

DISSERTATION
SCHOOLING FOR PEACE:
CREATING A CULTURE OF CARE IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Submitted by
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In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
Colorado State University
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Committee on Graduate Work



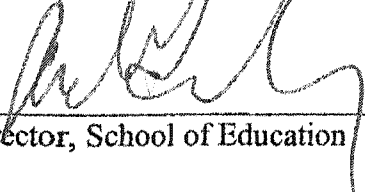




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ABSTRACT OF DISERTATION

Schooling for Peace: Creating a Culture of Care in an Elementary School

We live in a moment in time that is profoundly affected by the events at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, in 1999 and the tragic events of September 11, 2001. In reaction schools in this country have adopted a climate of retribution to deal with violence. The purpose of this research was to study the meaning of peace in the culture of Walden School. My hope in conducting this study was to begin to understand what a school that appears to have built an intentional community of peace looks like. As a constructivist ethnographer I collected data in the form of fieldnotes, interviews and documents. I analyzed those data using constructivist grounded theory and vignettes. That analysis revealed a theory of a culture of care, which contrasted with the dominant use of control of student behavior in schools.

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT OF DISERTATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
CONTENTS	v
DEDICATION	vi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2: METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION	18
CHAPTER 3: METHODS OF ANALYSIS	29
CHAPTER 4: LIMITATIONS	71
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS	75
CHAPTER 6: LESSONS LEARNED	113
REFERENCES	127
APPENDICES	138

DEDICATION

*This is our cry,
this is our prayer,
peace in the world.*

(Coerr, 1977)

This saying is engraved at the bottom of the statue of Sadako Sasaki in Peace Park in Hiroshima, Japan. Sadako died when she was 12 years old. She was two when the atom bomb was dropped on her city. Ten years later she died from leukemia as a result of radiation from the bomb. Every year on August 6th, Peace Day, thousands of folded origami paper cranes are placed at the base of this statue.

The Japanese legend holds that if a sick person folds a thousand cranes they will get well. Sadako had folded 644 cranes at the time of her death. Members of the bamboo class, to which she belonged, finished folding the thousand cranes and later erected the statue of their former classmate.

Sadako is a model for the proposed study and for the children who are participating in this study. So this project is dedicated in memory of Sadako Sasaki.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This ethnographic study was conducted based on the following research problem, purpose of the study, conceptual framework, and research questions. In this introduction I will introduce myself and the research study I conducted.

Research Problem

We live in a moment in time that is profoundly affected by the events at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, in 1999 and the tragic events of September 11, 2001. In reaction to these events schools in this country have deepened their commitment to peacekeeping, focused on safety. The foundation of these peacekeeping efforts is rules and punishment, patterned after the retributive system of our courts. These get-tough policies include police presence in the schools, metal detectors, zero tolerance policies, student and locker searches, and drug and alcohol testing. As a result of these policies, we have criminalized our schools and put some students on a “schoolhouse to jailhouse track” (Browne, 2003, p. i).

These peacekeeping activities are termed negative peace efforts. The alternative to these efforts is positive peace, which is built on peacebuilding (Galtung, 1969; Harris, 2000). This project was focused on the positive approach to peace and learning how one school created a culture of peace.

I was motivated to do this study because I have a passion for peace, particularly as it is applied to resolving intrapersonal conflicts through restorative justice, a new and innovative approach to healing the harm resulting from wrongdoing and conflict

(Zehr, 1995). I was interested in learning how this theory might be applied in an elementary school dedicated to educating students about peace.

Restorative justice is based on the theory that we need to heal the harm that results from wrongdoing and conflict. The way to repair broken relationships, based on the philosophy of restorative justice, is by creating a safe environment for dialogue, where each person can tell their story and be validated, where the harm can be identified, and where a mutual plan to repair the harm can be created (Burford & Hudson, 2000).

This passion for restorative justice is what compelled me to engage in doctoral studies. I determined that two areas I wanted to contribute to in this new field were education and research. This study allowed me to combine two of my passions: restorative justice and ethnographic research.

I spent the 2002-2003 school year at Walden School and experienced and learned about the culture of the school. "Walden" is a pseudonym for the real name of the school.

The initial focus of my study was a curriculum called *Friendship Circle*, which was developed by a local psychologist, Francis Gaebler, Ph.D., (2000) about eight years ago and introduced by Gaebler at the Walden School at the same time. The course outline describes the course as: "discovering empathy, teamwork, how to solve conflicts peacefully, and finding the good in everyone, even when we are angry and want to win" (p. 1). That curriculum teaches students in the third and fourth grades how to peacefully resolve conflicts that occur in their lives.

Gaebler asked me to read his *Friendship Circle* curriculum in early 2001. While I reviewed it, I realized the concepts contained in the curriculum were consistent with the philosophy of restorative justice. When I met with Gaebler to discuss my feedback on his

course, I asked if I might be a participant observer in the teaching of the course. He invited me to work with students from the counseling department of a local university as they taught the course during the fall of 2001. Teaching this course to third and fourth grade students at Walden School is an internship opportunity for these counseling students.

I spent four weeks at the Walden School in the fall of 2001 as a participant observer in the *Friendship Circle* class. During this time I observed how the third and fourth grade students applied what they learned in the course to resolving a playground conflict over how football was played at recess. The philosophy underlying the *Friendship Circle* course relates to one strand of peace education theory, conflict resolution (Harris, 2002).

As I participated in the course, I was with struck how the culture of the school was unique. There was a sense of peace about the school that I sensed at a deep level. I wanted to experience this sense of peace for a longer period of time. I asked the staff at the school if they might be open to me doing my dissertation research at the school. They were enthusiastically supportive. From my experience at the school, I believed Walden had a unique culture that is based on positive relationships. I believed the curriculum developed by Gaebler helped create this culture. I wanted to study that culture during the 2002-2003 school year.

In the in-house literature I received, the Walden School is described as “an alternative to the traditional classroom.” Three of the values the school espouses struck me: (1) “A positive, nurturing environment builds self esteem and encourages respect for

others,” (2) “A sense of community within the school is developed,” and (3) “Students become positive contributors to their families and communities.”

I was impressed to read the following quote by Pablo Casals in Walden’s literature, which is given to the parents of prospective students. My impression was that Walden has created a culture consistent with Casals’ thoughts.

Each second we live
Is a new and unique moment of the universe,
A moment that never was before
And never will be again.

And what do we teach our children in school?
We teach them that two and two make four
And that Paris is the capital of France.
Do we also teach them who they are?

We should say to each child:
You are a marvel. You are unique.
In all the world there is no other child
Exactly like you.

You may become a Shakespeare,
A Michelangelo, a Beethoven.
You have the capacity for anything.
Yes, you are a marvel.

And when you grow up,
You must cherish one another.

We must all work
To make this world worthy of its children.

Pablo Casals

Based on what I knew about Walden School, I believed that there were lessons to be learned from this school about creating a culture of peace. My hesitations were that this was a small, private school.

Literature Review

In order to become familiar with the literature related to my research project, I ran electronic database searches using FirstSearch. Using FirstSearch, I chose the ERIC database. I made multiple searches using keywords related to peace education and restorative justice. A search under the keywords, “school peace ethnography” resulted in three entries in three databases. The book by Feuerverger (2001) and Swadener’s (1998) paper, which was presented at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual meeting, are two key documents for my study. Fine’s (1997) video ethnography was too limited to be of much value to this study. The next search I ran on the ERIC database contained the keywords “school restorative justice.” Three documents were identified. Two of the documents were theoretical, with no research to back up the claims that were made (Campbell & Revering, 1997), and the third document was the research report from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2000). The final search again used the ERIC database and contained the keywords “school peace.” Four items were identified. One document was a book of essays by Canadian educators about peace and other social issues (Goldstein & Selby, 2000). Three of the papers were theoretical, not research based, and presented at conferences (Bruning, 2000; Harris, 2001; Banks, 2001). One paper (Morris, Taylor, & Wilson, 2000) and one book (Kreidler & Furlong, 1995) outlined stories and activities to use in the classroom to teach children about peace. None of the studies in the literature were based on peace education theory or restorative justice theory.

Feuerverger’s (2000) book is an interesting ethnographic study of a school near Jerusalem where Palestinian and Jewish students attend school together and learn how to

live together in peace. The focus of this book, however, is different than the focus of the study I am proposing. The only study I could find that was related to peace education was conducted in 1988 (Swadener), before the Columbine and September 11, 2001 tragedies. As Harris (2002) noted, the dynamics of peace education have changed in this present moment. Therefore, the proposed study fills a gap in the research because it applies two new theories regarding peace education to the present moment.

Morrison (2002) conducted a research study in Australia focused on the use of a restorative justice approach for addressing bullying and victimization in schools. This mixed method study, which focused on an elementary school, is important to my proposed project because it showed a positive association between restorative justice as a form of conflict resolution and the way the students in this pilot study interacted with each other in terms of respect, consideration, and participation. These three components that formed the basis of this study are based on the work of Johnson and Johnson (1995). Harris (2002) also based his conflict resolution education strand of peace education theory on the work of the Johnsons. Therefore, I am able to situate my study and interest in the application of restorative justice theory in schools to the current research and peace education theory.

Peace Education Theory

Harris (2002) created the most current and definitive work on peace education theory. Peace education theory formed the initial framework for observing and interpreting this culture for the meaning of peace. The five strands of this theory formed the basis of this study. Those five strands are human rights education, environmental

education, international education, conflict resolution education, and development education.

Human rights education. This strand of peace education theory addresses the violence of ethnic hatred, with a goal of creating multicultural understanding. At the core of this strand is creating an understanding and behaviors consistent with basic spiritual and humanistic values. These values are consistent with the Universal Declaration on Human Rights created by the United Nations (Sikula, 1996). Glendon (2001) found the values that underlie this document were spiritual in origin. Therefore, these values can be said to be both spiritual and humanistic. I adapted these values into these basic concepts, which are consistent with peace education theory (Cavanagh, 2000).

1. Common Good. We create a whole network of social conditions that enable human individuals and groups to flourish and live a fully genuine human life. Far from being primarily for him or herself, all are responsible for all.

2. Human dignity. We treat all people as holy, using the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a framework.

3. Solidarity. We are all interconnected with each other and form one family. We need to stand with one another, particularly when human dignity and the option for the poor are concerned.

4. Subsidiarity. Authority and responsibility are given to those who are directly involved in the action (grass roots) with people working at their capacity and being trained to improve their capacity to solve their own problems.

5. Option for the poor. We must think of the effect of our actions and decisions on the poorest among us, those who live on the margins of our society.

6. Relationships. Relationships are at the core of acting in the common good and are based on two principles, association and participation. Association is based on the fact we are created to be social, which is directly connected with our ability to work together in society (economics, law, politics, and policy) to create a community based on the common good. Participation is based on the idea we have a right and a duty to participate in society, together seeking the common good.

Environmental education. This strand of peace education theory addresses the violence of environmental destruction, with a goal of creating ecological sustainability. At the core of this strand is the promotion of sustainable development based on holistic thinking about the interrelationship between natural and human systems. Such thinking is intended to “contribute to an ecological world outlook that contains basic ecological knowledge, develops strong personal convictions about protecting natural resources, and provides dynamic experiences conserving natural resources” (Harris, 2002, p. 18).

Nordland (1994) described ecological education as a combination of ecology and cooperation, “using the school as a workplace for the theory and practice of aspects of sustainable development” (p. 211). Sustainability is at the core of Orr’s (1992) ideas about ecological education. He said, “Sustainability is about the terms and conditions of human survival” (p. 83). Orr argued that ecological education needs to include student learning about our ecological crisis and becoming actively engaged in addressing the problem.

Harris (2002) said, “The goal of environmental education is to promote sustainable development” (p. 18). Ahearn (1994) offered this definition of sustainable development:

A process of social change in which policies and practices are established to meet human needs, both material (physical necessities) and nonmaterial (e.g., access to a clean environment, political and spiritual freedom, meaningful work, and good health). Social change, within this context, must not occur at the expense of the resource base upon which societies are dependent (p. 121).

International education. This strand of peace education theory addresses the violence of war, with a goal of creating world citizens who are committed to peacekeeping. The intent of this strand is to stimulate in the minds of students a global identity and an awareness of problems around the world. The aim is to develop students who think of themselves as “compassionate global citizens who identify with people throughout the world struggling for peace” (Harris, 2002, p. 20).

While international education is a diverse field, there is general agreement globalization is an irreversible trend. Three types of globalization are occurring at the present time: (a) economic, the creation of transnational corporations and a consumer-dominated global middle class; (b) public order, governments cooperating in solving common problems related to health and the environment; and (c) popular, grass roots campaigns by such organizations as Amnesty International, Greenpeace, and Medecins sans Frontieres. The idea is to ensure this globalization works to the benefit of all people (Harris, 2002).

Stomfay-Stitz (2002) addressed the problem of teaching children about international peace after September 11, 2001. In the present moment, she suggested children in school need help in fostering a sense of civic and social responsibility based on caring for others.

Conflict resolution education. This strand of peace education theory addresses the violence of interpersonal conflicts, with a goal of teaching people the skills of

peacemaking. Harris (2002) relied on the work of Johnson and Johnson (1995) as the basis for explaining this strand. Upon my review of the work of the Johnsons, I found they emphasize the management of conflict by teaching students to negotiate, mediate, and arbitrate. As Moore and McDonald (2000) said, these three approaches handle conflicts as disputes and focus on resolving the facts through an agreement or at least an agreement to disagree. Conflict transformation, based on restorative justice theory, focuses on the negative feelings that have arisen between two or more people.

In this study the conflict resolution was considered in terms of the theory of restorative justice. The use of the term conflict within the philosophy of restorative justice refers to those behaviors and interactions that result in harm to relationships with another person or persons. The key questions involving this harm resulting from conflict are: (a) what harm resulted from the behavior or interactions, (b) what needs to be done to resolve the harm, and (c) who is responsible for repairing the harm (Zehr, 1995). I found this approach to conflict resolution to be more consistent with the *Friendship Circle* curriculum than the approach of Johnson and Johnson (1995).

Development education. This strand of peace education theory addresses structural violence, with a goal of creating world citizens who are committed to peacebuilding. The goal of this strand is to encourage students to be active participants in building peaceful communities focused on an equitable sharing of the world's resources. The improvement of human communities through nonviolent means is the aim of this strand (Harris, 2002).

Social justice is at the heart of this strand. The idea is to create a critical consciousness in students that questions "dominant patterns of development" and decries

“the poverty and misery produced and advanced by the capitalist economic order, where an elite minority benefits from the suffering of a vast majority of people on this planet” (Harris, 2002, p. 24).

An important part of this strand is the development of critical consciousness in terms of Freire’s (1990) notion of “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (p. 36). This critical consciousness was described by Glass (2001) as being “mindful of the relationships among consciousness, action, and world and grasp the why of the world in the constructive nature of knowing” (p. 19).

Two important ideas are foundational to peace education in this moment. Conscientization is a process described by Freire (1985) by which people participate, based on critical consciousness, in transforming activities. The second important idea comes from feminist thought and emphasizes the value of caring over competition. Noddings (1992) said the education about caring should include “care for self, for intimate others, for associates and acquaintances, for distant others, for nonhuman animals, for plants and the physical environment, for the human-made world of objects and instruments, and for ideas” (p. xiii).

Culture

I chose to study the people associated with Walden School as a culture in the sense that Eisenhart (2000) described the study of school culture. Traditionally culture in schools was viewed as something presented to students. Eisenhart added to the discussion of school culture how it is learned and affected by students. Rather than limiting this study to how culture organizes individuals, this study included how individuals organize culture.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to study the meaning of peace in the culture of the Walden School. This ethnographic research study was conducted at the Walden School, which is located in a city along of the Front Range of Colorado. My hope in conducting this study was to begin to understand what a school that appears to have built an intentional community of peace looks like. This idea of an intentional community is taken from Schorr's (1997) description of such a school community as seeing "themselves less as bureaucratic institutions than as communal and socializing institutions, with a mission to prepare the young for productive participation in adult society" (p. 258).

The term schooling in this study was meant to include two ideas. First, Freire's (1985) idea of education included critical reflection and action, pedagogy and practice. Johan Galtung, described as one of the "founders of modern peace studies" (Batic, 1997, p. 4) talked about peace education in a journal interview conducted by Batic (1997), "a lot of knowledge and skills, theory and practice are required for it...It is only meaningful if it leads to action. The goal is not more books, but more peace" (p. 4).

Second, in terms of ethnography, schooling is used to describe, "humanity's unique methods of acquiring, transmitting, and producing knowledge for interpreting and acting upon the world" (Levinson, 2000, p. 2). In this sense schooling involves the continual adaptation to the environment of a group, which allows for the group to reproduce the conditions of its existence.

The term peace is used in the sense that Galtung (1969) used it. He described negative peace as eliminating personal violence. This approach to peace is particularly attractive to societies that emphasize law and order. Positive peace emphasizes social justice and the absence of structural violence. The ideal state for creating peace is a combination of negative and positive peace.

The meaning of peace I brought to this study was influenced by my work in restorative justice. The biblical concept of shalom best describes that sense of peace. In that sense peace means all rightness, by living in right relationships within a community (Zehr, 1995). In this context peace does not mean the absence of conflict; rather, conflict is understood as being transformed by recognizing and repairing the harm, particularly to relationships, that results from conflict and wrongdoing (Moore, D. & McDonald, J., 2000).

I found these concepts of peace were consistent with the *Friendship Circle* curriculum that is taught at the Walden School. In this instance the researcher and the research participants appeared to begin the study with a common understanding of the concept of peace. This study focused on the meaning of peace in the daily lives of the students, teachers, staff, and parents involved in the Walden School community.

In his proposal for a theory of peace education, Harris said, "In spite of the importance of developing a peaceful society, the main goal elements for schools that constitute the core of the education system in the United States neglect to mention the word 'peace'" (p. 2). Rather, Harris noted these schools are focused on standardized testing and a militaristic approach to security. I believed the teachers at Walden School exhibited what Harris described as the "commitment to nonviolence" (p. 2) that is

characteristic of peace educators, and that commitment is not the norm in K-12 education in the United States today.

Conceptual Framework

This study was focused on a group of people, the Walden School community, and not the individuals who are part of that community. Ethnography, which is the study of culture, is consistent with the purpose of this research. Essential to doing an ethnography is developing a conceptual framework for looking at the culture.

The conceptual framework for this study was based on two approaches to studying this culture. Given the nature of my study, I organized and guided my research within the frameworks of interpretive theory and social construction theory. These frameworks provided a lens for my work and guided my activities in the field.

Interpretive Theory

I was an outsider to the culture of the people in the Walden School community. Using the interpretive theory as a guide helped me to “make sense” of the actions of these people related to how they are creating a community of peace. Geertz (1973) called for researchers like me to look for “webs of significance” (p. 5) as part of the search for meaning in culture.

Under the interpretivist framework I produced “thick description” (Geertz, 1973, p. 6) of the conversations and interactions of the people I was studying. The activities of interpreting and writing explored the intersubjective meanings (Tillmann-Healy, 2001) of how the people of the Walden School community have or have not created “webs of significance” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5) around the idea of peace.

I used “thick description” (Geertz, 1973, p. 6) as a research activity for trying to make sense of the social interactions among the people of the Walden School community (Hall, 1990). Using the lens of interpretive theory, I observed the meaning of peace in this culture, based on the five strands of peace education theory, as a process and participating in the life of the Walden School community as a lived experience. Understanding the meaning of that process and experience constituted the knowledge to be gained from this inductive, hypothesis-generating mode of inquiry (Merriam, 1998).

My objective was to see the culture of the people in the Walden School community as the accumulated totality of patterns of behavior and communication, in which peace may be a meaningful part. I adapted Geertz’ (1973) work to study the systems of meaning which embody behaviors of peace. Then I related those systems of meaning to the core social structures of this group.

Social Construction Theory

The social construction framework guided my project by causing me to focus on the social organization of peace and peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding activities among the people of the Walden School community. Using this framework, I planned to collect and analyze data about how these people behaved and communicated relative to the five strands of peace education theory (Harris, 2002).

Social interaction is fundamental to social construction theory. This theory is appropriate to research studies concerned with careful analysis of the minute details of interpersonal relationships in a limited number of events. My social construction work focused on how the people involved in my research made decisions that are connected with creating a culture of peace. These decision making and problem solving activities

are at the heart of social construction work (Mehan, Hertweck, & Meihls, 1986). In this culture that exchange was based on a social network, which is centered in the school and is a fund of knowledge for these people.

By studying the conversations and behaviors of the people in the Walden School community, I sought to demonstrate the “situated relevance of social structures” involving peace as existed among these people in their social interactions (Mehan, 2000). However, the conversation and behavior activities I chose to study were unfamiliar to me as an outsider to this community. I expected to be forced to struggle with the events I observed in order to imbue them with meaning. Through the careful observation of the activities and conversation in the school, I hoped to learn how a culture of peace in an elementary school is produced. I looked for what social structures the people of the Walden School community created around peace in terms of acknowledging it, talking about it, and modeling it, consistent with Harris' (2002) peace education theory model.

I constructed a visual representation of my conceptual framework, using the concept of “bins” (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Please refer to Figure 1.

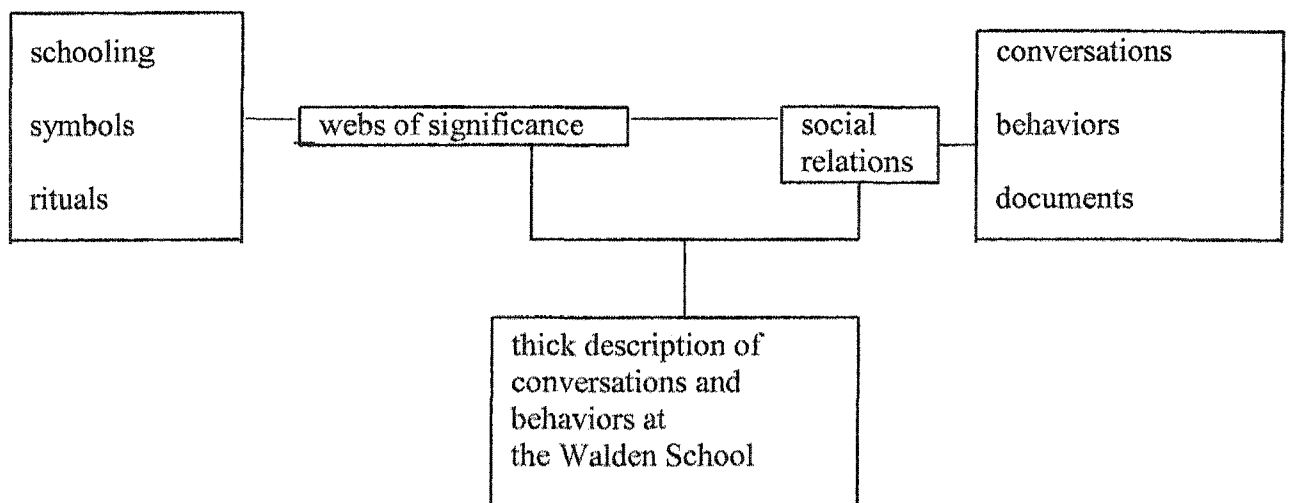


Figure 1. Visual Conceptual Framework.

