reduce human beings to mere raw material to
>
> be fashioned and formulated into information receptacles for the "global
>
> corporate economy" (p.43).

 Students need freedom and substance in their curriculum, and it needs to be represented in context so that they can apply what they learn to real world situations. If students cannot transfer what they learn to the real world then educators have failed.

Students come from varied backgrounds and many teachers view situations from the prospective of a white, middle class value system, but many of our students do not see issues from the same vantage point. Aoki (1993, p. 261) believes that one of the dangers of adhering only to the curriculum-as-planned is that:

> [the students] uniqueness disappears into the shadow when they are spoken of in prosaic abstract language of the external curriculum planners who are in a sense, condemned to plan for faceless people, students shorn of their uniqueness or teachers who become generalized entities often defined in terms of performance roles. Often those who are designing curriculum and making policy do not actually understand all the issues that students and teachers face in the everyday classroom. These policy makers are removed from the interaction and needs of the students and teachers and go blindly about determining the learning possibilities of students.

Palmer (1993, p.23) agrees that, "one of the greatest sins in education is reductionism, the destruction of otherness that occurs when we try to cram everything we study into categories that we are comfortable with, ignoring data, or writers, or voices, or simple facts that don't fit into our box." It is impossible to fit every student into the same category, but it appears that is what we attempt to do in the contemporary classroom. Every student is expected to achieve on the same level and to react with the same

intensity to each lesson. A student's internal belief system, feelings, and even illness or

health affects their ability to respond but the teacher must continue teaching to the group.

There is no time allowed to pamper the students' individual needs. This is an atrocity

because students are human beings not just a number on a test form. According to Kolb

(1991, p.59):

> By examining the learning process teachers and parents can come closer
>
> to understanding how it is that people generate from their experience the
>
> concepts, rules and principles that guide their behaviors in new situations,
>
> and how they modify these concepts too improve their effectiveness.

Every student is unique with different needs, learning styles and ways of dealing with the

external world and teachers must look at the learning process so that they can meet the

needs of the diverse student population if they are to guide their students to a fulfilled,

successful life.

Technology and the Hidden Curriculum

What will the impact of technology be on the educational system as we know it

today? At this time, it is an overwhelming task to even comprehend the drastic changes

that technology will have on, not only education but on society in general. Because

technology is changing at such a rapid rate it is impossible to keep up with these changes,

and as a result it is having a drastic impact on the school system. Technology keeps

changing so dramatically in such short periods of time that people who do not use it

regularly risk feeling obsolete and it is changing so fast that schools will have to change

to accommodate the change in society. Rector (2000):

We're at a crossroads right now. In 30 years, the shape of schooling will change at a rate that we haven't seen in the past 400 years. We're teetering on the edge of a fundamental change in how we do classroom education. The teacher assembly line approach is not good. But the notion of a teacher as a mentor can get a boost from technology. We're going from a physical classroom to a classroom without dimension.

Humanity is undergoing one of the most dramatic technological revolutions in history, one that is changing everything from the way people work to the way that they communicate with one another (e.g., cell phone) and spend their leisure time (e.g., video games). Education must be reconstructed to meet the challenges of a global and technological society because if educators do not meet these challenges then we fail our students miserably. This is one area of the hidden curriculum because at the present time technology is not being utilized in education to its highest potential since many teachers are not trained to use it constructively. Papert (1997) addresses the following key points:

The cybertopian vs. the cybercritic - those that "praise the wonders of the digital age" vs. those that "warn of dire dangers". What is actually being done there is a sheer travesty of what could be done with technology "...I do know that (digital technology) could make a dramatic difference for the better or for the worse in the lives of children, and that there is no guarantee that it will be for the good. Quite the contrary, if one goes by what one sees happening today; it is almost guaranteed that the technology will be used mindlessly or for the profit of corporations rather than for the benefit of children. ...using technology is "limited only by your imagination and the effort you are willing to make. Some teachers

tend to be very creative in other aspects of their curriculum, but fail to apply that same creativity to utilizing technology.

This technological revolution that we are experiencing centers on hanging information, dynamic computers, mass communication, and multimedia technologies. Dimitriadis (2002) states, "that media culture is a phenomenon with significant implications for schooling and school curricula, both official (e.g., textbooks and lesson plans) and the unofficial, hidden curriculum (e.g., classroom practices)." Education is one of society's key vehicles for the transmission of societal culture; therefore, the school transmits more than just information and values. It also passes on, often subtle, and indirect ways the descriptive stories that translate our history and traditions into meaningful, workable symbols; thus, these issues of culture must be addressed if school reform is to be successful. Since technology, mass media, and popular culture are so important in the postmodern society then it becomes valid to study how these technological advances function and determine educational issues. Postman (2000) stated that:

> I believe that there are five ideas inherent in technological change. First, that we always pay a price for technology; the greater the technology, the greater the price. Second, that there are always winners and losers, and that the winners always try to persuade the losers that they are really winners. Third, that there is embedded in every great technology an epistemological, political or social prejudice. Sometimes that bias is greatly to our advantage. Sometimes it is not. The printing press annihilated the oral tradition; telegraphy annihilated space; television has humiliated the word; the computer, perhaps, will degrade

community life. And so on. Fourth, technological change is not addictive; it is ecological, which means, it changes everything. And fifth, technology tends to become mythic; that is, perceived as part of the natural order of things, and therefore tends to control more of our lives than is good for us.

It is true that technology controls more and more of our students' time. The student now has an IPOD in his pocket, a cell phone in his book bag, and a laptop computer in his briefcase. If schools do not keep up with the rapid pace of technology then educators will lose the interest of their students. Educators must be able to compete in a technological world or students will feel that they are not learning what they need to know.

Technology curriculum may be either formal or informal, and inherent lessons may be overt or covert, good or bad, correct or incorrect depending on one's' view. Students who use the Internet on a regular basis, both for recreational purposes and for research and information, are bombarded with all types of media and messages. Much of this information may be factually correct, informative, or even entertaining or inspirational, but other information may be very incorrect, dated, passé, biased, perverse, or even manipulative. The implications for educational practices are that part of the overt curriculum needs to include lessons on how to be wise consumers of information, how to critically appraise the accuracy and correctness of electronic information, as well as the reliability of electronic sources. Students are exposed to so much that they need to learn how to make choices and disregard the information that is not useful to them. Also, students need to learn how to be artfully discerning about the usefulness and appropriateness of certain types of information. And, like other forms of social

interaction, students need to know that there are inherent lessons to be learned about appropriate and acceptable online behavior.

Educators are always in a dilemma with society demanding that they keep up with the newest in technology. Film and radio in the 1930s, instructional television in the 1960s, and more recently computers are touted to revolutionize classroom instruction by increasing teacher and student productivity. People believe that more can be taught in less time with these machines and that students can learn more and even better than from textbooks or even the teacher: however each new medium brought disappointment with the blame usually attributed to the classroom teacher. One major problem with technology is that the school system has problems keeping abreast of the fast changing pace.

In today's society there is a hidden agenda of shifting technological experiences for each individual because of the varied qualities of mass telecommunication. Much of technology remains mysterious to many people because some are very resistant to change. Often teachers are not trained to use technology effectively. This increase in technology will continue to affect modernity, power and even education. People view technology as the modern expression of progress, and education is challenged to help society change from the industrial age to the information age. Schools are being pressured at every junction to provide access to the information highway as quickly as possible because technology has changed our very existence. Chasin (1995, p. 73):

Explores identifications across women, servants and machines in contemporary

robotics. Her aim is to trace the relations between changes in forms of machinic

(re)production (mechanical to electrical to electronic), types of labor (industrial to

service), and conceptions of human-machine difference. Figured as servants, she
points out, technologies reinscribe the difference between 'us' and those who serve
us, while eliding the difference between the latter and machines. The servant
troubles the distinction between we-human-subjects-inventors with a lot to do (on
the one hand) and them-object-things that make it easier for us (on the other).
Educators must recognize the importance of technology and the impact that it will have on
the postmodern society. It has changed the way we work, play and communicate, and will
continue to make drastic changes in the way we live and work. According to Bolter and
Grusin (2002):

Television, film, computer graphics, digital photography, and virtual reality: our
culture recognizes and uses all of these technologies as media…. Each participates
in a network of technical, social, and economic contexts; this network constitutes
the medium as technology…A medium is that which remediates.

 Media specialist believe that media are not simply channels for conferring information
between two or more environments, but rather are themselves shapers of new social
environments and as a result new environments are created. For example, television
through mass advertising and its ability to reach mass markets on many levels changes our
lives each day. Every student in my class is impacted by television in some manner.

Countless computers are placed in the public schools because the idea has been
propagated that these technological resources can change poor academic achievement and
bring about educational reform, but this is often not the case because there is not a clear
plan of how to best utilize the computers. Teachers, administrators and others may not be
properly trained to best use the computers; therefore, they are used to complete tasks that in

the past were completed using low-tech items such as scissors and glue. These innumerable

computers reflect well on us as a technological society, and we define ourselves by their

number and complexity, but because schools perpetuate the status quo they have a natural

resistance to technological innovations. Many teachers resist the use of computers because

they are not knowledgeable enough to use them appropriately. Many teachers are also

afraid of the information that can be gained from the computers. They fear that they will

lose control of what and how they are allowed to teach. However, computer use is out of

the hands of educators because most of the middle to high school age students now have

access to the internet in the home and are online. Students are also experimenting with

technology utilizing such sites as UTube, and are quickly becoming postmodern cyborgs.

Dumit and Davis-Floyd (2001) state that:

> A cyborg (shorthand for "cybernetic organism") is a symbiotic fusion of human and
>
> machine. Humans have always developed technologies to help them survive and
>
> thrive, but in recent decades the rapid escalation and intensification of the human-
>
> technology interface have exceeded anything heretofore known. From satellite
>
> communications to genetic engineering, high technologies have penetrated and
>
> permeated the human and natural realms. Indeed, so profoundly are humans altering
>
> their biological and physical landscapes that some have openly suggested that the
>
> proper object of anthropological study should be cyborgs rather than humans, for,
>
> as Donna Haraway says, we are all cyborgs now.

Post modern students are definitely cyborgs and the phenomenon continues to grow each

day. It is almost impossible for educators to keep up with the changes that occur in the

lives of our students. I see students today as cyborgs because they always have some

technoloical extension of themselves. It may be a cell phone, an IPOD, CD player or some other technological extension of themselves.

Students may repeat dominant ideas such as occupational success requires technological literacy, yet they don't internalize this view. Sometimes students and teachers use computers as instruments of escape in the classroom because each person works alone and they do not have to be defined by another. Computers allow students and teachers to legitimately ignore one another and their social roles. Computers with word processing capability allow the student to produce a paper that is spell checked and grammar checked by the computer program. Thus, the student does not have to learn to spell proficiently and grammar is not a real concern.

Students using text messaging are becoming more and more symbol conscious because they use more symbols than actual language since symbols have become a way to communicate without the use of language. Students also become isolated since they are so focused on the computer with IM, games, word processing. Students in the contemporary classroom do not have to interact in society as the computer supplies all of the needs and limits the amount of time the student has for face-to-face social interaction. Through various practices, students' appropriate technologies on the level of symbolic meaning, thus, information technologies come to represent escape, community, communication, and self-expression for these students.

So far, educators can define at least two reasons for wanting to bring technology into schools; the first is the desire to have these modern miracles in the classroom to assure us that the classroom is as modern as the world of tomorrow. Each new development in technology- radio, film, television, computers- in society insist that the new revolutionary

invention will bring new success in the classroom. The second reason for wanting

technology is to allow students greater advantages in pursuing educational success. Each

attempt to fully integrate the new technology meets with failure after some time for various

reasons. One problem with technology is that it changes so fast that schools cannot keep up

because the cost is prohibitive. One such example is computers which become obsolete

almost before they are placed in the schools. Technology is changing at such a fast pace

that it is almost impossible for students and others to keep up with the ever changing

technology

Testing and the Hidden Curriculum

What are the ethical implications of rethinking the American educational

system at this time? Many educators and parents think that these are the worst of times

for the American public schools, and as a teacher working in public education; I would

have to agree that these are dismal times. Policy makers who understand little about

education have imposed agendas for change that are ill informed, radically

experimental, unsubstantiated by credible research and driven by political motives. In

the past decades schools have undergone rapid changes in their knowledge base because

of technology, in family structure because of economic and class structure, and in

parenting and pedagogy because of changing values. The consequences of all of these

changes are dynamic, and they are causing a great deal of upheaval in American public

education. There are extensive implications of "high stakes" testing which defines the

curriculum, stifles student motivation and determines teacher behaviors. On the surface,

today's typical classroom may look homogeneous, but in reality students have a wide

range of abilities and needs, which the prescribed curriculum does not allow for or

recognize. I believe that these are some of the hidden consequences that affect students as a result of high stakes testing. Hong (2001, p.1) suggests that:

Teachers can slip too easily into maintenance teaching when school days are regimented and at the pace of fast-food eateries rather than four-star restaurants. Teachers have no time in which to build the provocative experiences that nurture richly layered learning-experiences that provide teachers with the continuing intellectual and creative challenges that allow them to be professional educators rather than short-order cooks.

When developing curriculum in the classroom educators need to be aware of the importance placed on evaluation, knowing that it can adversely affect intrinsic motivation, and in turn, lifelong learning. Most teachers have probably faced the dilemma of how to assign a grade to the bright student who does not produce assignments, even though this student knows the work. Or the students who have difficulty with written text, but can strongly articulate what they know. Rather than providing evaluation criteria that asks for the same performance from each student, educators need to look at how our evaluation methods address each student's strengths and ways of learning.

Tests that determine the outcome of a student's academic success are known as "high stakes" tests, because their results are very significant for the students who take them and because the result can determine their future. There is considerable controversy about the ethical value of using, standardized, multiple-choice tests to either predict a student's future performance, or as a measure for entering educational institutions. One ethical issue concerning these tests is that almost all standardized tests have a bias outcome against most minority students, and another problem is that the test

themselves are inherently flawed. Teachers are forced to abandon acknowledging and building upon the diversity in the classroom in order to implement prescribed objectives and performance criteria which "threatens to turn teaching into a mechanical process of training students to pass tests, while unnecessarily restricting teachers' freedom to open their students' minds" (Osborne 1999, p.41). Standardized tests are also poor predictors of how well students can apply the knowledge that they demonstrate on these tests. Furthermore, standardized tests scores are not accurate predictors of how students will do in later life.

According to Kohn (2002), standardized testing has swelled and mutated, like a creature in one of those old horror movies, to the point that it now threatens to swallow our schools whole. Kohn also lists indisputable facts on "high stakes" testing that are detrimental to the well being of our students:

Our students are tested to an extent that is unprecedented in our history. Noninstructional factors explain most of the variance among test scores. Norm-referenced tests were never intended to measure the quality of   learning or teaching. Standardized-test scores often measure superficial thinking. The time, energy, and money that are being devoted to preparing students for standardized tests must come from somewhere. Many educators are leaving the field because of what is being done to school in the name of "accountability" and "tougher standards".

These facts define the multitude of problems that come about because of over testing our students, and as a career educator, I believe that we have an ethical responsibility to

offer our students a more meaningful education, which is reflective of the nature of the learner and his/her future.

I would have to agree with Levianas (1985, p.100) when he responds in an interview with Nemo, "It is I who support the Other and am responsible for him…. My responsibility is untransferable; no one could replace me… Responsibility is what is incumbent on me exclusively, and what, humanly, I cannot refuse". Our responsibility as educators should be to allow each student access to the highest quality education, but because of the testing mania this is not what happens. Teachers are forced to teach to the test because they are held responsible for test scores even though these tests are not in the best interest of the students.

Curriculum Issues and Testing

On the surface aligning curriculum, assessments, and standards seems logical; however, the problem is that because high-stakes tests are driving standards-based reform there is growing danger that curriculum will be geared toward standardized tests regardless of what the standards state. Since test scores are driving standards it becomes necessary to focus on "teaching the test" and, in the process, narrowing the curriculum and emphasizing memorization over critical thinking; thus, students do not receive the best quality education. Kohn (2002) states, that:

> Schools under intense pressure to show better test results have allowed those
> tests to cannibalize the curriculum. Administrators have cut back or even
> eliminated vital parts of schooling programs in the arts, recess for young
> children, electives for high schoolers, class meetings (and other activities
> intended to promote social and moral learning), discussions about current

events, the use of literature and entire area such as science. When students will be judged on the basis of a multiple-choice test, teachers may use multiple-choice exercises and in-class tests beforehand. This is called the "dumbing down" of instruction, and teachers may even place all instruction on hold and spend time administering and reviewing practice tests.

According to Thoreau (2003, p.9), "Most men….through mere ignorance and mistake, are so occupied with the factitious cares and superfluously coarse labors of life that its finer fruits cannot be plucked by them." In my opinion this is the exact situation that modern education is in today. Educators are under such a burden of testing or factitious care that they don't have the time to share the finer fruits of education with their students. I see many ethical issues in testing students to the point that they are only concerned with answers on a test because they are not challenged in their thinking. There are many wonderful readings, thought provoking discussions and exciting ideas that could be shared with students if educators were given some freedom in their classrooms; however, teachers are so burdened with tests that this freedom is not an option. Ethically, schools should enrich lives, nourish curiosity, and introduce students to new ways of formulating questions and finding answers, but in most postmodern schools this is not the scenario.

This maze of high stakes tests invariably has an impact on the classroom and the relationship between teachers and students. These tests cause a narrowing of the curriculum and a movement away from the type of curriculum and instruction that is best for students. "Studies have shown that high stakes testing decreases choice in the classroom, decreases motivation to learn, focuses the curriculum on coverage at the

expense of depth and understanding, and narrows the scope to instruction to more teacher-centered strategies rather than student-engaged interaction"(Sacks, 2000). This changing curriculum often privileges skills over meaning and limits the access that students have to an expanded curriculum.

The testing requirements are endless! Schools must perform assessments on students in order to determine what the student knows at the time of assessment. The assessment process does not enhance academic mastery or ability. It tracks the students thought process and manipulates the student in order to prepare them for the business world. Furthermore, assessments are accompanied by an endless array of nosy surveys that delve into the students' background.

Ultimately, educators are creating an education system, in which depersonalization in teaching and learning are at the core... Educators should take to heart the following quote by Annelise Schantz, the valedictorian of the 2000 graduation class at Hudson High School in Massachusetts:

> So, I'm the valedictorian, Number one, But, what separates me from number two, three, four, five, six, fifty or one hundred? Nothing but meaningless numbers. All these randomly assigned numbers reflect nothing about the true character of an individual. They say nothing…about creativity. Nothing about heart. Numbers cannot and will not ever be able to tell you who a person really is. Yet in today's society we are sadly becoming more and more number oriented. Schools today are being forced to teach to the numbers…. The MCAS serves as just another set of meaningless numbers that add one more

reason to focus on scores and forget leaning…..Judging us by our

competency on a biased test is perhaps the biggest injustice that the

state could ever inflict upon us…….Does anyone care about the human

beings behind the numbers? (Schantz, 2000)

The federal education bill, No Child Left Behind or as some call it No Child

Left Untested, requires states to test students in grades three to eight each year and to

judge school performance on the basis of these test scores. This testing is supposed to

maximize student achievement and hold teachers accountable, but there is little

evidence about the effectiveness of such policies. Derrida (2000) states that:

From the moment when a public authority, a State, this or that State power,

gives itself or is recognized as having the right to control, monitor, ban

exchanges that those doing the exchanging deem private, but that the State can

intercept since these private exchanges cross public space and become available

there, then every element of hospitality gets disrupted.

I agree with Derrida because I believe that the State has taken control of public

education and I believe that education should be managed on the local level with

parents and teacher making meaningful decisions for students. McKenzie (2003) states

that:

The No Child Left Behind act fails to address the root causes of poor school

performance such as poverty, low nutrition and weak starts in life. No Child

Left Behind imposes high standards without developing capacities because

people with little understanding of how students learn are imposing a heavy-

handed, top-down, test-driven version of school reform that is lowering the

quality of education in this country. The hidden agenda of No Child Left Behind is to shut down urban public schools and send students into the maze of corporate schooling.