Based on this conceptual framework I looked for the following in the study of this group: (a) evidence of peace as a social and interpreted construction; and (b) sources of evidence for culture in the forms of conversations, behaviors, and documents. This framework was my initial guide in the field. As I collected data in the field, I reflected upon this conceptual framework to determine what remained appropriate to the study, what was no longer appropriate, what needed to be changed, and what new elements needed to be added.

Research Questions

The initial research questions focused on discovering the meaning of peace in the culture of the Walden School community. These questions were intended to guide my work in the field. As I collected and analyzed the data, I reflected on what I was learning in light of these questions to determine if they were appropriate. I expected to modify and change the questions as this study evolved.

My initial research questions were based on the purpose of this study, the meaning of peace as I have described it, and the five strands of the peace education theory model (Harris, 2002). Those initial research questions were:

1. What does peace mean at the Walden School?
2. What is the daily lived experience of the students, teachers, staff, and parents associated with the Walden School relative to creating a culture of peace that is consistent with the five strands of peace education theory?
3. How does the Walden School combine elements of positive and negative peace into the culture of the community?

CHAPTER 2: METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

This ethnographic study was conducted at the Walden School. The school is located in an urban city along the Front Range of Colorado. I chose this school because it is a small (approximately 52 students during the year of my study) private school and provided an ideal setting for this research. Students, teachers, and parents who were part of the Walden School community were involved in the study.

My approach to this project was as a qualitative researcher acting as interpreter or bricoleur. Before beginning the study, I reflected upon constructivist methodologies (Schwandt, 1990), particularly the ethnographic approach, to frame this cultural study so I could learn the meaning of peace in this context. The goal was to produce an ethnography of my work (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

A qualitative ethnographic study was appropriate to answer the research questions posed and to fulfill the purpose of the research. Ethnography is characterized by extensive fieldwork by the researcher as a participant observer in order to learn the meaning of some element of the culture being studied. The purpose of this study was to learn the meaning of peace in the culture of Walden School. The emphasis of my work was to facilitate the multiple voices I heard in the field and reconstruct those voices in a meaningful way. This process was best performed in the qualitative paradigm because of its emphasis is on words and not variables.

My constructivist worldview influenced this research project, and I believed this approach best suited the purpose of this study. I agree with Denzin and Lincoln (2000),

who said, “constructivism adopts a relativist ontology (relativism), a transactional epistemology, and a hermeneutic, dialectical methodology. Users of this paradigm are oriented to the production of reconstructed understandings of the social world” (p. 158).

Because of this worldview, I believe meaning is contextually bound, and I limited my study to one context. I wanted to serve as a facilitator to reconstruct the multiple voices I heard in the field because I believe that multiple realities are exemplified in those multiple voices. I believe this approach to the research is consistent with peace education theory (Harris, 2002), which is based on valuing multiculturalism and recognizing the basic dignity of all people.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) described this new paradigm in terms of involving “an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. Such research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” and causes the researcher to “study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3).

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) described the present moment as the time of “blurred genres (1970-1986).” “The naturalistic, postpositivist, and constructionist paradigms gained power in this period, especially in education, in the works of Harry Wolcott, Frederick Erickson, Egon Guba, Yvonna Lincoln, Robert Stake, and Elliott Eisner” (p. 3). In talking about Geertz and the blurred genres moment, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) said, “Geertz argues that old functional, positivist, behavioral, totalizing approaches to the human disciplines were giving way to a more pluralistic interpretive, open-ended perspectives” (p. 15).

As I searched for meaning in the culture I was studying, the constructivist paradigm gave voice to my worldview. That worldview includes the following elements: (a) there are multiple realities and meaning is contextually bound, (b) a desire to associate closely with the people who are involved in the research as a participant observer, and (c) together constructing the research. I was aware of the likelihood that the culture of the Walden School consisted of subcultures, such as the students, teachers, staff, and parents. I thought other subcultures might exist in terms of gender, grade level, and ethnicity.

I agree with Guba (1990) that positivist and postpositivist paradigms are flawed and must be replaced. Positivists and postpositivists fail to recognize there are multiple meaning systems, and our failure as a society is relying on positivist and postpositivist methods as the one, true, scientific way to understand the meaning of something (Lincoln, 1985). Constructivism then is an “alternative paradigm” (Eisner, 1990) which, “undermines the tacit but widely held belief that there is only one dependable way to know, something vaguely called ‘the scientific method’” (p. 89). My intention was not to predict or control the culture at the Walden School; rather, I hoped to reconstruct the meaning of peace at the Walden School in an ethnography that captured the essence of what I learned in the field (Guba, 1990).

I took a subjectivist epistemological stance position in this study, consistent with my constructivist methodology. My posture in this regard followed Heshusius’ (1994) notion of a “participatory mode of consciousness” (p. 15). Beginning with Peshkin’s (1988) idea that subjectivity is inevitable, the question is whether this subjectivity is accounted for or not, or as Peshkin said, tamed or untamed.

Participant Observation

I entered the field as a participant observer after I collected signed consent forms from teachers and parents of students and assent forms from the students. I viewed this role on a continuum, and I anticipated moving back and forth along that continuum as I engaged with the people at the Walden School. From my experience the previous fall at the school, I was aware that I can quickly fall into the participant role. My experience in this study proved that assumption to be true. That helped me build trust with the participants. My participation at the school last fall had already created some trust between the members of the school community and me. At the same time I valued the need to be an observer at times.

Heshusius' (1994) idea of "participatory consciousness" (p. 16) requires me to go to a deeper level in the relationship between the knower and the known. This form of engagement between the researcher and the informants requires me to focus on the other and not myself. As Heshusius explained, participatory consciousness "results from the ability to temporarily let go of all preoccupation with self and move into a state of complete attention" (p. 17).

Rather than participate in the dualistic debate of objectivity versus subjectivity, participatory consciousness ignores the argument. Instead researchers like me ask that the rigor of our work be judged in terms of our methodology and the ethical, including participatory, nature of our research (Heshusius, 1994).

Rather than name my work as participatory action research, I prefer Tillmann-Healy's (2001) idea of friendship as methodology. In aligning friendship with participatory consciousness (Heshusius, 1994), I was committed to be aware of my role

as the researcher in the relationship of friendship and to not use that relationship for selfish or unethical advantage in this study.

Tillmann-Healy (2001) described the practices of friendship in these terms. First, friendship is created and sustained in “conversation, everyday involvement, compassion, giving, and vulnerability.” Second, our research should follow the “natural pace of friendship...slow, gradual, and unsteady.” Third, the ethic of friendship is “a stance of mutuality, caring, justice, and even love.” These three concepts of friendship as research practice are summed up as “radical reciprocity, a move from studying them to studying us” (p. 201-202). Heshusius’ (1994) participatory consciousness allowed me to be aware of my role in the project.

The teachers at Walden are referred to by Mr. or Mrs. and their last name. I was asked by the teachers if I wanted to be addressed by the students as Mr. Cavanagh or Tom. I chose Tom to distinguish myself from the authoritative role of the teachers and to increase my interaction with the students. I wanted to participate in school activities from the position of a student.

I began my participant observation at the school picnic a week before school started. At that time I was not certain what my role at the school would be. I soon became aware of my role.

Immediately I began to observe and participate in the daily life of the school. I was given permission to wander about the school as I wish and to participate in the activities. I could come and go as I desired. I feel free to roam about the school and learn about the people of the school in a way that adds richness to my study.

I wondered about acceptance in the community, and I soon found I was an accepted member of the school. I was assigned a mailbox by Mrs. Cook, the school secretary, in the workroom, along with the teachers. I sat on the stage with the teachers at the Friday all-school meetings (Fieldnotes.1, Vignettes, September 22, 2002).

Later I reflected upon my entry into and acceptance at Walden.

One of the first concerns of an ethnographer is gaining the trust of the group you are studying. I was pleased to be accepted by the Walden School community soon after I began my observations. I chose to participate with the students in their learning. In Spanish class, for example, I sat with the students and answered questions posed along with the students. At the weekly school meetings, I was invited to sit on the stage with the teachers and to share a few thoughts about a hero for that week. So far I have talked about Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. Parents greet me regularly when they are at the school. The teachers include me in activities whenever I am around (Field Memo.1, Revised October 23, 2002).

My primary source of data for this research was observations made through fieldwork and recorded at the site as jottings and later in fieldnotes. I supplemented that data with personal interviews and document analysis. I was also a participant in the life of this school. My role as a participant observer in this study began on the observer end of the continuum and emerged over time to a greater participant role. By the time I participated in the Halloween celebration, I wrote, "I am such a part of this culture" (Fieldnotes, Thursday, October 31, 2002).

I observed the people that are part of the Walden School community, students, teachers, and parents, on about a weekly basis during the first half of the school year and less often during the second half of the year. I made 41 field visits during this study. I spent 149 hours observing and participating at this school. I observed the conversation members of the community had in and about the school (i.e., classrooms, the park for recess, and senior center for school gatherings) about peace within the community. Through these observations I believed I could learn how these people gave meaning to the idea of peace in this context.

Journal Writing

In the field I wrote what Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) termed “jottings” (p. 17) as a form of journal writing. I used a notebook with legal ruled paper so I could write my observation notes on the right-hand side of the page and questions and personal, methodological, and theoretical notes on the left-hand-side. These notes then formed the four categories of the fieldnotes that I typed. The observation notes (ON) were concrete and detailed and contained what I saw, heard, smelt, felt, and tasted. The methodological notes (MN) were messages to myself regarding how to collect the data and such questions as who to talk to, what to wear, and when to call. The theoretical notes (TN) contained hunches, hypothesis, connections, and critiques of what I am doing, seeing, and thinking, while remaining open to alternative interpretations. The personal notes (PN) contained my uncensored feeling statements about the research, the people involved, my doubts, my anxieties, and my pleasures (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). I typed 105 pages of fieldnotes during this study.

These jottings were written overtly in the field from the beginning so that the informants would get used to the idea I was taking notes as I visited with them. I openly carried with me and wrote my jottings in a white notebook so I would have the flexibility of when, where, and how I wrote my jottings (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995).

The jottings I wrote contained: (a) initial impressions, including details of the scene of my research; (b) descriptions of key events or incidents that occurred while I was present, including my reflections on those events; and (c) the reactions (or lack of reactions) of the participants to these key events or incidents. I captured rich pieces of talk that occurred during these events or incidents (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995).

In writing my jottings in the field I paid attention to the following details: (a) key components of what I observed, (b) avoidance of judgmental or generalized statements, (c) the details of conversation and behaviors, (d) sensory details of key observations, and (e) my general impressions and feelings (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995).

While I was engaged in fieldwork, I reviewed and reflected on my fieldnotes and produced memos. These memos helped me identify and develop at a deeper level interpretations, questions, and themes that were emerging in the fieldnotes and from my field experience (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995). I used these memos to reflect on whether or not the research questions were still appropriate in light of what I was learning in the field. I shared these memos with the research participants and got feedback from teachers, parents, and students. The guidelines for my observations are contained in Appendix A.

I kept a handwritten, personal journal with me at all times throughout the study. That journal allowed me to jot down ideas, reflect on the research, and write reminders to myself. I found I needed a journal with me constantly so I wouldn't forget things that were on my mind.

Ethnographic Interviewing

Informal Interviews

Informal interviews were held in and about the school. While I was conducting observations in the school, I informally talked with the students, teachers, and parents about how the community thought and felt so I could gain a better understanding of what I was observing.

Formal Interviews

I formally interviewed teachers and parents during the research project. I conducted 18 interviews: four teachers, one teacher/parent, one staff/parent, and 12 parents. I typed 142 pages of transcripts of the interviews. I determined that informal interviews were a better way to have conversations with the students.

The formal interviews were held in the school, at local coffee shops, at the local library, at my office, and in the homes of parents. The interviews lasted about an hour each. At first I used my machine shorthand skills to record and transcribe the interviews. I determined the equipment was distracting to the participants, and I chose to use a tape recorder for the balance of the interviews. I then listened to the tape recording and recorded the conversation using my shorthand skills.

At first I submitted the transcript of the interview to the interviewees for review and any changes they would like to make. However, I found they were distracted by how they expressed themselves orally rather than focusing on the meaning of their conversation. I learned from other qualitative researchers that submitting a summary of the themes and patterns of their interview (selective coding) yielded a better result. For the balance of the interviews I used that method of review.

The questions I asked in the formal interviews were based on what I observed in the field. I was able to observe physical actions and hear the words spoken during my fieldwork. I was not able to observe what was in the hearts and minds of the participants. I needed to probe into these areas in order to answer the research questions about how these people think and feel about peace. The interviews helped confirm or not confirm the themes and patterns I observed in the field.

As Patton (1990) noted, I am not able to observe the thoughts, feelings, and intentions of the informants. At the core, I wanted to learn what these people were thinking and feeling at the time of events I observed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

The purpose of these unstructured interviews was to understand the meaning of the behaviors I observed without any a priori categorization that might limit my inquiry. The purpose was to create a friendly, interactive conversation by establishing a human-to-human relationship with the informants based on my desire to understand more deeply what I observed (Fontana & Frey, 2000).

The format for the formal interviews was based on the work of Spradley (1980), Merriam (1998) and Schensul, Schensul & LeCompte (1999). The format I used for the formal interviews is contained in Appendix B.

Document Analysis

I collected a variety of documents and other tangible artifacts during this study. A total of 96 pages of documentation were collected. During the family retreat at the beginning of the school year I made a collage of natural materials I found during the scavenger hunt. That collage hung in the hall of the school for several weeks, along with other collages. I took photographs during the study and photographs were given to me. Mrs. Cook, the school secretary, put documents in my mailbox that were notes to parents, minutes of teacher meetings, and calendars of events.

At the spring program I purchased a CD that was made about the 2002-2003 school year. This year the school started a student newspaper, the "Walden Post," and I was given copies of both editions.

During the study I observed artifacts that were on the walls and placed about the school. Some of these artifacts were artwork of the students. Others were posters, Buddhist prayer flags, notes on the community bulletin board, jars for collecting money, and the 10th anniversary scrapbook.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Two methods of data analysis were used for this project, constructivist grounded theory and vignettes. By utilizing two methods of analysis I added to the trustworthiness of my work (Patton, 1990). Finally, I addressed the question of validity in the constructivist paradigm.

Constructivist Grounded Theory

I used a constructivist grounded theory approach for analyzing the data in this project because I believed it supported my theoretical framework, an ethnographic study, and my personal worldview. Utilizing constructivist grounded theory, I sought meanings from the data, which formed the basis for “webs of significance” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5) from both the participants and me. This approach also supported my attempts to compare my conceptual framework with what I learned in the field. The data and analysis were created through interaction with the people I interacted with and observed (Charmaz, 2000).

Based on the constructivist grounded theory approach, I gathered the rich, thick data Geertz (1973) called for in the form of formal and informal interviews, fieldnotes, and documents. Constant comparative analysis was used for analyzing the data because this method is used to create theory (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995; Glaser and Strauss, 1967), such as constructivist grounded theory. The key was to be flexible and open to what emerged from the data.

I used the method of constant comparative analysis to learn what patterns or “webs of significance” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5) were discovered through the data analysis process. First, my field jottings were written by hand in the field and then typed in the form of fieldnotes, and each recorded interview was transcribed verbatim. Second, each document in step one was coded using the “open coding” method (Glaser, 1978; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The “open coding” process or level one coding (Hutchison, 1988) produces concepts (codes) that fit the data (Strauss, 1987). Particular attention was paid to data that could generate concepts that related to “conditions, interactions among actors, strategies and tactics, and consequences” (Strauss, 1987, p. 27-28) of interest to the research questions and my theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

Third, each of the concepts generated by open codes was examined to find relationships and to elevate (inductively) the open codes to more abstract levels or level two codes. Fourth, the concepts and relationships produced at the level two coding were then analyzed across all participants and important classification variables for the purpose of finding the major constructs and themes that would allow the data to speak to the major research questions of the study and my theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

This step-by-step process was guided by the process of constant comparative method (Hutchinson, 1988). The purpose of this method is to constantly compare concepts with concepts and themes with themes to produce the similarities and differences that can lead to an understanding of the data. The constant comparative method is designed to produce a conceptualization among the three levels of coding “weaving the fractured data back together again” (Glaser, 1978, p. 116). As a result of

using this method of constant comparative analysis, I deconstructed the “thick description” (Geertz, 1973, p. 6) I obtained as data and reconstructed the themes and meanings that emerged into a narrative about the “webs of significance” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5) that were revealed by the data.

I used the NVivo qualitative computer software program to manage the data and to help me with the coding. I did the initial or open coding using NVivo. Then I used NVivo to deconstruct the original text by codes. I reviewed those codes and created a tree of relationships of the codes to one another across themes and patterns. These themes and patterns were my second level or axial coding. When the codes and their relationships to one another became complex I used NVivo to create a visual model of the relationships of the codes, themes, and patterns to one another.

Vignettes

Vignettes are stories written based on the themes that emerge from analyzing the data. These stories pull the themes together into a plausible story that fills in the gaps in the data. This form of analysis allows the researcher to gain a deeper appreciation for the meaning of what was observed in the field. These vignettes are similar to the scenario writing used in the field of business management to predict the future based on major trends in the present (Schwartz, (1991). Erickson (1986) noted that vignettes are “rhetorical, analytic, and evidentiary” (p. 150).

I anticipated some field visits might not yield data that was conducive to writing vignettes. However, I attempted to write two vignettes for each set of fieldnotes, a confessional and an impressionist. For the interview data I wrote two impressionist vignettes. The confessional vignette allowed me to explore my interpretation of the

events and to talk about what I learned in the field. I used the impressionist vignette to give the reader a sense of what it was like to be in the field in the manner of an interesting story that was true to the data (Van Maanen, 1988). By writing vignettes I gained a deeper appreciation of the meaning of the data and greater insight into this group's meaning of peace.

After generating these various forms of analyses, I reviewed and reflected on my raw data and the analyses as a whole to get a sense of what themes and patterns emerged from that process. I wrote these reflections in a memo, and I checked with my informants to ascertain that my findings were consistent with their perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1984). I modified my findings to reflect the suggestions of the informants. I used the writing of my final report as an extension of the analysis process.

The cultural themes that were found through these analyses were tentative. These cultural themes constituted an emerging theory. I went back into the field again and again to gather data that shed light on this emerging theory until I was satisfied the data were saturated (Charmaz, 2000).

Constructivist Validity

I find it difficult in this age of the "Seventh Moment," a term Lincoln & Denzin (2000) used to describe the present time in research, for a qualitative researcher, espousing a constructivist epistemology, to find a clear path for talking about validity. On the one hand you have researchers such as Denzin (1994) and Wolcott (1990) denying the need for referring to validity. On the other, Lather (2001) choosing to use the term validity as a means of "(dis)articulation of positivist hegemony" (p. 241). Whether the discussion is couched in terms of internal and external validity or trustworthiness and

authenticity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), I believe the issue of legitimacy of our work cannot be avoided.

Gergen and Gergen (2000) noted traditional efforts to discover and record the trust of our work are being replaced by such innovations as reflexivity, multiple voicing, literary representation and performance. These innovations are causing researchers to reconceptualize and reframe the conversation about validity.

Lather (2001) provided us with a framework for “thinking differently about how we think about validity in qualitative research in education” (p. 242). She based her conversation about this new framework in terms of “first, the shifts in epistemology and the consequent weakening of homogenous standards, and second, the proliferation of counterpractices of authority in qualitative research” (p. 242).

Traditional normative criteria for validity are replaced by what Lather (2001) called constitutive criteria, which “move away from compelling conviction to some essence and toward contextually relevant practices that both disrupt referential logic and shift orientation from the object to the relations of its perception, to its situation of address and reception” (p. 244). This view of validity fits with my constructivist worldview because validity is seen as contextually bound rather than as a universal truth. In that context validity is then tied to the ethical considerations of being in relationship with the participants in the study.

Lather (2001) paid respect to Lincoln and Guba (1984) for moving the discourse about validity from normative to relational practices. She ends her chapter with this thought:

Situated in the crisis of authority that has occurred across knowledge systems, the challenge is to make productive use of the dilemma of being

left to work from traditions of research and discourses of validity that appear no longer adequate to the task. Between the no longer and the not yet lies the possibility of what was impossible under traditional regimes of truth in the human sciences; the invention of other practices of generative methodology out of recognition of the unnoticed dangers of the techniques we use to conceive and resolve our problems of establishing legitimate knowledge (p. 247).

In defining the present or “Seventh Moment” Lincoln and Denzin (2000)

described qualitative research as embracing two tensions at the same time.

On the one hand, it is drawn to a broad, interpretive, postexperimental, postmodern, feminist and critical sensibility. On the other hand, it is shaped to more narrowly defined positivist, postpositivist, humanistic, and naturalistic conceptions of human experience and its analysis (p. 1048).

This description also embraces the range of the conversations about validity, on one hand, and trustworthiness and authenticity, on the other. From these tensions, Lincoln and Denzin (2000) proposed four “certainties” (p. 1049) about the qualitative researcher to help us address the questions raised by this range of conversations. My interpretation of these “certainties” is:

1. We do not stand outside and above the text as an objective, authoritative, politically neutral observer.
2. We must remember we are historically constructed and locally situated as a human observer of the human condition.
3. The meaning we seek to learn about is radically plural, always open, and politically saturated.
4. Our inquiry should be conceptualized as a civic, participatory, collaborative process that joins the researcher and the researched in an ongoing moral dialogue.

I believe these four “certainties” (Lincoln & Denzin, 2000, p. 1049), while they are not definitive answers to the lingering questions of how to evaluate the legitimacy of

our research work, they do provide a framework for judging our work. As a constructivist researcher, I attended to these “certainties” in my work so that my research had legitimacy in this “Seventh Moment.”

Visits to the Field

The data collected in the field were analyzed in five sets. Four sets represented fieldnotes and documents. The fifth set of data was formal interviews. These data sets are attached as Appendices. The reflective memos I wrote constitute the commentary I make for each data set.

First Set of Field Data

The first set of data was collected from August 21, 2002, the first day of the school year at Walden, to September 11, 2002, the anniversary of the terrorist attack on the United States. (See Appendix C.)

This first reflective memo was prepared after six field visits, constituting 68 hours of observation and informal interviews. As a result of those six field visits, 30 pages of fieldnotes were produced and 27 pages of documents were collected.

One Light, One Sun

One light, one sun. One sun lighting everyone.
One world turning. One world turning everyone.

One world, one home,
One world home for everyone.
One dream, one song,
One song heard by everyone.

One love, one heart,
One heart warming everyone.
One hope, one joy,
One love filling everyone.

(Song sung at the family retreat, the Friday all-school meeting, and in music classes at Walden School.)

My initial focus was to become familiar with the site of my study. These were my initial impressions.

Walden School sits in the middle of a beautiful residential area, in the midst of old homes, on a street lined with old trees and a median with similar landscape. The city park is a block away. This is the 10th year since the school began. Founder's Day will be celebrated in April. That is the day the owners, Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Johnson, and Mrs. Knox, signed an agreement to begin the school. Mr. Johnson told me on an earlier date the philosophy of the school is to accept children where they are academically and developmentally and help them improve. The school sign on the front lawn reflects that philosophy. It says, "Individual Education - Universal Growth." There are four classrooms at Walden School. Mrs. Johnson teaches the pre-school and kindergartners. Mrs. Knox teaches the first and second graders. Mrs. Schmidt teaches the third and fourth graders, and Mr. Johnson teaches the fifth and sixth graders. The three owners are also teachers, and the only visible administration is the school secretary, Mrs. Cook, who is helped by the school dog, a wonderful yellow lab-golden retriever cross, JT or Jayne. The three other teachers are Spanish and music, art, and physical education. In addition to the four classrooms, there is a kitchen, bathrooms, a workroom, art room, large room (with a stage), library, secretary's office, and entryway (Fieldnotes, September 12, 2002).

One of my first concerns as an ethnographer was gaining the trust of the group I was studying. I was pleased to be accepted by the Walden School community soon after I began my observations. I chose to participate with the students in their learning. In Spanish class, for example, I sat with the students and answered questions posed along with the students. At the weekly school meetings, I was invited to sit on the stage with the teachers and to share a few thoughts about a hero for that week. I talked about Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. Parents greeted me regularly when they were at the school. The teachers included me in activities whenever I was around.

I observed activities that were consistent with some of the strands of the peace education theory model that was the foundation of my conceptual framework for this study. Human dignity was an aspect of that theory I first noticed.

Mrs. Knox uses the “Walden credit card” for children when they need to use the bathroom. The student gets up from their chair and gets a “Walden credit card” and places it under the “restroom” sign on the green board. Mrs. Knox’s use of the “Walden credit card” honors the dignity of the students. They do not have to raise their hand or ask permission of the teacher to go to the bathroom. Their privacy is honored (Fieldnotes, August 21, 2002).

Environmental awareness is another strand of peace education theory.

Mrs. Schmidt was the resident naturalist at Walden School.

Mrs. Schmidt talked about the different kinds of trees – evergreen, deciduous, and fern. She passed around small specimens of each variety for the children to see, touch, and smell (Fieldnotes, August 30, 2002).

International awareness is another part of the peace education theory model and an integral part of the school. Two students from South Korea were attending the school at the beginning of the school year. The students focused their social studies on the Middle Eastern or Mediterranean countries, China, and the history of the United States. The primary example of international awareness occurred on the anniversary of September 11, 2002. The school celebrated this day as “World Harmony Day”.

The event that made the greatest impression on me was World Harmony Day, held on the first anniversary of the terrible tragedies of September 11, 2001. The day began with an all-school meeting, which was announced by the ringing of the school bell. About 30 parents, grandparents, and guests were present. Two college professors made a presentation using the quilt as a metaphor for peace and harmony. The students sang a new song, “Weave Us Together,” which one of the teachers found earlier that week. . . . After the meeting the quilt making started. I was impressed how the students worked to cut their harmony or peace designs (hearts, butterflies, hands, peace symbol) out of a piece of fabric, have it ironed on to a piece of muslin, and then sew the edges of the fabric to the muslin (Impressionist Vignette, September 12, 2002).

Conflict resolution was most evident in the Friendship Circle curriculum that I helped Francis Gaebler to teach. The theory of Friendship Circle was used in all classrooms.

The emphasis of the course is on teamwork, empathy and conflict resolution. Francis talks about the ground rules: human dignity and community... The students for the most part used the talking spoon when they talked. Then they watched a video about negotiation, mediation, and arbitration (Fieldnotes, September 5, 2002).

The one strand of peace education theory I had not observed at the school at that time involved the effect of development or systemic processes on world peace, particularly focused on the equitable sharing of the world's resources. I continued to watch for indications of this strand in my field work.

From my brief visits to the school last year, I expected to find evidence of peace education theory. What I was surprised to learn this early in my fieldwork was the culture for peace in the school that supported peace education theory.

As a result of my field experience and analysis, I found the strands of peace education theory resonated with the consciousness raising aspect of Freire's (1990) theory of conscientization. What I found was evidence of the praxis aspect of that theory, in the form of a culture that supported the consciousness raising focused on peace education theory.

As I analyzed my initial data, I was reminded of Some's (1998) work. I found the culture of this school was grounded in the ethic of caring (Noddings, 2002), caring for and caring about. I believed this ethic of caring had three aspects in this context: (a) ritual, (b) healing, and (c) community. An example of caring is found in this passage, particularly as caring was contrasted with competition.

This year was different in that soon after the beginning of the school year a weekend retreat was held in the mountains west of the school. Students, parents, and teachers spent the weekend together in a beautiful, relaxed atmosphere. The focus was on individual families getting to spend time together and to share some of that time with other families in the school community. What surprised me was what I did not see – comparisons of families, competition, and other ways of

setting up win/lose, better/worse, or right/wrong situations. Even events that could be competitive, like the Treasure Hunt on Saturday morning, turned out not to be competitive. The event that I thought has the greatest potential for being competitive was the fort building. Mr. Johnson described the activities as each family building a fort. I was hiking while the fort building activity was going on. When I returned, I went to look at the results and found one fort being built. I learned right away the students decided they would rather work together and build one fort than many forts. The result was magnificent (Impressionist Vignette, September 12, 2002).

Walden School is rich with ritual, and the rituals support the ethic of caring. One of the first rituals I observed was the “Book Buddies.” The use of book or reading buddies is a well known reading and literacy strategy used in elementary schools. Reading texts, such as those authored by Tompkins (2003), contain references to this process. However, Walden extends this idea to other aspects of the school day.

At recess the students are paired up – fifth and sixth graders with the preschool-kindergarten and third and fourth graders with the first and second graders. They are called “Book Buddies.” In addition to walking with their buddy hand in hand to and from recesses each day, they read to each other at various times during the week and sometimes engage in mutual projects or games (Fieldnotes, August 21, 2002).

Closely linked with rituals are symbols. The school bell serves as both a symbol and a ritual at the school. The bell has a long history, dating back to the early 1900’s, when it called children to school in New California, Wisconsin. A current parent at Walden School listened to that bell as she rode her bike to school. Later her family bought the bell. Ultimately the bell was donated to the school. Profits from school fundraisers were used to build the tower that housed the bell.

“The bell tower has come to symbolize Walden Community’s spirit of working together toward a common goal.” The ritual of ringing the bell will mean students are “preparing for a new day of lessons and activities, but also that they are linked to an earlier time in history.” (Document analysis of Walden School Newsletter of May 2002.)

The focus of healing was relationships, healing the harm to relationships that results from conflict and wrongdoing. The Friendship Circle course gave the students the skills to engage in this healing process. At that time I had not found evidence of how members of the school community reacted to conflict. I was interested to find out if the behavior of the members of the community corresponded with what was taught in the Friendship Circle class.

Community at Walden School had a specific meaning. Community in this context was focused on creating a culture where all members of the community can flourish and there is a sense of solidarity or all for all. The following passage illustrates how this is a community where all can flourish.

My observations confirmed what Mr. Johnson told me, the focus of the school is on the individual student – accepting them where they are and helping them improve. Students worked at their own pace. If the student was not doing well in a classroom they were moved. There was no talk about standardized tests, school report cards, and needing to do well on these tests (Impressionist Vignette, September 12, 2002).

The idea of solidarity or all for all was found in rituals like the “Book Buddies.”

Another example was the first day root beer floats.

As I walked down the hall, a student hands me a root beer float. I learn this is a Walden School tradition. On the first day of school (and the last day also) the fifth and sixth graders prepare root beer floats and take them to everyone in the school (Fieldnotes, August 21, 2002).

As I wrote in my dissertation proposal, “The purpose of this research is to study the meaning of peace in the culture of the Walden School...My hope in conducting this study is that we can begin to understand what a school that appears to have built an intentional community of peace looks like.” I was surprised and pleased to see a theory emerging this early in the study that was directly related to the purpose of this study. The

theory of a culture of caring which resulted from the findings was encouraging. This ethic of caring and its three aspects, ritual, caring, and community, formed a new theory for this study. I went back into the field and collected data to determine if that theory continued to be valid in this context.

Second Set of Field Data

I went back into the field again on September 12, 2002, and collected my second set of data until October 31, 2002. (See Appendix D.) The second reflective memo was prepared after 14 field visits, constituting 24 hours of observation and informal interviews. As a result of those 14 field visits, 32 pages of fieldnotes were produced, two formal interviews were held yielding 11 pages of transcript, and 12 pages of documents were collected.

During this second period of data collection for this study one mother described to me her first experience at Walden School as “just like a hug.” Consistent with this cultural description, I found this saying on a poster in the workroom at Walden School:

Louisiana Children’s Museum

I tried to teach
my child with books.
He gave me only
puzzled looks.

I tried to teach
my child with words.
They passed him by
often unheard.

Despairingly,
I turned aside,
“How shall I teach
this child,” I cried.

Into my hand
he put the key.

“Come,” he said,
“Play with me.”

After analyzing the second set of field data, I was beginning to learn that there were several themes that appeared to be directly related to the meaning of peace in this school. Those themes were: caring and competition, school norms, rituals, symbols and celebrations, heroes, recognizing and empowering students, parent involvement, global awareness, environmental awareness, community, and conflict resolution.

Caring and competition were two major themes that helped me understand the meaning of peace in this culture. Noddings (1992) said the ethic of caring was in contrast to the societal norm in the United States of competition. As one teacher explained, competition in this context refers to external competition (i.e., sports, winning and losing, ranking students) rather than internal competition (i.e., desire to do better, to learn more, to improve). Evidence of the ethic of caring at Walden was abundant (i.e., Book Buddies, students helping each other, teacher concern for the welfare of other teachers, and parents bidding their children good bye in the morning). My observations of external competition concentrated on football at recess. I learned that sportsmanship and inclusion of everyone (at least the boys) was stressed more than winning and losing, at least from the perspective of the teachers. Internal competition might be better referred to as internal motivation and was apparent in the individualized instruction and the lack of creating dualistic comparisons or rivalries (i.e., better/worse, right/wrong). At that point I thought that caring and internal competition or motivation were two important components of the meaning of peace in this culture.

School norms became apparent to me in the last month. Although I had not seen a document that lists school rules for student behavior (and I have since learned no such

document existed), norms for student conduct were apparent, for example, how students line up going to and coming from recess, how students file into the large room and sit in rows for the all-school meeting on Fridays, shutting lights off when students need to quiet down, and the requirement of “inside voices” when students have indoor recess. These norms appeared to be taught in a number of ways (i.e., Book Buddies, teachers, traditions), and the norms had consequences, although I would not term the consequences as punishment. I particularly enjoyed how bathroom etiquette was taught at an all school meeting by a short play involving a teacher and a student. The bathroom pass was part of the culture of the school and was introduced in the first and second grade classroom and used consistently through the sixth grade.

Mrs. Knox uses the “Walden credit card” for children when they need to use the bathroom. The student gets up from their chair and gets a “Walden credit card” and places it under the “restroom” sign on the green board (Fieldnotes, August 21, 2002).

Rituals, symbols and celebrations were an important part of the culture of this school and a means for teaching and learning about the culture of peace in this environment. I described rituals as those events that have become traditions at the school. Two important rituals I participated in were root beer floats on the first day of school and hot cocoa morning on the first day of snow. The importance of rituals at Walden was captured in the Walden School Newsletter article about “Hot Cocoa Morning” (2002, January), “We need to know that some things can still be counted on like rituals and memories. Like hot cocoa and new fallen snow.”

Symbols and rituals were hard for me to distinguish. I believed the school bell was an important symbol at the school, and it was also part of the rituals at the school. Likewise, celebrations were hard to distinguish from rituals. I termed those events that

were also part of the life of students outside of Walden as celebrations. The major celebration to date was Halloween. As one father noted to me, private and public schools have discontinued the celebration of Halloween. He was happy that Walden recognized the need for children to have fantasies and act them out in a safe manner, such as Halloween. Even within these celebrations were certain traditions, like the appearance of Viola Swamp, the well known elementary school storybook character (Allard, 1977), on Halloween to substitute for the first and second grade teacher.

I return later that morning for the celebration. I notice Mrs. Knox dressed as "Viola Swamp." I have read the book about Viola and know the story of how the nice teacher disappears after a time when the students are misbehaving and is replaced by Viola, a strict and mean character. Later the teacher returns and the students are so glad and behave much better. I go into role with Mrs. Knox (Viola) in front of her students. The students protest that this is not really Viola and we insist she is. There is much fun (Fieldnotes, October 31, 2002).

Heroes were an important part of the culture of Walden School. Many of these heroes that are talked about at the all-school meetings on Fridays included people famous for work related to peace: (i.e., Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi).

Students at Walden were recognized and empowered. One part of the all-school meeting on Friday was for a poem to be read. Often a student poem was read with the student sitting on the stage. Empowerment included such things as encouraging a student to arrange for the local people in charge of blood donations to come to the school and demonstrate withdrawing blood on the student's father. Another time I watched as two older students solved the problem of how to get a paper airplane out of the heating duct on the ceiling of the large room. This philosophy was expressed well by a teacher in the school newsletter (2002, September-October), "My theory about helping children to become confident and eager writers is to encourage successes and feelings of pride for

their efforts.” That philosophy for building student confidence appeared to apply to all aspects of the school.

Parent involvement at the school contributed to the culture of the school. They were a constant presence in the school, not only bringing children to school and picking them up. I observed them helping their children and other students in the individual classrooms, helping collect money for lunch, running the book fair, leading great books, and facilitating the Halloween festivities. Obviously parents felt they were welcome at the school and were an integral part of the school.

I asked parents why they chose Walden for their child. The responses centered on the small size of the school and the classes, individualized instruction, and a match between the philosophy of the school and family values. They believed the school had created a culture of excitement for learning. One parent said, “the school emphasizes the key elements that create the culture: caring, character building, and dignity/respect, and the learning naturally occurs. In other words, the school is not academics driven. If we create the culture for learning, learning will occur, and that culture is a place where children are cared about and cared for” (Fieldnotes, November 8, 2002).

Students at Walden School had an awareness of the world. I found this aspect of the culture primarily in two areas: World Harmony Day and the focus this year on learning about the Mediterranean countries. World Harmony Day was the school’s way of remembering the events of September 11, 2001, in a positive way. The students in each classroom made a quilt that hung in the large room at that time and was given away at the end of the school year. In the large room was a poster of children playing together and at the bottom it said, “Let us join our hands and hearts to build a better world.”

Out of World Harmony Day came a new school song. The words to the song sung on World Harmony Day and the new school song were:

Weave, weave
Weave us together.
Weave us together in love.
Weave, weave, weave us together.
Weave us together, together in love. (chorus)

We are many textures.
We are many colors
Each one different from the other,
But we are entwined with one another
In one great tapestry.

We are different instruments
Playing our own melodies,
Each one tuning to a different key,
But we are all playing in harmony,
In one great symphony.

I thought the focus on learning about the Mediterranean countries at that time was most appropriate. Our country was struggling with how to be in relationship to these countries. This focus was the first topic for World Studies at Walden.

Environmental awareness pervaded the life of students at Walden. There was a garden outside the west windows of the large room. One teacher focused her comments at the all-school meeting on learning about the environment.

Community at Walden was defined in terms of “we all fit in” (Fieldnotes, September 12, 2002). This sense of solidarity was seen in terms of cooperation and working together. The result was “the whole school has a family feel to it” (Fieldnotes, November 11, 2002).

Integral to this study and, of course, of particular interest to me was how the school responded to conflict and wrongdoing. I observed that the Friendship Circle class

was a way of teaching students the skills of negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. Mrs. Schmidt asked me to facilitate a conference for the third and fourth grade class. I chose to use the Peacemaking Circle process and acted as the keeper of the circle. I was impressed with how the students transferred what they were learning in the Friendship Circle classes to this new process.

As part of the Friendship Circle curriculum, students were asked to sign and have their parents sign the following pledge, which was created by the students of Hillsboro High School, Nashville, Tennessee, in 1999:

Pledge of Peaceful Co-Existence

To end violence... "I will pledge to be a part of the solution. I will eliminate taunting from my own behavior. I will encourage others to do the same. I will do my part to make my community a safe place by being more sensitive to others. I will set the example of a caring individual. I will eliminate profanity toward others from my language. I will not let my words or actions hurt others...And if others won't become part of the solution, I will."

The reference to the family feel of the school caused me to notice an item in the Walden School newsletter. In the newsletter Mr. Johnson referred to an article by Elliot Eisner about the value of art. In another article published at the same time Eisner (2002) talked about "The kind of schools we need." He outlined 15 elements in this article. In my study I found intersections between Eisner's ideas and what I observed as to the following elements of "The kind of schools we need" (p. 576).

Walden had a flat organizational structure. The three owners taught in the classroom full time. As a result, they knew first hand what was happening in the classroom. Leadership then was integrated into the classroom because there were no layers of communication between the students and the managers of the school.

I noted the teachers were as interested in the questions raised by students as the answers they were expected to provide. Students were encouraged to define a problem by creating a hypothesis, gathering data, analyzing the results, and determining what were the findings. (i.e., Mr. Johnson's class checking heart rates before and during exercising.)

In this age of standards-based education I was interested to learn if at Walden, as Mr. Johnson said, students were accepted where they were at individually and then encouraged and helped to improve. This philosophy of Walden appeared to be contrary to a cultural norm at that time in our country that education needed to be tested on how well it produced student learning based on a standard of expectation. The emphasis at Walden was on the process, not the product.

I found evidence that individual student creativity and learning style were honored and encouraged. Students were not forced into a mold of what the ideal student looked like.

Walden placed value on different kinds of learning besides math, science, and reading. The walls of the school were constantly home to artwork (including my own from the family retreat). Music, art, theater, and physical education (including yoga) were an integral part of the life of the school.

The line between student life at Walden and their life outside the school was blurred. Students were encouraged to transfer their learning both directions, in and out of school.

Students at Walden lived in a culture where enjoying the process was stressed over competing for points or grades. Students appeared to develop a real love of learning.

What Eisner called “deep conversations” (p. 582) were an integral part of Walden. These conversations were student-driven and focused on what the students found interesting and wanted to learn, such as the blood drawing demonstration.

Students at Walden were empowered to assume responsibility, set their own goals, and create a plan to reach those goals. I saw this particularly with the fifth and sixth graders. As an example, this group raised money for the sixth grade graduation trip.

Students were encouraged simultaneously to focus on their interests and contribute to an activity greater than their personal interests. The World Harmony Quilt activity was an example of the latter.

During the analysis of the second set of data, I became aware of the importance of school and classroom size to forming the culture of the school. An issue of *Educational Leadership* focused on that theme. I learned small schools create spaces where young people have the opportunity to be known, to ask and to answer life’s most important questions (Ark, 2002).

Walden School was small, 53 students (as of September 20, 2002) during the year of my study, and all classes had 15 or fewer students, which is smaller than the average private elementary school class size (Wasley, 2002).

Small school and class size is related to problems involving conflict and wrongdoing (Holloway, 2002; Achilles, Finn & Pate-Bain, 2002; Klonsky, 2002). Research indicated the effects of small school and class size are most significant in the early grades, if students are continually in small classes; where the class size is under 20; and those effects carry over to the upper grades in larger schools and classrooms. There are two theories for why these effects result in the small school and class size setting: (a)

interactions between teachers and individual students are improved and (b) the classroom environment and student conduct are improved (Biddle & Berliner, 2002). My study confirmed that a combination of both theories produced the positive results from size.

At Walden School classes were combined, pre-school and Kindergarten, first and second, third and fourth, and fifth and sixth. In addition to the benefits of small class size, combining classes enhances the benefits of easing student transition from grade to grade because there is already a sense of knowing and being known, much like in a family (McGoogan, 2002).

My study confirmed the perspective of parents about smaller schools: (a) troubled students are easier to identify before harm occurs, (b) the sense of community is enhanced, and (c) parental involvement is greater (Johnson, 2002).

Strong leadership is a common characteristic of small schools (Ark, 2002). My research indicated Mr. Johnson provided strong leadership in a way that was not dominating or patriarchal.

Raywid (2002), an acknowledged expert in the area of school size (Nathan, 2002), said research results revealed that size alone is not sufficient to create a safe school. The school must create a culture that supports the advantages of small size. That culture needs to be based on shared values that are meaningful to students, parents, and teachers. Rather than being imposed, this culture needs to emerge voluntarily in a creative and organic way (Noguera, 2002). This study confirmed the research and focused on what cultural elements were needed to support the advantages of small size.

In a small school there is the opportunity to replace metal detectors, locker searches, and other zero tolerance measures with an atmosphere of caring. This strategy

is based on three principles: (a) students have a direct, personal relationship with the teacher, (b) teachers are engaged in constant dialogue about students, and (c) the mission of the school is focused on character development as well as academic achievement (Klonsky, 2002). This small size supports the efforts of teachers who are committed to creating a culture of caring and personalism (Allen, 2002).

By this time in my study, I was clear that the meaning of peace in this context was not found in Harris' (2000) Peace Education Theory Model. Caring appeared to be the glue that gave meaning to the idea of peace in this culture. I was ready to go back into the field and collect more data to test that theory.

Third Set of Field Data

The third visit to the field to gather data began on November 7, 2002, and ended on Friday, December 19, 2002. (See Appendix E.) At that time the students and teachers went on holiday break.

The third reflective memo was prepared after 11 field visits, constituting 18 hours of observation and informal interviews. As a result of those 11 field visits, 28 pages of fieldnotes were produced and 21 pages of documents were collected.

Friendship

Friendship is a very powerful bond,
That brings us all together,
In fact it's so strong.
We can't measure it.
Friendship pushes
Sadness out of the world.
It's hard to think all that
Comes out in one word.
(A student's poem that appeared in *The Walden Post*)

First, let me explain that the pseudonym for the school was changed at this point because two parents pointed out the old pseudonym was too close to the real name of the

school. I appreciated the feedback I received from the parents and the teachers in writing and through interviews. The name Walden was chosen in honor of one of my heroes, the writer Henry David Thoreau.

I was now halfway through the school year and at the halfway point in my data collection. The welcome I received from the students, teachers, and parents resulted in a rich study, which is the objective of an ethnography. I was grateful to the members of the Walden School community. I made note of this phenomenon:

Friendship and acceptance (inclusion) in the community whose culture you are studying become important elements of methodology over time. I notice how freely people say hi to me by name and approach me much like they do another parent. I do not sense the researcher/participant distance that I expected. I feel I have earned the trust of these people, and I so appreciate and value that trust. (Fieldnotes, December 19, 2002)

The poem that appears at the beginning of this section was in the first edition of the student newspaper, *The Walden Post*. I believed that poem was indicative of the culture of Walden that I described in past memos. During this set of field visits I continued to explore the culture of care at Walden.

As I analyzed the data I collected through fieldnotes, documents, and interviews, I was coming to a deeper understanding of what peace meant in this culture. I already identified the ethic of caring as being at the heart of that understanding. I mentioned caring and competition in my last data set analysis. I understand those two elements to be on a continuum, not a dichotomy. This passage from my fieldnotes of January 22, 2003, illustrated my point:

The hugs among Krys and the little girls are significant. Krys is one of the jocks of the school, if we were to use a term that might apply in the dominant school culture. He is the leader of the football and the favorite quarterback at the football games at recess. I am struck that the culture of this school is such that Krys feels comfortable hugging his school buddy

and the other little girls while others are watching. He must feel he can maintain his role as the football leader and be attentive to the little girls at the same time. Caring about these girls does not threaten his role.