There is a problem with using a single high stakes test to measure a student's knowledge. The manner in which students fare on standardized tests can be greatly influenced by many external factors, including stress over taking the test, amount of sleep, distractions at the testing site, time of day, emotional state, and many other factors. These are just some of the inequities in modern day testing practices. The IQ test is one such test that is often used to justify tracking, and variations in education. Many students are entitled to special placement, rewards, and resources because they scored higher on the IQ test than their counterparts. IQ tests do not measure creativity, logic and critical thinking skills, In addition, many minority groups do not score as well as the mainstream because of the testing format. Thus, putting these students in a lower achieving track with fewer resources and less experienced teachers is inequitable.

Teachers and curriculum are the major keys in breaking the bonds that hold lower class students to their lower socioeconomic structure. These students desire and deserve the opportunity to achieve in society as well as any other social class. With the proper school structure, equal funding, appropriate use of tests, and equal teachers and curriculum the gap can be bridged across the social classes. What counts as literacy is one of the most potent questions through which to examine the hidden curriculum of the educational system. Language systems are linked to the social and political interest of those who support the acquisition of such systems by the members of a society. Our

language defines who we are, our level of education and our position in society; thus literacy becomes an important element of the hidden curriculum.

According to Senator Paul Wellstone, "Making students accountable for test scores they will not tolerate failure, but this kind of accountability represents a hollow promise. Far from improving education, high-stakes testing marks a major retreat from fairness, from accuracy, from quality, and from equity" (speech).

The "No Child Left Behind" incorporates serious ethical issues in that it undermines the quality and equity in education. Educators need to expand the quality of education not undermine it through over testing. The curriculum should be challenging and open- ended to allow students to explore their interest. According to Guisbond, Schaeffer, Madden and Legeros (2004), there are two very clear false assumptions in the No Child Left Behind legislation:

(1). Boosting standardized test scores should be the primary goal of School. This assumption leads to one-size-fits-all teaching aimed primarily at test preparation, and it works against efforts to give all children a high-quality education.

(2). Schools can best be improved by threatening educators with harsh sanctions, since poor teaching is the primary cause of unsatisfactory student performance. Threats may get teachers to focus narrowly on boosting test scores.

In 1983, the National Commission on Education released A Nation at Risk, the most influential report on education of the past few decades. A Nation at Risk called for an end to the minimum competency testing movement and the beginning of a high-stakes testing movement that would raise the nation's standards of achievement

drastically. The National Commission on Education directed states to institute high standards to improve curricula and rigorous assessments is conducted to hold schools accountable for meeting those standards. As a result of this report the state became more and more involved in education. As Derrida (1988, p. 34) advocates:

> Not only is the State marked by the sign and the paternal figure of the dead, it also wants to pass itself off for the mother- that is, for life, the people, the womb of things themselves....It (State) is a hypocritical hound, which….claims that its voice comes out of the "belly of reality"…..The hypocritical hound whispers in your ear through his educational systems, which are actually acoustic or acroamatic devices.

As a result of testing the curriculum is narrowed to mainly math and reading because these are the main areas that are tested. Students' access to a rich and comprehensive curriculum that will encourage them to be lifelong learners and successful in further education and employment is compromised. The subjects of Science and Social Studies are neglected because they are not tested. There are fewer opportunities to learn outside the classroom because there is no time to have field trips where student explore for themselves.

Student Motivation and Testing

Student motivation is stifled because assessments should serve to determine the success of a program, provide information to parents on student achievement, and hold schools accountable. Student motivation is stifled because conformity is valued over curiosity and enforced with rewards and punishments. Students are compelled to compete against one another, and students are prevented from designing their own learning.

Students realize that they do not have access to a beneficial education that is challenging and motivational. Steven Wolk's challenge "Let's give one hour of every school day to students to let them learn what they want to learn" (Wolk, 2001, p.56). In the early 1900s, several educators such as John Dewey struggled with the quest to find the individual in the learning process and how education occurs in an institutional setting. In the contemporary school system individuality is lost and often students suffer because teachers do not have the time to attend to the individual needs and inspire awe in their students. One of my students wrote what he believes a teacher should be:

> In my eyes there are two kinds of teachers the good ones and the bad ones. A good teacher welcomes you with open arms and a bad teacher listens with closed senses. When you walk into a classroom you should be able to open the doors of your mind. But, the key to that door lies not within the hands of the pupil. The pupil cannot open the door of knowledge and go on in life without the proper teacher. Only when the teacher and the student become entwined in the knot of teaching and learning can the door swing open. That is where the good separates from the bad. The good teacher will allow the shackles of the student to be shed and guide you through the door not as a pupil but as a master of the arts. Yes, the bad teachers will guide you through the door but, when you get to the other side you will always be the pupil you have always been. In the end it will come down to not how smart you are but how well you were taught and in this fact we will find that the teachers who were taught the right way will never allow a student to leave. That is, until the pupil is ready to teach the students of the next generation. This is similar to the teaching of a bird to its young. If that bird will teach its

young how to survive on its own the young will continue to survive. The young

can grow and teach their own young and so the chain of good teachings will

always be with us and every generation to come. We may not live forever but

what we teach will be on this earth as long as there is still a pupil to be taught.

(Mark Perez -Tenth grade student).

Much of the curriculum is stagnant and uninteresting by definition because of

the imposition and nature of the tests. Sue Morris, a personal friend related that, "last

year the year book staff at her high school designed the year book cover to depict these

feelings. The back of the year book had students filling into a new high school looking

very different and creative, but the front of the yearbook depicts the same new school

with robots moving out of the front door." Dewey (1990, p.56), felt imagination had a

fundamental role in education:

The imagination is the medium in which the child lives. To him there is

everywhere and in everything which occupies his mind and activity at all a

surplusage of value and significance. The question of the relation of the

school to the child's life is at bottom simply this: Shall we ignore this

native setting and tendency, dealing, not with the living child at all, but

with the dead image we have erected, or shall we give it play and

satisfaction?

Students feel frustrated that they must spend years in an educational system that

is not preparing them to think for themselves. Students and even parents are often ill-

equipped to define the real issues that are relevant. The students realize that there is a

problem with the educational system, but they are powerless in the stampede of

standards reform. Most students just follow along; however, there are a few who will speak out about the detrimental policies of the system. I have a very bright student in my tenth grade English class who refuses to take these standardized tests. I have spoken to him as well as the administration, but he still refuses because he feels that they are a worthless measure of his abilities. This student's extreme reaction reflects the feelings of many students who submit to the ceaseless round of pointless, mandated tests. Wolk (2001, p.59) cites Carl Rogers who wrote:

> If I distrust the human being then I must cram him with information of my own choosing, lest he go his own mistaken way. But if I trust the capacity of the human individual for developing his own potentiality, then I can provide him with many opportunities and permit him to choose his own way and his own direction for learning.

These standardized tests focus on isolated language skill such as the analysis of short fragments of text; therefore, many students are reading fewer and fewer of the great books of literature. Booth in Nussbaum (1995, p.9) argues that:

> The act of reading and assessing what one has read is ethically valuable precisely because it is constructed in a manner that demands both immersion and critical conversation, comparison of what one has read both with one's own unfolding experience and with the responses and arguments of other readers.

This expanded type of curriculum takes more time and flexibility rather than the restricted curriculum utilized in preparing for a test. Logically then, other extended activities in which students solve complicated problems, apply skill to real-life

situations or design projects covering many subject areas are removed from the curriculum. Student motivation is stifled because students don't have the opportunity to explore in areas of personal interest. Not only are student behaviors affected by teacher behaviors but they are also determined by the standards movement.

Often students worry unduly about tests and suffer serious anxiety especially if they know that they do not perform well on tests. Another problem is that too much testing causes students to care little about how well they do, especially on standardized tests that have no bearing on their grades. Either case might lead to poorer scores than students would attain under ideal conditions. A bright student in my tenth grade literature class, Michelle Nicholas (2005), wrote the following poem in response to the heavy burden of testing.

TESTING: BURDEN

By Michelle Nicholas

The words and letters jump off the page

NAME, DATE, GRADE set the papers stage

PENCIL, PAPER, PEN and much more digress

Is all that is done before the test?

Quiet demanded and silence is REWARDED

No answers yet written or look toward

An empty page and a test of knowledge—

I HAVE TO PASS TO GET INTO COLLEGE!

OK, so that's a bit of exaggeration,

But this test is social devastation.

Paris, Lawton, and Turner (1991) speculated that standardized tests may lead both bright and dull students to do poorly. "Bright students may feel heightened parental, peer, or self-imposed expectations to do well on tests, which make them anxious. Slower, disadvantaged students may do poorly, then rationalize that school and tests are unimportant and, consequently, expend less effort preparing for and completing tests. Either case might lead to a spiral of decelerating achievement." Over testing is detrimental to all students, but educators continue to test at an unprecedented rate, and this testing leaves students feeling frustrated and uninterested in school.

Teacher Behaviors and Testing

It would seem that society in general blames teachers for the overall failure of the schools on many levels. Society blames their professional education, they blame what they teach, and they blame how they teach; however, in the postmodern world the government tries to fix the problem with standards and high stakes testing and in the end students are the ones who are suffering. The struggles classroom teachers face delivering the curriculum is addressed by Aoki (1993, p.260) when he discusses:

> The difficulty the practicing teacher has with the multiplicity of curricula, living in the middle of balancing the curriculum-as planned which is the required curriculum, geared towards the end-means, and the curriculum-as-lived, the other curriculum which varies from student to student, depending upon their experiences and the reality of their own lives.

Grumet (1996, p.16), supports Aoki's argument by stating, "What is basic to education is neither the system that surrounds us nor the situation of each

individual's lived experience. What is basic to education is the relation between the two.

Since teachers have become convenient scapegoats for all that is wrong with education, educators have also have turned their attention to students and punished them through the introduction of standards and high stakes testing proposals. The standards movement depicts a racist, one-size-fits-all approach that is designed to present a simplistic view of knowledge, truth and learning which ignores the diverse needs of our students. As a result of the standards policies that the government has placed upon teachers they have shifted lessons away from low-stakes subjects, neglected infra-marginal students and ignored critical aspects of learning that are not explicitly tested. Derrida (1992) would state that:

> When a responsibility is exercised in the order of the possible, it simply follows a direction and elaborates a program; it makes of action the applied consequence, the simple application of a knowledge or know-how. It makes of ethics and politics a technology. No longer of the order of practical reason or decision, it begins to be irresponsible.

It is certainly irresponsible to continue to test students at the rate that we are committed at this time in our history because I believe that this over testing does make us irresponsible in relation to what our students deserve.

The stress of these tests and overcrowded classrooms encourages teachers to focus on little more than the content of mandatory tests. As a result of the convergence of these tests and the ethical issues that they perpetuate, too many students will continue to get a compromised education because they create a false accountability system. Our

question is clearly situated in the debate concerning the basics in education, as curriculum theorist Madeleine Grumet discusses it. She says, "...education is about a human being making sense of their life in the world, and when we confuse their movement with the stops on an itinerary, or worse with someone else's travel memoirs, we obstruct it" (Grumet, 1996, p. 17). This testing frenzy confuses students and takes away the act of discovery in the educational process because teachers and students alike must cover the material that they know will be on the test. Carlson (2002) states that:

> I believe that teachers should do what is necessary to prepare students for the tests but do no more test preparation than is absolutely necessary. And then get back to the real learning; never forget the difference between these two objectives. Educators have an ethical responsibility to expose student to the best education possible. Whatever time is spent on test preparation should be as creative and worthwhile as possible. Educators should value great teaching and learning, which is precisely what, suffers when people become preoccupied with test scores.

Teachers are required to devote a great amount of time to preparing students for the tests, and as a result time is taken away from many   meaningful activities and the students suffer in the end.

 Abrams (1996), states that "Linguistic meaning is not some ideal and bodiless essence that we arbitrarily assign to a physical sound or word and then toss out in the "external" world. Rather, meaning sprouts in the very depths of the sensory world, in the heat of meeting, encounter, and participation." I feel that students today are deprived of this kind of discovery learning because of the testing constraints that bind

teachers and students. When teachers are evaluated on the passing scores of their students, those who teach at risk populations are the most likely to receive censure, and may decide to leave the teaching profession. Schools are loosing many experienced teachers at an alarming rate because of unfair practices in evaluating teachers. Minority and low-income students are disproportionately affected by the pressure on teachers to raise scores because many times these students are retained or forced into special education classes. Teachers are evaluated on the scores of their students, and the same measure is used to judge teachers who teach gifted students as those who teach minority at risk students.

In the beginning, teachers were hopeful that the testing craze was and educational fad, but this has proven to be untrue. Too much has been invested and too many powerful interest groups are backing high-stakes testing for educators to assume that it will pass as many other fads. Standards and test are here to stay and educators might as well get used to them. These tests are a force of politics, and political decisions should be questioned, challenged, and ultimately reversed, but this may prove to be a long tedious undertaking, because all that is necessary for the triumph of damaging educational policies is that good people keep silent.

One area that is tied to high stakes testing is merit pay, under which teacher salaries will be tied to student achievement. According to Kohn, (1997):

Learning is a process in which the words discovery, exploration, and curiosity are found in abundance. Learning is more important than the products that result. Skillful educators tap students' natural curiosity and desire to become competent. In a learning environment, teachers want to help students engage

with what they are doing to promote deeper understanding. Someone who facilitates students' learning welcomes mistakes—first, because they are invaluable clues as to how the student is thinking, and second, because to do so creates a climate of safety that ultimately promotes more successful learning.

According to Arendt (2003, p.6), "Morality concerns the individual in his singularity. The criterion of right and wrong, the answer to the question, what ought I to do? ….but on what I decide with regard to myself. …I cannot do certain things, because having done them I shall no longer be able to live with myself." This is the dilemma that many teachers face because they are forced to administer high stakes tests over and over; thus, some teachers become discouraged and decide to look for a less stressful profession.

Citizens in America are facing an educational emergency because the intellectual life is being squeezed out of schools as they are transformed into what are essentially giant test-prep-centers. As educators, we should value great teaching and learning, which is exactly what, suffers when schools become preoccupied with test scores. Educators must take up the struggle against standardized test because until we have chased the monster from the schools, it will be difficult perhaps even impossible to pursue the kinds of school reform that can truly improve teaching and learning.

The current practice of high stakes, standardized tests are punitive and neglect the notion that assessment should serve the primary purpose of improving student learning. Teachers need the freedom to expand the idea of assessment by providing different, yet rigorous, ways for students to demonstrate what they know. If given academic freedom teachers could develop demanding and yet inclusive proficiency exit

standards that combine student portfolios and performance exams but would not be dependent on one high stakes standardized test.

Educators have an ethical responsibility to protect students from this policy of "high stakes" testing. If teachers fail to protect their students from unfair policies then we do a disservice to out students. Sometimes people think that "this too shall pass"; however, too much is invested by now, and too many powerful interest groups are banking on high-stakes testing for educators to assume that they will simply pass away. In any case, too many students will be sacrificed in the meantime if educators don't take action.

This is the time of profound questioning in educational circles. In the case of high stakes tests; we don't know how to live with them; we can't seem to live without them. The oft-quoted opening of Charles Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way(1859, p. 3) seems especially relevant to the situation in which we find ourselves.

Popular Culture and the Hidden Curriculum

> Now since the young must leap and jump, or have something to do, because
> they have a natural desire for it which should not be restrained (for it is not
> well to check them in everything) why should we not provide for them
> such schools, and lay before them such studies?   Martin Luther

Popular culture surrounds us in every walk of life and students often utilize popular culture to make a statement that they otherwise could not make This becomes a part of the hidden curriculum in that students use popular culture as localizing power to gain some control over an otherwise uncontrollable situation. Students construct, sustain, and maintain notions of self, history, and community through popular cultural texts.

If educators would learn to use popular culture instead of opposing it, they could capture the interest of students to a greater extent. Teachers would be able to introduce texts that are part of the curriculum and empower readers in our society. Popular cultural texts need to be valued and understood by teachers, as students' cultural placement. Teacher would benefit if they would sanction, validate and use popular texts in classrooms, because students feel more comfortable and welcome in an environment that is all too often challenged with white middle class culture that does not fit the needs of all students. Dewey (1897, p. 77) wrote:

> …I believe that the individual who is to be educated is a social individual, and that society is an organic union of individuals. If we eliminate the social factor from the child we are left only with an abstraction; if we eliminate the individual factor from society, we are left only with an inert and lifeless mass. Education, therefore, must begin with a psychological insight into the child's capacities, interests, and habits.

The attitude that educators take toward popular culture matters because popular culture is such a vital part of the students lives. When teachers exclude and police, or when they look the other way, they set up limiting expectations. Teachers tell their students that some texts are worthy of serious analysis—Shakespeare, for example but that others are

not-Televisions "The Simpsons" , or other media-related texts when in truth the media related texts also have value, and students are more likely to respond in a positive manner; therefore, teachers stifle the motivation that students may have.

Much of what students read, write, and talk about today revolve around popular culture; however, resources from pop culture through which students actually identify and define themselves are not often used in schools, and if they are utilized they appear extrinsic to real teaching and learning. Education must be restructured to respond constructively and progressively to the technological and social changes that society is facing; however, this transformation poses tremendous challenges to educators to rethink their basic doctrine, and to utilize these innovative technologies in creative and productive ways. It is imperative that educators recognize and incorporate popular culture into the classroom in order to stimulate interest in the curriculum. It is not a matter of whether or not educators should "bring" popular culture "into" the curriculum. Popular culture literally surrounds us from the time we wake up each morning until we go to bed. It is the backdrop of everyday life, part of the cultural terrain we inhabit in a postmodern information age. This means that popular culture literacy—learning how to critically read and deconstruct the hidden, mythological narratives at work within various popular culture texts—is one of the "basic skills" progressives must insist that public schools teach young people.

As educators, it is impossible to escape the dramatic effects of popular culture on our students, but often it is ignored and banned from the classroom. The language of the pop culture that is currently in vogue demonstrates a meaning all its own. Teachers who do not have access to the hidden meaning of these words are left in the dark when their

students begin discussing a subject. In this case, teachers could use the students know how to educate themselves; however, teachers along with administrators are afraid of giving the students the "power" to teach.

Schools are immersed every day in popular culture from the clothes students wear, to the music they listen to, and the language that they use, but educators still attempt to ignore the impact that popular culture has on our students. Popular culture permeates every aspect of our society and impacts every decision that we make; yet, the dynamics of popular culture are often overlooked in educational decisions making. Educators often view popular culture as a passing phase and not worth the time and effort to understand its impact. According to Hahn (2006):

Employing popular culture mediums in education must be a part of today's education not only because it heightens student retention, but also because of popular culture's role in shifting paradigms. Student learning has changed drastically over time mainly due to advancements in technology……Popular culture changes and influences the way we think as a society. How then can the educational realm ignore the influences that shape its very existence? Specifically, the societal impact born from popular culture affects student metacognition, the way students learn how to learn. Students respond to visual learning more often due to heavy integration of television and "video games" into society.

Those who make curricular choices do not understand the importance of allowing popular culture to be part of the curriculum. Students would be much more involved if educators would acknowledge popular culture and how it functions in everyday life. Popular culture is often ignored in the educational arena as policy makers consider it to

be trivial. This is one of the aspects of the hidden curriculum because educators are not meeting students where they need to be met. John Gatto (2005) stated that:

> If we are going to change what is rapidly becoming a disaster of ignorance, we need to realize that the school institution "schools" very well but it does not "educate"- that is inherent in the design of the thing, It is not the fault of bad teachers or too little money spent, it is just impossible for education and schooling ever to be the same thing.