In this culture, the students, particularly the boys, were taught to differentiate between the appropriate time and place to be caring and to be competitive. Often I saw the older boys tenderly helping their School Buddies put on their coats, mittens, and boots and then holding their hands as they walked to the park for recess. Once at the park, the younger students went off to play with their peers, and the older boys went to play a competitive game of football. At the end of recess, the same boys returned to the role of caregiver to their School Buddies and held his or her hand as they walked back to the school building. I noticed that these boys were not ridiculed for their caring behavior. The culture of the school supported their being caring in one instance and competitive in the other. I believed this ability to differentiate was consistent with the culture of caring I identified.

An important element of caring and nonviolent conflict resolution is empathy. In one of the Friendship Circle sessions a student defined empathy in these terms, "Empathy is when you listen with your heart. You put yourself in their shoes and really understand what that person is feeling, pretending to feel like they feel" (Fieldnotes, December 18, 2002).

Caring extended beyond the school. I noticed several instances of this type of caring. While at the World Studies Night in November, I wrote the following:

After serving I get a dish for myself and sit down. Mrs. Knox and her husband sit down with me. I am impressed when Mr. Knox gets up to serve food to a homeless man that has wandered in and out of the room a couple of times while we are serving. Mr. Knox treats the man with dignity, compassion and caring. I am impressed. (Fieldnotes, November 16, 2002).

Also in November a teacher wrote to the parents:

A recent article in the newspaper reminded me again just how fortunate I am, A loving family, a comfortable home and a fulfilling job are just a few of the many things that I have come to take for granted. Most of us never have to think about whether we will be able to feed or clothe our children, yet there are many people in our own community who must make difficult decisions every day about how they will use their very limited resources” (Documents, November 17, 2002)

As a result the students and their parents responded, as I noted in this writing:

This morning as I enter the large room I notice children and their parents are carrying sacks of food and clothes into the large room and placing them on the stage. A few fifth and sixth grade students are placing the frozen turkeys in a pyramid. (Fieldnotes, November 22, 2002)

I learned these students, and the adults in their lives, demonstrated sensitivity to the poor, particular those living in poverty in the local community. The donated food was given to the local food distribution center, and the clothes went to a church in the community. Sharing food with the homeless man was a powerful demonstration to the students of the attitude toward poverty in this school.

I continued to enjoy the traditions at Walden. The highlight in November was the Thanksgiving feast, which I described in this way:

This is the tenth year for this tradition, and today the menu is the same. Each classroom makes a different item for the meal: preschool-kindergarten – butter; first and second grades – no-bake pumpkin pie; third and fourth grades – cornbread; and fifth and sixth grades - applesauce. In addition, the first and second grade students made construction paper pilgrims and Indians for centerpieces on the tables. So we put a dab of each part of this festive meal on each plate. I am in charge of the pumpkin pie, which I note is a lot of Cool Whip and pumpkin. I learn the preschool and kindergarten students worked hard shaking the film canisters to make butter. They complained their arms hurt from shaking the canisters.

Then the students begin to arrive back from recess. Their cheeks are red, and there is snow on their clothes. They have to take off their snowsuits, coats, boots, gloves, mittens, and hats. They have snow on their clothes.

A teacher plays some quiet music, and another Thanksgiving tradition begins. The tables are at the sides of the room, and the children sit on the floor in the middle. Another teacher asks the students if they remember the story, and they raise their hands and say, "Yes." Then she reads the story, "Giving Thanks," just as she has for the last ten years. (Fieldnotes, November 26, 2002)

These traditions were part of another important element of the culture of caring, continuity. An example of continuity was found in this passage:

On the way out of the building I notice a book on the table near the front door. It is a scrapbook, prepared by a mother of two former students of Walden, about the first ten years of the school. I am impressed with the amount of continuity shown in that book. All of the teachers have been at the school in the same roles since the start of the school. One teacher took off a brief while to have a baby. Also the music/Spanish teacher has been at the school since the beginning.

Continuity is another major theme at this school. That is a major component in creating this culture of caring. The students have predictability in the traditions and rituals as well as who will teach them in what grades. That creates a real sense of comfort with the school. (Fieldnotes, December 5, 2002)

I observed that the students at Walden were encouraged to be familiar with their local surroundings. In this regard I wrote:

Also she talked about how the class was beginning to study "Fort Collins History" with a field visit to "The Avery House" (Documents, November 22, 2002)

I believed the metaphor of quilting was appropriate in describing the culture of caring at Walden. The following quote explained this metaphor:

Quilting is a way of expressing ourselves, of sorting out thoughts and emotions, of sifting through daily experiences, frustrations and joys, to produce a visual, tactile record of a day, a month, a minute. . . It is a way to wrap our children in love at night, to delight them during the day.

Quilting. . . has given me self-confidence and helped me to see that I am a unique individual with a unique view of life (Brainard, 1997, p. 36).

As I became engaged in this research study and began analyzing the data I collected in the field, I realized that the ethic of caring was a major focus of how the

Walden School community found meaning for the phenomenon of peace. In the conceptual framework for this study I referred to the ethic of caring as developed by Noddings (1992). However, I did not expand on that theory.

Because of what I learned from analyzing the data, I began reviewing the literature about caring. The ethic of caring was described by Noddings (1992) as “care for one’s self, for intimate others as well as strangers and distant others, for animals, plants, the earth, and for human instruments and ideas” (p. ii). This ethic is based on the idea that to care and be cared for is a fundamental human need. Based on these assumptions, Noddings said, “the main aim of education should be a moral one, that of nurturing the growth of competent, caring, loving and lovable persons.” The ethic of care originated with the work of Gilligan (1982). She described the ethic of care, from a feminist perspective, as an alternative approach to moral problems.

Noddings (1992) claimed that the current education climate of “academic adequacy” focuses on an ethic of competition rather than caring and results in students who do not feel cared for or about. Performance and efficiency are the dominant values, which naturally lead to a culture of zero tolerance in response to wrongdoing and conflict because such behaviors are an intrusion to academics. In contrast, Noddings said the endeavor of schools should be to “educate all our children not only for competence but also for caring. Our aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving, and lovable people” (p. xiv). The object of schooling is to raise happy, healthy, and competent children in a climate of caring and continuity. Continuity was recognized by Dewey (1963) as a criteria of education and is fundamental to caring and includes continuity of place, people, purpose, and curriculum (Noddings, 1992).

I believed my contribution to the thinking about the ethic of caring in schools would be a model for creating a deliberate culture of caring based on the theory of restorative justice and nonviolent response to conflict and wrongdoing. What I learned in my study was the meaning of peace in the culture of Walden School was focused on caring rather than the theory of peace education, as outlined in the conceptual framework for this research. The theory of peace education creates a student citizen of peace not a culture of peace in the school. Based on my research I believed Walden School created a deliberate culture of caring in which teaching and learning justice and peace takes place.

The contrast between the culture of Walden School and the dominant paradigm in education is based on Noddings' (1992) work. Zero tolerance results in greater violence because the harm resulting from such wrongdoing and conflict is not validated and repaired. On the other hand, Walden School's philosophy of individualized instruction and accepting students where they are and helping them improve holistically, not only academically, is consistent with the ethic of caring. Fundamental to caring are relationships based on empathy between the carer and cared for. This culture of caring is based on a constructivist worldview, which Noddings called "interpersonal reasoning" (p. 53), rather than a logical-positivist worldview that is based on logical-mathematical reasoning.

The encounter between the carer and the cared for is based on the idea that care is extended to the cared for, who recognizes, receives, and responds appropriately to such care. In this culture of caring teachers are called to be carers and to develop the capacity of younger students to accept positively the role of accepting care and, as they grow older, to develop the capacity of giving care. Based on Noddings' (1992) theory creating

caring relationships is the first priority of teaching and precedes learning. The exchange relationship is students need teachers to care for and about them and teachers need students to respond to their caring. This ethic of caring applies to student relationships with other persons and their surroundings. They have a duty to care for others and the cleanliness of their classroom and building.

Strike (1990) criticized Noddings for not recognizing the exchange aspect of relationships that is found in relationships (friendships) and for valuing what can be *accomplished in relationships (community)*. He criticized Noddings for not reconciling caring and justice. I believe justice can be viewed on two dimensions “duties and responsibilities” or human consequences and “rules and institutions” or legal consequences (p. 216). The theory of restorative justice, as I pose it, helps create this reconciliation. Caring and justice are not in competition but are complimentary when viewed in the context of restorative justice. I disagree with Strike that caring and justice exist in different contexts. My conceptual framework puts caring and justice together into a cultural framework.

An important consideration is how caring fits with justice. While our traditional retributive form of addressing the legal consequences of wrongdoing and conflict in schools is sometimes needed, particularly to insure the safety of the community, the ethic of caring demands justice that addresses the human consequences. In particular the ethic of care is based on an enriched sense of justice that opposes the notion that one solution fits all people in all circumstances. This ethic is based on: (a) empathy, being with; (b) respecting individuality, being for; and (c) responding to others’ needs, being there for (Noddings, 1992).

The sense of justice associated with the ethic of care is grounded in cooperative solutions to problems, based on choices, and centered on relationships, community, and stakeholder participation. Justice in a culture of caring focuses on maintaining and enhancing caring relationships by seeing wrongdoing and conflict as impairing relationships and calling for forgiveness and reconciliation, rather than punishment and retribution.

The theory of restorative justice provides the foundation for the justice that the ethic of care needs; “a care perspective might encourage what we could call ‘restorative justice’” (Katz, Noddings, Strike, 1999). This theory is based on the idea that we can transform wrongdoing and conflict by validating the harm that has occurred and seeking together to heal the harm, particularly to relationships. The ethic of care can flourish in an environment that has a preferential option for restorative justice and the traditional retributive system is the second choice.

Fourth Set of Data (Formal Interviews)

After the holiday break I focused on gathering data by interviewing teachers and parents in the Walden School community. I interviewed five teachers, one of whom was a parent and teacher; one staff person, who was also a parent; and 13 parents. (See Appendix F.) The fourth reflective memo was prepared after producing the formal interviews and preparing 131 pages of transcripts.

Caring emerged as the central theme of this data analysis. Teachers and parents interviewed agreed with my reflective memos focusing on the culture of caring. This theme of caring is contrasted with competition by Noddings (1992). However, a few parents had trouble with the contrast. The distinction to be made is between external

competition and internal motivation. Rather than juxtaposing the two ideas of caring and competition, perhaps Walden wanted to create caring competitors, particularly differentiating between the appropriate time and place for caring and competing.

This culture of caring at Walden has these elements: (a) norms are ritualized and not written as rules, (b) celebrations, traditions, and symbols ritualize the norms, (c) the number of students in the school and classrooms is small, (d) continuity exists in terms of teachers and predictability, (e) caring extends outside the school to the community, (f) students learn how to resolve conflicts nonviolently, particularly through the skills learned in the Friendship Circle program, and (g) students are empowered and become “powerful,” particularly through increasing amounts of responsibility from preschool through sixth grade.

When we started the place one of our goals was we wanted to have powerful kids, confident powerful kids, who can go out in the world and manage, take care of themselves, not to have one of us around (Interview of Mr. Johnson, April 2, 2003).

The parents talked about why they chose Walden for their children’s primary education. The parents said they visited several other schools, sometimes talked to others, and finally chose Walden because it fit and felt right, particularly because of the individualized learning and the foundation of care.

Fifth Set of Field Data

The collection of this data concluded my time in the field on this project. The data were collected from January 16, 2003, to May 29, 2003. (See Appendix G.) The fifth and last reflective memo was prepared after 10 field visits, constituting 20 hours of observation and informal interviews. As a result of those 10 field visits, 15 pages of fieldnotes were produced and 36 pages of documents were collected.

The themes were repeating themselves and the data were saturated. The major theme was caring, and that theme represented how the people in this study gave meaning to the word peace in this context.

The culture of caring at Walden had several dimensions. The school was small, and that was an important factor in creating and sustaining this culture. Because the school was small, behavior was directed by norms rather than written rules. These norms were supported and learned by new people primarily through the rituals of the school, which were part of the traditions, symbols, and celebrations. The primary focus of this school was on the human consequences of conflict and wrongdoing. These behaviors were seen as opportunities for learning. Students were taught nonviolent responses to conflict and wrongdoing. Conflict resolution skills were taught to the students beginning in the third grade. Walden chose early on to be noncompetitive, and that was consistent with the caring culture.

These themes emanated from the data and formed the framework for the new conceptual theory for this study. Certainly data supporting the five strands of Harris' (2000) model were found. However, they were not sufficient to explain how this group of people gives meaning to the idea of peace. Over time in the field, I was able to determine that Noddings' (1992) ethic of care helped me make sense of what peace means to the people I studied, and more importantly, these people agreed with that sensemaking.

During this study two books were published that informed my work. Harris and Morrison (2003) published an updated text on peace education. They contend that peace education is focused on individual change. My study is based on the idea that such individual change best occurs in a culture that supports such change. I agree with their

call for a new conversation based on caring and mutual respect and their contention that “the context in which peace education takes place is an extremely important variable in any study of peace education effectiveness” (p. 179-180).

In his book, Timpson (2002) called for new language for teaching and learning about peace. Timpson focused on the “positive classroom climate” (p. 46) for such teaching and learning. I agree with Timpson that students can come to understand that revenge and retribution is one choice for responding to wrongdoing and conflict. However, these students need a school culture that supports the classroom learning and climate. If a student leaves the classroom with a positive climate and walks into the hallways of a school that models a culture of control, rules, and punishment, the student is receiving a mixed message.

The theme of the March 2003 issue of Educational Leadership was “Creating Caring Schools.” I was excited to read that publication in the midst of my data collection and analysis because the themes and patterns of my study focused on the ethic of caring. To see a major journal in our field dedicated to the same theme as was emerging in my study was affirming and motivating. Those articles informed my thinking in the following ways.

In this time of rising greed, delinquency and disrespect, we need to help teachers increase their capacity for reflection and empathy. The key to changing children's behavior is through interactions with significant adults in their lives (i.e., teachers and parents). Through these relationships children learn concepts such as harm and truthfulness (Weissbourd, 2003).

When a school engages in shaming activities (i.e., labeling and punishment), children resort to violence, even though they are aware of the harmful consequences of their actions, because the anger and cynicism that results from stigmatizing shame erodes the child's sense of caring, responsibility, and morality. Such shaming ignores the child's human dignity and labels the child as inherently bad.

What kind of culture do schools need to develop to foster a sense of caring? Weissbourd (2003) said, "Schools face the challenge of creating cultures in which teachers come to view appreciating and being generous to others, acting with fairness and integrity, and formulating mature and resilient ideals as evolving and subtle capacities" (p. 8).

In my study I looked at the role of three groups of Walden School in creating a culture of care: students, teachers, and parents (families). There are two primary roles for these groups: caring for and about and receiving care. All three groups were involved in both roles. However, students began school primarily focused on the receiving care role. These students learned how to appropriately respond to care from other students, teachers, and parents. I observed in Mrs. Knox' classroom they began to move back and forth between the role of receiving care and providing care.

Walden School was built on a community of relationships woven together by this culture of care. Because this community met the students' basic needs for caring, belonging, independence, and competence, the students were committed to the norms and values that exemplified the school (Schaps, 2003).

Schaps (2003) said the research shows that children that are schooled in this environment are more likely to perform well academically and socially. The results of

this environment carry over into middle and high school. Key indicators of schools that create a sense of community include: (a) class and school meetings that emphasize mutual respect and shared norms, (b) a buddies program that is based on the ethic of care, and (c) school-wide activities that become traditions.

At the core of the ethic of caring is relationships, and those relationships are created in the actions and thinking of the people involved. Reciprocity is a key to the relationships, which is described by anthropologists as an exchange relationship (Deiro, 2003).

Exchange relationships is a core concept in ethnographic work. The fundamental exchange relationships in this study included: students and teachers, students and parents, and teachers and parents. These relationships were based on an understanding of each other's roles related to the ethic of caring and the expectations and obligations attached to those roles (Bryk & Schneider, 2003).

Rofrano (2002) talked about the ethic of caring in terms of invitation and acceptance. The invitation is an expression of "I care for you" (p. 49). The acceptance is a willingness to receive the care. In a culture of care the exchange relationship is between the person providing the care and the person cared for. The exchange is genuine caring for respect. Mrs. Knox described this exchange relationship between teachers and students at Walden well (Interview, April 10, 2003).

Well, you know I think that we call this occupation teaching, but really what it means is they teach me more than I teach them and really I'm caring for them. I really feel we care for them physically emotionally mentally in all ways, so it's not really that we're teaching them so much we're just caring for their growth. so that's really I guess how I see the school grow. we have the Pablo Picasso saying each child is unique and we just need to care for each child individually because they grow some differently. so I guess that's how I see it. we're really almost caregivers rather than teachers. that's kind of how I feel. that's why I feel this

school ends up the way it does. it's not so much an education as taking care of them for this part of their life.

These exchange relationships are facilitated by the small size of the school and classrooms, the stability of the school in terms of continuity of teachers and the school building, and the self-selection of parents to participate in the school by deliberately choosing to send their children to Walden.

My study exhibited constant themes across the three key indicators of a school with a sense of community. These three indicators are foundational to the culture of caring at the school. Community is built at Walden through such activities as Book Buddies, the family retreat (a new activity this year), class meetings (peacekeeping circle), interaction between the school and parents, making quilts, and the food and clothing drive.

Continuity was a theme that runs through the data that I analyzed in this project. This theme was apparent in the symbols, rituals, traditions, and stories that highlighted this study and the life of the school. From John Dewey, Frank (2001) said, we learned that continuity is a fundamental part of education.

The expectations for the quality of personal interactions among the students, parents, and teachers are ritualized through the symbols, stories, and traditions that permeate this school. The Friday all-school meeting is a ritual that exemplifies this idea. This meeting focuses on recognition of individual students for who they are, their writing and activities. Stories such as Viola Swamp at Halloween and the story Mrs. Johnson reads at the Thanksgiving meal each year are examples of ritualized traditions.

Symbols were a rich part of the culture of this school. I became aware of this on the first day of school when I heard the school bell ringing. Four quilts hung on the walls of the large room during the school year as a symbol of what the school stood for.

The enduring traditions at Walden include root beer floats on the first day of school, hot cocoa on the first day of snow, Halloween, Thanksgiving, World Studies Nights, Spring Program, and Graduation. Glickman (2003) reminded us that these traditions are real demonstrations of what the students and adults at the school learn and how they recognize that knowledge and pass it on to future students, teachers, and parents.

Inlay (2003) wrote about the River School, a middle school where she is the director. This school is similar to Walden. The implicit curriculum Inlay talked about is the school culture.

Inlay (2003) cited Goodlad (1984), who said what students are taught in the classroom must be consistent with what students experience outside the classroom. Teachers can focus on such things as conflict resolution skills, mutual respect, economic and ecological justice issues, and the role of systems as related to social justice, but the values expressed in these areas are hypocritical if the culture of the school does not support them. The result is cynical students. A culture of caring, such as found at Walden School, supports the values of peace education that are taught in the classroom.

Rather than hanging posters on the wall espousing values, River School lives their mission of helping “students cultivate a strong sense of self through demonstrations of personal and social responsibility” (Inlay, 2003, p. 69). This personal responsibility is achieved by students and teachers being accountable, particularly for the human

consequences of wrongdoing and conflict they are responsible for. Consequences are an important part of the culture of Walden and River Schools. At both schools students are held accountable for the choices they make, and they experience the appropriate and natural consequences of those choices. One Walden mother told a story about consequences in her interview (April 7, 2003):

Probably one of my things is it's not my responsibility, and just for an example, last week they both forgot their lunches, got roller blades and roller bladed to school. I got a call from Miss Knox, "They have no lunches." I'm sitting here and I said, "You know, I'm not going to walk to school; that's their responsibility." They are more aware, I hope, that they need to have their lunch.

Through trial and error students learn how to make good decisions. The results are, as Inlay (2003) said, an environment that "lessens extrinsic control, nurtures our students' intrinsic motivation to learn, and increases their self-confidence to meet and overcome challenges" (p. 70).

Social responsibility at both schools was focused on creating self-determining individuals within a community where it is safe to be different and belonging is not dependent on conformity. When conflict or wrongdoing occurred in this context, students are confident they will be treated with respect. They trusted the process because the message is that students are respected not because they are students but because they are human beings who have the right to be respected. Both schools have used a facilitated conferencing processes to bring the affected parties together to help them reach a common understanding.

Kohn (2003) cautioned schools that positive reinforcement of student behavior, while maintaining an objective of compliance, is inconsistent. From my study I learned that the objective at Walden is not to control student behavior. Rather, the parents and

teachers at Walden want student behavior to be viewed as an opportunity to meet the students' needs for learning consequences. In that way the students create expectations for themselves rather than relying on expectations of others to control their behavior.

Frank (2001) drew on the work in multiple and emotional intelligences and brain research. From brain research we learned we want to build schools that are free from fear, where students do not fear making mistakes. Rather, mistakes are opportunities for students to take responsibility for their actions. Conflict then is viewed as problem solving; how can we collectively solve and transform this conflict.

Noddings supported the idea that schools should respond to wrongdoing and conflict as opportunities to learn and not with punishment. She said, "You don't penalize them (students) for their mistakes but you help them to learn it...Because the idea is to learn, not to be defeated by it" (Hatton, 2000, p. 12).

Based on this theme of responsibility we can transform caring students into caring, confident students. Frank (2001) said empathy is the essence of caring. Empathy is a core concept in the Friendship Circle curriculum.

Through this study I do not wish to perpetuate the discourse of femininity and gender difference by conceptualizing caring as exclusively a motherly activity (Vogt, 2002). Rather, in my study I observed the male teacher and the female teachers committed to the ethic of care. The boys and girls attending the school were caring. While I observed gender differences in other areas, both the male and female students were engaged in the culture of care.

U. S. Department of Education sponsored research conducted by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning and the Mid-Atlantic

Regional Educational Laboratory for Student Success supported the theory of this study (Elias, Wang, Weissberg, Zins, & Walberg 2002). That theory is based on the idea that the competencies contained in Harris' (2000) five strands need to be combined with a culture of caring in the school. This research showed that where that combination of competencies and culture exist academic performance improves. Walden School emphasized the combination of competencies and culture based on the belief that if you create a school environment for learning improved academic performance will be the result, and the research supported that philosophy.

Walden's fundamental philosophy is based on individualized learning. In a journal interview Noddings said, "I learned that people are very different and go through very different experiences...kids are very different and have different interests" (Hatton, 2000, p. 11). She suggested that teachers, "listen to your students. Listen to them and try to connect what you think they should learn with what it is they want to learn" (Hatton, 2000, p. 13).

Walden does not use grades, which is consistent with the philosophy of non-competition. In a journal interview, Noddings supported that idea, "I feel very strongly about grades. I hate giving grades. I think it gets in the way of the teacher-student relationship" (Hatton, 2000, p. 12).