How can educators even begin to address the problems such as student apathy, truancy, and student dropout rate, if we simply focus on the individual student without seeing the larger pattern that connects these problems to changes in school policy, the economy, and peer culture? Popular culture impacts every aspect of the students' life and should be considered in curriculum planning but often is not given any consideration. Weis (2004, p12) states that:

> Class, while perhaps a "phantasmatic category," nevertheless organizes the social, cultural, and material world in unexceptionally profound ways. The books we read (if we read at all); our travel destinations, and modes of travel (bus, car , private jet); the films we see; the foods we eat; the clothes we wear; whether we have orthodontically straightened teeth; where our children go to school, with whom , and under what staff expectation and treatment; the "look" and "feel" of home- and school- based interventions if our children "fail"; the types of plates and cutlery in our home;….are all profoundly classed experiences, rooted not only in material realities but also in culturally based expectations, whether recognized or not.

Our nation is experiencing a dramatic change from the industrial age to the information age, and educators find it increasingly difficult to keep astride of the dynamic changes that they face each day as information is increasing at such a drastic rate. The information age has far-reaching implications such as economic instability, downsizing industry, globalization and unemployment; therefore, young people see their world changing at a terrific pace and are fearful that they will not be able to succeed in such a fast changing society. This has created the students who, after attaining what should be a world class education, are still occupying a bedroom in the home of their parents. These students have not been trained for the available jobs and were indoctrinated that if they achieved a college diploma, their needs would be met. As society moves into the postmodern information age governments, societies, bureaucracies, schools, and other institutions will continue to undergo drastic changes and if educators do not prepare students for these changes then they have failed in their mission to educate.. Today technology, mass media and popular culture enable students to form connections between themselves and their social environment enables them to make decisions in social situations and helps them understand what is considered appropriate knowledge within the social arenas of their lives. Dimitriadis (2005, p.72) states that,

> There has been a growing sense from many quarters that young people's
> lives- their needs, wants, interests, and desires- are being occluded from daily life
> in school. Teachers and parents alike, many maintain, have little knowledge of,
> or interest in, engaging the lives of young people in all their complexities.
> As a result students turn to popular culture to determine their needs, wants,
> and interests since adults in their lives are not fulfilling this need.

Dimitriadis (2002) also writes about "the importance of "role models" in popular culture and discourse as well. Role models can often take the place of missing significant adults in a student's life." Yet teachers and other school personnel refuse to recognize this need for role models that fit the expectation of the postmodern student. The student then turns to other icons such as rock stars, sports figures, ultimate fight figures, and other unrealistic role models. These students then based their expectations of life after school on the characteristics of these idols.   This is unrealistic and disappointing to the student when they enter life after school. This happens because they have not been prepared by their teachers or others who hold the keys for expectations.

If educational reform is to keep up with this new discourse, educators will be forced to change the way they define instruction and the way that they teach students. At this time education centers more on 'why', but this type of instruction will become more and more inadequate as innovative teaching styles become more dominant. Lewis (1998, p.18) understands that:

> By allowing students to converse about the popular culture of the time, valuable lessons can be taught in a way that ensures better retention than from merely reading a text book. At the same time, critical thinking and analysis skills are developed during the activity. Critical thinking about popular culture needs to be employed in classrooms. For as many positive images in popular culture, there are also as many negative ones. By addressing these images in class discussion, students can become aware of how the system or "machine" of popular culture shapes the life of the individual consumer.

As a society, we are thrust into the information age, and what is being challenged is the basic conception of the mind as a container of - objects, beliefs, conjectures, and desires, but with the advance of the technological age educators need a new way of thinking about knowledge and the mind. Educators are caught in a Catch 22 situation because we have been accustomed to understanding the mind as a container that must be filled, but now we are faced with the challenge of dynamic changes in thought; therefore, if educational practices are to move ahead there must be major changes in our conception of knowledge. Educators must change their way of presenting information to students. Important advances are taking place in pedagogy and to accommodate these changes educators must face a new way of thinking that is innovative, and one that will work for the new challenges faced by education. In examining popular culture, students must be encouraged to ask whose interest are being served or challenged in a particular popular cultural practice, and what their own commitments are to those practices.

Mass Media and the Hidden Curriculum

Popular culture has been an integral part of shaping the American society since the beginning of the twentieth century because popular culture as depicted through mass media constantly sends messages of how the world functions and what determines the accepted standard for certain groups in society. Surette states that, "Popular culture contains a common shared set of world knowledge that is pervasively distributed via mass media" (1992, p.17). Television is today's mass social educator with powerful influence on social life, people's worldviews, consumer behavior and the shaping of public sentiment. Everyone is exposed to televisions version of social reality and this

reality becomes our reality and often this reality is riddled with violence. Webber (2003) discusses the impact of television on youth, insisting that it makes little sense to blame the media separate from the public when the media has become the public sphere, and the social activator. She claims that censoring violent media without broader social change may actually escalate the problem, because students are denied "fantasy spaces" to act out their rage (p.160).

Television takes up more of children's time than any other waking activity; therefore, television's pervasiveness and the huge amount of time students spend in front of the television screens, suggests that media literacy instruction can no longer be a curricular add- on, but must be viewed as a medium worthy of serious study: as social text, cultural icon and social practice. Many schools are slow to utilize this medium in worthwhile ways. I always attempt to reinforce what I teach with a video or some visual that the students can relate to their personal experience because I feel that this helps them to retain the principles that I taught in the lesson.

According to Dyson (1997), "the commercial media are central to contemporary childhood. The media not adult storytellers (or readers)-provide most U.S. children with their common story material." What does critical media pedagogy look like in a classroom? Anne Haas Dyson (1997) studied a primary classroom where the teacher encouraged student's knowledge of popular superheroes as contexts for language and literacy development. In this class, one group of girls responded to the boys' dominance of superhero play by writing new scripts that placed girls in powerful positions. The media presented boys as the only gender that could be superheroes, however the girls felt that they could also function as superheroes and wrote about these issues in the

classroom. The media lesson for girls is that girls are generally mindless and powerless, but the girls in Dyson's study had a different viewpoint. It is important to integrate ideas generated by mass media into the classroom because these are the ideas that are relevant to students and elicit high levels of interest from them. The everyday television and popular cultural texts that students encounter are at least as; if not more, significant sources of learning than the print texts educators deem as culturally relevant literacy texts.

Through the years, the media has become the primary medium through which we acquire information; however, the controversy lies with the fact that "people use knowledge gained from the media to help construct an image of the world" (Surette, 1992, p.11). Students must be taught that the media is only as factual as the person who is reporting. Media encourages the public to view the world from their standpoint, and the different networks always have a biased view of the world as it is and they present this view to the general public. The question now is how much can student's filter out from the information they are given. The answer is they cannot filter out much if they are never taught critical thinking skills in the classroom. So the media also has a "hidden curriculum." Each person interprets media as it relates to their social values. Derrida (2003) states that:

> This is all too evident in what is called the "cultural" press (arts, literature, philosophy, etc.) and in all those "refined," over determined, super-coded evaluations that does not immediately induce public opinion as political judgment or electoral decision. Each time a media institution controls market phenomena on a massive scale, it seizes and censures just as massively; it

dogmatizes, no matter what its real eclecticism or façade of liberalism, its virtues or vices, may be, no matter whether it captivates or whether one finds it distinguished or crude or both.

The impact of popular media is indeed powerful; unfortunately, the impact of media is sometimes negative. Often the media centers on the unpleasant occurances rather that the good; thus, students receive a one sided view of society. Spiegelman (2004) points out that:

Since 9/11 our response to events has changed and that we no longer view our society as stable. We see our world through short excerpts that we view on television- "FIRE! THE WORLD TRADE CENTER IS ON FIRE!" NY Times 9/11/01 –"LIVE IMAGES MAKE VIEWERS WITNESSESS TO HORROR". NY Times 9/11/01."THE AGE OF IRONY COMES TO AN END". NY Times 9/24/01.

Another form of media that students view in short segments is advertising clips. These advertisements flash by so fast that it is almost impossible to keep up with what is happening on the screen. Advertisements are designed to sell products, but its images also teach students about their world and how to function in this fast paced society. Advertising is filled with propaganda devices-slogans, testimonials, glittering generalities, and manipulative appeals to human needs. Virtually every advertisement is an inducement to suspend disbelief and critical judgment and to accept biased testimony at face value. Students are asked to compare themselves to a perfect model. As educators, we recognize that it is much more difficult to teach students who have a low self-image, yet advertising often attempts to sell products by playing on insecurities and repeatedly

emphasizing imagined inadequacies. If one is too fat or too slim or too anything one does not fit the ideal model; therefore, one must buy something to fix the problem and when one problem is fixed another one is looming in the future. Contemporary students are not happy because they always want more and more material possessions because they are striving to be like their peers. According to Ruggiero, (2000):

Young people need self-discipline - popular culture preaches self-indulgence.--Young people need open-mindedness and curiosity – popular culture narrows their perspective and makes them preoccupied with self.--Young people need respect for reason - popular culture venerates emotion." Young people need the habit of analysis and reflection – popular culture encourages impulsiveness and gullibility.-Young people need a commitment to excellence – popular culture presents vice as virtue.

Educators usually view the news as educational, but is it educational or mind controlling indoctrination? There is always a hidden agenda of media bias that will affect those who watch the news. As educators, we know that students in America are subjected to a culture of violence that comes in many forms such as child abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, mental abuse. Students also experience violence on the streets, in the school, in the community, and violence in the news. It is impossible to escape from this culture of violence since it is spewed over the media over and over each day.

The average student spends more time in front of the television than they do in school; therefore, television will have more of an impact. What is the media teaching our students, and what is the hidden message behind television violence? Does television teach our students that violence is an acceptable way to solve problems? There has been a

great amount of research analyzing the correlation between television viewing and violence. Most researchers find a definite correlation between watching violence on television and violence displayed in society. Cartoons have been a source of entertainment for many students but there are also studies that conclude that cartoon and cartoon violence has an impact on children. Bugs Bunny, The Roadrunner, Tweedy Bird and Tom and Jerry are only a few examples of cartoons that exhibit extreme violence.

For the last seven decades children have grown up with 'popular culture' as defined by Disney Films; thus ,Disney is an influential educator in the lives of our students, but often parents and teachers do not realize the hidden lessons that Disney culture teaches our children. There are many hidden messages and stereotypes hidden in Disney films. According to (Pinsky, 2003):

> Disney films impart wisdom for people to live by-"Welcome the stranger, respect and accept those who are different, pray when you are in need, avoid the temptation of the easy solution—eating a magic apple will never solve your problems." Pinsky finds a vision of mainline American Protestantism where, he writes, "Good is always rewarded; evil is always punished. Disney heroes favor gun control and environmentalism (Bambi), the nobility of the poor (Robin Hood), marriages based on love despite differences (Lady and the Tramp), (The Little Mermaid) and unconditional love (Lilo & Stitch).

Many educators advocate that parents and teacher need to critically look at the media to understand the values that are being touted. Parents and teachers should teach their children about media literacy, but many parents do not understand media literacy themselves. Media literacy should teach students how to interpret critically the

knowledge, values, and power of the media. Educators should study to better understand how the media presents gender, race, and multiculturalism in the movies, and guide students to better understand how these issues are played out in the media.

There is an ongoing debate about the value of popular media in education because many educators believe that pop culture trivializes real academic study, and that it should not be used in the classroom; however, others believe that popular culture can expand students' critical thinking skills, and help them to evaluate the world that they live in. The reality is that students learn more from electronic media than they do from school. Much of what students receive and accept about society is based on what they see in Hollywood films; therefore, educators should engage students to read, write and analyze various texts as they relate to their lives. Derrida (1992) states that:

> In this post-Revolutionary modernity, the techno-economic mutation of the media marks another scansion… let us not forget the constraints of the press, which are not only quantitative: they also impose models of readability. This growth of the media gives voice to the Other or minorities deprived of institutional representation; it can correct errors and injustices; but this "democratization" never legitimately represents.

Educators should never limit the scope of their students, but they should encourage them to discover new modes of learning and if we limit media exposure then we limit the scope of our students exposure to issue that are relevant in society. Through the use of essays and class discussion, students can relate what they have read to the movie on the same subject or book. Cates (1990, p.68) presents an excellent model for students to review films critically, using specific guidelines such as:

 Choice of words: Do the terms used tend to have strong connotations, either positive or negative? How are they used? -- Actor selection: Are the actors, chosen to portray events or points of view, uniformly attractive or unattractive, appealing or unappealing, in direct relationship to the points of view they hold? Does the relationship seem to be more than just coincidental?--Character development: Are characters portrayed as stereotypes? Is there a pattern to which characters are stereotyped?--Use of Music: Is music used in some parts of the film and not in others? Is the music used in some scenes raucous and irritating, whereas the music used in other scenes is pleasing?

Dress and the Hidden Curriculum

Dress of students is a major issue of the hidden curriculum because it is one way that the students utilize localizing power to have some control over their lives. In the l960's the "beatniks" culture was dominant and eventually led to the freak scene that was prominent in the seventies and became a dominant force in society. This "beatnik" culture included Radicals, Hippies, Peaceniks, Mods, and Rockers. In the post modern society we have the Goths, the emo, the preps, and the gangs. All of these have a definite dress style and a statement to make. The Goths are characterized by the very dark clothing, black dyed hair, and white makeup. The emos, while dressing like the Goths, also practice self-mutilation. The emos are also devoid of feelings and they use music as their excuse to self-mutilate. The preps are usually the students who excel at sports and in the classroom. Their clothing is usually name brand and they are easily recognizable by their swaggering demeanor. The gang members are defined by colors and distinctive dress. These colors are proudly displayed and the gang member will wear a distinctive

form of clothing such as one pant leg rolled up, or handkerchief dangling from a pocket. While the other students may not be in the gang, they are very much aware of gang paraphernalia.

In the 1970's the freaks came into their own openly embracing the image of strangeness and otherlyness. Each of these groups was defined by a mode of dress or appearance in some manner. In schools today, students use clothing to define themselves, and to make a statement. Teachers are instructed to police the attire of their students, and sometimes it becomes such an issue that the students rebel. This policing of what students wear is a facet of the hidden curriculum because someone must decide what the appropriate attire is and that of course is a subjective decision. In performing the policing duties, the teachers bring their own belief systems into play. These same teachers would be horrified at the thought that they could possibly be acting in a Nazi like manner, but this is the message that is being given to the student.

Clothing defines a person and often students use clothing to make a statement. Cultural coding among teens is the hallmark of adolescent identity: from color-coded shoe laces or school bags, to in-crowd gestures or sub cultural attire of the Grunge, the Goths, the Surfers and the Nerds. Students pay a great deal of attention to clothes, and they are an expression of not only personality but also of popular culture and group orientation. In my classroom, if I read every T-shirt that makes a statement I would be reading all day. Sometimes educators question clothing as to whether it meets dress code because they don't understand or agree with the message. Often the meaning of a message is influenced by the context as well as what appears to be the stated meaning. Some time teachers do not understand the context and misjudge the meaning behind the

attire, and students become angry when they are told to change their attire. Students take

this as an affront to their personal identity. The meaning of a popular text is shaped, in

part, by who is using it, the context in which it is being used, and the purpose it serves.

In the world of student attire every sign or image signifies something else and is

always culture and genre dependent. Students already have a good understanding of the

meaning of these signs when they arrive in our classes. Students are not naïve or

incompetent when it comes to media texts. Students come into classroom as television

experts and most have little trouble applying conceptual analysis to the texts with which

they have grown up and which occupy a significant amount of their time. Colors of

clothing have very definite meaning. Black can be associated with style and class, evil or

mourning. Red can mean danger, romance, or sexual allure; furthermore, the use of color

can depict mood, national identity or gender. Often students use clothing to make a

statement about themselves and their beliefs and they are deeply offended if the teacher

makes a comment about their attire. Many confrontations occur among teachers and

students when the students' choice of dress is questioned.

Music and the Hidden Curriculum

Keeping up with what's trendy and what's not in the music world can be a

daunting task. A quick look at Billboard's list of Top 10 albums in the country reveals

artists like Nelly and Usher, both of them prominent names in the R&B and hip-hop

scene, alongside country star George Strait, Ray Charles and Rod Stewart. The

alternative music of Smashing Pumpkins and Nickelback are being downloaded into the

IPOD so that students can take this music with them where ever they go.

Music infiltrates the lives of adolescents in many contexts: at home, in shopping malls, and on the go. Cars come equipped with radios as well as compact disk and cassette players along with the ability to plug the IPOD into the speaker so that listeners may play music of their own choosing, thus students are familiar with the lyrics to various musical trends since every car has 'a system'. Some of the 'systems' are designed to destroy your eardrums with speakers in some cars costing more than the car itself.

As educators we should acknowledge student's interest in music and invite them to bring this interest into the classroom. By connecting adolescent musical choices in all its many forms to critical media literacy, teachers can become instrumental in encouraging students' engagement in the complex experiences through the study of music. Many teachers are afraid of the music of today. It is important to learn about the music because some of the music is not acceptable in the classroom. Teachers need to learn about, acknowledge, and help students explore pleasures in music in ways that will open possibilities for positioning themselves in their culture; however, there are pedagogical concerns behind reading rock 'n' roll in the classroom. If teachers will use music in the classroom it stimulates interest and helps the students to feel more connected to the subject. Some music, while having a great beat and rhythm, is inappropriate for classroom use. Teachers need to listen to the music and understand the social implications to help students develop critical thinking regarding their choice of music and how it defines them as a person. Students are already familiar with the music and often have formed strong feelings rooted in the identification and pleasure that the music provides. The teacher's goals in analyzing the music may be undercut by students' experience outside of school.

In its inception hip-hop was intended to celebrate the revival of the age-old rhymed recitation of life's problems and aspirations set to music, but unfortunately somewhere along the way, some unscrupulous elements hijacked this influential means of expression and loaded it with the evil and debasing, hate-driven messages in the lyrics we now know as gangsta rap. Many African American students respond to hip-hop because it expresses some of their fears and frustration and helps them better relate to society. Hip hop often tells a story of experiences that the students understand. Many students enjoy hip hop, but because of its' inappropriate language it is not usually accepted in school, but students still listen to it in secret. They not only listen; they often try to imitate those who perform hip hop. This is a part of the hidden curriculum since we censor music that would stimulate interest in the students; however I don't see any way that this music would ever be allowed in school. Hip-hop culture has a great influence on American youth. White and Cones (1999) write, "Hip hop is a catch-all term for a contemporary, urban-centered youth lifestyle associated with popular music, break dancing, certain dress and hair styles, graffiti, and street language"

(p. 96). Hip hop culture has gone from primarily rapping, break dancing, dj-ing, and graffiti to including dialects, attitude, expression, mannerisms, and fashion. This dynamic culture has a drastic impact on many students.

Stereotypes and the Hidden Curriculum

Stereotypes are often barriers to acceptance and many times media defines the stereotype; therefore, the hidden curriculum functions through stereotypes. Students are sometimes labeled using hurtful stereotypes. Stereotypes are simple, one-dimensional portrayals of people and they are usually based on sex, race, religion, profession or age.

We all stereotype people to some degree as we try to make sense of our world, but stereotyped images create false ideals that people can't live up to, foster low self-esteem for those who don't fit in, and restrict people's ideas of what they're capable of achieving.

An excellent example of stereotype is the response of the nation since 9/11. All Arab looking men are automatically terrorists. They are profiled at airports, on busses, in apartment complexes, and in all areas of today's society. While the truth is that not all Arab men are terrorists. These men have families, steady jobs, work hard and look forward to vacation. Teachers should strive to teach their students to recognize and be mindful of media stereotypes and to understand how they influence students.

Filmmakers often rely heavily on stereotypes, because they are a quick and simple ways to establish a movie character's traits. Stereotypes perpetuate common misconceptions about groups of people. These oversimplified and inaccurate portrayals can profoundly affect how we perceive one another, how we relate to one another and how we value ourselves. For example, Blonde women are dumb, foreigners are villains, Mexicans are lazy, and blacks are great athletes. Teenagers are portrayed as sex crazed, uncivilized, moralistic or shallow, and they tend to be lumped into groups of either popular kids or geeks. Middle aged women are only looking for the next affair as they spend their husband's money on the latest new car or a new house in a better neighborhood. The film industry today is more sensitive to issues of culture and gender than it once was, but many movies still perpetuate common misconceptions about groups of people. Such oversimplified and inaccurate portrayals can profoundly affect how people perceive on another, and how we relate to one another and how they influence us.

Because students have a limited experience of the world, they are particularly vulnerable to being influenced by media stereotypes. Even animated movies have their share of stereotypes, because they are familiar and easily understood. Movie makers rely heavily on stereotypes because they are well understood by each person in the audience.

Summary of Chapter Two

In chapter two I addressed some of the major theorists that have researched the hidden curriculum and how they believe the hidden curriculum impacts the school system. These researchers have different viewpoints, but they all agree that the hidden curriculum is a major factor in education.

I also listed some of the major issues of the hidden curriculum that focuses on the students as well as the school system. Some of the ideas that surface are that the hidden curriculum has a significant impact on the productivity, progress and attitudes of students and teachers. The hidden curriculum is created, maintained and managed by the students and staff of the school, and the hidden curriculum can be both constructive and destructive, and it is very difficult to make changes in the hidden curriculum because it is so illusive and hard to define.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this section I will list the research questions, describe the general design of the study, the data collection and criteria for trustworthiness. This is an auto-ethnography study utilizing ethnographic qualitative research methods to closely examine my own practice as a high school teacher. I analyzed the process in which I arrive at decisions, and I looked for the ways I assessed and implemented those decisions. When working with students, I looked for ways the students responded to classroom activities, school activities and ways that defined my action research. And I looked for the ways of activities of being a teacher, and the various ways in which action research informed my activities as a teacher. I looked closely at actions that I had always completed in the process of teaching and tried to define how I could improve on those actions. I also looked at areas of the school in which the hidden curriculum functioned.

Qualitative research is a way to examine the hidden curriculum because according to Merriam (2001, p.5):

It is an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that helps educators understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena such as the hidden curriculum with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible. Qualitative studies usually rely on open-ended questions, observations, or analysis of documents and audiovisual records. The results of qualitative studies are described in narrative terms.

Defining Action Research

As a teacher who researches her personal teaching practices, I want to examine

Kincheloe's (1991) suggested example of possible teacher research. Kincheloe suggests a "critical constructivist historiography" which could provide "a starting place for our exploration of consciousness construction and the forces which have helped shape the lived world of our students and ourselves" (p. 181). "Memory is the means that teachers, educational leaders, community members, and students use to gain self-consciousness about the genesis of our own common sense beliefs, derived as they are from our ideological, social, and cultural milieu" (p. 182). Through analyzing Kincheloe's explanation I understand the value of an autoethnography of my professional development. It is a work of teacher research constructed through the theoretical lens of activity theory that will have educational value both in the practices of teacher as researcher and of teaching as teacher educator. My personal goal for teacher research has been to expose the hidden curriculum in the school and in my classroom so that I might become a better educator. I am interested in finding ways to free my own practice of teaching from the confines of institutional control.

In order to accomplish this research I analyzed school documents, texts, assessment instruments, board work, journals and, classroom reading texts to help with decision making. My analysis for this research project will be the decisions I make both in and out of class as a teacher, keeping journals of what occurred within and without the classroom. This is an ethnographic narrative to reveal for the reader my practice as a teacher and to define my understandings of what from my life experiences affects my teaching. These personal experiences reflect the flow of thoughts and meaning that I experience in the immediate situation and help me to adjust my teaching style so that I

can better serve my students. Learning new techniques for teaching is important for my professional growth as a teacher.

Most importantly, reflection helps me to develop my own learning and teaching framework. Brookfield (1995, p.56) proposes that this framework:

Allows us to consciously develop our own repertoire of strategies and techniques to draw upon in our teaching, which are relevant to our particular context and discipline. Helps us take informed actions that can be justified and explained to others and that we can use to generate answers to teaching problem. Allows us to adjust and respond to issues and problems. Helps us to become aware of our underlying beliefs and assumptions about learning and teaching so we understand why we do what we do and what might need to change. Helps to promote a positive learning environment. Through reflection, our teaching becomes responsive to student feedback and needs, which can serve to build trust in students when they see their feedback is valued and taken seriously through changes to teaching. Helps us to locate our teaching in the broader institutional, social, and political context and to appreciate the many factors that influence student learning. In this way, reflection helps us to keep our perspectives and to avoid blaming ourselves for every problem that arises in our classrooms.

<div align="center">Timeline of Action Research</div>

I first became interested in the hidden curriculum and how it functions in two thousand and three when I entered the curriculum studies doctoral program at Georgia Southern University. The subject of the hidden curriculum came up in discussion in

Dr. Reynolds's class and I was immediately intrigued by the idea of the values, issues, and ideals that educators teach inadvertently ,and as a result, I began to look at my classes to define how the hidden curriculum was impacting my classes. In the beginning, my interest was not a structured study it was more of an introspective approach. In the fall of two thousand and four I began to keep structured notes as to what was happening in my classroom and in the school. Each day I would write in my journal what had transpired during that day. I wrote about each situation and my personal response to what occurred, and I diligently wrote about both positive and negative experiences. In the process of writing and reading these journals, I began to define the hidden curriculum in my classroom and in the school. I was surprised at the many areas of the hidden curriculum that I could define. At this point, I spoke to my principal and received his permission to continue carrying on my research concerning the hidden curriculum in a more structured manner. My principal said that I could do the study and that he would be very interested in my findings concerning the school.

In order to fully understand a complex and dynamic phenomenon such as the hidden curriculum the overall curriculum and school culture must be examined from a variety of perspectives, and I determined to complete this examination by examining the hidden curriculum in the school and in my classroom. Furthermore curriculum must be viewed as lived experience. Teachers must look closely at curriculum and determine how it impacts students each day as they interact with teachers, administrators and peers. Every teaching situation is a unique and complex interplay of interacting, interdependent, often incompatible contexts. Teaching occurs within a structural context which Cornbleth (1991) argues is the "education system's established roles and relationships, including

operating procedures, shared beliefs and norms often distinguished as organization and culture" (p.35). I began to look at theses relationships, procedures, beliefs, values and norms in relation to the hidden curriculum and how it functioned in the school and in my classroom.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the dissertation is based on looking at what occurs in the school system and my classroom to determine what part of the curriculum functions as the hidden curriculum. Bringing the many facets of the hidden curriculum into focus will enable me to better serve my students. Pinar (1982, p.32) argues that, "the curriculum field is being revitalized through the development of curriculum studies, which he calls reconceptualization. Pinar states that, "since there is a fundamental structural change in the culture….." what is necessary "is a fundamental reconceptualization of what curriculum is and how it functions in a postmodern society". It is necessary to examine curriculum and define how it functions in the school system in order to facilitate school reform. Many times the hidden curriculum is ignored when the stated curriculum is researched. I myself had ignored the hidden curriculum for many years because I did not realize the importance of the hidden curriculum in relation to my teaching and how it could be used to help my students. In this study I attempt to correct this mistake and closely examine the hidden curriculum.

The form of this curriculum inquiry/research is critical autoethnographic inquiry orientation in which research is conceived as the meaning which people give in a situation. The meaning of any experience will change according to those involved because of the various life experiences that they bring to the situation. Meaning will

change from day to day depending on the dynamics of the group. I find that I may teach

the same lesson to different classes but the outcome is different for each class because

of the student personalities involved in the class.

Language works as much through sub-verbal codes as by what is actually said;

therefore, the real understanding is completed in the relationship between words and

meanings. Students have different connotations of words; therefore they approach

situations differently. The hidden curriculum is defined through these words and

meanings in this research. According to Derrida (1974):

Meaning is not based on the will to dialogue alone. Most fundamentally, it is

made possible by absence, by the relations of a word to other words within the

ever-pevasive network of structures that language ultimately is. Our relation to

the speech of others, or to the texts of the past, is not one of mutual respect and

interaction. It is a relationship in which we have to fight against misunderstanding

and dissemination, one in which the focus on communality in language provides

but a harmful illusion.

The hidden curriculum can be addressed in many different ways as it functions

throughout the school system, and the hidden curriculum can be perpetuated thorough

words, actions, and beliefs.

Theoretical Framework

Critical theory serves as the framework for this study of the schooling experiences

of this high school. "Critical theory includes transformative activity that is explicitly

political and commits to projecting a future of possibilities" (Giroux, 1983, p.10). This

transformative process requires that the views and voices of the students and teachers be

heard. In this research I have listened and recorded students and teachers as they talked about the issues that concern them in the school. Kincheloe & McLaren, (2000) state that:

> While critical pedagogy concerns how teachers enact the art, craft, and practice of critical theory, critical ethnography describes a means for researchers to investigate educational practices. It hopes to promote democracy by examining how power operates in society with a clear focus on groups from different genders and classes, races, and ethnicities (p 71).

Carspecken (1996, p. 11) states that, " critical qualitative writers...position themselves as political and interrogative beings, fully explicit about their original positions, and about where their research actually took them as investigators and as political actors." Carspecken (1996) offers a five-stage scheme or framework in order to conduct critical qualitative research. These five include 1) compiling the primary record through qualitative collection of data; 2) preliminary reconstructive analysis; 3) discovering dialogical data generation; 4) describing system relations; 5) using system relationships to explain the findings. I utilized this five step method as I undertook the project. Stage one includes providing a rich, thick description of the subjects in order to compile the primary record .During the second stage of the research, the investigator begins to speculate as to the meanings of the observations. Stage three included gathering data through naturalistic means. Stages four and five seek to explain the meaning of the study and give the focus of the study meaning.

I chose to use ethnography for my research because it seems to be the most effective manner in which to study the hidden curriculum. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994):

Ethnography has had many uses and meanings throughout history. The history surrounding ethnography reveals how multiple uses and meanings are brought to each practice. Critical ethnography differs from traditional ethnography in its attempt to link the detailed analysis of ethnography to wider social structures and systems of power relationships in order to examine the origins of oppression. Critical ethnography raises substantive questions about structural relationships. The intention is to go beyond grasping the subject's meanings in order to relate those meanings to wider cultural and ideological forms. Critical ethnography is a widely used technique in critical social research. The involvement and close attention to detail characteristic of ethnography make it useful for rendering visible the invisible, and for revealing anomalies and common-sense notions

Research Methodology

This is an autoethnographic curriculum study in which I focus on the hidden curriculum and how it impacts the school since curriculum is at the heart of education. Curriculum, however, is not as straight forward as it first might appear. As we know many things are taught in the classroom that may not be planned. In this study I focus on those aspects of curriculum that I define as the hidden curriculum. According to Portelli (1993, p.21):

Besides the manifest curriculum, the curriculum explicitly taught in the classroom, curriculum consists of a hidden curriculum, which consists of underlying values and assumptions that are communicated through subject matter choices, instructional methods, social interactions and institutional setups.

Furthermore, "the curriculum communicated may not neatly match the received nor may it be assimilated uncontested" (Jackson, 1992). Because communication is such a tentative activity what the teacher means is not what the student understands he\she to mean; thus, studying curriculum means to examine the curricula-in-use as negotiated in daily interactions, and the contexts that make these curricula-in-use understandable. Ethnographic research methods lend themselves to studying the curriculum-in-use and its intended and unintended (hidden) consequences. This is so because ethnographers spend extended periods of time at a site as participant-observers and so come to know why individuals do what they do, and how they co-construct the curriculum. This knowledge, in turn, facilitates understanding the educational processes at work that lead to the intended and unintended educational outcomes that we can observe. The goal of this project is to determine how the hidden curriculum functions in the classroom and the high school, and to use this knowledge to facilitate change.

Autoethnography is qualitative research that emphasizes description, induction, grounded theory, and the study of peoples understanding. Autothnography is a type of qualitative research where the researcher is the main subject, regarding himself as a phenomenon and providing narratives of his personal life, and yields data that has been termed soft, that is, rich in description of people, places, and conversations, and not easily handled by statistical procedures. Autoethnography is the work of teacher research constructed through the theoretical lens of activity theory that will have educational value both in the positional practices of teacher as researcher and of teaching as teacher educator.

The researcher must carefully examine teaching practices in order to improve. Teacher action research is the research of any activity done by the teacher which involves the teacher's professional experience. The goal of that research is going to differ according to the reason for the activity of the research. My personal goal for teacher research has been to research the hidden curriculum in the school where I teach so that it can be brought into focus in order to improve my own teaching practice and bring into focus some aspects of the hidden curriculum as it functions in the school where I teach. I am very much interested in knowing how my own teaching practices both inhibit and support the students that I teach each day. I would like to know that I am doing the very best for each student and if I am not doing the best for my students then I want to make changes in my classes to address any problems that I find in my teaching practices.

Autoethnography displays a self-conscious interest in narrative form. According to Ellis (2004), the distinguishing formal characteristics of autoethnography are as follows:

> The author usually writes in the first person, making herself or himself the object of research. The narrative text focuses on generalization within a single case extended over time. The text is presented as a story replete with narrator, characterization and plot line akin to forms of writing associated with the novel or biography. The story often discloses hidden details of private life and highlights emotional experience (p. 30).

Researcher as Subject

Critical autobiographical research can enable educators to become cultural researchers who explore their profession, revealing hidden cultural forces that, when left

unchecked, can flow through the social structures of schooling, the curriculum and teachers pedagogies, and lead to the reproduction of inequities and social injustices with long-lasting effects for the lives of students and society. This research process involves excavating ones personal life history, identifying eventful moments in time, representing them in story form, sharing the stories with colleagues and eliciting their commentaries, and finally writing ones own commentaries on the professional significance of the story writing. Usher and Edwards (1994, p. 80) offer this insight:

It is impossible to be a teacher without also being a learner, that in order to be a teacher it is first necessary to abandon the position of the "one who knows", recognizing both one's own lack of knowledge and of self-transparency and mastery and that ones own learning is never, and never will be, complete. Autoethnography is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays

multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. According to Denizin and Lincoln (2003, p.209),

Autoethnographers primarily focus on a culture or subculture, authors use their own experiences in the culture reflexively to bend back on self and look more deeply at self-other interactions. The researcher's personal experience becomes important primarily in how it illuminates the culture.

Autoethnography reflects the flow of thoughts and meanings that I have in the immediate situation, and they occur within my own personal life. It is impossible to study lived experience directly, because language and systems of discourse mediate and define the very experience that I attempt to describe.

Data Collection Method

Data collection occurred in the natural setting of the school and the classroom. This is a large modern high school, with a very large and diverse student body. Spending extended amounts of time in the setting where the action is happening is a concept referred to as human-as-instrument (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This is the approach that I will take since I have worked in the same school for eleven years. I have gathered and documented information over the last five years in relation to the hidden curriculum. I have worked in the same county since nineteen eighty eight, and believe that I have a good understanding of how the school system functions. I taught eighth grade English until nineteen ninety seven when I transferred to the high school where I have taught ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades. I have worked under three different principals since moving to the high school. Each of these men views their role as administrator in a very different manner and the impact of their differences was evident in the climate of the school. The first principal that I served under was very people oriented and he respected his faculty and they respected him. The second principal was very strict, data driven and did not appear to care much for the faculty as a whole. The principal that I serve under now seems to be very open and caring for his faculty. He is also somewhat authoritarian and data driven.

My research will focus on a sound qualitative research format. According to Merriam (2001, p. 5),"qualitative research is a way to examine the hidden curriculum because it is an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that help educators understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena (such as the hidden curriculum) with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible". I can observe the

hidden curriculum in my classroom and in the school in general. "Qualitative studies usually rely on open-ended questions, observations, or analysis of documents and audiovisual records" (p.111). The results of qualitative studies are described in narrative terms. The different types of qualitative studies commonly found in educational research include ethnographic, phenomenological, grounded theory, and case study research.

I will examine the hidden curriculum and indicate some of the issues that occur in the high school where I teach. Such an account is called an autoethnography, descriptive-ethnographic or qualitative research technique. According to Denizen, & Lincoln (2003, p. 211), reflexive ethnographies primarily focus on a culture or subculture, authors use their own experiences in the culture to bend back on self and look more deeply at what is happening in the culture……..Complete-member researchers is a term coined by Adler (1987) to refer to researchers who are fully committed to and immersed in the culture they study. I have worked in the same school system for twenty years and will be looking at the hidden curriculum of the school from my personal experiences. In the complete member autothnography emphasis is on the research process and what is being studied; therefore the emphasis in this study will be the hidden curriculum and how it functions in the contemporary school system. I will talk with teachers, students and administrators to better understand the function of the hidden curriculum, and this study will be completed by using techniques such as personal journals, observation, conversation and document analysis.

This is the manner in which I intend to approach my study on the topic of the hidden curriculum. The point for educators is to understand and manage school urriculum in the postmodern era, while using it to promote learning. How can we use what we know about the postmodern world to address the needs of our students? This basic question

leads to other associated questions such as: (1) what kind of school curriculum is needed in order to romote student learning? (2) What instructional strategies are needed to promote student nvolvement in the curricula? (3) How can the inclusion of more student choice help promote rich learning environments?

Questions to Consider

1). How does this school define its purposes and goals with respect to students, teachers and others in the system?

(2). How are teachers fostering students' ability to construct desired learning outcomes?

(3) What pressures, supports and barriers are placed on teachers in fostering students' ability to construct desired learning outcomes?

(4).Who makes the crucial decisions concerning what and how students are taught in school?

(5). How much say do teachers have over their work and how much should they have?

(6). How well does the hidden curriculum function in this school?

(7).Since the hidden curriculum is by definition a paradox and because it is spontaneous and less explicit than the overt curriculum; is there anything educators can do to achieve consistency in its application.

(8).Which of the five types of climate is functioning in the school? (Appendix A).

There are a many ways to gather the information. Some evaluation methods are as simple as a casual conversation in which I ask students how things are going, while others require special equipment or techniques (videotaping a lecture or gathering and analyzing student response to my teaching style). I can evaluate my performance by paying attention to the non-verbal cues of my students; reviewing student's notebooks;

asking for specific, written comments; having a friend, colleague, senior faculty member, or teaching consultant sit in on one or more of my classes; and, of course, by assessing student performance through tests and/or assignments. Each method has value and some are particularly valuable for gathering certain kinds of information

One of the main methods that I used to collect data was observation. According to Adler & Adler (1994, p. 389), Observation is "the fundamental base of all research methods….The most powerful source of validation. Observation rests on something researchers can find constant which is their own direct knowledge and their own judgment".

I will also utilize personal journals that I have written over the last five years. I will analyze the data collected in order to analyze my teaching practices and school practices in order to facilitate change. According to Carspaken (1996, p. 190):

Critical discourse theory provides tools for understanding how interactions among courses both shape and are informed by power relationships and ideologies in people's learning lives. Cultural studies provides a basis for studying cultural practices from the people's perspectives and for recognizing that power is produced in everyday lives in and through societal institutions. Differing types of interactions in the classroom should be coded, pulled together into themes, and categorized through rigorous reconstructive principles. Through this study insights may be yielded into developing and enacting responsive curricula, teaching practice improvements, and school reform.

According to Carspecken there are several states that must be addressed in this type of study. "Stages one through three emphasize social integration….four and five

emphasize system integration and the relationship between social and system integration" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 190). In stage four, several issues that relate to the hidden curriculum will be examined; in stage five, findings will be explained through social-theoretical models and may yield revisions. For this study, ethnographic methods will document the details of students, school actions, issues, and accounts to enable the researcher to articulate specific teaching practices, events, and experiences of students and teachers in a classroom culture.

Details will enable the researcher to clearly express the link between everyday practices of the social institution (school) and power relations that exist in the school culture. Many times everyday practices are ignored because they are accept as normal occurrences of the school day but when closely examined we see that they have special significance. There are many different power relations in the school that also have a major impact on student and teacher alike but often are never which is addressed.