Most recently, Salomon (2003) emphasized that peace education research should be conducted on a group and not an individual level. He said that the perceptions, attitudes, and feelings of a group are fundamental to this research.

Salomon's (2003) work supported the change in my conceptual framework from Harris' (2000) Peace Education Theory Model to Noddings' (1992) ethic of care. Harris'

work is focused on helping individual students gain skills in five areas related to peace. Noddings' work supported my data analysis, from which the idea of a culture of caring emerged.

Based on my data analysis and the feedback I received from the participants in the study, I determined I needed to create a new conceptual framework for this study. I also determined that I needed to review the research questions and reframe those questions in light of the data analysis and the new conceptual framework.

CHAPTER 4: LIMITATIONS

This chapter is included to describe the limitations of my data collection and data analysis procedures. The limitations I considered involve: (a) lack of diversity, (b) private school setting, (c) small size, (d) purposeful study, and (e) student data.

Lack of Diversity

The site of my study was a private school. Because this school was private and located in a city dominated by white, European culture, I was not surprised to find little ethnic diversity among the students and their families. As one teacher explained, “We have diversity in kind of a narrow sense, not a whole lot of racial diversity, a lot of economic” (Teacher Interview, February 13, 2003).

Among the 52 students there were two students from South Korea at the school for a short while at the beginning of the year. Two students with a Czechoslovakian background were bilingual. One student was mixed Asian and European background. One teacher was of Japanese heritage. The majority of the students matched the dominant culture of the city, white and European.

There were 32 male and 20 female students. Among the teachers six were female and one male. The one staff person was female. Predominantly more mothers were present in the school on a daily basis than fathers. However, there were fathers I saw at the school consistently.

I expected the people sending their children to Walden would be affluent. I was surprised to find out a number of people were not affluent and made sacrifices to have

their child attend the school. As one mother explained to me, rather than buy a new car, she and her husband purchased a used car so they could afford to send their child to Walden. Another mother told me that Walden is not a status school. If it was, people would know about it, and she said people in the locale do not know about the school.

The lack of diversity in this study is further limited by Noddings' (1992) ethic of care itself. Valenzuela (2002) noted that Noddings' work is situated in a politically conservative environment. Situated in that environment, researchers can easily ignore an evaluation of how well this ethic of care responds to the community's need to define the language and policy of educational success in its own terms. As a result, the well-being of the community can be compromised.

Private School Setting

The site of my study was a private school. Tuition is the primary source of funds for the school. The school is not subject to federal and state laws and mandates requiring standardized testing and standards based education. A state report card is not compiled comparing this school to other schools in the area. The curriculum is determined by the teachers rather than mandated by administrators.

The school cannot be easily compared to a typical public elementary school. Walden was teacher owned and did not have a hierarchical structure. The leader of the school was one of the owners, who also teaches the fifth and sixth grade students.

Small Size

With 52 students and an average of 13 students per classroom, the size of the school was smaller than the elementary schools in the local public school district. In that district the average class is over 20 students.

Bryk (2003) explained that elementary schools with fewer than 350 students are considered small. He noted “relational trust” (p. 43), which is a key element in a culture of caring, depends on certain conditions, including small school size.

Purposeful Study

I chose to make this a purposeful study. I was interested in learning the meaning of peace in a context I believed had a deliberate culture for peace. During my study participants engaged me in conversations that sought my opinion about how Walden compared to other local schools. I learned most of the parents chose Walden after visiting several local schools. The parents were interested in how I would compare Walden to other schools.

When I told these parents I was not conducting a comparative study, I noted disappointment in their demeanor. I believe it is natural to want to make comparisons. However, my study was not intended to make comparisons.

Student Data

I found collecting data from the students was different than from the adults. The children did not appear to be affected by my presence and the notebook I carried with me for writing jottings. They would answer my informal questions about what was happening.

However, when I would ask a more formal question, like how they felt about a certain event, I noticed their demeanor changed. The students appeared less relaxed and reluctant to talk. Based on those observations, I elected not to conduct formal interviews with the students.

I wanted to understand the students' feelings and thoughts about the school at a deeper level. Finally, toward the end of the school year I came up with the idea of having the students engage in an activity of describing a day in their life at Walden School. Along with that, students would carry a disposable camera with them and take pictures of things that mattered to them during a day. The pictures would accompany the story. Of course, the assignment would be made age appropriate.

I talked to Mr. Johnson about this idea, and he liked it. However, we determined it was too late in the school year to conduct the project.

Like all research projects, this study had limitations. I do not believe these limitations diminished the value of the study and the lessons learned from the research. Rather, I think these limitations are the basis for further research based on this study.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

The findings of this study are addressed in three ways. First, I will paint a portrait of the study site and the participants so I can bring this study to life. Second, I will address how my theoretical framework changed as a result of the data collection and analysis. I will address how the original research questions were changed as a result of the data collection and data analysis and the changes made to my theoretical framework. Third, I will address the new research questions one at a time. I will use data excerpts to illustrate my findings.

A Portrait of the Site and Participants

My study took place at the Walden School. Walden is a small, private school located in a large city in the Front Range of Colorado. Walden had 52 students the year of my study. There were four primary teachers and three teachers that taught music, art, and physical education.

Walden School was established ten years before my study. A mother of two former students made a scrapbook capturing the first ten years of the school. This excerpt from my fieldnotes (December 5, 2002) told the story about the continuity of Walden. The school used the same building since its inception.

On the way out of the building I notice a book on the table near the front door. It is a scrapbook, prepared by a mother of two former students of Walden, about the first ten years of the school. I am impressed with the amount of continuity shown in that book. All of the teachers have been at the school in the same roles since the start of the school. One teacher, Mrs. Schmidt, took off a brief while to have a baby. Also the music and Spanish teacher has been at the school since the beginning.

Typically I rode to the school on my bicycle for my field visits. I rode through several neighborhoods and the city park on my way. I parked my bike in the rack in front of the school. Then I would enter through the front door, a small entryway, and into the large room, where I left my jacket and bag, alongside the students' backpacks.

I began collecting data on the first day of school. That initial field visit provided me with an opportunity to get a picture of the site of my study and the participants in the research.

It is so appropriate to begin this first day of data collection for this research study that spans a school year on the first day of school. And the day and the year of study began, symbolically enough, with the ringing of the old school bell, which came from a country school in Wisconsin and is now housed in a bell tower on the north end of Walden School.

As soon as the bell started ringing, parents and students stood still and looked in the direction of the bell. Some began to clap. The bell was installed last year, and this was the first time the bell was rung for the first day of school.

This is the tenth year the school is in existence. Founder's Day will be celebrated in April. That is the day the owners, Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Johnson, and Mrs. Knox, signed an agreement to begin the school.

Parents were taking pictures of their children outside by the school sign that sits on the nicely groomed grass, and in the classrooms, with their teachers and friends. The parents stood around, some with a coffee cup in hand, until 8:45, chatting with one another, occasionally acknowledging their child with a hug and perhaps a small kiss, their child who ran up to them.

As the parents stood gathered in the large room, the students began working, seemingly without prompting, on some project at their tables. There are four classrooms. Mrs. Johnson teaches the pre-school and kindergartners. Mrs. Knox teaches the first and second graders. Mrs. Schmidt teaches the third and fourth graders, and Mr. Johnson teaches the fifth and sixth graders. The owners are also the teachers, and the only visible administration is the school secretary, Mrs.

Cook, who is helped by the school dog, a wonderful yellow lab-golden retriever cross, JT or Jayne. Two other teachers are Spanish and music, and art. In addition to the four classrooms, there is a kitchen, bathrooms, a workroom, art room, large room (with a stage), library, secretary's office, and entryway.

The school sits in the middle of a beautiful residential area, in the midst of vintage homes, on a street lined with old trees and a median with similar landscape. A local park is a block away.

At recess the students are paired up - fifth and sixth graders with the preschool-kindergarten and third and fourth graders with the first and second graders. They are called "Book Buddies." In addition to walking with their buddy hand in hand

to and from recesses each day, they read to each other at various times during the week. If the fifth or sixth grader is responsible for holding the stop sign as the students cross the street while going to the park for recess, the younger buddy helps hold the sign.

At recess the students engage in the usual games: soccer, tag, running, and a circle game. Football dominates the middle of the play area and is marked by orange cones. The other play activities take place around the perimeter of the football field (Fieldnotes, August 21, 2002).

My initial impressions of this study and the site I visited often during the school year were captured in a vignette.

The first day of school for Walden was August 21, 2002, and the weekend before was the first event of the new school year. Students, parents, and teachers met at the park near the school for a potluck picnic. New teachers, new families, and I were introduced to the community. There was a mixture of conversation, play, and eating at the event.

This was the tenth year since the school began. The first day was marked with the ringing of the school bell. This morning was the first time the bell heralded the beginning of a new year since its installation. We stood in silence as the bell rang – inside the school building, out on the lawn, wherever we were. Parents lingered at the school, taking pictures, talking to the teachers and other parents, and helping their children make the transition from summertime to school.

As the school year began, there was a sense of easing into the new routine, making the transition from spending most of their day at home to school. The parents appeared to want the same transition time, as they lingered at the school, sometimes with a cup of coffee in hand, chatting with the other parents. By the start of the second week, the parents of the grades two and below were doing less chatting with each other at the door of the classroom of Mrs. Knox and spending more time in the classroom helping their child and other children get started for the school day. They would stay at the school for as long as an hour.

I learned the first day that the school is rich with rituals. In the early afternoon a student handed me a root beer float. I asked what was going on and was told traditionally on the first day the fifth and sixth grade students make and deliver root beer floats to all the people in the school.

At the first recess the students already knew who their Book Buddie was, and I noticed older students holding the hands of younger students as they went to and from recess. If the older student had the job of holding a stop sign as they crossed the street to the park where they played during recess, the younger student would help.

My observations confirmed what Mr. Johnson told me, the focus of the school is on the individual student – accepting them where they are at and helping them improve. Students worked at their own pace. If a student was not doing well in a classroom they were moved to another classroom. There was no talk about

standardized tests, school report cards, and needing to do well on these tests (Impressionist Vignette, September 12, 2002).

Normally I would arrive at Walden School at 7:45 in the morning, just before school started at 8:00. I would see parents driving and walking their children to school. The children would be wearing backpacks. Sometimes parents would bid goodbye to their children in front of the school, and sometimes they would go inside. I was touched by one father who said goodbye to his children in his native language. Then the children would turn to me and say, "Good morning." I thought it was wonderful how they switched from one language to another with ease.

I was struck by how involved the parents were with the school and how they appeared to be bonded to one another.

The parent involvement in the class seems to be a way of transition from home to school, without the abruptness of dropping a child off at the front of the school and leaving. At this age this transition seems to work well, and the parent involvement helps all the students (Fieldnotes, August 28, 2002).

The parents stood around, some with a coffee cup in hand, until 8:45, chatting with one another, occasionally recognizing with a hug and perhaps a small kiss, their child who ran up to them. . . As the parents stood gathered in the large room, the students began working, seemingly without prompting, on some project at their tables (Fieldnotes, August 21, 2002).

To become familiar with the school, Mr. Johnson suggested I attend the Friday all-school meetings. I began attending those meetings the first week of school. I learned this gathering was an important event for the students, teachers, and parents.

The all-together meeting starts at 8:15. Again, the player piano brings the classes to the room. Mr. Johnson has to help the two students assigned to the player piano. The children come in single file and sit in rows east to west in the large room, with the youngest students in the front and the oldest students in the back. When the school bell rings, the students quiet down.

Then Mr. Johnson says the school bell is like "magic" in how it calls everyone to attention. He then turns the term "magic" to tell how yesterday a story about "rats" became the talk of the school. First there were rats in the boys' bathroom -

one, two, three, four rats, and then they began appearing in the girls' bathroom. He emphasized that this was a "story."

I then told them about my hero, Mahatma Gandhi, and that he stood for peace. I talked about his long walk to the sea to get salt, and how he gained independence from England for India.

Mrs. Schmidt talked about the different kinds of trees - evergreen, deciduous, and fern. She passed around small specimens of each variety for the children to see, touch, and smell.

Mrs. Johnson played her guitar and led us in a song about the earth.

Mr. Johnson introduced two students with new siblings - one that was just born and one to be born soon. He read two poems from the book, "Where the Sidewalk Never Ends." One was about "imagination" and the other about "fear." He tied this into the story about the rats and how often imagination goes with fear, because we tend to create imagination out of our fears.

The player piano signals the end of the meeting, and we all go back to our classrooms (Fieldnotes, August 30, 2003).

Beyond my observations of the school, I wanted to gain insight into what the participants thought about the school. In the formal interviews I asked the parents I talked with why they chose Walden for their children. Their answers helped me paint a picture about the school.

I thought an environment that was small would be good advantage for him. I didn't want to split them up either. I didn't know whether it was a good thing or bad thing. They're so close, I'd rather not. So when we interviewed initially I got good feelings about the smallness and the calm and a lot of caring going on, a lot of demonstrative kind of things that went on between the students and each other and as well as with the staff (Interview of a Mother, April 7, 2003).

I hadn't considered private schools. I went to Walden and in about three seconds I thought, oh, gosh, I bet this is going to be a line item in my budget. The minute I walked in here there was something about the whole feel and the community and the eye contact and openness, and anyway, I spent the entire day, and I can't really describe it, but I knew quickly this is exactly where I fit in. I wanted teachers that were down to earth, and they looked like they all got along with each other. I liked the way the parents were. I liked what was going on. I liked the individualized learning, small classrooms; brought the whole package together. There were definitely some things I couldn't get. They couldn't be involved in things they wanted, but the foundation of care is more important to me than anything. The academics, they were both smart. That wasn't a problem. I wanted the foundation of caring (Interview of a Mother, April 8, 2003).

Trying to describe the participants, who became my friends during the study, is difficult because there is so much to write about. Trying to capture in a few paragraphs a year of interaction with the people of Walden School is challenging. So I will close with my favorite description of Walden, which was made by a mother, who said Walden was “just like a hug” (Fieldnotes, October 10, 2002).

Reframing the Theoretical Framework and Research Questions

Data collection and analysis in this study led to a reframing of the theoretical framework. That reframing resulted in addressing and changing the research questions for this study.

The initial lens for collecting and analyzing data for this study was based on the work of Harris (2002). At the time he had created the most current and definitive work on peace education theory. I chose peace education theory as the theoretical framework for observing and interpreting the culture of Walden School for the meaning of peace because my study was taking place in a school and involved the idea of peace. The five strands of this theory formed the basis of this study. They were human rights education, environmental education, international education, conflict resolution education, and development education.

One of the ideas I determined at that time to be a part of peace education theory (Harris, 2002) was the ethic of care. This idea came from feminist thought and emphasized the value of caring over competition. Noddings (1992), author of the ethic of care, said that education about caring should include “care for self, for intimate others, for associates and acquaintances, for distant others, for nonhuman animals, for plants and

the physical environment, for the human-made world of objects and instruments, and for ideas” (p. xiii).

The theory of restorative justice was another important part of my initial theoretical framework. I interpreted the strand of Harris’ (2000) peace education theory involving conflict resolution in terms of the theory of restorative justice. This approach to conflict resolution appeared to me to be consistent with the *Friendship Circle* curriculum at Walden School.

I also mentioned in my theoretical framework the values contained in the peace education theory model (Harris, 2000) were consistent with the Universal Declaration on Human Rights created by the United Nations (Sikula, 1996). I noted Glendon (2001) found the values that underlie this document were spiritual in origin. Therefore, these values can be said to be both spiritual and humanistic. I adapted these values into these basic concepts, which were consistent with peace education theory (Cavanagh, 2000): (a) the common good, (b) human dignity, (c) solidarity, (d) subsidiarity, (e) option of the poor, and (f) relationships.

Reframing the Theoretical Framework

Early on in my data analysis I began to believe that the meaning of peace in the culture of Walden School was more than the five strands of the peace education theory model (Harris, 2000). This excerpt is from my first reflective field memo (October 23, 2002).

As I analyzed my initial data, I was reminded of Some’s (1998) work. I found the culture of this school is grounded in the ethic of caring (Noddings, 2002), caring for and caring about. This ethic of caring, present in the culture of the school, has three aspects: (a) ritual, (b) healing, and (c) community. An example of caring is found in this passage, particularly as caring is contrasted with competition.

This year was different in that soon after the beginning of the school year a weekend retreat was held in the mountains west of the school. Students, parents, and teachers spent the weekend together in a beautiful, relaxed atmosphere. The focus was on individual families getting to spend time together and to share some of that time with other families in the school community. What surprised me was what I did not see – comparisons of families, competition, and other ways of setting up win/lose, better/worse, or right/wrong situations. Even events that could be competitive, like the Treasure Hunt on Saturday morning, turned out not to be competitive. The event that I thought has the greatest potential for being competitive was the fort building. Mr. Johnson described the activities as each family building a fort. I was hiking while the fort building activity was going on. When I returned, I went to look at the results and found one fort being built. I learned right away the students decided they would rather work together and build one fort than many forts. The result was magnificent. (Impressionist Vignette, September 12, 2002.)

Walden School was rich with rituals, and the rituals supported the ethic of care.

One of the first rituals I observed was the “Book Buddies.”

At recess the students are paired up – fifth and sixth graders with the preschool-kindergarten and third and fourth graders with the first and second graders. They are called “Book Buddies.” In addition to walking with their buddy hand in hand to and from recesses each day, they read to each other at various times during the week and sometimes enjoy projects or games together (Fieldnotes, August 21, 2002).

Closely linked with rituals were symbols. The school bell served as both a symbol and a ritual at the school. The bell has a long history, dating back to the early 1900’s, when it called children to school in New California, Wisconsin. A current parent at Walden School listened to that bell as she rode her bike to school. Later her family bought the bell. Ultimately the bell was donated to the school. Profits from school fundraisers were used to build the bell tower.

“The bell tower has come to symbolize Walden Community’s spirit of working together toward a common goal.” The ritual of ringing the bell will mean students are “preparing for a new day of lessons and activities, but also that they are linked to an earlier time in history.” (Documents, May 2002.)

I found healing relations was an important concept in this culture. The focus of healing is relationships and healing the harm to relationships that results from conflict and wrongdoing. The Friendship Circle course at Walden gave the students the skills to engage in this healing relationships process.

Community at Walden School had a specific meaning. Community in this context was focused on creating a culture where all members of the community can flourish and there is a sense of solidarity or all for all. The following passage illustrates how this is a community where all can flourish.

My observations confirmed what Mr. Johnson told me, the focus of the school is on the individual student – accepting them where they are and helping them improve. Students worked at their own pace. If the student was not doing well in a classroom they were moved. There was no talk about standardized tests, school report cards, and needing to do well on tests. (Impressionist Vignette, September 12, 2002.)

The theory of a culture of care, which emerged from the data analysis, was encouraging. This ethic of care and its three aspects, ritual, healing, and community, formed a new theory for this study. I then went back into the field and collected data to determine if that theory continued to be valid in this context.

My second round of data collection and analysis confirmed and expanded my initial theory about this culture of care that gave meaning to the idea of peace at Walden.

I am beginning to learn that there are several themes that appear to be directly related to the meaning of peace in this school. These themes form the content of this paper and are: caring and competition, school norms, rituals, symbols and celebrations, heroes, recognition and empowerment of students, parent involvement, global awareness, environmental awareness, community, and conflict resolution.

Caring and competition are two major themes that help me understand the meaning of peace in this culture. As authors, such as Professor Nel Noddings of Stanford, have noted, the ethic of caring is in contrast to the societal norm in the United States of competition. While Noddings seems to contrast caring and competition as dichotomous, I believe they are two parts of the culture of Walden,

existing on a continuum. As one teacher noted to me, competition in this context refers to external competition (i.e., sports, winning and losing, ranking students) rather than internal competition (i.e., desire to do better, to learn more, to improve). Evidence of the ethic of caring at Walden is abundant (i.e., Book Buddies, students helping each other, teacher concern for the welfare of other teachers, and parents bidding their children goodbye in the morning). My observations of external competition have concentrated on football at recess. Boys often wear clothing with logos for local university and professional sports teams. I learned that sportsmanship and inclusion of everyone (at least the boys) is stressed more than winning and losing, at least from the perspective of the teachers. Internal competition is apparent in the individualized instruction and the lack of creating dualistic comparisons (i.e., better/worse, right/wrong). I determined that caring and internal competition are two important components of the meaning of peace in this culture (Reflective Memo, February 15, 2002).

School norms became apparent to me in the second phase of data collection. I found these norms were connected to the idea of caring.

Although I had not seen a document that listed school rules for student behavior, norms for student conduct were apparent. For example, how students lined up going to and coming from recess, how students filed into the large room and sat in rows for the all-school meeting on Fridays, shutting lights off when students needed to quiet down, and the requirement of “inside voices” when students had indoor recess. These norms appeared to be taught in a number of ways (i.e., Book Buddies, teachers) and had consequences, although I would not term the consequences as punishment. I particularly enjoyed how bathroom etiquette was taught at an all school meeting by a short play involving a teacher and a student. The bathroom pass was part of the culture of the school and was introduced in the first and second grade classroom and used consistently through the sixth grade (Reflective Memo, February 15, 2002).

I confirmed the theme of rituals in the data collected during the second phase of this study. I noted rituals, symbols and celebrations are an important part of the culture of this school and a means for teaching and learning about the culture of peace in this environment. The three themes were integrated but had different meanings. I described rituals as those events that had become traditions at the school.

Two important rituals I had participated in by that time were making root beer floats on the first day of school and hot cocoa morning on the first day of snow. The importance of rituals at Walden was captured in the Walden School Newsletter article about “Hot Cocoa Morning” (January 2002), “We need to know

that some things can still be counted on like rituals and memories. Like hot cocoa and new fallen snow” (Reflective Memo, February 15, 2002).

At that time symbols and rituals were hard for me to distinguish. I believed the school bell was an important symbol at the school and was also part of the school rituals. Likewise, celebrations were hard to distinguish from rituals. I termed those events that were part of the life of students outside of Walden as celebrations. The major celebration to date was Halloween. Even within these celebrations were certain traditions, like the appearance of Viola Swamp on Halloween to substitute for the first and second grade teacher.

In time I came to understand these symbols, traditions, and celebrations were the way this community ritualized its norms. This ritualization process was the way new students and parents learned the norms of the school.

The theme of heroes was part of my observations. Many of these heroes that were talked about at the all-school meeting on Fridays included people famous for work related to peace: (i.e., Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi).

I observed that students at Walden were recognized and empowered. This empowerment process was part of the school’s deliberate attempt for students to take age appropriate responsibility beginning in preschool until they graduated at the end of sixth grade.

One part of the all-school meeting on Friday was poetry. Often a student poem was read with the student sitting on the stage. Empowerment included such things as encouraging a student to arrange for a blood donation demonstration at the school involving the student’s father as the blood donor. Another time I watched as two older students solved the problem of how to get a paper airplane out of the heating duct on the ceiling of the large room. This philosophy was expressed well by a teacher in a recent edition of the school newsletter (2002, September-October), “My theory about helping children to become confident and eager writers is to encourage successes and feelings of pride for their efforts.” That

philosophy for building student confidence appeared to apply to many aspects of the school (Reflective Memo, February 15, 2002).