<div align="center">Summary of Chapter Three</div>

In Chapter three I explained my theoretical perspective which is critical theory, and how it can be used to effectively study the hidden curriculum. I also defined my method of study which is autoethnography and the manner in which data was collected. I also defined by position as the researcher

I posed several questions in this chapter that I will develop in the findings of Chapter four. These questions helped to focus my study as I attempted to look carefully at the hidden curriculum in my classroom and in the school system

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

As I gathered data I began wondering about decisions I make in the classroom, what they mean, why I make them, are how the various decisions impact the classroom. As I analyzed the data I wondered about decisions my students make. How would I identify them? How can I help them make better decisions? Why do I choose to make those decisions? I thought about how this research would impact my practice as a teacher and how I would utilize the research for the purpose of improving my classroom and the school. That was how I began my research. Very quickly into my research I found myself confronted both by the structure of the school system, and the limitations of time that always face teachers; however, I had to learn to balance my work and research if I was to come to any successful conclusions. This study allowed me to have some insight into how my teaching affects my students. According to Kidder (1989):

> Teachers usually have no way of knowing that they have made a difference
> in a child's life, even when they have made a dramatic one....Good teachers
> put snags in the river of children passing by, and over the years, they redirect
> hundreds of lives.... There is also an innocence that conspires to hold humanity
> together, and it is made of people who can never fully know the good that they
> have done (p. 313)

Personal Findings

I often look at students that I have had some real personal contact with and wonder if I have made a difference in their life. When a student returns to the school and takes the time to look me up and let me know what is happening in their life then I know that I have made a difference, and I am always excited to hear from these students.

At the beginning of each semester, I always narrate the fable of "The Grasshopper and the Ants" in order to motivate my students to work hard throughout the year:

One fine day in winter some Ants were busy drying their store of corn, which had gotten rather damp during a long spell of rain. Presently up came a Grasshopper and begged them to spare her a few grains. "For," she said, "I'm simply starving." The Ants stopped work for a moment, though this was against their principles. "May we ask," said they, "what you were doing with yourself all last summer? Why didn't you collect a store of food for the winter?" "The fact is," replied the Grasshopper, "I was so busy singing that I hadn't the time." "If you spend the summer singing," replied the Ants, "you can't do better than spend the winter dancing." And they chuckled and went on with their work. *Moral – work when the time is right.*

I tell my students that my goal for them is to be like the ants that have worked during the summer for their winter supply of food and are ready for the winter cold. The grasshopper plays and wiles his time away in the summer and when the winter comes he is begging for mercy because he has not stored up any food. I encourage them to be like the ants and have their grades all in and ready for report cards, and to avoid being like the grasshopper who plays and wastes his time. Some take my advice but others don't seem to care.

On several occasions, I have had students return to school or see me out in public and they tell me that they think about that story and that they may have been a grasshopper when in my class, but they are now an ant. It feels wonderful to know that I

have made a difference in their life. I look for ways to be a caring concerned teacher so that I can encourage my students.

One of my findings was that a caring teacher is an element of the hidden curriculum because student perception is an important issue in a student's life. If they think that you care then they are more like to strive to succeed in school. According to Noddings (1992):

What is learned from caring teachers willing to share their knowledge and their pleasure in learning is often incidental and very powerful precisely because it is given freely. We live in an age that concentrates too narrowly on the specification of what must be learned and on testing to be sure that it has indeed been learned. As I talk to my students they often relate the fact that they like teachers who respond to them in a positive manner.

This is one way that I can improve my teaching. I must make a concerted effort to let

my students know that I care about them and their plans for the future. I care very much but I know that sometimes things get so busy that it is hard to take the time to give special attention to the students in my classroom, and let them know just how much I care

If I am to serve my students I understand that I must be responsive to their needs and this includes the whole child. I must see the student as an individual not just a number in relation to an educational statistic. Responsiveness to the context of students implies sensitivity to their life as a whole. When a situation involves a teacher and a student, it involves understanding the student's family background, his or her talents and interests, fears and aspirations as well as the cognitive capabilities of the student. All of

these issues come together to make up the student; thus, all of these issues must be considered if I am to help the student.

<div align="center">Barriers Placed On Teachers</div>

What pressures, supports and barriers are placed on teachers in fostering students' ability to construct desired learning outcomes? The longer I teach the more I realize the constraints that are placed on teachers in relation to what and how they are allowed to teach. In the contemporary classroom, teachers are faced with more and more rules and regulations, and as a result the teacher has very little autonomy to practice the art of teaching. Teaching in a contemporary classroom is almost teaching a prescribed lesson. Teachers must attend workshops that instruct them in the same teaching style and then they are observed by school administrators to insure that they are following the dictated style. This constant surveillance stifles teachers and students alike. According to Noddings & Enright (1983, p.182), "The best hope for improvement in educational practice is the enhancement of teachers as autonomous and reflective beings." This is a major part of the hidden curriculum in the contemporary classroom where lessons need to be more fluid and designed to let the individual student have some autonomy in developing the lesson, but this is not what is happening in the average school of today. There does not seem to be enough time to cover what is expected, let alone time to follow up interesting lines of thought or explore new ideas with my classes. Often students bring up issues and topics that they would like to discuss, but it is difficult to address these issues because I am forced to follow a prescribed format. I feel that my freedom to make decisions about my teaching has been constricted and that freedom is smothered.

Teacher Control

At the school where I teach, teachers do not have much say over what they will teach. Each teacher must teach the same short stories, the same novels and the same poetry; thus, there is very little individuality allowed in the classroom. All grade level teachers must give the same nine weeks test and the same final exam; therefore, teachers are held to a strict schedule of the material that they must cover in a semester. Teachers become more and more dissatisfied with the system. Harris (1998), for example, argues that:

> The present history of teachers in much of the Western world has become one of decreased status and control with relation to educational issues, loss of autonomy, worsening of conditions, loss of purpose and direction, destruction of health, increased anxiety and depression, lowering of morale, and, despite a continued proliferation of policy rhetoric to the contrary, subjugation to increasing government and other external controls of schooling and curricula. The initiatives currently being imposed on teachers are serving, at one and the same time, to reduce the professional knowledge and critical scholarship which teachers bring to their work, and to decrease the political impact that teachers might bring to bear through their instructional activities (p.5).

In the process of this study, I have talked to teachers about their job satisfaction and most of them are stressed and are not happy with the situation in which they teach.

I found that a major area of concern is the testing craze. I believe that teachers should do what is necessary to prepare students for the tests but do no more test preparation than is absolutely necessary. And then get back to the real learning; never forget the difference between these two objectives. Educators have an ethical

responsibility to expose student to the best education possible. Whatever time is spent on test preparation should be as creative and worthwhile as possible. Educators should value great teaching and learning, which is precisely what, suffers when people become preoccupied with test scores. Abrams (1996), states that "Linguistic meaning is not some ideal and bodiless essence that we arbitrarily assign to a physical sound or word and then toss out in the "external" world. Rather, meaning sprouts in the very depths of the sensory world, in the heat of meeting, encounter, and participation."

I found that students today are deprived of this kind of discovery learning because of the testing constraints that bind teachers and students. When teachers are evaluated on the passing scores of their students those who teach at risk populations are the most likely to receive censure and may decide to leave the teaching profession. When rewards and punishments are applied to educators, those who teach low-scoring populations are the most likely to be branded as failures and may decide to leave teaching. Minority and low-income students are disproportionately affected by the pressure on teachers to raise scores because many times these students are retained or forced into special education classes. Teachers are evaluated on the scores of their students, and the same measure is used to judge teachers who teach gifted as those who teach minority at risk students or even learning disabled students

I work with a special education teacher who was placed on a professional development plan because the percentage of students that she had passing the state mandated test did not meet county requirements. She is an excellent teacher, who works diligently with the students; therefore, she was devastated that she was censured since her students and handicapped and do not have the mental capabilities to pass the tests.

She refused to sign the paper work and said that she would not be returning next year. This is a shame because this county will be losing an excellent teacher, but this seems to happen more and more in educational circles.

I realize that my perspective has changed drastically since the beginning of my teaching career because I now understand how difficult it is to change such an entrenched power structure as the American educational system. Each day as I teach I see the hidden curriculum as it functions to maintain the power structure for those who are in power. Education of course supports the status quo, and those in power do not want to see any change in a system that supports their views. According to Giroux (2000):

As the world moves into the next millennium, questions of culture have become central to understanding how politics and power reorganizes the social and economic forces that profoundly effect and regulate everyday life. The politics of culture can be seen not only in the ways that symbolic resources and knowledge have replaced traditional skills as society's primary productive force but also in the role that culture now plays as the main educational force that secure the authority and interests of dominant groups" (p.111).

These power struggles are always present and determine curriculum and the general cultural rules of a school. However, I have not completely lost all hope in the educational system because I still believe as Deleuze states, " that there are both smooth and striated places and one can always find a place to fashion lines of flight" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.8). Each teacher must struggle to find a path where they can still be an effective teacher in spite of the constraints that the educational system imposes; therefore, without these lines of flight all hope would be lost for our students. Teachers as

well as students lack significant power and must frequently seek the spaces within their

schools for creating personal meaning. I know that an effective teacher is one of the most

important factors in student achievement; thus teachers must somehow take it upon

themselves to rise above the system and reach students on an individual basis and guide

their students to success. In the process of this study I found out that one way to reach

students is through the hidden curriculum. Students are quick to recognize those teachers

that listen and that are willing to work and make a difference in their life.

Function of the Hidden Curriculum

I think that the hidden curriculum functions very well in my school. Many ideas

are articulated to the students, but they are sometimes contrary to fact. The hidden

curriculum can be both positive and negative. I can use the hidden curriculum to their

advantage by showing students how to achieve and be successful as they move through

the educational system. Without this help many students flounder because this is the only

encouragement that they receive. If I can just take the time to listen and let my students

know that I am always available to help them as an individual then I believe that they will

respond to me in a positive manner.

 I found that many teachers are not even aware that they have their own individual

hidden curriculum that is based on their particular personality and teaching style, and that

they can make a difference in the lives of their students. Many times students come to

class with problems and cares that teachers may not be aware of; however, if teachers are

too busy to take the time to stop and listen, then students realize this and feel alienated. I

strive each and every day for innovative ways to make a difference in the lives of my

students because I don't think that any educator can stay in the teaching profession if they

fail to look for ways to improve the lives of their students. I know that educators' hands are tied to a certain extent, but there are always ways to make a difference in the lives of individual students through hard work, dedication and caring about students as individuals. I must just stop and listen and students will learn to value this interaction. I know that I knew the value of listening to my students before, but this study made me open my eyes to the fact that somehow I must make the time to listen to the individual thoughts of my students.

The week before school dismissed one of my students, who is sometimes shunned and teased by other students, brought in a project that she had completed in another English class. When she brought the book that she had made to me, I quickly realized that this was her way of getting my undivided attention. I took her book, looked at it and praised her for the great job that she had done. She was excited to have my undivided attention if it was only for a few minutes, and I could see that she was excited to have her work recognized. It does not always take a long time just a few minutes to make a student feel special. One thing that I found in this study is that I will try to make each of my students feel special.

I see the major task for me, as a teacher is to increase the student's perception so that they understand the purpose of learning. I want to help my students relate the lessons that I teach to real life situations. If they cannot make this relationship then education is useless. As a teacher, I must work toward teaching for meaningful learning and critical thinking that addresses the diverse needs of my students. Students bring many varied social, racial, ethnic and class backgrounds to school and these differences become magnified as a result of their interaction with both the overt and covert structure of

school. Some students become alienated and fail to function within the system. It is my job to understand these problems, to examine curriculum in context, and to understand external relationships as well as internal patterns, and help my students to achieve in these various educational situations. If I remain diligent then I can encourage my students to understand the value of education and help them to become lifelong learners.

Learning Outcomes

I know that students must be able to transfer what they learn in class to the real world, but many times I see students struggle with this concept. It is not enough to help students see the specific objectives that are required because they need to understand how their education will be useful in the real world, but many students do not see education as meaningful. If teachers could change their student's attitude about their education many more would be successful. If teachers can help students see value in what they are teaching then students will be eager to learn. As Gabbard (2003) states in "Education as Enforcement":

> Few students see much relevance in schooling as anything other than a vehicle for increasing their own individual use-values within the competitive, dog-eat-dog world and rat-race that constitutes their own individualistic pursuit of secular salvation within the market society—the American Dream. Since they find so little intrinsic value in school-compelled learning, the more compliant "good students" learn to perform chiefly for the sake of the grades and test scores that will grant them higher degrees of secular salvation later in life (p 23).

Many times it seems as if educators teach students isolated, unconnected bits of information and expect the students to understand how to combine these fragmented bits

to form a working idea. As I talked to my students and read their papers I found that students see their educational experience as meaningless and useless because they are not learning to solve real-life problems or learning how to function as effective members of society. In a recent survey of high school dropouts, respondents indicated that, "they felt alienated at school and that no one even noticed if they failed to show up for class. High school dropouts also complained that school did not reflect real-world challenges. More than half of respondents said that the major reason for dropping out of high school was that they felt their classes were uninteresting and irrelevant "(Bridgeland & di Iulio, 2006). They are learning material that will not be relevant when they graduate, and many of them realize that fact. Students should always be taught what and why they are learning new information that they encounter each and every day. Students are more likely to be engaged in learning when they perceive that their school work is significant, valuable, and worthy of their efforts. Students need structure and substance in their curriculum and the curriculum needs to be presented in context so that they can apply what they learn to real world situations. The manner in which curriculum is presented is a large part of the hidden curriculum since through the manner of presentation the teacher can guide students to agree or disagree with ideas and values. Since I began this study I have tried to improve on the curriculum in my classroom and to make sure that the students understand the relevance of the lessons that I teach. I believe that teachers at my school are doing a better job of helping students to understand the importance of the material that they are learning. I realize that if students understand the relevance of what they study that it will increase the teacher's ability to construct desired learning outcomes?

As our world changes the basis of knowledge also changes. According to Leotard (1997), "the status of knowledge is altered as societies enter what is known as the postindustrial age and cultures enter what is known as the postmodern age; therefore as a teacher I am challenged to keep up with these rapid changes". Technological transformations have considerable impact on this changing knowledge. There are those teachers who have a highly positive perception of technology while others are very negative about technology. Some believe in a technology- based reform policy. They believe that technology "will be bonded to society until the bitter end (Ferneding 2003, p.231)." Some described technology as "only a tool," and that as a society we are "becoming slaves to our technologies (Ferneding 2003, p.232)." "Do civilizations shape tools or do tools shape civilizations?" "Automobiles have changed the way we live and computers have changed the way we think also, electronic technologies have essentially reconfigured our perception of time and history" (Ferneding 2003,p. 233). "As the world moves into the next millennium, questions of culture have become central to understanding how politics and power reorganize the social and economic forces that profoundly effect and regulate everyday life" (Giroux 2000, p.111).

I know that the manner in which technology is distributed in the school system is a major factor that determines the hidden curriculum. In the school where I teach, the more academically motivated students have much more access to technology than average students which locks the average student into remaining average. All of the gifted/ honors classes have computers in the classroom, but in the average classes only the teacher has a computer. Of course, this practice does not allow equal opportunities for all students. Educators must prepare students for this technological age because it is here

to stay, and we must teach students to use technology to the best of their ability. The students who can begin early to make connections in life and to see things as connected have begun the life of learning, and teachers must have the technology available to help students to make these necessary connections.

Each year I teach students to complete a research paper, and I assumed that they knew how to use the computer. I was surprised to find out that they know how to play games and get on the internet, but that many of them do not understand how to set up work document and set margins; therefore, I know that I must start with the basics. Students like to think that they know how to use the computer, but I found that they do not know how to use it as a work instrument. They can certainly play games, but they need to be taught how to use the computer constructively.

As an educator it is imperative that I find ways to reach as many of my students as possible. Students are hungry for someone to care and for someone to take the time to listen to their problems. In today's society everyone is so busy and as a result even parents don't take the time to genuinely listen to their children. Many parents believe that therapy is the solution. It is much easier to pull out the insurance card and pay someone to listen. Thus, the therapeutic milieu is also a standard in today's society. Students deserve the very best and school is the only stability that some students have. I will always strive to help each student in my class reach their full potential. I see teaching as very challenging, but also as very rewarding because there is no greater reward than having the opportunity to help students achieve success.

Each day in the classroom, I am faced with many challenges since there is so much diversity in my classroom. I must rise to meet many challenges if I am going to meet the needs of my students:

> I must address students, peers, administrators, parents, and mountains of paperwork. I am supposed to enter class and fill my student's life with a love for learning, and instill a sense of pride in their ethnicity, modify their behavior, wage war on drugs and sexually transmitted disease. I am to check their backpacks for weapons, raise their self-esteem, teach them patriotism, good citizenship, sportsmanship, fair play and character. Furthermore, I must maintain a safe environment; recognize signs of anti- social behavior, offer advice, and make sure that all students pass the mandatory state examinations (Kirkland- personal e-mail).

It seems as though there are a million jobs for me to accomplish every day, but this diversity is what makes teaching challenging and rewarding. I enjoy being there in order to guide my students to a better understanding.

I would like to give my students the opportunity to change as they move through the educational system, but I found that most of the time students must fight for desired change, since the modern educational system does not encourage change. Foucault (1983) states, "The self or personal identity, is constituted by others, by official discoursed, and by what Foucault calls power/knowledge." This power/knowledge is an integral part of the hidden curriculum because it works to control and focus issues in education. Foucault states that schools legitimate themselves through using power in this way to define individuals. The expert knowledge they gain in this process is used to

legitimate further exercises of power which Foucault calls 'power knowledge' (Foucault, 1981). I found that this power/knowledge is strong and that it strives to maintain the status quo in the school system.

Consistency in the Hidden Curriculum

Since the hidden curriculum is by definition a paradox and because it is spontaneous and less explicit than the overt curriculum; is there anything educators can do to achieve consistency in its application? If educators are to achieve any consistency in the application of the hidden curriculum then teachers, administrators and others must work to unveil the hidden curriculum as much as possible because they have a moral obligation to meet the various needs of their students. Many times the hidden curriculum is incorporated into the taught curriculum and teachers and students are not even aware that it is functioning in all aspects of the educational system. This hidden curriculum often determines how students feel about many controversial issues. Discussion of +current events, even if only a small part of classroom time, functions as the hidden curriculum in shaping what a student feels regarding politics and other forces that become a part of our society. I allow my students to discuss current events because it is something that they enjoy doing, and before I began this study I did not realize how much I could influence their belief system.

Knowledge is never neutral, because it is always embedded in cultural contexts and in our personal experience. Learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current and past knowledge. I know that many of the most potent messages that are imparted in school are not communicated through the explicit curriculum; rather, the messages are part of the hidden curriculum. Apple and

Beyer (1983), contend that ". . . prior to measuring whether or not students are `able' to learn or have learned a particular set of facts, skills, or dispositions, we should want to know whose knowledge it is, why it is organized and taught in this particular way, [and] to this particular group" (p.431). The null curriculum, or elements that the formal curriculum does not include, may also reveal content bias.

I found that many educators are not even aware that a hidden curriculum exists because many meanings are hidden in other contexts, and are often out in the open but are not noticed because they are ever present. There is a hidden curriculum which teaches many important things about the world by the sheer experience of school life, even though this may not be intended or even recognized by people who staff schools. Eisner (1998) states:

> When humans work on tasks, they almost always learn more and less than what was intended, furthermore, teaching that is not tied to rigid specifications often moves in directions and explores ideas that neither the students nor the teacher could envision at the outset. In addition, virtue in education is much more than achieving uniformity in outcomes among students (p.68).

When I enter my classrooms to teach any material I should realize that much more is imparted to my students than the formal content of the lesson. Even though the same lesson is taught to several different classes the outcome of the lesson is different because of the dynamics that occur in the classroom. The issues addressed and the overall outcome is different because of the different personalities that are involved; thus each class has a persona of its own and will respond differently to any given lesson.