Parent involvement was another theme during this second phase of data collection and analysis. Parents were a constant presence in the school, not only bringing children to school and picking them up. I observed them helping their children and other students in the individual classroom, helping collect money for lunch, running the book fair, leading Great Books, and facilitating the Halloween festivities. Obviously parents felt welcomed at the school and were an integral part of the school.

I found students at Walden School had an awareness of the world. I observed this aspect of the culture primarily in two areas: World Harmony Day and the focus on learning about the Mediterranean countries. World Harmony Day was the school's way of remembering the events of September 11, 2001, in a positive way.

The theme of community again emerged in the second round of data collection. I found that community at Walden was defined in terms of "we all fit in" (Fieldnotes, September 12, 2002). This sense of solidarity was seen in terms of cooperation and working together. The result was "the whole school has a family feel to it" (Fieldnotes, November 11, 2002).

Integral to this study and, of course, of particular interest to me was how the school responded to conflict and wrongdoing by focusing on healing relationships. I observed the Friendship Circle class was a way of teaching students the skills of negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. I was asked to facilitate a conference for the third and fourth grade class. I chose to use the Peacemaking Circle process and acted as the keeper of the circle. I was impressed how the students transferred what they learned in the Friendship Circle classes to this new process.

At the end of the second phase of data collection and analysis I found the original themes of caring, rituals, community, and healing relationships continued to emerge. The theme of rituals was expanded to include symbols, traditions, and celebrations. Additional themes that emerged during this second phase of data collection and analysis included norms, heroes, student empowerment and recognition, parent involvement, and world awareness. Again, I went back into the field a third time to collect data to determine whether or not this emerging theory of a culture of care would be substantiated.

During the third phase of data collection I deepened my understanding of what peace meant in this community. I learned another element of caring was empathy. In a Friendship Circle session a student defined empathy in these terms, "Empathy is when you listen with your heart. You put yourself in their shoes and really understand what that person is feeling, pretending to feel like they feel" (Fieldnotes, December 18, 2002).

I found that caring extended beyond the school. I noticed several instances of this type of caring. While at the World Studies Night in November, I observed this example of extending care:

After serving I get a dish for myself and sit down. Mrs. Knox and her husband sit down with me. I am impressed when Mr. Knox gets up to serve food to a homeless man that has wandered in and out of the room a couple of times while we are serving. Mr. Knox treats the man with dignity, compassion and caring. (Fieldnotes, November 16, 2002).

Also in November a teacher wrote to the parents:

A recent article in the newspaper reminded me again just how fortunate I am, a loving family, a comfortable home and a fulfilling job are just a few of the many things that I have come to take for granted. Most of us never have to think about whether we will be able to feed or clothe our children, yet there are many people in our own community who must make difficult

decisions every day about how they will use their very limited resources” (Documents, November 17, 2002).

As a result of this request, the students and their parents responded, as I noted in this writing:

This morning as I enter the large room I notice children and their parents are carrying sacks of food and clothing into the large room and placing them on the stage. A few fifth and sixth grade students are placing frozen turkeys in a pyramid. (Fieldnotes, November 22, 2002).

I observed these students and their parents demonstrated sensitivity to the poor, particular those living in poverty in the local community. The donated food was given to the local food distribution center, and the clothing went to a church in the community.

The theme of traditions continued to emerge. The highlight in November was the Thanksgiving feast, which I described in this way:

This is the tenth year for this tradition, and today the menu is the same. Each classroom makes a different item for the meal: preschool-kindergarten - butter, first and second grade -- no-bake pumpkin pie, third and fourth grade - cornbread, and fifth and sixth grade - applesauce. In addition, the first and second grade students made construction paper pilgrims and Indians for centerpieces. So we put a dab of each part of this festive meal on each plate. I am in charge of the pumpkin pie, which I note is a lot of Cool Whip and pumpkin. I learn the preschool and kindergarten students worked hard shaking the film canisters to make butter. They complained their arms hurt from shaking the canisters. Then the students begin to arrive back from recess. Their cheeks are red, and there is snow on their clothes. They have to take off their snowsuits, coats, boots, gloves, mittens, and hats. They have snow on their clothes. A teacher plays some quiet music, and another Thanksgiving tradition begins. The tables are at the sides of the room, and the children sit on the floor in the middle. Another teacher asks the students if they remember the story, and they raise their hands and say, “Yes.” Then she reads the story, “Giving Thanks,” just as she has for the last ten years. (Fieldnotes, November 26, 2002)

I learned these traditions are part of another important element of the culture of care, continuity. An example of continuity was found in this passage:

On the way out of the building I notice a book on the table near the front door. It is a scrapbook, prepared by a mother of two former students of Walden, about the first ten years of the school. I am impressed by the theme of continuity that permeates the book. All of the teachers have been at the school in the same roles since the start of the school. One teacher took leave to have a baby. Also the music/Spanish teacher has been at the school since the beginning.

Continuity is another major theme at Walden. That is a major component in creating a culture of care. The students have predictability in the traditions and rituals as well as who will teach them in what grades. That creates a sense of comfort with the school (Fieldnotes, December 5, 2002).

I observed that the students at Walden are encouraged to be familiar with their local surroundings. Noddings (n.d.) called this placed based education and said it correlates with the ethic of caring. In this regard I wrote about a letter to parents from a teacher:

Also she talked about how the class was beginning to study “Fort Collins History” with a field visit to “The Avery House” (Documents, November 22, 2002)

I came to believe the metaphor of quilting was appropriate for describing the culture of care at Walden. The following quote explained this metaphor:

Quilting is a way of expressing ourselves, of sorting out thoughts and emotions, of sifting through daily experiences, frustrations and joys, to produce a visual, tactile record of a day, a month, a minute...It is a way to wrap our children in love at night, to delight them during the day. Quilting...has given me self-confidence and helped me to see that I am a unique individual with a unique view of life” (Brainard, 1997).

By the end of the third round of data collection and analysis I understood at a deeper level the meaning of caring in this culture. Important elements of the theme of caring were continuity, empathy, and extending caring beyond the Walden community. The idea of place-based education was a new theme, and I recognized it as related to the ethic of caring. Traditions was a recurring theme in this round of data collection and analysis.

At this point the school was ready for the holiday break. While on break I reflected on what I learned thus far in the field and determined that during the second half of the school year I would continue to visit the field but less frequently, and I would focus on conducting formal interviews with the parents and teachers to confirm (or not confirm) my emerging theory and to deepen my understanding of the meaning of the idea of caring in this culture.

The data collected from the formal interviews helped me confirm my findings in the field and get another perspective on those data I had collected. Again, caring emerged as the central theme of this data analysis. Teachers and parents interviewed agreed with my reflective memos that focused on the culture of care. I contrasted this theme of caring with competition based on the work of Noddings (1992). However, a few parents had trouble with the contrast. I thought about the contrast in terms of the distinction between external competition and internal motivation. I determined, rather than juxtaposing the two ideas of caring and competition, perhaps this school wants to create caring competitors, particularly differentiating between the appropriate time and place for caring and competing.

From the interview data I learned the key elements of this culture of care are:

- (a) norms are ritualized and not written as rules, (b) celebrations, traditions, and symbols ritualize the norms, (c) the number of students in the school and classrooms is small, (d) continuity exists in terms of teachers and predictability, (e) caring extends outside the school to the community, (f) students learn how to resolve conflicts nonviolently, particularly through the skills learned in the Friendship Circle program, (g) students are

empowered and become “powerful,” particularly through increasing amounts of responsibility from preschool through sixth grade.

My conversations with parents about why they chose Walden for their children’s primary education were interesting. The parents said they visited several other schools, sometimes talked to others, and finally chose Walden because it fit and felt right, particularly because of the individualized learning and the foundation of care.

I analyzed my fourth data set from the field at the end of the school year. This concluded my time in the field on this project. I found towards the end of the school year the themes were repeating themselves and the data were saturated. I was confident the major theme was caring, and that theme represented how the people in this study gave meaning to the word peace in this context.

By that time I had learned the culture of care at Walden had several dimensions. The school was small, and that was an important factor in creating and sustaining this culture. Because the school was small, behavior was able to be directed by norms rather than written rules. These norms were supported and learned by new people primarily through the rituals of the school, which consisted of the traditions, symbols, and celebrations. The primary focus of this school was on the human consequences of conflict and wrongdoing. These behaviors were seen as opportunities for learning. Students were taught nonviolent responses to conflict and wrongdoing. Conflict resolution skills were taught to the students beginning in the third grade. This school chose early on to be noncompetitive, and that was consistent with the caring culture.

These themes emanated from the data and formed the framework for a new conceptual theory for this study. Certainly data supporting the five strands of Harris’

model were found. However, they were not sufficient to explain how this group of people gave meaning to the idea of peace. Over time in the field, I was able to determine that Noddings' (1992) ethic of care helped me make sense of what peace meant to the people I studied, and, more importantly, these people agreed with that sensemaking.

The findings revealed by my data collection and analysis helped me understand the meaning of peace in this culture. The core of that meaning was based on the ethic of care (Noddings, 1992) and helped me form a theoretical framework for understanding the culture of care at Walden School. Rather than contrasting the ethic of care with competition, as Noddings did, I learned from this study caring is contrasted with control (Inlay, 2003), that is, controlling the behavior of students.

My work in this study took Noddings' (1992) work, which was focused on the classroom and the individual teacher, and applied the ethic of care to the school. Goodlad (1984) said we cannot ignore the school's "ambience" (p. 81) or culture. His research suggested that a culture of caring was as important to the parents he studied as was academics.

This theory of a culture of care is built on Noddings' (1992) work and two other theoretical frameworks. I learned in this study the basic elements of a culture of care were ritual, healing relationships, and community (Some, 1998). Healing relationships were dependent upon safety, accountability, and competency (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1998). Combining these ideas formed the new conceptual framework for this study.

For this theoretical framework I adopted Noddings' (1984) conceptualization of the ethic of care. This definition fit well with the idea of empathy taught to the students at Walden in the Friendship Circle course. The explanation of care is:

Apprehending the other's reality, feeling what he feels as nearly as possible, is the essential part of caring from the view of the one-caring. For if I take on the other's reality as possibility and begin to feel its reality, I feel, also, that I must act accordingly; that is, I am impelled to act as though in my own behalf, but in behalf of others (p. 16).

This theory of a culture of care is dependent on three primary elements: ritual, healing relationships, and community. Some's (1998) work fits well with the data I collected and analyzed. In this culture of care norms formed the boundaries for behavior of students, parents, and teachers. These norms were ritualized through symbols, traditions, and celebrations. I found that the small size of the school and the classrooms contributed to the ability of this community to ritualize norms rather than adopting written rules. These norms were built on the idea of human dignity and mutual respect for one another.

The distinguishing feature of this culture was healing relationships. People were recognized as being social by nature and responsible for contributing to the well being of the community in which they participated. Other schools have rituals and a sense of community, and like other schools Walden has its problems. What differentiates Walden from other schools is how people in this culture responded to conflict and wrongdoing. The emphasis in this school was on healing relationships rather than imposing punishment based on a violation of the written rules. These problems were viewed as an opportunity to learn, not as an interruption of academics.

The idea of healing relationships is based on three elements: safety, accountability, and competency. Dennis Maloney (personal communication, March 5, 2002) was one of the primary consultants to the report about this concept (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1998). His explanation of these terms fits with what I found from my data analysis. Safety involves both physical and emotional safety. Students are not dependent on external management of their behavior. Their locus of control is internal rather than external. Students are accountable because they do not need written rules to control their behavior. They are accountable to the people around them based on human relationships rather than the fear of punishment. The students learn how to heal the harm of conflict and wrongdoing through restorative processes like negotiation, mediation, and Peacekeeping Circles rather than using retributive, violent means to respond. Problems are solved by persons directly involved rather than having someone in authority solve the problems for them. The students at Walden become competent through ever-increasing responsibility while they attend the school and acquire the skills they need to be competent. They learn to apply those skills, and they transfer them to their daily life. Finally, they teach others at the school the skills for competency.

In this context community is built on the idea of the common good, a culture where all members can flourish. There is a sense of solidarity or all for all, and there is a place for everyone because students, in particular, are accepted for who they are and given help to improve. I found this idea of community contrasts with a climate of rivalry. Such a climate is closely aligned with Noddings' (1992) idea of competition and is contrary to the desire of Walden's founders to create a noncompetitive school climate.

Adopting a new theoretical framework caused me to look at my original research questions and reframe those questions, if necessary, according to the new basis for understanding the data in this study. Adopting new theoretical and conceptual frameworks and research questions is common in qualitative studies. Grounded theory analysis is used purposely for studies like this in order to create new theory based on the data (Ryan & Bernard, 2000).

Reframing the Research Questions

My initial research questions focused on discovering the meaning of peace in the culture of the Walden School community. These questions were intended to guide my initial work in the field and to give me a lens for looking at the data I collected. As I collected and analyzed the data, I reflected on what I was learning in light of these questions to determine if they were still appropriate. I expected to modify and change the questions as the study evolved.

My initial research questions were based on the purpose of this study, the meaning of peace as I described it, and the five strands of the peace education theory model (Harris, 2002). Those initial research questions were:

1. What does peace mean at the Walden School?
2. What is the daily lived experience of the students, teachers, staff, and parents associated with the Walden School relative to creating a culture of peace that is consistent with the five strands of peace education theory?
3. How does the Walden School combine elements of positive and negative peace into the culture of the community?

Based on what I learned from those data I collected and analyzed and the new theoretical framework I created for this study, I found I needed to change my research questions. The first question remained the same. I changed the second question because I found Harris' (2002) theory did not help me to understand the meaning of peace in this culture, and the third question was not relevant to my study since I did not find evidence of negative peace at Walden School. My new research questions were:

1. What does peace mean at the Walden School?
2. What is the daily lived experience of the students, teachers, staff, and parents associated with the Walden School relative to creating a culture of care.

Addressing the New Research Questions

Each research question will be addressed one at a time. I will use excerpts from those data I collected and analyzed to illustrate the answers to the questions.

The first research question was: What does peace mean at the Walden School? I am confident the data pointed to the culture of care as the answer to this question. The parents at Walden School gave meaning to the idea of peace in their daily lived experiences through this culture of care. This culture formed the framework for understanding how these people gave meaning to the idea of peace.

I believe the essence of this culture of care is expressed in the school song, which was sung for the first time at the World Harmony Day celebration.

Weave, weave
Weave us together.
Weave us together in love.
Weave, weave, weave us together.
Weave us together, together in love. (chorus)

We are many textures.
We are many colors

Each one different from the other,
But we are entwined with one another
In one great tapestry.

We are different instruments
Playing our own melodies,
Each one tuning to a different key,
But we are all playing in harmony,
In one great symphony (Fieldnotes, September 13, 2002).

I looked for a metaphor and symbol for this culture of care. I believe the quilt is the symbol for this culture and the Book Buddies process is the metaphor.

Quilts were an important symbol in this school. I believe these quilts are a symbol of the culture of care at Walden. The quilts I talked about in these fieldnotes (September 11, 2002) hung on the walls of the large room during the school year.

Two guest speakers were introduced from the philosophy department of the local university. Their children had attended Walden. They talked about harmony having to do with different people, doing different things, in different spots, coming together. They made this an amusing talk.

Then they turned to the idea of a quilt. In order to make a quilt you need to know and understand about the other pieces and how does your piece fit with the other pieces. The same with people. You want your people to blend in with the others. That is difficult, which is why harmony is hard to achieve.

So what happens when people don't get along? If two pieces of the quilt don't fit together, then we use a third piece of quilt to help the two pieces fit together. The same with people. When we don't get along we use a third person, "someone in the middle," a "harmony maker." This third person is called a mediator. At Walden we are all becoming mediators to bring harmony to the world.

Then the students, teachers, parents, and guests sang a song about "weaving" – "weave us together in love." Mr. Johnson later said this is the school song. They waited ten years and finally found a school song, and it was found earlier this week, just in time for World Harmony Day.

Mrs. Knox pointed to a poster of children playing together and at the bottom it said, "Let us join our hands and hearts to build a better world."

Now the making of the "Harmony Quilts" started. The children each had a design on paper they cut out. They then picked a square of material from among hundreds of choices of color and design. They placed the design on the material and cut out the design. Then they took the material to one of the mothers to have the Wonder sticky material ironed on the back. Then the design was ironed on to a square piece of muslin. The muslin was put in a hoop, and the children began to

sew around the edges of their design. Now, the preschool and kindergarten children did not use this process. Instead they drew directly on the muslin. After Mrs. Knox explained this process, the school bell rang, and the children went to their individual classrooms. After they had cut out their designs on the material, they returned to the large room. I observed children sitting in clusters sewing and chatting. Parents were sitting or squatting with the children, helping them with the needle and thread. There was a pleasant sound of voices as they proceeded with the sewing. Few were done when the time came (late) for recess. So the children put aside their work and went outside. And I left for the day.

Mrs. Knox quoted Brainard (1997) when explaining the importance of quilting at Walden.

Quilting is a way of expressing ourselves, of sorting out thoughts and emotions, of sifting through daily experiences, frustrations and joys, to produce a visual, tactile record of a day, a month, a minute...It is a way to wrap our children in love at night, to delight them during the day. Quilting...has given me self-confidence and helped me to see that I am a unique individual with a unique view of life" (p. 36).

The metaphor for the culture of care at Walden was the Book Buddies process.

The students read to one another, as the name would imply. However, the activity Book Buddies engaged in that illustrated the culture of care was the process for going to and from recess.

At recess the students are paired up - fifth and sixth graders with the preschool-kindergarten and third and fourth graders with the first and second graders. They are called "Book Buddies." In addition to walking with their buddy hand in hand to and from recesses each day, they read to each other at various times during the week. If the fifth or sixth grader is responsible for holding the stop sign as the students cross the street while going to the park for recess, the younger buddy helps hold the sign (Fieldnotes, August 21, 2002).

As I explained my ideas about this culture of care to participants in the study, I found I would often refer to the following story to illustrate my thoughts.

In this culture, the students, particularly the boys, are taught to differentiate between the appropriate time and place to be caring and to be competitive. Often I see the older boys tenderly helping their School Buddies put on their coats, mittens, and boots and then holding hands as they walk to the park for recess. Once at the park, the younger students go off to play with their peers, and the

older boys play a competitive game of football. At the end of recess, the same boys return to the role of caregiver to their School Buddies and hold hands as they walk back to the school. I notice that these boys are not ridiculed for their caring behavior. The culture of the school supports their being caring in one instance and competitive in the other. I believe this ability to differentiate is unique to the culture of Walden and is consistent with the culture of caring I have identified (Reflective Memo, February 15, 2003).

I believe the culture of care at Walden was captured in this interview exchange (April 10, 2003) I had with Mrs. Knox:

Q This whole idea of caring that I keep writing about, what are your thoughts and feelings about that?

A Well, you know, I think that we call this occupation teaching, but really what it means is they teach me more than I teach them, and really I'm caring for them. I really feel we care for them physically, emotionally, mentally, in all ways, so it's not really that we're teaching them so much we're just caring for their growth. So that's really, I guess, how I see the school grow. We have the Pablo Picasso saying each child is unique and we just need to care for each child individually because they grow so differently. So I guess that's how I see it. We're really almost caregivers rather than teachers. That's kind of how I feel. That's why I feel this school ends up the way it does. It's not so much an education as taking care of them for this part of their life.

The culture of care at Walden had several dimensions, framed within the ideas of ritual, healing relationships, and community. A discussion about those dimensions answers the second research question.

The second research question was: What is the daily lived experience of the students, teachers, staff, and parents associated with the Walden School relative to creating a culture of care. This daily lived experience will be described in terms of the dimensions of this culture of care: ritual, healing relationships, and community. Healing relationships will be further explained in terms of safety, accountability, and competency.

The importance of norms in this culture and how these norms were ritualized was discussed in this passage:

I struggled with the idea of rituals at this school. I finally determined that the norms of the school were ritualized through symbols, traditions, and celebrations.

School norms became apparent to me in the last month. Although I have not seen a document that lists school rules for student behavior, norms for student conduct are apparent. For example, how students line up going to and coming from recess, how students file into the large room and sit in rows for the all-school meeting on Fridays, shutting lights off when students need to quiet down, and the requirement of “inside voices” when students have indoor recess. These norms appear to be taught in a number of ways (i.e., Book Buddies, teachers), and the norms have consequences, although I would not term the consequences as punishment. I particularly enjoyed how bathroom etiquette was taught at an all school meeting by a short play involving a teacher and a student. The bathroom pass is part of the culture of the school and is introduced in the first and second grade classroom and used consistently through the sixth grade.

Rituals, symbols and celebrations are an important part of the culture of this school and a means for teaching and learning about the culture of peace in this environment. The three themes are integrated but have different meanings. I describe rituals are those events that have become traditions at the school. Two important rituals I have participated in thus far are making root beer floats on the first day of school and having a hot cocoa morning on the first day of snow. The importance of rituals at Walden was captured in the Walden School Newsletter article about “Hot Cocoa Morning” (2002, January), “We need to know that some things can still be counted on like rituals and memories. Like hot cocoa and new fallen snow” (Reflective Memo, February 15, 2002).

The Friday all-school meeting is a metaphor for this idea of ritualizing norms. I explained this weekly gathering in this Impressionist Vignette (February 15, 2003):

Every Friday the day begins with the weekly all-school meeting. I was struck by the ritual of two fifth and sixth grade students choosing a song and playing it on the player piano. As the students pumped furiously away on the piano so the music would be heard, the classes entered the large room one at a time and sat in rows, starting with the youngest in the front and the oldest in the back. Parents would either sit with their children or stand in the back of the room. Teachers and guests sat on the front of the stage. When everyone was seated, the school bell would start ringing, and we would all be silent. The meeting usually included a discussion about a hero, like Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr., a song about peace, our planet, or living together, introduction of a guest, and a poem read by Mr. Johnson. The meeting would end with the playing of the player piano.

The traditions at Walden were an important part of the culture and a means for ritualizing norms. There were traditions unique to Walden, like root beer floats on the first day of school and hot cocoa on the first day of snowfall. Other traditions were shared with the larger society, like Halloween, Thanksgiving, and graduation.

Halloween was a favorite tradition for the students at Walden. I described the Halloween festivities at Walden in this fieldnote (October 31, 2002):

I come early today, thinking the festivities start right away, and I learn that the students will carve the pumpkins they brought to school (already cleaned out) during the morning, and the real activities start after the noon break.

I return later that morning for the celebration. I notice Mrs. Knox dressed as “Viola Swamp.” I have read the book about Viola and know the story of how the nice teacher disappears after a time when the students are misbehaving and is replaced by Viola, a strict and mean character. Later the teacher returns and the students are so glad and behave much better. I go into role with Mrs. Knox (Viola) in front of her students. The students protest that this is not really Viola and we insist she is. There is much fun. Mrs. Cook notices I am without a costume and offers me a Mad Scientist costume. So I dress up in a black shirt with big white polka dots, a bowtie, and plastic black glasses, with big eyebrows, and a nose. I look the part with my long curly hair and beard, which is now graying. I enjoy playing the role.

Dr. Boris comes from the local university to show us “The Haunted Laboratory.” He brought live bugs for the students to see and touch. He joins fun, scariness, and great learning for the students about insects, the different kinds – arachnids, crustaceans, and arthropods. In the middle of the talk, Dr. Boris passes around a big live cockroach. Somehow the cockroach gets out of its container and is squashed. Dr. Boris reacts calmly and suggests someone clean up the mess. He then brings out “Rosy,” a tarantella, for the students to feel and hold in their hand if they want. I marvel at how some of the older boys choose not to touch the tarantella and some of the youngest and smallest girls are anxious to do so. The room is set up in a carnival-like atmosphere. There is a “Monster Walk,” a broom-fishing pond (where I work), a table where students taste jellybeans and say what it tastes like (i.e., toe jam, navel lint, vomit), and hopscotch. I enjoy being part of the broom-fishing pond.

The young students, preschool through second grade, come to the carnival first. Then the older students, third through sixth grades, enjoy the carnival. Afterward, the carnival games are cleaned up while the students are gone. Then the students come back in the large room for the costume

parade. Parents stand on the edge of the room taking pictures. The students walk around in a circle in the middle of the room. They are wearing costumes like: mermaid, princess, Harry Potter, doctor, wizard, Pocahontas, Sherlock Holmes, angel, devil, cat, and a football player.

The tradition of Thanksgiving was part of the school since its inception. I described this tradition in this fieldnote (November 26, 2002):

I come today because it is the Thanksgiving celebration at Walden. The children are at the park at recess. I notice tables from Mrs. Knox's classroom are set up in the large room. Immediately Mrs. Johnson recruits me to help set the tables for 48 students.

This is the tenth year for this tradition, and today the menu is the same. Each classroom makes a different item for the meal: preschool and kindergarten - butter, first and second grades no bake pumpkin pie, third and fourth grades - cornbread, and fifth and sixth grades - applesauce. In addition, the first and second grade students made construction paper pilgrims and Indians for centerpieces on the tables. So we put a dab of each part of this festive meal on each plate. I am in charge of the pumpkin pie, which I note is a lot of Cool Whip and pumpkin. I learn the preschool and kindergarten students worked hard shaking the film canisters to make butter. They complained their arms hurt from shaking the canisters.

Then the students begin to arrive back from recess. Their cheeks are red, and there is snow on their clothes. They have to take off their snowsuits, coats, boots, gloves, mittens, and hats.

Mr. Johnson plays some quiet music, and another Thanksgiving tradition begins. The tables are at the sides of the room, and the children sit on the floor in the middle. Mrs. Johnson asks the students if they remember the story, and they raise their hands and say, "Yes." Then she reads the story, "Giving Thanks," just as she has for the last ten years.

The final traditional event for the year was graduation. My fieldnotes (May 29, 2003) explained this tradition:

The last visit to the field for this study. I enter the large room, full of chairs facing the stage. I notice on the back of the stage a large mural with five kites. Obviously each kite is dedicated to one of the five graduates. On the mural is this saying, "You're on your way up. You'll soar to your heights." This mural was created by the fifth graders in Mrs. Schmidt's classroom.

Mr. Johnson is the host for the evening and begins with three quotes, one of which is from E.E. Cummins, "It takes courage to grow up to be who you are." Then he sits on a stool, as I have seen him do many times

throughout the year, and begins to read to these graduating boys for the last time. He reads Dr. Seuss' "Places You Go."

He notes that four of the five boys were at Walden for their entire primary school years. He alludes to the trip he took with the graduates to Colorado Springs. He notes these students are "unique, respect each other, and respect each other's uniqueness."

Then each graduate gives an individual presentation. Matt is theatric. Rex plays Mozart on the piano. Adam talks about the "life lessons" he learned. Erin plays the violin and then compared playing the violin to his experience at Walden. Pete talks about his experience at Walden in terms of his favorite card game.

Next the A La Mode singers entertain, and I so enjoy them. One of their songs is "Your Children Are Not Your Children."

The five graduating students raised money throughout the year with a buffet lunch, bake sale, and pizza sales. They give gifts to the school in the form of \$50 checks to each of the special areas of the school: music, art, and physical education.

Then the fifth graders sing a song for the sixth graders, and the sixth graders, in turn, play a composition they created.

There are many traditions in this graduation. One of them is to go into the audience and hug their parents to thank them for being able to go to Walden. Mr. Johnson reads a poem for each student written by the fifth graders. The family of one of the graduates shows a video show titled, "A Tribute to Five Terrific Boys."

Finally, the big moment comes. Each boy receives a portfolio that documents their work throughout the time they were at Walden, a pillow for autographs, and their diploma. The third and fourth graders provide the refreshments and serve us.

The idea of healing relationships was a way of explaining how conflict and wrongdoing is addressed in the culture of Walden School. At this school the response to wrongdoing and conflict was focused on the human consequences and healing the harm to relationships caused by such behaviors.

The idea of healing relationships was captured in a poem written by one of the Walden students. The poem was published in the first edition of "The Walden Post" (December 13, 2002).

Friendship

Friendship is a very powerful bond,
That brings us all together,

In fact it's so strong.
We can't measure it.
Friendship pushes
Sadness out of the world.
It's hard to think all that
Comes out in one word.

I addressed the idea of healing relationships in my first reflective memo (October 23, 2002): "The focus of healing is relationships, healing the harm to relationships that results from conflict and wrongdoing. The Friendship Circle course gives the students the skills to engage in this healing process."

The principle of healing relationships at Walden School is explained within the framework of three concepts: safety, accountability, and competence. Safety at Walden was both physical and emotional. Safety is built on the idea of acceptance of individuals and respect for who they are.

My fieldnotes (September 3, 2002) illustrated the idea of physical safety at Walden.

After that experience I headed to the city park with Betty and the preschool and kindergarten children. She talked to them about treating the bodies of ourselves and others with respect and in a safe manner. She said when they do exercises like running, they want to not run into each other and hurt other people. They want to learn how to play without hurting each other by slowing down, stopping, and listening. She suggested they pretend they are cars on a race track going side by side without hitting each other.

Betty had the students make a big square on the grass using orange cones. The students stood on the perimeter of the square. First they walked individually to the other side without bumping into each other. Then Betty told them they needed to have "more care" as they skipped or galloped to the other side without bumping. Next she grouped the children in twos or threes and had them move as a group to the other side. They did it well, stopping, waiting, without trying to be first to the other side. Betty complimented them for "listening so well."

The philosophy of Walden School supported the idea of emotional safety. I explained that in a reflective memo (October 23, 2002).

Mr. Johnson told me on an earlier date the philosophy of the school is to accept children where they are academically and developmentally and help them improve. The school sign on the front lawn reflects that philosophy. It says, "Individual Education - Universal Growth."

Emotional safety at Walden is captured in this quote from the mother of one of the students (Interview, February 6, 2003):

So he did ballet and started playing violin, both of which could be called sissy activities in other settings. Here he was respected, encouraged. Here he feels very safe at being a good violinist. When we go out into the soccer community he doesn't tell anybody that he plays violin. He knows that's not safe.

When he was at day care in the summer, the reason he quit doing ballet is because they called him ballet boy, and he quit, and he was so mad. He was in third grade and he was crying, "Why don't they think it's okay for a boy to do dancing."

I don't know. Here he was in an environment where that was part of him. He didn't have to worry about being teased. He could write stories about being in the Nutcracker; everybody thought it was great.

So in some ways some people might say it's bad to have them here in a protected environment where they're not seeing the real world, and I think it's so much better to let them grow up to 11 or 12 without being influenced by prejudice.

Accountability is the second facet of healing relationships. Accountability at Walden was defined in terms of consequences and solving problems. Norms and consequences are tied together in this school environment.

These norms appear to be taught in a number of ways (i.e., Book Buddies, teachers), and the norms have consequences, although I would not term the consequences as punishment. I particularly enjoyed how bathroom etiquette was taught at an all school meeting by a short play involving a teacher and a student. The bathroom pass is part of the culture of the school and is introduced in the first and second grade classroom and used consistently through the sixth grade (Reflective Memo, February 15, 2002).

I described the phenomenon of consequences in a parent vignette (May 16, 2003). Over time John has come to realize students at Walden are accepted, each as their unique selves, which I believe is the essence of individualized education. We both came to realize that the teachers at Walden truly cared for and about John. They valued his individual gifts and encouraged him to be responsible and accept the natural consequences for his actions. So now he is doing well, although I'm not sure he would admit it.

Problem solving is another example of accountability at Walden. My fieldnotes (November 26, 2002) illustrated this idea.

I entered the school. Mr. Johnson was looking on and encouraging two fifth and sixth graders. They were assessing how to get a paper airplane that was caught in the heater duct near the ceiling of the large room. Mr. Johnson let the boys decide how they would accomplish their task. They decided they needed a ladder and went to get one. They brought the tall ladder into the room, set it up, and one boy went up the ladder and retrieved the paper airplane. He came back down. Mr. Johnson commended them for their good work, saying, "What teamwork." The two boys took the ladder back to where it belonged (September 13, 2002). While Mr. Johnson and I work to fill the plates (for the Thanksgiving meal), some fifth and sixth grade boys come out and want to know where the big ladder is so they can hang up their poster. Mr. Johnson tells them where the ladder is and to be sure to clean it off (leaves, etc.) before they bring it inside. He tells me he'll let them figure out how to get the ladder inside. They do, and soon they are carrying the big ladder into the large room. Mr. Johnson asks them to take the ladder back outside and clean it off and then bring it in. They do, and then they go and get their poster, which is about 10 by 6 feet, green background, with a multi-colored cross, and the words, "Joseph's Coat of Many Colors." They hang it on the wall near the player piano.

The Peacemaking Circle process was a metaphor for accountability at Walden.

My fieldnotes (October 15, 2002) explained that process.

The day arrives for the Peacemaking Circle with Mrs. Schmidt's class. Somewhere from when the conversation began with Mrs. Schmidt, I suggested a Peacemaking Circle process to both Francis and her. They both agreed with the idea. I sent them an outline of the purpose and process of a Peacemaking Circle. I got the assistance of Alison to facilitate the circle. Actually instead of facilitator I am the keeper of the circle. So I am ready with a board and easel with the ground rules written out, marking pens, masking tape, and the outline of the Peacemaking Circle process.

Mrs. Schmidt is ready about 8:15 a.m., as Alison and I stand in the kitchen. I am anxious and trying not to show it too much. I go in the classroom and ask the students if they want to sit in a circle on chairs or on the floor. They choose chairs. So they sit in a circle. Mrs. Schmidt asks if I want her in the circle or outside. I say inside. Alison sits across from me, and the board and easel is right behind me.

I welcome everybody and compliment them for having this circle. I explain the purpose of the circle and I ask individual students to read each ground rule and explain what it means to them. I add a bit to it. Then I open the circle and ask

Mrs. Schmidt to please explain what she sees is the problem in the classroom we are talking about today. All the students participated in the process.

The students are constantly raising their hands, even though Mrs. Schmidt told them they don't need to. I learned that another rule is the talking stick will be passed around the circle from person to person, and each person can speak or not speak. The talking stick will not be passed other than to the person next to you and not need to raise your hand. We will continue to pass the talking stick around the circle until everyone has a chance to talk.

The group took time to identify the real problem, probably about 30 minutes – exclusion and treating others disrespectfully. At the end I am happy, except Evan doesn't get it – the process and the effect of his behavior on the class. At the end of the circle I ask the students to describe how they are feeling at this time in one word. Most students say good, and Evan says, "Bored." I believe he minimizes his behavior and the effect of his behavior on others, and I think he is arrogant. At one point in the process, he turns his chair around and sits on it backwards. I tell him he needs to sit in his chair like everyone else and participate in the circle like everyone else. I believe his behavior in that regard is a sign of his discomfort with the circle process. Overall, I think the students are pleased with the process. At the end, with the help of Alison, we put the agreement on a large sheet of paper, and each student picks a marking pen and signs his or her name. Mrs. Schmidt agrees to post the agreement in the classroom.

The Friendship Circle curriculum was taught at Walden for eight years prior to the year of my study. Students in the third and fourth grades learned negotiation and mediation skills in this course as ways to be accountable to one another.

The emphasis of the course is on teamwork, empathy and conflict resolution. Francis talks about the ground rules: human dignity and community...The students for the most part used the talking spoon when they spoke. Then they watched a video about negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. (Fieldnotes, September 5, 2002.)

The Friendship Circle course and Peacemaking Circle illustrate the basic components of restoring a sense of all-rightness in a community after conflict or wrongdoing has occurred. This process involves compassionate listening, focused on validating the stories of one another, so that the persons affected might begin to heal the harm resulting from the wrongdoing or conflict.

Competence was the third prong of healing relationships at Walden School. This characteristic was based on responsibility and empowerment. The idea of responsibility was mentioned in a Walden School brochure.

This brochure announces the school: (a) encourages community involvement, (b) builds a solid foundation for lifelong learning, (c) provides strong, individualized, academic achievement, and (d) fosters independence, self-esteem, and responsibility (Documents, May 29, 2003).

A mother explained the importance of this concept at Walden to me in an interview (October 30, 2002).

The philosophies that are important to us are individualized instruction -- I'm trying to prioritize as I think - a positive environment, non-competitiveness, academic excellence, with a goal of personal success and a sense of responsibility to yourself and your community and the ability to problem solve in a peaceful way.

Empowerment of students was a continual theme in my fieldnotes. My selective coding (May 31, 2003) reflected this idea of student empowerment and recognition.

I continue to see examples of student recognition and empowerment. Student heroes of the week is now a permanent part of the Friday all-school meetings. Birthday celebrations are another form of student recognition. Students are empowered to shovel the school's sidewalk in the winter, to make individual presentations at graduation, and to have clear boundaries.

The ideas of empowerment and responsibility were tied together by Mr. Johnson when I interviewed him (April 2, 2003).

Q That fits with another area that also strikes me, that responsibility starts in preschool-kindergarten, all the way through yours, and it's amazing to me how empowered these student are by the time they graduate, and I don't know how purposeful that is or that works out or what your thinking is about that?

A I think it is purposeful because I think our goal, when we started the place one of our goals is we wanted to have powerful kids, confident, powerful kids, who can go out in the world and manage, take care of themselves, not to have one of us around. So I don't have to answer a lot of questions.

The following story from my fieldnotes (September 26, 2002) illustrated the idea of empowerment:

At 10:00 a.m. I went to fifth and sixth grade class for a demonstration of blood donation. Dan and Stephanie from the local blood bank came to the school at the invitation of a student, Dean. Dean's father volunteered to be the donor. I learned from Mr. Johnson that Dean asked a question about donating blood, and Mr. Johnson encouraged him to make the arrangements for this demonstration. He did, and Mr. Johnson gave him the credit. The students clapped. Students were encouraged to and did ask questions about blood types, Rh factor, etc.

The third prong of the culture of care at Walden School was community.

Community in this context was based on symbols, continuity, celebrations, parent involvement, relationship with the local community, and concern for others.

Two symbols stood out for me, the school bell and the player piano. The Walden School Newsletter (March 2002) talked about the school, which was recently installed.

“The bell tower (housing the school bell) has come to symbolize Walden Community's spirit of working together toward a common goal.” The ritual of ringing the bell will mean students are “preparing for a new day of lessons and activities, but also that they are linked to an earlier time in history.” This bell has a long history, dating back to the early 1900's, when it called children to school in New California, Wisconsin. A current parent at Walden listened to that bell as she rode her bike to school. Later her family bought the bell. Ultimately the bell was donated to Walden School.

The player piano in the large room at Walden was another symbol of community.

I explained the importance of this symbol in my selective coding (September 12, 2002).

The Walden School has a player piano in the large room. It was donated to the school. The school's player piano is another symbol, and it is played once a week, on Friday morning, to signal the start of the weekly all-school meeting. The player piano brings the classes to the room. The children come in single file and sit in rows east to west in the large room, with the youngest students in the front and the oldest students in the back. The player piano signals the end of the meeting, and everyone goes back to their classrooms.

Continuity is another part of community at Walden. On the school's tenth anniversary, which occurred during the year of my study, a mother put together a scrapbook that illustrated the theme of continuity.

On the way out of the building I notice a book on the table near the front door. It is a scrapbook, prepared by a mother of two former students of Walden, about the first ten years of the school. I am impressed with the amount of continuity shown. All of the teachers have been at the school in the same roles since the start of the school. One teacher took off a leave of absence to have a baby. Also the music/Spanish teacher has been at the school since the beginning. Continuity is another major theme at this school. That is a major component in creating this culture of caring. The students have predictability in the traditions and rituals as well as who will teach them in what grades. That creates a real sense of comfort with the school. (Fieldnotes, December 5, 2002)

Walden had several celebrations during the year. Two that I attended were World Studies Night and Pioneer Night. My fieldnotes (November 16, 2002) talked about the World Studies Night celebration.

Students, teachers, and their families (about 125 people) are gathering tonight to celebrate what the students have learned this year about the Mediterranean countries. They start off with Mediterranean food, prepared by the Mediterranean Restaurant. Each dish is described on a card by its name and ingredients. The food is served buffet style. I help serve and enjoy greeting each person as they come through the line. The students in the fifth and sixth grade made the Baklava, which was wonderful, and served it to us.

After dinner we are entertained by the students singing (with actions), playing instruments and dancing in the Mediterranean traditions. Kelly explains that songs being performed are from the Middle East and are in the "universal language" of love, happiness and friendship. The students are wearing sashes of red and green. The students in the fifth and sixth grade play the instruments: drums, tambourine, etc.

The program begins with two Israeli songs, Arabian folk songs, while Mrs. Schmidt does a narration. Then the students get into circles and do dance steps. Next they perform an Egyptian peasant song. The fifth and sixth grade students sit on the floor and play various instruments. While the students sing an Arabic song they wave colorful streamers. They do dance steps to a Jordanian song called "Happy Children." Next they perform a Turkish song. The students from the fifth and sixth grade created the choreography for an Israeli round, and taught the third and fourth graders. Next they did a Greek dance and invited the audience to join in. The students taught their parents, grandparents, and siblings the steps to the Greek dance. The evening ended with loud applause and a great ending.

Pioneer Night was another celebration for the Walden community. My fieldnotes (February 28, 2003) captured the essence of this event.

This is the first time for this event, which is sponsored by the Walden Parents' Association. Parents, teachers, and students are participating. Many of them are dressed in old west style clothing. One-half of the gymnasium is used for square dancing, complete with music and a caller, and one-half of the room is for a variety of activities. The children are divided into either half and switch sides about halfway through the night; preschool through second grade in one group and third through sixth grade in the other group. Of course, there is food and drink, prepared by the parents and Mr. Johnson's class.

Parents were involved in the daily activities of Walden. I would see parents bringing their children to school in the morning and staying with them for awhile or drinking coffee with the other parents. I described parental involvement at Walden in this way:

Parent involvement at the school contributes to the culture of the school. They are a constant presence in the school, not only bringing children to school and picking them up. I observe them helping their children and other students in the individual classroom, helping collect money for lunch, running the book fair, leading great books, and facilitating the Halloween festivities. Obviously parents feel they are welcome at the school and are an integral part of the school (Reflective Memo, February 15, 2003).

One mother (Interview, April 8, 2003) talked about parent involvement in terms of contribution.

There was one thing I would add, and I think you say it. One of the things I was thinking of is there's room to contribute, sort of like that old Kennedy thing, "Don't ask what your county can do for you." I really think there is something about feeling like there's room to contribute at your child's school in a meaningful way, if you it's your interest or occupation or something you happen to be good at because of your job. If you have an idea, it seems like you can barely mention it and there's room for you to make it happen. It's a feeling like you can contribute, which makes me feel part of the community. You don't just wait for the school to do their best for the child. You feel you're part.

Walden students became aware of their local community and contributed to the community. They took field trips and invited local people to speak to them. Two events I observed illustrated place-based education in this context. The first excerpt illustrates the students' concern for people in the local community.

This morning as I enter the large room I notice children and their parents are carrying sacks of food and clothes into the large room and placing them on the stage. A few fifth and sixth grade students are placing the frozen turkeys in a pyramid. One mother wants to start loading the food and clothes into her car, and Mr. Johnson says no, "Let's let the children see all the things they brought to school today." (Fieldnotes, November 22, 2002).

The second excerpt illustrates the students' concern for non-human beings, namely the plight of raptors. His concern led to the placement of a jar for contributions near the front door of the school.

While the students were practicing their skits I wandered out near the front door. I noticed a jar. The sign said the money collected was for the local raptor center for the holidays. Mrs. Johnson came by and explained that a student had the idea and was leading the project (Fieldnotes, December 18, 2002).

These findings describe how the students, teachers, and parents gave meaning to the idea of peace in their school. I learned this meaning was found in the culture of care that encompasses the school. The building blocks of this culture were rituals, healing relationships, and community. Healing relationships were based upon safety, accountability, and competence.

CHAPTER 6: LESSONS LEARNED

In this final chapter I will integrate all my findings into a final interpretation of the culture of Walden School. I will write about what I have learned about the research problems. The limitations of that interpretation will be addressed. I will discuss my plans for further research related to this study and offer some concluding thoughts.

Final Interpretation of the Culture of Walden School

This final interpretation is presented as lessons learned rather than conclusions because I want to distinguish this qualitative ethnography from an experimental study. Findings in a qualitative ethnography are presented as transferable and replicable rather than generalizable. Therefore, I want the readers to understand the lessons learned in this study apply to the context I researched and may apply to other contexts if the participants in that context believe they are applicable.

The lessons learned are based on the findings of this study. The findings resulted from extensive data collection, using multiple methods, and rigorous data analysis. Collecting and analyzing data over an entire academic year allowed me to take a long, reflective look at the culture of Walden School. I am confident the theory of a culture of care for schools that emerged from this study is an accurate reflection of the meaning of peace at Walden.

The lessons learned are written for two audiences, the participants in the study and educators and others who care about schools and are interested in this study. I want to share what I learned from this study with the members of the Walden School

community in exchange for the encouragement and support they gave me during this study.

As I wrote in my dissertation proposal, “The purpose of this research is to study the meaning of peace in the culture of the Walden School...My hope in conducting this study is that we can begin to understand what a school that appears to have built an intentional community of peace looks like.” I was motivated to conduct this research because of the state of schools in our society at that time. At the beginning of the study I noted that we lived in a moment in time that was profoundly affected by the events at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, in 1999 and the tragic events of September 11, 2001. I was concerned that in reaction to these tragic events, schools in the United States had deepened their commitment to peacekeeping, focused on safety. The foundation of these peacekeeping efforts was rules and punishment, patterned after our retributive legal system. These get-tough policies included zero tolerance, police presence in the schools, metal detectors, student and locker searches, and drug and alcohol testing.

The lessons learned from this study offer a choice. In this culture the meaning of peace was based on the ethic of care. The findings of this study, particularly the new conceptual framework for a theory of a culture of care in schools, were based on the answers to the two new research questions that were posed. This ethic of care is rooted in the ideas of caring for and about and responding to such care. I concluded the meaning of peace and caring intertwined in this culture.