Many of the most potent messages students receive are not communicated through the explicit curriculum and its content rather, these are part of the hidden curriculum. These messages are so subtle that they are not recognized by students or faculty, but they are part of the form that curriculum takes. Curricular form determines what students can and cannot experience, and the ways in which they can and cannot act. According to Dewey (1904, p.25), "inherited conditions impel….the school to a certain triviality and poverty of subject matter, calling for mechanical drill, rather than thoughtful activity". This mechanical drill and mindless activity is a part of the hidden curriculum and it stifles individuality and critical inquiry. Students are trained to work in cooperative groups so that they will not be independent thinkers but become a part of the group dependant on one another. Another example of how patterns of power embodied in curricular forms influence student constructions of self, others, and the world is provided by a recent study of the interrelationship between thinking styles and learning. The study determined that "those students who achieve highest academically are actually those who prefer to work individually" (Cano-Garcia & Hughes, 2000, p.413). Those who are academically motivated do not like to depend on others because they are more likely to have higher order thinking skills and want to make their own decisions and do not like to work with lower functioning students. Yet, in schools today students are expected to work in groups; thus, any individual thinking is stifled. If teachers do not incorporate cooperative projects in their lessons then they are censured. This is part of the control that educational practices perpetuate. I know that in my classroom students will often ask if they can work alone instead of in a group because they had rather be responsible for their own product. Students

who take pride in their work do not like to be paired with students who are not meticulous in what they turn in to me.

In my estimation the hidden curriculum functions much like the Hans Christian Anderson fairy tale The Emperors New Clothes:

The vain emperor was tricked by two shrewd tailors who invented a cloth so light and fine that it looked invisible to anyone "too stupid and incompetent to appreciate its quality." When the swindlers presented the new garment to the emperor he thought, "I can't see anything. If I see nothing, that means I'm stupid... or, worse, incompetent!" When the emperor paraded naked through the city streets, "everyone said, loud enough for the others to hear "Look at the Emperor's new clothes. They're beautiful!" However when an innocent child observed that the emperor was naked he revealed the truth, and everyone was horrified that the Emperor was parading down the street naked. Yet, the Emperor shivered, for he suspected that they were right. But he thought, "This procession has got to go on."

Often in educational circles teachers, parents and administrators are much like the vain emperor since they may realize that there is something wrong with the educational system but they choose to ignore the problem because they don't want to address the issue or because they are afraid of the consequences of speaking out against those in control. I am sure that each of us have been guilty of ignoring problems and issues that we should have the courage to face. Many other educators are quite unaware of the notion of a "hidden curriculum" and unquestioningly assume that the institutions that they participate in are socially beneficial even though this may not be true. As I studied the hidden curriculum I was surprised at the teachers who did not even realize that there is a hidden

curriculum in school. These educators are not aware of the many lessons that are taught in school just in the process of everyday interaction of the students with administrators, teachers and other people who work in the school system. Every person, every event, and even the curriculum that a student is exposed to have an enormous impact on that student. The manner in which teachers and other students respond to one another is part of the hidden curriculum. This is very important in school because we are social people and the manner in which others respond to us makes a great difference about how we feel about ourselves.

Students need to be taught how to value lifelong learning. Students indicated that they perceived that I valued and respected my students. The students perceived that they are receiving a well-rounded education that potentially may have lead to a greater acceptance and understanding of the global issues of the world and encouraged individuals to think more deeply and widely about democratic ideals. Several of the students indicated that they believe a balanced education where students are encouraged to think is important.

School Purposes and Goals

I found that our school is very good at stating clear, precise goals; however the stated goals and the actual goals many not correlate. One stated goal is that the purpose of the Caring High School System is to educate its students to become positive, contributing members of society. The school system strives to provide educational excellence through viable programs and responsible partnership with the community. This is a true statement of a goal but in my experience this is true for only a fraction of the student population, because most students do not have the opportunity to interact with

the community at all. A few of the students are allowed to work out in the community and some are allowed field trips: however, most field trips have been cut out because of funding which limits much of the school population.

<div align="center">School Instructional Goals</div>

Instructional goals should be closely aligned to the standard curriculum; and these goals should provide a rationale for what is achieved in the classroom. If properly defined goals should provide direction for the school program, they should affect teacher actions, and establish a framework for assessing school success. "If goals are to be effective they need to relate to the lives of students and to the society in which they live" (Yager, p.422). I found that many problems develop when the stated goals do not match the outcome, and as educators we know that this happens many times. Schools articulate the proposal that they want to impart a love of knowledge to their students, but often they formulate static goals that stifle interest in learning and creativity, and as a result they smother creative thinking skills. If educators are to develop a meaningful educational system for all students they must correlate stated goals with outcomes. I am sure that I have been guilty of this but as a result of this study I will strive to make my classroom curriculum more responsive.

In many classrooms students complete numerous worksheets that are really just busy paperwork, and very little real learning occurs. I teach literature and when I get a new class and try to have a discussion class with them they are totally bewildered. They think that if they don't have a worksheet to turn in that they are not learning. Students have been trained to mindlessly fill in spaces on the worksheet. This relates to the hidden curriculum in that we are training docile factory workers, though of course we don't tell

students or parents this. It bothers me that students do not know how to think, and that what we teach in school is not what students will face in real world situations.

Instructional goal setting is one area in which the "hidden curriculum" operates. Schools have developed many goals that preserve the nature of society. Goodland found a "great hypocrisy" (1984, p.241) in the difference between what schools aspire as values and what student's experience. As we all know, setting goals is important for all individuals as well as institutions. Our aspirations for reaching a goal determine the effort, direction, and persistence that we utilize to reach these goals. In educational circles, goals are formulated simply to say that there are goals in place, but often educators do not strive for those goals to be met. Often educational goals benefit a certain group over another and serve to strengthen the values of the group. Sports are highly valued in our community and often I see those students who participate in sports being given preferential treatment so that their grades will remain high enough for them to continue to play on the team. Sometimes the coaches even ask that a grade be changed so that a student will be allowed to play on the team.

Educators state that they want self-directed students, but often teachers do not teach students how to be self- directed; thus, it is impossible to hold them to any standard. Students should be given an assignment and expected to turn the assignment in on time; however, this is often not the case. If a parent calls and wants a student to be allowed to turn work in late then an administrator comes to my room, and dictates that I take the assignment. Students are not being taught skills that will be absolutely necessary when they enter the 'real world'. Employers do not usually give second and third chances to get a project done correctly. Employers perceive that workers who cannot complete a

specific task are costing the company money, and employers are also looking for employees who can think and function without being micromanaged. Micromanagement is what we are now teaching in the school. Teachers choose what projects students do, teachers choose what books they read, and teachers choose what mindless worksheets students complete. When do educators hold students responsible for their choices?? - NEVER! As I spoke to teacher during this research this is one thing that was addressed over and over. "When are we going to hold our students accountable"? I intend to hold my students more responsible for their work as a result of what I have learned in this study; however my good intentions are likely to be overruled by the administration.

I think that the school system needs to be responsible to the requests of parents when they are reasonable, but I do not think that the administration should bend to unreasonable demands made by parents. As I watch and talked to other teachers, I found that many teachers are dissatisfied with the fact that the administration allows parents to make unreasonable demands and these demands are honored.

Teachers are encouraged to teach respect for everyone across the curriculum; therefore, I felt that a presentation on encountering a blind person would be beneficial and appropriate for my students. However, when I requested that a blind resource speaker be allowed to give a presentation on how to respond to someone with a Seeing Eye dog, the presentation was denied. According to the principal, this presentation did not relate to an English class; yet, we had just completed a story about a handicapped person. I feel that proper etiquette toward the disabled is pertinent to any discipline, and if we state that we want students to show respect for others then we must teach them how to behave. Studies have shown that students hold misperceptions and stereotypes about

the disabled. They feel that the disabled cannot contribute to society or hold jobs. If students are provided the opportunity to interact with people from different backgrounds in a structured environment, prejudice and stereotypes can be reduced.

Some goals demand that students master a knowledge base for each discipline and all students are expected to use this knowledge to gain power in an industrial society. We have all heard the aphorism that "knowledge is power". Do we want students to gain knowledge to be educated, intellectual people, or do we simply want them to take their place in an industrialized society. It seems that we train the students to behave more like robots than individuals who think and make wise decisions for themselves. Most teachers that I spoke with felt the same way, and they were frustrated that teachers are not allowed to require students to make sound choices.

The official goals, which are formal declarations of the schools' mission, may be in direct conflict with the operative goals that reflect the true information of a school system. Often schools focus on the administrators' goals, instead of goals that benefit students and teachers. For example, teachers are to maintain secure and orderly environments in schools, and at the same time, develop trust and caring among students yet they not given autonomy to carry out this difficult task. They are driven by student assessment and teacher evaluations. Students in my class believe that they need to remember information only long enough to regurgitate it on a test, but they don't see the need to learn and process information for later use. I think that educators encourage this attitude by the overload of testing that school goals demand. Students are not taught the love of knowledge, but are taught to give back information in the form of testing, to satisfy a statistical standard that must be reached, and as a result students learn quickly

what the system expects of them. They see little relation to the test, and knowledge, that

they need to function in the real world. Teachers must tear down assumptions that may

serve to oppress, but must also inject creativity back into the classroom. Standardization

has suffocated our student's creativity. Most teachers feel the same way, but our hands

are tied because we must teach to the test, and this type of teaching does not allow for

any creativity.

Furthermore teachers are kept so busy with menial paperwork and duties that

they don't have time to attend to the important issues. Teachers in my school are told

that we have to align the curriculum, but we know that the system hired a firm to align

the curriculum so our endeavor is just an effort to keep us busy. It is my opinion and the

opinion of many other teachers that the administration deliberately keeps teachers

burdened down so that they do not have time to address issues that the administrators

would like left alone. Many times the administrators have attained their position through

much hard work, and they are not interested in having controversial issues addressed.

There is very little time to honor the student as an individual, and as a result the students

become numbers to show that the school system has reached stated goals, instead of

cultivating each student's unique perspective. The school that I work at is totally data

driven because all issues revolve around test scores.

Many goals are related to the needs of our society, thus we offer classes that deal

with values and behavior. When setting goals many factors must be considered and we

understand that the relationship between the purpose of the goal and the actual practice is

very complex. There are many hidden variables that we may never address. Educators

formulate goals that state that each student will become a productive, responsible

individual, but our expectation of students is entirely different. If we state that students are responsible then we should hold them responsible. They should report to class on time, prepared to learn; however, often this is not the case, and there are no consequences for the inappropriate behavior. I give students after school detention with me if they do not bring their textbook to class, but many parents complain so the principal asked me not to continue with this policy. How can I teach a student if he/she does not bring book, pencil, or paper to class.

Cheating in most schools is rampant, but the consequences for this unethical behavior are minimal; thus the system perpetuates the behavior. We may verbalize that students will be civic minded, honest individuals, but in reality we do not expect this. At the beginning of the year our students must sign an honor code, but it does not amount to anything. In each of these situations we see that we have a double standard in that what we verbalize is not actually what we expect from our students; thus, students become proficient at using the system to gratify their own desires. I find that in my school students cheat on a daily basis. They help one another to cheat and they do not feel any remorse if they are caught. It seems to be more of a badge of honor that something to cause them shame.

The hidden curriculum encourages perpetuation of the status quo, and it does not encourage students to engage in divergent thinking, but it fosters continued allegiance to the system that is in place. While it is understood that students are simply echoing values that are learned or absorbed at home, these values are not what society should expect of their future generations. It is also understood that many of the value systems that are in place today are the direct result of decision makers who have discounted the value of

having consequences match the behavior. Students, who are very knowledgeable in how to achieve their perceived goals, quickly know that they can exhibit these behaviors and truly nothing will happen. Students actually prefer limit setting, as this increases their comfort level, their security level, and assists in building their self-esteem when they are able to function within the limits set. I strive to have a structured, well organized class so that my students will feel secure and know what the limits are each day.

The organization of goals can motivate students toward moral growth, and other goals can establish an atmosphere of fair play, justice, sharing and rewards. In actuality the informal atmosphere determines in significant ways the student's sense of self-esteem and self-worth. The power relationships in school are close to those inherently in society: between classes, between sexes, and between various racial, ethnic, and religious groups. This is very evident in the dynamics of our school. We have a step club for students, which is a dance club that is suppose to enhance multiculturalism, but actually it is a club to honor the black culture. I asked several teachers to list ways that they thought the school enhances segregation and several of them listed that because there is black female assistant principal black girls were allowed much more freedom than black boys or whites in general. According to all those interviewed, the principal seems to have a special concern for the black girls. Another teacher related that pep rallies were slanted toward the black students because only racy- rap type music was used; therefore, many of the white students became apathetic and were not interested in attending the pep rallies. Sometimes educators show preference for one gender to another in the school setting and this becomes an issue for contention among the students. Students are quick to pick up on the inequities, and their perception of how the school functions determine how they feel

about their school. Each of these is an example of a subtle practice, but a practice that definitely functions on the covert level.

Power struggles are a common occurrence in the school setting because it is impossible for people from so many different walks of life to agree every day. Males with excess testosterone are always showing off, girls are coming into their own sexually, perceived class bias is often shown with who has the latest in designer items, and general power struggles between teachers and students. Many times, controlling the school environment will change the curriculum as the administrators are confronted with escalating discipline problems. These problems take time away from school activities including reaching educational goals. Many of these problems could be eliminated if our school administrators would address the problems in a direct manner and if parents would allow administrators to formulate plans that would best control the school environment. All of these examples show that while not in a direct manner, the hidden curriculum is always being changed to adapt to circumstances beyond the control of the school personnel.

Climate Functioning in the School

The climate of a school is an important issue in its structure because climate determines how students, teachers, and other school personnel feel and respond to differing issues. We strive to maintain safe schools and campuses throughout our system. We believe that all students should have opportunities for learning, which will help them develop their fullest intellectual, personal and societal potential. The climate of a school dictates how school personnel and students feel about their environment. Elizabeth

Cornbleth (1991) in her research on curriculum defines several different types of school climates. She defines:

> Bureaucratic climate with an administrative emphasis on law and order is one in which rules are strictly defined and enforced. A conservative climate intent on maintaining the status quo and one that allows the powers in control to continue to control school issues. A threatening climate of external curriculum challenges and self-censorship does not allow either the students or the faculty much freedom to explore and discover. A climate of perceived pupil pathologies and pedagogical pessimism allows student more freedom to explore and learn though self evaluation. A competitive climate dominated by student testing and public school ranking makes the school climate very restrictive.

These different cultures\climates may be mixed because they are certainly not delineated by a fine line; therefore, a school may have trends from more than one climate. According to Cornbleth (1991):

> School climate refers to prevailing conditions affecting the life and activity of a place. Sometimes the prevailing conditions are tangible, be they strong winds or the voices of organized interest groups. At other times they are less so as with a "climate of opinion." Without overdrawing the climate metaphor, it seems appropriate to note that climates of constraint and/or restraint appear to be cyclical if not seasonal as well as multifaceted, nested, and fluid. A climate of constraint and/or restraint, like the weather, is neither generic nor fixed. By meaningful learning, I refer to going beyond memorization at least as far as comprehension and to coherence, both connecting information internally

(imagine a diagram rather than a list) and with what one already knows (i.e., elaborating or extending mental schema).

Our school culture has changed because we have a new principal who was basically hired to improve moral at the school. In talking with teachers, counselors and clerical staff we agree that the past administration was a bureaucratic- competitive administration with emphasis on rules strictly enforced for some, but ignored for others, and competitive in that there was a strong atmosphere of over testing. People did not enjoy coming to work and many resigned. The new principal has worked to change the overall atmosphere of the school, and I believe that he has been successful in this goal. We now have a conservative- competitive climate which seems to operate much smoother than the previous dictatorial climate. The new principal is soft spoken and will listen to suggestions from the staff. He supports and encourages his teachers and has managed to improve moral at the school. The school is still competitive because we have a heavy emphasis on classroom testing. We were instructed to develop grade level nine week test and grade level final exams. Since we all give the same tests we are locked into teaching the same stories, poems and novels which takes away choices for students and teachers alike. We also designed lesson units that we all have to teach because the tests are based on these units.

 One major positive point about the school is that the faculty works well together and is very supportive of one another. I enjoy working with the teachers and others in the school, but I often feel frustrated because I have very little autonomy to teach the material that I would like to teach. I have spoken to other teachers who also feel that their choice of what they can teach is very restricted and they feel that because

of this student suffer. Teachers as well as students function better when they are given choices.

   This conservative competitive climate is part of the hidden curriculum because parents believe that we are serving the students in the best way possible, but if we were serving student then they would have the opportunity to explore and learn some material of their choice instead of all choices being made for them. They do not have the opportunity to seek out knowledge that interests them and often the material that they are taught is dull and uninteresting, and as a result they are uninterested in school.

Content of Curriculum

   Curriculum is a planned set of human activities that maximizes learning with two very distinct curricula being taught. First, students are taught a knowledge base of basic skills such as literature, history, math and reading, but there are many subtle lessons concerning attitude, concepts, and practices that can occur in school. This is the hidden curriculum that exhibits implicit instructional influences. The public schools have traditionally operated a controlled-access curriculum. The system rationalizes knowledge, controls content, tracks students, rewards certain learning styles, and focuses on facts rather than theories.

   Educators know that there are class-based hidden curricula that functions very well to determine the occupational path of students. Ability tracking is one way that the hidden curriculum works and limits educational opportunities for students. Our school tracks students into ability groups designed for bright, average, and slow learners. According to (Apple, 1979) "the differential hidden curriculum can be defined by the fact that working-class, minority, and lower-track students are taught such things as

punctuality, neatness, respect for authority, external control of behavior, and a tolerance

for boredom".   These lower-track students have less opportunity to obtain knowledge

and interaction with higher level students. The students from more advantaged classes,

and those in higher tracks, are taught intellectual open-mindedness, problem solving,

flexilibility, and other skills and dispositions, which enable them to function as managers

and professionals, rather than as unskilled or semi-skilled laborers. Apple (1979) states

that," knowledge and skills leading to social power and rewards (e.g., medical, legal,

managerial) are made available to the advantaged social groups but are withheld from the

working class, to which more " practical" curriculum is offered (e.g. manual skills, and

clerical knowledge). I see this happening each day at the school where I work. Upper

level students have more access to computers, and to a much wider array of classes than

average students. Their classes are also considerably smaller which is another advantage

not given to the working class because these class usually have between twenty five and

thirty students.

I teach both technical prepatory (TC) and College prepatory (CP) classes. The

main thing that I notice is that the technical classes need very defined instructions and

close supervision to function productively, if I attempt group work with them they will

quickly get off task, but the college prepatory classes are totally different. These classes

will work diligently with less control. If they are assigned groups they may talk and

socialize while they work, but they are self controlled and they remain on task. The

difference between the two groups is much defined, and I can only think that their

behavior is a result of years of training to behave in a designated manner. The college

prepatory group manages ambiguity, challenging authority and creatively solving

problems while the technical prepatory group is more compliant with authority and fail to solve challenging problems. I think that the students' response has been shaped by past and present rewards and sanctions that they encountered in the educational process.

Curriculum theory by nature is humanistic though Dewey sought to set it in a scientific framework. Since the school as an institution, values function in a hierarchy, thus the value system is constantly being examined. Through this exchange teachers must determine which knowledge is of the most worth. As we develop curriculum we must constantly strive for a curriculum design that espouses the culture's values in a positive manner. We constantly address these issues through the hidden curriculum, and many subtle lessons occur in the school setting. "A school system that confronts the values of the community has a force as strong as a river running through it" (Reynolds, 2003).

Character education is another area where the hidden curriculum functions. Educators say that they teach character education, but in our school this amounts to the word of the week- honesty, trust, responsibility, etc. It is a known fact that many students today, because of society's pressures on the family unit, have not been taught character education. Maslow's theory has a great impact on educational structure:

In order to maximize on the effectiveness of school-wide and individual classroom teaching programs, administrators and teachers must consider student needs and their hierarchical order. This must be a top priority in the development of these programs, so that students have the capability of reaching their highest levels of potential.

It would be impossible for a student who is hungry to interact with the learning

environment in a positive manner. But yet, we expect each student to perform to what we

perceive to be their highest level.

Many subtle lessons occur in the school setting. The hidden curriculum refers to

implicit instructional influences that pervade the school climate. Jackson concludes that

curriculum might be inclusive of all "experiences" or "learning opportunities" that occur

in schools "or under the guidance of teachers", and "not just those associated with the

teaching of certain subjects…" (1992, p.5). The hidden curriculum of the school fosters

conformity and passivity, while seldom encouraging critical thinking, ethical behavior,

and civic courage (Giroux, 1993). I agree with Giroux when he states that the defined

curriculum in most schools does not encourage students to think for themselves or

become active thinkers. It fosters rote learning and repetition. Many times, strict

adherence to the presented curriculum is not always in the student's best interest, and in

order to foster independent thought and creative thinking, it may be necessary to deviate

from the proposed path. The hidden curriculum should not always be perceived as a

negative influence in the school setting.

The curriculum in schools is not fully based on the needs of the students. I think

that we are expected to teach students as if they all come from wonderful, two parent, and

middle class homes, but we all know that this is not the case. Teachers have to rush

through the required classes at break neck speed, and they have little time to respond to

the individual needs of students who are dealing with stress, broken homes, jobs, grades,

and anxiety in various situations. Many times students come into my class and I can see

that they are in an emotional turmoil, but with thirty students to teach it is impossible to

give the one enough time to be of any real value. The fact that there is never enough time

to tell the student through action or hidden reasoning of their worth, leads them to believe

through implication that they are not important as an individual. Just last week, I took up

a note from a student, and she was telling another student that she had been raped, and

that her grandfather with whom she lives told her not to report the incident because she

was dressed seductively. This student needed someone to talk to immediately. None of

our counselors were available because they were in a countywide meeting. My heart

went out to this student, but my hands were tied also. What are we teaching in times like

these? According to Gordon (1988):

> The behavior of the individual high school student is related to his or her status
>
> and role in the school. The informal system is a subsystem within the community
>
> and the still larger complex of American society. Gordon also defines three
>
> subsystems: (1) a formal system of curriculum, textbooks, classrooms, (2) a
>
> semiformal system of clubs and activities and (3) an informal system of
>
> unrecognized cliques, factions and other groups.

I think that these informal groups have a great impact on student behavior, and I feel that

students are fiercely loyal to the informal group, so much so that these groups almost

seem to be organized. This hidden agenda may consist of many functions that are neither

intended nor recognized. Students often refuse to stand up for ideals and principles that

they know are right because of the loyalty to the informal group. They often will not

"rat" on another student even when they feel that the student has done something that is

wrong. They have a fierce loyalty to the group, and it takes a great amount of courage for

a student to go against this system. The informal group exerts tremendous peer pressure on the individual that it allows to belong to the group.

When developing the curriculum, the actual building must be taken into account, the design of the building, the classrooms, the media center, the gymnasium and the auditorium. The very appearance of the school building can be inviting or depressing. The building may be dull and uninteresting or vividly stimulating. There are some schools that are very open to the community. They invite parent volunteers, and have many workday experiences that are open and rewarding for all concerned. The school that I teach in is a beautiful facility. It is well kept and we strive to teach the students the importance of respecting the building so that it will remain beautiful and functional; however some still throw paper everywhere, and do not seem to value having an inviting school to attend. The feeling of pride in the school does not transfer to some students though we strive to encourage them to take part in the aesthetic value of the school hoping that this love of beauty will transfer to the community.

Crucial Decisions

School organization is a major part of the hidden curriculum. The principal subtly controls the curriculum by the decision-making role. The principal controls the master schedule, delegation of authority, curriculum materials; evaluative process, and resource allocations. Through total control, the principal defines the hidden curriculum. He\ She also determines the culture and climate of the school based on decisions that are made in regard to an array of issues.

The school climate is an affective factor, but is still very real. When the really sensitive decisions are up for discussion, all schools have their outcasts. Some teachers

are what we determine "in the loop"; and others are not. The reason given is that the teacher cannot be interrupted from class for involvement in decision-making. In the final analysis, the decision to leave a teacher out is usually more of a personal judgment than a professional one when certain teachers are chosen, basic priorities and proposals have controlling all decisions. In our school, some teachers are perceived as "team players" while others are thought to be "disruptive" and do not seem to adhere to the goals of the system; therefore , these teachers are left out of any decision making activities.

The hidden curriculum permeates every area of our school. I would think that the hidden curriculum works much like deconstruction in that it subversively undermines the surface meaning and it denies any concrete statement of meaning. Like deconstruction the hidden curriculum has internal contradiction. Instead of defining one ultimate outcome from the curriculum it is always in a state of change. Curriculum is always an open-ended construct because of all the arbitrary variables that are involved. Though we intend one outcome we may receive many unexpected outcomes. Just as deconstruction attempts to reveal a deeper meaning and to search out contradictory structures so must we search the curriculum for hidden structures within? Derrida (1988) states that he can no longer teach without trying, at least, to make the content and the process of teaching even down to its details, dislocate, displace, and analyze the apparatus in which I am involved. I feel that we must also deconstruct the curriculum so that we might better understand the hidden values that we impart to our students. By examining the curriculum in this way we are better able to improve teaching practices. Derrida (1988, p.64) states that:

Deconstruction, whether it wants to or not, redefines the conditions determinacy

of the axiological limits to thinking, that it meets and will ultimately test, so as

to converge upon uncharted destinations of thinking, teaching, and learning

without the confines of a ready made, conceptualized map, an inalterable

archive of "what knowledge is of most worth." Its duty, to question what is

held sacred, taken for granted as TRUTH, even venerated, risks both all and

nothing because it opens responsibility to the other whose effects on the

formation of the subjectivity are incalculable.

I would have to agree with Derrida in that the formal curriculum often follows

uncharted destinations of thinking and this is where the hidden curriculum comes into

play. When we instruct students what happens in the minds of the young person is

incalculable and uncontrollable. Each student brings different values, ideas and feeling to

a lesson; therefore, the impact on each student is very different, psychological forces over

which we have very little control govern many of our reactions to curriculum; therefore

many of our reactions are unconscious. We view things differently in respect to race,

culture, gender and class; thus no two people look at a situation in the same manner.

Michael Apple (1979) advocates that, "schools reproduce knowledge to maintain existing

social, economic and political conditions". If I teach the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*

each student in the class will bring ideas and values that may be very different according

to all those variables mentioned earlier. The lesson imparts a message, which can only be

understood by the experiences that each student brings to the lesson, and as a result will

be totally subjective. I can control the delivery of the lesson, but I do not have any control

over the responses that my students will have. My students are individuals and they each

have different responses to each situation.

Teacher Perceptions

Teacher self-reflection is an important part of the personal dimension. By honestly examining their attitudes and beliefs about themselves and others, teachers begin to discover why they are who they are, and can confront biases that have influenced their value system (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

According to Greene (1971), "arduous or not, teachers must "remain in contact with one's own perceptions, one's own experiences, and strive to constitute their meaning" (p.141). Teachers must be willing to speak out about concerns and question policies that are "handed down to us as curriculum". Teachers must also challenge philosophies that separate us from being part of the decision making process. At my school some teachers are outspoken while others follow the dictates of the administration.

Teachers must also help students have a voice in educational decisions because if they do not have a voice they will not have a vested interest. Green (1971) states that ; " no matter how well devised is that curriculum, no matter how well adapted to the stages of his growth, learning (a disclosure, as generating structures, as engendering meanings, as achieving mastery) will not occur" (p.146). I do not think that most students at our school feel vested because they are not given many choices at all, and as a result they do not take an avid interest in policy.

Choice of textbooks is a major factor in curriculum implementation, and there are many hidden agendas and stereotypes encompassed in textbooks. What are the guidelines used to determine whether material in textbooks is offensive or inappropriate ethically or ideologically and why is a textbook considered an appropriate tool to use. Grumet (1989) states:

Curriculum is both a producer of culture and a product of culture. If we understand culture to be a system of meanings available to actors situated in shared space, time, history, and possibility, then it is reasonable enough to think about curriculum development and criticism as hermeneutic activity, as acts of interpretation (p.233).

The curriculum at our school is certainly a product of culture because it is tightly controlled by cultural groups. Every video or book that teachers use in the classroom must be approved by a committee. This is often frustrating because if the committee does not agree with ideas or language in the video or book then it is censored. Our community has a strong religious group that will address the school board if they do not like any material that is taught in school. I was teaching *Of Mice and Men* to my eleventh college prep class and I had much opposition to parents to some of the language in the book. It seems like there are more and more controls placed on teachers from different groups. The African American parents object to Huckleberry Finn and other parents object to books because of violence. This type of tight control over curriculum is definitely a producer of culture because the students are not exposed to the great works of art because of such tight control over what I can teach. Each group struggles for control over what is taught and none of them agree; therefore, the scope of what is actually taught is tightly controlled and narrowed. Teachers have very little say in what is taught because the school board attempts to please everyone and as a result they do not please anyone and the students suffer. Kessler (1998) writes:

Honoring the soul in education means attending to the spiritual development of students. The body will not grow if it is not fed; the mind will not flourish unless

it is stimulated and guided. And the spirit of the child will suffer if it is not

nurtured. A soulful education embraces the many and diverse ways we can satisfy

the spiritual hunger of today's youth.

Methods of Communication

Encompassed in curriculum communication are many questions of curriculum

delivery. Who makes the decisions in the classroom about what is learned or not learned?

What is the actual role of the teacher and how do we carry that out? What is the actual

role of the student and how do they carry that out? How do different teaching styles (i.e.

direct instruction, cooperative learning) affect learning? What does time on task and

engaged learning look like? If children are learning what they really want to learn, is

discipline an issue? What matters more, product or process? What is considered

successful learning? How can we be accountable for students learning what they need to

learn? According to Rilke:

> There are many questions to ask and many places to explore. Although, I will
>
> remember to let the questions be the guide... to be patient toward all that is
>
> unsolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves like locked
>
> rooms and like books that are written in a foreign tongue. Do not now seek the
>
> answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them.
>
> And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then
>
> gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer. (Rilke,
>
> 1993, p. 36)

If I am to communicate with my students they must know that I care for them as

individuals because if I do not care they will instinctively know that I do not care. My

feelings of care for my students encouraged me to work harder on meaningful lessons. I wanted them to learn more about themselves and how they deal with the world since both teachers and students are motivated by care. Caring about students motivates teachers to champion the curriculum and to guide students to a better understanding. Noddings (1992) writes about the challenge to care in schools:

> Surely our responsibility to educate includes attention to matters of the spirit. . . But schools have a way of taking vitally important material—exciting material— and reducing it to mush. Discussion and open exploration must be central to spiritual education . . . We must keep our purposes clear. We study spirituality because it matters to us individually and collectively; it is a center of existential care. (p. 85)

As I observed classrooms and talked with teachers, I found a wide array of teaching styles both in curriculum delivery and caring styles. I could see how the hidden curriculum functions in many classrooms. Sometimes teachers tell students that they care, but it is obvious that they do not actually care about the student as an individual. Students often come to class hurting from family problems such as sickness or domestic violence but many teachers do not take the time to ask the student what they can do to help. How can a student learn if they are thinking about problems at home? Some students appear sad and if a teacher would only stop and offer a listening ear the student would love to have someone to listen to their troubles. I know that I have been as guilty as others, but I do try to watch my students and if I see that one is in distress, I try to help this student. There are many teachers who do care, but some just go along and do not consider the feelings of the students at all.

Curriculum delivery is also a problem for some students. Each person has a strong learning style, but if a teacher only teaches to one learning style then many other students are left out. As I talked to teachers, some admitted to lecturing for ninety minutes which others said that they depend heavily on worksheets. Effective teachers must use a variety of delivery styles if they are to reach their students. Since students come from such different cultures they approach learning in very different ways. Often good teachers think that they are doing what is best for their students, but in actuality they are not.

Students need to understand that language in general, and how it is used in a specific text, can influence people's beliefs, attitudes, values and world-views; and that words are rarely neutral but carry with them connotations and associations that reflect specific attitudes and ways of thinking. They understand that individuals, groups and concepts can be represented in different ways in different texts and that differences in representation reflect differences of opinion and belief. They analyze how texts and ways of reading encourage certain ways of thinking and ignore or marginalize others. They understand the way in which stereotypes can reinforce preconceptions about certain social groups and may serve the interests of some groups and disadvantage those of others.

<div align="center">Interpretation of Findings</div>

In the process of this research I found that teacher personality and approach may influence perceptions of lifelong meaning and value. Creemers (1994) pointed out that "In daily life, people often remember their teachers as persons; they remember their morale, their humor, and teaching style more than instructional qualities" (p. 76). I know

that to be true because I remember teachers from my past who I know cared about me as an individual and make me feel special. I remember professors in college who have made me feel inferior and I did not like the feeling at all. I remember one occasion when a professor made a comment about me and because of a mistake in communication I thought that the person was being derogatory, but now I realize that that probably was not the case.

The hidden curriculum in schools "send messages" to students and teachers who participate in them, often unintentionally and covertly. The messages are disbursed, conveyed and coded in myriad ways, from the quality of the furniture, to the security arrangements, to course regulations, and practically anything else which happens within a school. Since the hidden curriculum does not have explicit content, it is up to recipients (students and teachers) to make of them what they will.

I found that students are often labeled and that these labels often become self perpetuating prophecy, and students never overcome these labels. Students become stuck with these labels and do not try to break out of the mold in which they have been placed. They will make statement such as: I am not smart- I cannot read very well- I am not good at math. They have been labeled and the label stuck.

Each teacher brings her or his unique personality traits, interests, talents, and previous educational influence to bear on classroom practice. Teachers need more autonomy to practice their own particular teaching style as an art form. If teachers are allowed some freedom in teaching they are able to enrich the learning experiences of their students

I found that culture and climate is a major factor in how students and teachers feel about the school, and a large determiner of how teachers and students function within the school system.

Summary of Chapter Four

In chapter four, I developed the questions that I posed in chapter three and attempted to answer these questions in relation to my classroom and the school.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS

Implications of Research

Research in schools under everyday conditions is needed most to bring about any desired change in curriculum. It is often difficult to bring about any real change in education because there are so many variables that must be addressed if change is to be permanent. This research needs to be approached systemically because educational reform requires attention to the subculture or hidden curriculum of the students, the school and, community. It is necessary to look at the institutional, sociocultural, psychological, organizational, philosophical, and political ideas which can play a role in the initiation, implementation and continuation of change. It is also necessary to address the curriculum or the subject matter. Research should focus on student roles and student needs since students are the reason for the system to function. More understanding is needed of learning organizations in terms of teachers, students and curriculum and how these factors are related to values and beliefs, both individually and collectively.

Max van Manen (2001) states:

> … to do research is always to question the way we experience the world, to want to know the world in which we live as human beings. And since to know the world is profoundly to be in the world in a certain way, the act of researching – questioning – theorizing is the intentional act of attaching ourself to the world, to become more fully a part of it, or better, to become the world. (p. 5)

> One way to look at the teaching world is that preferences for certain teaching

styles, curriculum, school and classroom climate may be as much a function of temperament as of reason or design. According to Sergovanni and Starratt (1993, p.25) administrators have two alternatives:

> Continue the present practice of developing singular and standardized supervisory systems, putting them into place, and evaluating everyone on the same terms or providing options for evaluation and inviting teachers to play key roles in deciding which option makes sense and in sharing responsibility for implementing the options.

One implication of this study is that it is important to respect differences and encourage diversity in both teachers and students in order to enhance both teacher autonomy and student learning. It is necessary to respect each teacher's uniqueness and to have an understanding of how diversity enhances rather than limits the educational process. Students come from many diverse backgrounds and teacher must strive to understand the student in relation to their cultural background.

In too many classrooms, different ethnic groups are still being seen as passive, docile, dependent, and inferior to other students. Students sometimes receive negative messages through classroom instruction and teacher behavior. According to Kuykendall (2004, p14)

> Many educators sill respond to students who are different in predictable ways- they isolate them, ignore them, retain them, suspend them, expel them and in far too many instances they fail to love them or teach them. Two damaging practices that are still practiced in school are tracking and ability grouping.

There are many barriers to change and the strategies for overcoming them are not fully understood; therefore, continued research in order to reach a better understanding is necessary. Among the barriers to change are the operational and cultural beliefs and values on the part of everyone involved including, teachers, students, administrators, and community members. Institutions of all kinds tend to resist change and education is no exception. "The task of trying to change schools has been compared to changing the laws of gravity" (Green, 1988). Education resists change to programs which evolve from local responses to specific problems or needs programs These policies involve overall plans embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures of a government body or authoritative group, and practices. The authoritative body that has formulated will work to keep them from being changed because they support their beliefs and goals. For policy changes to become firmly entrenched the changes must be supported in the standard practices of the system and this is very hard to achieve.

One issue that has long interested curriculum ethnographers is how to conceptualize the social relations and forms of cultural knowledge expressed through, and constructed by, curriculum or (the hidden curriculum) in use. In addressing this issue, researchers have typically resorted to the conceptual and methodological tool of subcultures that operate in social institutions. The hidden curriculum is analyzed in aspects of organizational structure and culture, content of lessons, and methods of communication. Gender and disability are embedded into organizational structure and culture also. For van Manen (2001) the researcher aims to:

> Transform experience into a textual expression of its essence – in such a way
> that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive re-living and reflective

appropriation of something meaningful: a notion by which a reader is

powerfully animated in his or her own lived experience (p. 36).

It is very difficult to define the hidden curriculum in textual expression because it is

such an elusive phenomenon. The hidden curriculum changes in relation to differing

people and situations.

Enhancing learning for our students involves more that just understanding and

being able to apply general learning and teaching principles or guidelines. Most

importantly, it involves being able to make sense of what is going on in our classrooms,

which means understanding our students and being able to respond appropriately to

their needs and feedback. It also involves understanding ourselves as teachers, which

means being aware of why we do what we do and the impact of this upon our students'

learning. We develop this awareness and understanding through engaging in an ongoing

process of close reflection into teaching practices. This study is my attempt to look

closely at my individual teaching practices and how they impact the students so that I

can make necessary changes; therefore research into educational issues aids in this

process. Research is a necessary component to becoming a scholarly teacher and a

"reflective practitioner" (Schon 1983), engaged in continuous self-directed development

and capable of making informed decisions about approaches to learning and teaching

within particular disciplinary and academic contexts.

One important implication is that teacher attitudes have far reaching

consequences. If teachers develop low expectations and the accompanying negative

behavior, they send signals to students that suggest that the student is not capable of

success in a given subject area. Students are quick to pick up the attitude that a teacher

is unhappy with their job, disgruntled with the system, bored, boring, or unfair. Students will avoid teachers who make them feel uncomfortable. They may skip class or have a high absenteeism rate.

The professional educator must realize that the classroom does not exist in a vacuum, and that the ability to examine and understand the larger social context in which students operate is crucial to our success. Educators must be mindful of the forces that influence students thinking outside the classroom, and they must not look at students as a number that represents a score on a test. Educators must create an environment that allows each student to develop to their fullest potential; however testing practice today stifles any true freedom to educate students. Our fixation on standards and high stakes testing was demonstrated when, the day after the tragic killings in Littleton, Colorado, high schools continued their scheduled standardized tests, rather than postpone them and discuss the incomprehensible events that shocked students and adults alike. I know that in my school students were anxious to talk about the events that had transpired, but there was no time to stop and give them time to talk about their fears.

Putting such emphasis on high stakes test intensifies problems already inherent in the educational system, thus teachers face serious ethical dilemmas. Teachers must decide if they are going to teach to the tested proficiencies and assure high test scores for their students or are they going to chose to teach a curriculum aimed at students' understanding and their long-term learning, not the short-term goals inherent in the testing of memorized fragments. Job security as opposed to ethical responsibility becomes an issue because if a teachers test scores do not meet county requirements the

teacher faces problems. If teachers do not respond as they are instructed they are considered insubordinate and in danger of their contract not being renewed. In my classroom I have tried to manage this dilemma by teaching necessary skill, but still allowing the students some choice.

Hidden Concepts

Educators are guilty of skillfully using language to cover up what actually occurs in the public school system. Administrators and others in control want to keep many occurrences out of the public view. Most parents do not have any idea about what their children are taught in school, and only a few delve into the curriculum and really understand the indoctrination that the school accomplishes through rules and curriculum. Parents are often led by the nose with the use of web sites that list a student's homework or grades, and meetings with teachers that do not accomplish any purpose, except to state that a meeting was held. Donmoyer (1989, p.257) states that:

> When those who look 'behind the classroom door' discover that even when a curriculum theory has been adopted and translated into official policy it normally is not implemented by classroom teachers, and why even when teachers sincerely espouse a particular curriculum theory, the gap between their espoused theory and their theory-in-use often remains wide.

When teachers enter their classroom, even though research states that their autonomy is compromised they still have some freedom to teach what and how they wish. There are major constraints placed on teachers, but once in the classroom teachers can stress some areas while ignoring others. I find that in my classes when possible I choose stories that teach a moral because my personal belief is that teachers should

encourage students to make good choices. When I teach, I always try to encourage

students to look at a situation and in the process make the best possible choice for their

future.Another implication or way to look at the teaching world is that preferences for

certain teaching styles, curriculum, school and classroom climate may be as much a

function of temperament as of reason. According to Sergovanni and Starratt

administrators have two alternatives:

> Continue the present practice of developing singular and standardized supervisory
> systems, putting them into place, and evaluating everyone on the same terms or
> providing options for evaluation and inviting g teachers to play key roles in
> deciding which option make sense and in sharing responsibility for implementing
> the options.

> Most schools are organized as bureaucracies with well-defined procedures for

dealing with students, for dealing with teachers, and for working with the community.

These procedures determine who will be allowed to participate in the educational

process, how they will be treated and expected to behave, how their performance will be

judged, and down what path they will be directed once they leave the school. While these

procedures may seem equitable, there still is, to a certain extent, a hidden curriculum in

schools underlying, unpublished rules that emanate from the cultural beliefs of those who

work in the schools and those who set policy for them.

Several implications regarding teachers that I gathered from this study is that

teachers should know their students well enough to create learning opportunities for them

that will bring them to a condition of learning. Teachers also have a responsibility to

know their subject matter well enough so that they can effectively impart this knowledge

to their students so that students can connect with the subject matter. Teachers need a large repertory of teaching strategies so that they can engage students with various learning modalities. Teachers also need to teach by example and counsel a broad array of learning, which goes beyond academic learning to a variety of personal and social learning such as social manners, acceptance of differences, self-esteem and a sense of responsibility.

Another implication of this research brings attention to school's role in regulating language. The school regulates language through regulating the curriculum and censorship. Censorship is a major issue in the school where I work because many areas are severely censored. Language is censored because text books carefully limit language, and monitor ideas. These ideas which powerful groups wish to be imbedded in student are espoused in textbooks while other ideas are carefully censored. Books are censored, clothing is censored, ideas are censored, and beliefs are censored. The school system exercises careful control over many issues that are pertinent to the students.

Another implication of this study is that school is an institution that demands uniformity and this uniformity brings to light many issues that are a part of the hidden curriculum. Even though some conformity is necessary for the institution to survive too much emphasis conformity stifles learning and causes students to become unmotivated. According to Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993, p.46):

> The demand for a standard curriculum, embodied in textbook, may suppress the legitimate place in society of some minorities. The stress on "public knowledge" as defined on standardized tests may displace the legitimating and expression of knowledge. The emphasis on conformity may rob student of the choice to make

decisions. Schools appear to disenfranchise students from legitimate sources of self-esteem and personal growth.

Knowledge of Students

Accomplished teachers care about their students and show their students that they care about them. They use their knowledge about adolescents and adolescent development, and their knowledge about how this development affects their learning, to guide their curricular and instructional decisions. Every student is different and teachers must learn how to respond to each student in a special way if the student is to succeed. Caring teachers understand the impact of home life, cultural background, and experiences in the learning process and strive to relate this knowledge to teaching the students. In order to reach students teachers must address the whole child.

When students' home culture and the school's culture are very different, educators can easily misunderstand students' behavior and in response to these differences, use instructional strategies and discipline that actually are at odds with the students' cultural or community norms (Delpit 2001). It is imperative that teachers strive to understand the background of the students in their classrooms.

Learning Environment

Accomplished teachers help students learn by creating environments in which students are active learners, show willingness to take intellectual risk, develop confidence and self esteem, and value learning. This kind of environment fosters student learning. School climate can also help or hinder teachers as they attempt to satisfy their needs at work. The learning environment or interpersonal work life affects teachers, administrators and students. If the learning environment is conducive then both teachers

and students will work harder to achieve a designated goal. Owens (1995) on organizational culture states that:

> Student learning thrives in schools where there is respect and trust among faculty, staff and students, and where parents and other community members volunteer their time and develop a sense of pride. Character education is the process through which this culture of pride and climate of success are developed within a school. It is the ideal of bringing together educators, parents, community, and students to establish the constancy of purpose that fosters the emergence of high-quality school environments. Such environments support the total education of students in a community of respect, safety, and spirit, resulting in optimized student learning. Character education is the foundation for school improvement.

Fundamental to establishing and developing an excellent school culture and climate is the importance of effective, caring leadership. "Effective leadership is a force that not only changes, but protects and intensifies a school's structure and hence culture in a way that enhances meaning and significance for students, teachers and the entire school's community"(Sergiovanni, 2000 p. 28). Effective leadership in continuously improving schools not only expands, but changes over time in response to what is going on in the school leadership is not just that of the principal and executive, but of everyone involved in the school. Leadership, as exercised by the principal, must be seen as an educative rather than as a management process. The principal must be a strong, caring person because the principal of the school is the one person most responsible for the climate and culture of the school and for the outcomes of productivity and satisfaction attained by students and staff

Families and Community

Accomplished teachers support and promote the involvement of families in their children's education because the teacher must consider all variable that might affect the student. They help varied communities understand the role of the school in today's classroom. Accomplished teachers collaborate with peers and other education professionals to strengthen their school's program, advance knowledge, and contribute to improving practice within the field. They value individual learning differences, student attitudes and aspirations, and community expectations and values on student learning. Teachers must value and look at the whole child if they are to effectively meet the needs of their students.

Lifelong Learning

One very important implication that arose from my study is that students need to be guided into becoming lifelong learners. Several of the students indicated that they believe that a balanced education where they are encouraged to think is important. They also believed that their education should offer them more opportunities to think and function in a more effective way. They see most of their classes as dull and uninteresting. These students did believe that a balanced education and character building skills were the perceived benefits of the educational program that enhance lifelong learning.

Research indicates crucial factors in the development of lifelong learning to be critical thinking, self-confidence, creativity, a sense of valuing of students and a love of learning. By focusing on listening, speaking, reading and writing effectively students will be more effective communicators. If students are allowed to explain their thought processes in arriving at outcomes and by applying problem solving and decision-making skills to real life situations, they will be more informed thinkers. Students must be taught

to assess and reflect on their attitudes, skills and behaviors, to set priorities, plan and take action to accomplish goals. They need to be taught to manage time and resources efficiently, by applying what they learn to real life situations, and they should explore and prepare for academic, extracurricular and career opportunities. In completing these goals they will become self – directed learners. If they can learn to recognize diverse ethnic, linguistic, cultural and economic backgrounds, to recognizing the rules and processes that govern societies, by demonstrating and exercising the skills required to be a contributing member of a society, and by applying practices that preserve the safety and health of one's self, others and the environment, they will be more responsible members of society.

Developed Goals

Another theme that emerged from the data was how teachers and students have different goals within the activity itself. The process of action research enabled me to understand how students implicitly reveal their own goals as they participate in the activities that I as a teacher have brought together. The emergence of evidence that students have their own goals also depended upon resources of time that I do not usually have within the practice of day to day teaching, much less within the classroom. The goals of each student emerged through our class activities and discussion activities.

Some of my goals, such as comprehension of written text and strengthening of oral language fluency arose out of my job as a teacher. As a teacher I am always looking for evidence of the progress my students make towards specified goals. "Progress must be defined according to local goals, with development in specific domains specified by cultural as well as biological goals and problems" (Rogoff, 1990, p.12). The students' goals of telling one another personal narrative arose, I believe, out of their larger goal to

socially interact with one another. "Mental processes such as remembering or planning or calculating or narrating a story occur in the service of accomplishing something, and cannot be dissected apart from the goal to be accomplished and the practical and interpersonal actions used" (Rogoff, 1990, p. 29).

All of the participants bring to the class their own goals. Before this research project, I noticed that students did and said things that I understood as examples of their own personal interests. However, I hadn't really understood them as bringing their own particular goals to the lessons. Now I have a broader understanding of how students may make evident their own goals. It is also the emerging knowledge of the students as they participate that engages my interest and from which I make decisions on what to ask next. My goals influence the decisions I make in what to say or do. The students' responses in turn influence my goals and further decisions. But students don't just respond. They also exert practices within participation of influencing the direction of the activities and in these reading activities one way was through introducing narratives. The students' narratives indicate possible goals the students might have, as well as influencing their own decisions about what to say or do next.

Change does not come easily in any institution and the school is no exception. It is often very difficult to change practices both in the classroom and the school. For change to have meaning and effect it must change not only the way things look but also the way things work. Sometimes efforts to change are directed toward doing the same things better, but that not true change. True change is that which alters basic issues of schooling such as goals, values, believe, working arrangements and the distribution of power and authority. As a result of my study of the hidden curriculum, I believe that I

have made many worthwhile changes in my teaching style and in classroom

management. I have addressed some of the issues that involve the school, but I do not

have as much power to bring about change in this area.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

As a professional educator I have made a commitment to practice on the cutting edge of teaching by staying abreast of the latest research in practice, researching my own practice, experimenting with new approaches, and sharing my craft insights with others. I have renewed my commitment to support successful change and improvement in my classroom and the school when possible. I know that I must accept responsibility for my own professional growth if I am to keep up with modern trends.

As defined in this research the hidden curriculum is a major part of the school system and is evident throughout the school. If you walk into a truly excellent school you can feel this in the atmosphere almost immediately. There is a calm, orderly atmosphere that implies purposefulness. Students and teachers move about with poise and confidence. There is a pleasant hum of conversation in the classroom and in the hallways but there is no sign of chaos. Teachers exhibit professionalism and concern for one another and their students. Both teachers and students appear to be happy and confident rather than stressed. Students and teachers treat one another with respect due to shared interests. Teachers talk and share new teaching techniques with one another in order to improve overall instruction. This is all part of the hidden curriculum but is possibly the least discussed element in school.

 Curriculum studies theorists or reconceptualist suggest that many espoused solutions to educational improvement have failed, and that curriculum must change from curriculum development to understanding curriculum theory which requires a deeper understanding of the field. There are various issues that need to be addressed. According to Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman (2002):

To understand the contemporary field it is necessary to understand the curriculum

field as discourse, as text, and most simply as words and ideas………… (p.7).

There has been a shift in the definition from curriculum as exclusively school

material to curriculum as symbolic representation. Curriculum can be analyzed

politically, racially, autobiographically, phenomenological, theologically,

internationally, and in terms of gender and deconstruction (p.16).

This effort to understand curriculum as symbolic representation defines the hidden

curriculum because educators must look deeper into the hidden agendas that control

many educational policies.

If educators are to bring about change and make it permanent it is imperative that

they study the hidden curriculum and learn how to manage part of it effectively. The

hidden curriculum impacts all areas of the school system; thus it is necessary to study it

in depth. The fact is that institutions (schools) send messages to those who participate in

them, and often these messages are unintentional. The messages are conveyed in various

ways, and educators must understand how these messages impact the student population

if they are to be successful in serving their students.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

(1). How does this school define its purposes and goals with respect to students,

teachers and others in the system?

(2). How are teachers fostering students' ability to construct desired learning outcomes?

(3) What pressures, supports and barriers are placed on teachers in fostering students'

ability to construct desired learning outcomes?

(4).Who makes the crucial decisions concerning what and how students are taught in

school?

(5). How much say do teachers have over their work and how much should they have?

(6). How well does the hidden curriculum function in this school?

(7).Since the hidden curriculum is by definition a paradox and because it is spontaneous

and less explicit than the overt curriculum; is there anything educators can do to achieve

consistency in its application.

(8).Which of the five types of climate is functioning in the school?

APPENDIX B

2007 PROFILE FOR WRIGHT HIGH SCHOOL

School: The single, public high school in   Enrollment:

Camden County, offering a comprehensive   Enrollement: Senior Class: 561, Total: 2865

curriculum (9-12) with a variety of classes

for both College Preparatory and Career   Accreditation:

Technology Preparatory   Southern Association of Colleges and

School Mascot: Wildcats   Schools, Georgia Department of Education

School Colors: Columbia Blue and White

CEEB/ACT School Code: 11328

Marking System:

80-89   A

70-79   C

Grades below 70 are not passing. One unit may

be earned for each of 8 scheduled classes per

year (4 each semester).

Weighted Classes: For 04-05: Honors/Gifted and PSO classes receive 3 extra points and

AP classes receive 5 extra points. For 03-04: No weights given. For 02-03: 5 pts given

for PSO, Honors/Gifted, and AP classes.

Advanced Placement Classes (6):

U.S. History, Art History, French, Spanish,

Statistics, Environmental Science, English Literature/Composition,

English Language/Composition,

Calculus, Biology, and Physics

SAT Mean Scores: (2006 Graduates)

	CCHS	Ga.	Nat'l
Verbal	489	494	503
Math	480	496	518
Writing	477	487	497

Testing Program:

Statewide Testing Program:

Georgia High School Graduation Tests

Percent of First-Time Test-Takers Passing:

English/Language Arts	97%	(3/06)
Mathematics	98%	(3/06)
Social Studies	92%	(3/06)
Science	77%	(3/06)
Writing	96%	(10/05)

Camden County Testing Program: PSAT,

SAT, ACT, and ASVAB

Class Periods:

Approximately 1½ hours each on a

4 x 4 semester block schedule

Marking Period:

Two 18-week semesters, with report cards

issued every 9 weeks

Continuing Education: Of the 2006 graduates:

30 % attended a public college

15 % attended a technical school

55 % other (military, work, other)

Faculty Information:

68 % have earned Post-Baccalaureate degrees.

 Career Technology Education Courses:

Agriculture Technology, Automotive Technology,

Business Technology, Teacher Internship, JROTC,

Family/Consumer Finance, Metal Technology,

Health Services Technology, Construction

Technology, Engineering Technology, Work

Programs (CBE, DCT, and YAP)

Strategic Plan- School Improvement Plan

The purpose of the Camden County School System is to educate its students to become positive, contributing members of society. The school system strives to provide educational excellence through viable programs and responsible partnership with the community.

We strive to maintain safe schools and campuses throughout our system. We believe that all students should have opportunities for learning, which will help them develop their fullest intellectual, personal and societal potential Strategic Plan- School Improvement Plan

Marking System:

90-100   A

80-89   B

70-79   C

Grades below 70 are not passing. One unit maybe earned for each of 8 scheduled classes

per year (4 each semester).

Weighted Classes:

For 04-05: Honors/Gifted and PSO classes receive 3 extra points and AP classes receive

5 extra points.

For 03-04: No weights given.

For 02-03: 5 pts given for PSO, Honors/Gifted, and AP classes.

Advanced Placement Classes:U.S. History, Art History, French, Spanish, Statistics, Environmental Science, English Literature/Composition, English Language/Composition,	CCHS	GA	National

Calculus, Biology, and Physics SAT Mean Scores: (2006 Graduates)			
Verbal	489	494	503
Math	480	496	518
Writing	477	487	497

SAT Mean Scores: (2006 Graduates)

	CCHS	GA	National
Verbal	489	494	503
Math	480	496	518
Writing	477	487	497

Testing Program:

Statewide Testing Program:

Georgia High School Graduation Tests

Percent of First-Time Test-Takers Passing:

English/Language Arts   97%   (3/06)

Mathematics   98%   (3/06)

Social Studies   92%   (3/06)

Science   77%   (3/06)

Writing   96%   (10/05)

Wright County Testing Program: PSAT, SAT, ACT, and ASVAB

APPENDIX C

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Classes have developed composite sketches of themselves that they have posted to web

site. They hope you and/or your classes will review their work and send a return message

by e-mail that tells us about yourself, your environment, and your views on issue that are

important to you.

Our student-authors will include some or all of the following elements in their

introduction. Feel free to use the same template in your greeting to us!

(I had my students complete this composite sketch of themselves as a part of the study)

> • Tell us some of the "vital statistics" about yourself: name, age, local community,
>
> state, and country.

> • Relate some of your non-academic interests: music, sports, favorite TV shows or
>
> movies, and recreational activities.

> • Discuss what your favorite subject is in school and why.

> Try to touch on one or more of the following school-related topics: Social
>
> Studies: What issues in the news do you feel are important and why? What type
>
> of government do you live under? Who are the leaders of your government? Are
>
> they doing a good job (US writers: Feel free to evaluate the job of the current
>
> President and Congressional leaders. Also, tell us something about your state
>
> leaders and local government. Have they had an affect on your lives? In what
>
> way?)

Science: What interests do you have in the scientific field? How does science improve your lives (technology, agriculture, medicine)?

Language Arts: Do you enjoy reading, poetry, or writing? Who are some of your favorite authors? What magazines do you like to read?

Mathematics: Calculate how far you are from us in Hagerstown, Maryland, USA. How long would it take for us to visit you by plane? By car? By foot? What is the population of your state/region/nation? Is your area densely populated or sparsely populated? What is the population density? If you have other mathematical applications to getting to know you, be sure to let us know? We are looking forward to reading your submissions!

Source:

http://www.cyberlearning-world.com/nhhs/html/get2no.html

APPENDIX D

COMPUTER USE QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of my dissertation research I surveyed students in the school particularly concerning networked computers, and found their responses to be extremely helpful and insightful.

Name (optional):_____ Grade (2005-2006): _____

1). Have you ever used a computer in a high school class for purposes other than word processing? _____

2). If "Yes," in what classes have you used the computer?

3). what is the most educationally useful classroom application of a computer you have ever experienced in school? What made it so useful?

4). what is the most educationally useful non-classroom application of a computer you have experienced in school (i.e. in school libraries, labs, etc.)? What made it so useful?

5). what is the least useful or worthwhile classroom application of a computer you have experienced in school? Why wasn't it useful or worthwhile?

6). Have you ever used a school computer that was connected to the Internet?

7). If "Yes," please describe the classroom situation(s) in which you used it.

8). Do you have access to a computer at home?

9). If "Yes," is the computer yours or is it someone else's or is it shared by everyone? If you have access to a computer at home, do you use it to connect to the Internet?

10). If "Yes," briefly describe how you use the Internet, and what you usually use it for.

11). Whether or not you have a computer at home, do you ever go to public libraries , and do you ever use computers there? If "Yes," briefly describe what you use them to do.

(2001)Roger B. Blumberg

APPENDIX E

EXAMPLE OF A STUDENT JOURNAL

Lots of people just don't want to learn. They do not want to be at school and they sure do not want to take advantage of all that is offered. I mean, sure, we are all born with different talents, but you still can make the most out of what you have...I guess all you have to look at is most of, uh, my classes in high school. You taught you know what it is like. I mean all the guys in the back throwing spit wads and the girls talking...I mean I got into trouble once in a while too...I am no goody two shoes, but still, I, uh, sure know when to turn it on to study, or write a paper or whatever. Too many people want things, just you know, given to them. Sorry, but that's just not like it is. You make your own way to go, and if you ...well if you screw it up then you have got nobody to blame but yourself. I'm proud of what I have become and I did it because I worked hard and earned it. Other people can do that too.

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