However, Noddings’ (1992) ethic of care in itself did not help me make sense of what caring meant in this culture. The ethic of care is focused on the classroom. The theory of care that emerged from this study takes Noddings’ work and applies it to the

school. The same is true of Harris' (2002) Peace Education Theory Model; it is focused on the classroom level. While I found elements of Harris' model in my study, it did not help me understand the deeper meaning of peace at Walden. The results of my study revealed the need to move the ethic of care from the classroom to the school level.

The theory of restorative justice also influenced this study. This theory bridges the gap between Noddings' (1992) ethic of care and justice. Restorative justice focuses on the human consequences of wrongdoing and conflict, while recognizing the need for legal consequences in some circumstances. The theory of care emerging from this study couches care in the theory of restorative justice, recognizing that responding to wrongdoing and conflict with legal consequences alone neglects the important human consequences. The current zero tolerance climate is based on our legal system's response to crime, which focuses on legal consequences, not human consequences. The theory of restorative justice challenges the use of zero tolerance and creates a balanced approach to responding to conflict and wrongdoing in schools.

In addition, I wanted to create a visual mapping or representation of the theory of culture of care for schools. See Figure 2 for an illustration of the theory of a culture of care for schools.

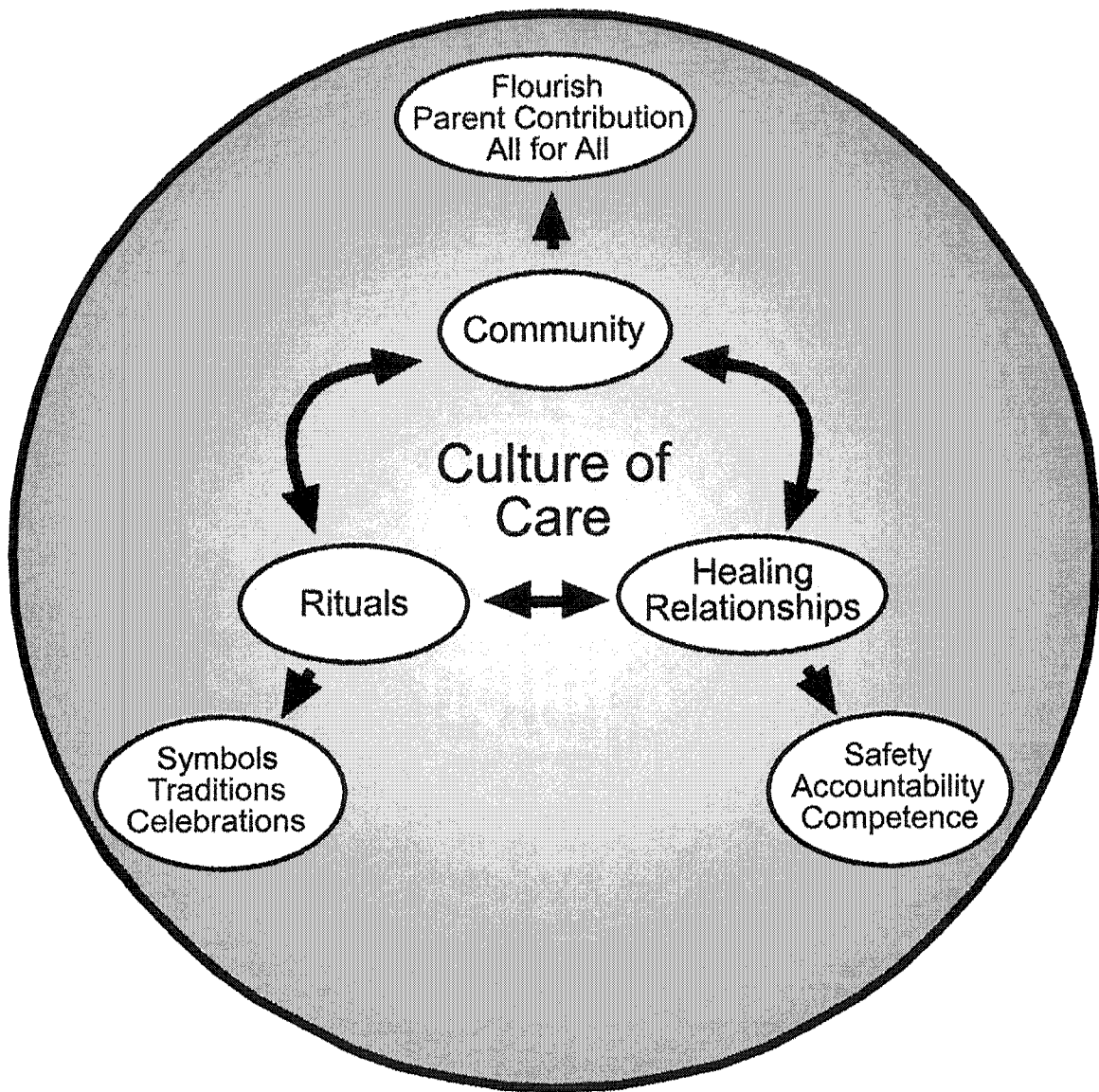


Figure 2. Visual representation of the Theory of a Culture of Care for Schools.

Lessons Learned for Walden School

I believe over the ten year history of its existence, Walden School has created what Schorr (1997) described as a deliberate community. However, the foundation of this community was not clearly articulated so all members of the community understood the basic philosophy of the school. The lessons learned from this study provide that articulation.

I engaged in this study as a participant observer, attempting to be conscious of my impact on the life of the community. I purposely chose not to disrupt the ordinary flow of activities at the school while I was conducting my fieldwork. I found that soon after I began visiting the school my presence was ignored most of the time.

However, I do believe my presence had a positive impact. Parents and teachers would talk to me at recess, on the sidewalk outside the school, and in the large room about things that related to my study. Teachers gave me literature to read that informed my research. Simultaneous with my study, the school engaged the services of a marketing consultant. I met with the consultant and shared with him the results of my study. Later in the year the school published a brochure that included some ideas from my research.

From my study of the daily lived experiences of the participants, I learned the culture of Walden School was built on acceptance and empowerment. Students did not receive grades or participate in the state's standardized testing, and there was a lack of student labeling, which were consistent with the school's commitment to no competition. The school's philosophy of non-violence was reinforced by pictures, stories, and written narratives about well known peace activists like Martin Luther King, Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, and Cesar Chavez. These heroes were highlighted at the Friday All-School

Meetings. Later in the year student heroes were honored at the Friday All-School meetings for emulating qualities of peace activists.

The students learned the skills for non-violent response to wrongdoing and conflict. Friendship Circles was a course taught to third and fourth grade students at Walden. Based on a philosophy of empathy, students learned the elements of negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. During the study, I facilitated a Peacemaking Circle for the students to help them resolve a conflict. In that process students learned how to problem solve together in a safe and respectful environment.

The boundaries of student behavior were framed by norms, and these norms were ritualized through symbols, traditions, and celebrations. Walden did not have written rules. I believe small schools can rely on rituals for passing on norms. However, large schools may be compelled to create written rules.

New students entering Walden learned the norms primarily from other students. Preschool and kindergarten students learned the school norms from their Book Buddies. Older new students learned the norms from their classmates. These norms and rituals provided continuity for the students. However, continuity can lead to stagnation and routine. Walden's encouragement for contributions from parents and other adults in the community helped to avoid stagnation by bringing in new blood and new ideas.

Book Buddies created cross-age relationships. Walden also combines grades in one classroom: preschool and kindergarten, first and second, third and fourth, and fifth and sixth. This cross-age interaction allows for students to be both learners and teachers.

Healing relationships were the foundation of Walden's culture of care. Healing relationships were based on safety, accountability, and competence. Members of the

community lived in physical and emotional safety. They needed to be accountable by accepting the consequences of their actions and working with others to solve the problems their actions created. Students were expected to build competence to behave as powerful, contributing members of the community. In this culture of care, community meant a place where all could flourish, everybody fit in, and there was a sense of all for all.

Walden School is not perfect. I observed the football games at recess that became so competitive they were harmful. I saw girls engaging in exclusive cliques. What distinguished Walden was the response to these behaviors. Rather than focusing on punishment, the community focused on learning new skills and how the relationships could be healed. The boys involved in football dialogued with Mr. Johnson and resolved the problems related to the growing rivalries by deciding to stop playing football for the year. A parent of one of the girls in the classroom who had a problem with cliques facilitated classes on building inclusive friendships.

Walden has created a deliberate culture of care. The elements of this culture need to be communicated to the students, parents, and others in the community. Current and potential members of this community need to know the culture of the school they are choosing for their children.

Lessons Learned for Educators and Others Concerned About Schools

Schorr (1997) said we can create the profound change required to improve our society by replicating what deliberate communities are doing. I believe the lessons learned from this study can serve as a basis for changing the culture of our schools. Those schools who believe the zero tolerance climate is too extreme can look at this culture of

care to moderate that climate. Caring teachers and administrators can use the lessons learned from this study to create a culture in their schools that supports their philosophy.

I offer this theory of a culture of care as a flexible framework for creating an alternative school climate. This choice or alternative is not presented as an either/or proposition; rather it is offered as an opportunity for change. I believe schools need both care and control, and the theory of a culture of care offers both. I propose the culture of care as the preferred choice for schools and control as an element of that culture under the aspect of safety in the category of healing relationships. In that way, control supports healing relationships rather than punishment and retribution. Finally, I suggest that this culture of care become the curriculum of the school so there is no gap between what occurs in the classroom and in the hallways.

Inlay (2003) argued that the dominant culture of schools today is one of control. This culture of control is built on fear, particularly fear of making mistakes and fear of punishment. Teachers are taught to maintain control of the behavior of students and schools expect them to use rules and punishment to control student behavior. Often punishment involves separation from other students, not based on safety but in a spirit of retribution. Rivalries usually result within the school: us versus them, good versus bad, and right versus wrong. These rivalries can create competition and are supported by labeling, ranking, and grading students.

In this environment students too often become retributive because the system is retributive. If a school's dominant culture is one of rules and punishment, then students, teachers, and parents are disempowered to resolve conflicts in a nonviolent way. This disempowerment creates a potential for harm and violence to occur.

For many schools, the result of this retributive system is a climate of zero tolerance. From Browne's (2003) research we have learned that zero tolerance has criminalized some schools and put some students, particularly minorities and special needs students, on a spiral of involvement with the legal system. I believe schools have adopted zero tolerance without realizing the consequences of creating a culture based on zero tolerance and that there are options to zero tolerance. The culture of care offers educators and parents the opportunity to create schools where students have a genuine sense of safety and belonging.

The theory of the culture of care is based on the idea of transforming conflict and wrongdoing rather than controlling behavior. Problematic behaviors are inevitable and need to be viewed as learning opportunities rather than interruptions to academics. In this culture the response to problems, particularly those involving conflict and wrongdoing, is restorative rather than punitive, and this culture is pluralistic in nature rather than dualistic.

Students in any school can learn the skills of healing relationships, such as negotiation, mediation, and facilitation. However, if such learning occurs in the midst of zero tolerance, the students are receiving mixed messages. A culture of care supports the efforts of teachers who want to be caring and focus on healing relationships in their classrooms. Creating a culture of care in schools takes time and is not a quick solution to problems.

Educators, parents, and those interested in creating a culture of care in our schools may be interested in learning about programs that will help create such a culture. One of the three exemplary social and emotional programs endorsed by the Collaborative for

Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (2002) supports the fundamental themes discovered in this study for creating a community of caring learners. This K-6 program is called Caring School Community (www.devstu.org). The program parallels the findings of my study in terms of school and class meetings, a cross-age buddies program, family involvement events, and school community building activities (Weissberg, Resnik, Payton & O'Brien, 2003).

Based on Noddings' (1992) work about the ethic of caring in education, Goldstein (2002) applied this work to teacher education. Noddings' ethic of care is focused on the personal and interpersonal levels. Goldstein applied Noddings' (1992) theories to helping teachers create a community of care. This theoretical model emphasized: (a) enhanced interpersonal commitment; (b) membership in a community of learners; and (c) passion for the creative, intellectual aspects of teaching.

The key to this theory for teacher education is understanding the role of the teacher in terms of being the one who is caring, that is, taking care of the student, who is cared for and about, and caring deeply about student learning. Goldstein (2002) agreed with the findings of my study that support the idea that this interpersonal relationship of caring between the teacher and student must be supported by a culture of caring, rather than an environment of rivalry and punishment.

Frank (2001) offered a series of research-based activities that can help teachers create a culture of care in the classroom by moving a class of disconnected students into a community of integrated learners. However, I disagree with Frank's notion that the classroom can exist completely separate from the culture of the school; that is, that you can have caring classrooms and hallways dominated by a zero tolerance environment.

Students become aware of the incongruity. A culture of caring in the school is needed to support a caring classroom in which learning occurs.

I believe teaching education students should be taught about the culture of care. That approach fits with Goodlad's (1984) call for care-centered teacher education programs.

Limitations of This Final Interpretation

The theory of a culture of care for schools is based on the lessons I learned from this study. This research was conducted in a small, private school. I believe that creating a dominant culture of care in a large school with crowded classrooms is challenging. Bryk (2003) suggested a small elementary school has fewer than 350 students. Walden had 52 students at the time of my study.

Walden School lacks ethnic and socioeconomic diversity. Parents of the children who attended Walden paid tuition for their children to attend the school. The result was a lack of children of color and low socioeconomic status. However, Walden does attract student with a range of abilities and interests.

This study was purposeful. Comparisons to other schools were not made. So no generalizations can be made. Likewise no extensive study was made of how well the students at Walden transition to middle school.

The lessons learned from this study and the theory of a culture of care for schools should be viewed with caution. However, these limitations provide a conceptual framework for future studies.

Further Research

Now that this study is completed, what recommendations do I make for further research? Obviously, the limitations to this study offer opportunities for further research. I plan to concentrate my future research in four areas. Funding and support for this research will be necessary if those of us involved in this line of research are able to create models for choice and help to change the dominant school culture.

First, next year I want to continue my study at Walden using the new theoretical framework I created. In particular, I want to focus on the students' reactions to my ideas about the culture of care at Walden.

Second, I plan to follow the sixth grade graduates of Walden as they transition to middle school next year. All of the 2003 graduates will attend the same program together at a local middle school in the 2003-2004 school year. I believe being able to observe all the graduates in one setting offers me a great opportunity to study how these students transition to middle school.

Third, I plan to work with colleagues to develop a survey instrument for assessing school climate. I believe the theoretical framework and lessons learned from this study can be the basis for variables to include in a survey instrument for assessing whether the dominant culture in a school is caring or controlling. Such an instrument will help us evaluate the effectiveness of programs focused on bullying, suspensions and expulsions, dropouts, and violent crimes.

Fourth, I am planning to conduct a similar study to the one I conducted at Walden in another setting where there is a deliberate culture of peace that includes diversity. I

also want to conduct a study in a different country where the school dominated by indigenous people.

Conclusion

I began this work over a year ago. I engaged in this project as a qualitative researcher acting as interpreter or bricoleur. I used constructivist methodologies (Schwandt, 1990), particularly the ethnographic approach, to frame this cultural study so I could learn the meaning of peace at Walden School. The goal was to produce this ethnography of my work (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Creating this ethnography completes my work as a bricoleur. I have created a portrait of the culture of Walden School related to the meaning of peace.

I believe the theories and lessons learned in this study offer us the opportunity to create a new conversation, a new way of thinking, talking, and acting about the culture of schools. I tried to capture the basis of that new conversation in a poem I wrote in my journal during this study (October 22, 2002).

Schooling for Care

The old school bell rings
And everyone is quiet
And standing still.
They look toward the bell.
Another school year begins,
The tenth for Walden,
And the first to be
Rung in by this bell,
A symbol of older times
And values sometimes forgotten:
Individualized learning,
Caring for each student,
Rituals like
Root beer floats on the first day
And hot cocoa on the first snow,
Healing conflicts instead of punishing,
And creating community

Where all support all,
No wonder this place feels at peace,
Like a warm hug, as one mom said.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Observation Guidelines

The following questions are posed to help me determine what I can observe, do, and say as I am conducting my observations. These questions are intended to guide my fieldwork (Agar, 1996; Merriam, 1998; Moore & McDonald, 2000; Patton, 1990; Spradley, 1980).

General Questions

1. What is my focus in this observation?
2. How long do I plan for this observation to last?
3. Where will the observation occur? How would I describe the setting?
4. Who is present and what is their role in the family? Is there anyone not present that I expected would be present?

Questions Related to Behaviors

1. What is going on during this observation? Is there a pattern to the activities I am observing?
2. How are people dressed, and where are they located in the home?
3. What brings these people together at this time?
4. How are people interacting with each other? Is this a typical activity or unusual? What is the context?
5. How are the people and the activities they are involved in connected?

Questions Related to Language

1. What is the context of the conversations in this observation?
2. Who is speaking to whom? Who listens? Are there noticeable silences and/or body gestures?

Question related to Documents and Artifacts

1. Are any documents talked about or artifacts referred to during the observation? Should I obtain a copy of the document or a picture of the artifact for my study?

Questions Related to My Role in the Study

1. What is my role in this setting and conversation (related to the observer/participant continuum)?
2. How do the participants perceive my role in this study?
3. How am I affecting the observation? How are people reacting to me?
4. What do I say and do during this observation?
5. What are my thoughts and feelings about what is going on?
6. What did I expect would happen and it did not?
7. Was there anything that occurred during the observation that surprised me?
8. What questions do I have as a result of this observation that I want to ask in an interview?

Questions Specific to the Topic of This Study

1. How do the participants talk about peace?
2. How do the participants behave when they talk about peace?
3. What appears to be the role of each participant in the discussion about peace?

4. How do the participants talk about peace in terms of its effect on the school community?
5. What feelings are expressed when the participants talk about peace?
6. How do the participants talk about repairing the harm resulting from wrongdoing and conflict?
7. How do the participants talk about decisions made by the participants in responding to wrongdoing and conflict?
8. How do the participants talk about solving the problems of peace?
9. How do the participants react to my presence when I ask them questions about peace?

APPENDIX B

Guidelines for Formal Interviews

Introduction

Hello. I want to thank you for letting me visit in your home so I can do this research project. Today I want to ask some questions of you about what I have observed and heard so that I can understand these things better. Is that okay with you?

Remember, my study is being done to help me learn the meaning of peace in the Walden School community. My observations thus far have helped me learn some things, and I'm confident through this interview I will learn even more. Your views are important to me because I am not a member of this community, so I don't understand what peace means to the people in the Walden School community.

My general questions are about what you thought and felt while certain events were going on. With your permission I am going to record this interview on my shorthand machine. I will be recording in shorthand everything both you and I say.

In the transcript I produce I will use pseudonyms rather than your real names so that your confidentiality and privacy are protected. I would appreciate it if you would then tell me what changes or additions you would like to make to the transcript so I have the best transcript possible of your thoughts and feelings. Is all of this okay with you?

Before we start I will remind you that you have signed the consent form, and if you would like to not answer a question or stop the interview at any time, please let me know, and I will respect your request. If you don't understand a question, please tell me, and I will ask it using different words. Do you understand?

Well, let's begin the interview.

Questions

During the time I have spent in the Walden School conducting this study I observed an event (describe the event). I would like you to think back to that event when I ask these questions.

1. Could you start at the beginning of that event and tell me what you were thinking?
2. Could you start at the beginning of that event and tell me what you were feeling?
3. What were your intentions during this event?
4. Tell me how you felt about me being present during this event?

Leave Taking

After listening to my questions, if you were in my shoes, is there anything else you would want to tell me?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I want to thank you for taking the time to talk to me. I have learned a lot today and expect to learn more in the future.

Again, I will give you a copy of the transcript when I have prepared it. I would appreciate it if you would read it and make any suggestions for changes and additions you would like so that we have your best story of these events. I would ask that you review only your interview transcript and not the transcript of any other informants.

Thank you again for your willingness to help me with this study.

APPENDIX C

Fieldnotes.1 – Open, axial, and selective coding; vignettes; and document analysis

Open	Axial
Site description, Staff description, School philosophy, New art teacher	Background
School bell, School song, All-School Meetings every Friday (reading stories and poems), Player piano, Book buddies, first day root beer floats, Heroes, Skits (retreat, Friendship Circle, environmental camp), Family retreat (new), School song (new), World Harmony Day (new), Quilt making, Quillows	Symbols, rituals
Hanging baskets, Yoga, Family retreat	Nature/environment
T-shirts, One teacher hugs another, Helping others, Family retreat	Caring and competition
Middle East assessment, World Harmony Day	International awareness
Teacher to student, Student to student, Reflective time, Smiling, Differences, Bathroom dignity, Teacher honors student dignity, Laughing at others in Spanish, Moving a student	Dignity/respect
Recess, We all fit in, Participation, Lunch older helping younger, Recess participation, Making book covers, Fort building at Family retreat	Teamwork/community
Friendship Circle, Peaceful Conflict Resolution poster	Conflict resolution
Family retreat	Family involvement/bonding
Visitors to school, with one another, PreK safety at PE,	Safety
Beginning research, Entry/acceptance, Do differently/concerns/ Participation, Early themes/patterns, Wisdom of Africa analogy, Friendship as methodology, Parents, Gaia theory	Researcher's reflections

Selective Coding

This is the initial grounded theory selective coding for this study. A number of themes were found in the data. They are explored in this paper.

Walden sits in the middle of a beautiful residential area, in the midst of old homes, on a street lined with old trees and a median with similar landscape. The city park is a block away. This is the 10th year since Walden began. The philosophy of the school is to take children where they are and help them improve. The school sign on the front lawn reflects that philosophy. It says, "Individual Education - Universal Growth."

There are four classrooms at Walden. Mrs. Johnson teaches the pre-school and kindergartners. Mrs. Knox teaches the first and second graders. Mrs. Schmidt teaches the third and fourth graders, and Mr. Johnson teaches the fifth and sixth graders. The owners are also the teachers, and the only visible administration is the school secretary, Mrs. Cook, who is helped by the school dog, a wonderful yellow lab-golden retriever cross, JT or Jayne. Two other teachers are Spanish and music, Mrs. Baker, and art, Mrs. Cox. In addition to the four classrooms, there is a kitchen, bathrooms, a workroom, art room, large room (with a stage), library, secretary's office, and entryway.

Rituals and symbols are an important part of life at Walden. The first day of school began, symbolically enough, with the ringing of the old school bell, which came from a country school in Wisconsin and is now housed in a bell tower on the north end of Walden School. The bell was installed last spring, so this is the first time the bell was rung to begin a school year. As soon as the bell started ringing, parents and students stood still and looked in the direction of the bell. Some began to clap.

The school bell is not rung every morning. However, on Fridays it is rung at the beginning of the all-school meeting. When the school bell rings, the students quiet down. Every Friday morning at 8:15 all the students and teachers gather for a meeting.

Show and tell is a common ritual in schools. At Walden this ritual is honored. Another ritual common to most schools is recess. Walden is no different. At Walden there are certain parts of the ritual of recess that are routine, like holding your Book Buddy's hand while you walk to and from the park and taking off your shoes and leaving them on the sidewalk before you come back into school.

An important ritual at Walden is the Friday morning meeting. Every Friday morning at 8:15 all the students and teachers gather for a meeting. It's a kind of check in with everyone and sharing. The all-together meeting starts at 8:15 with the call of the player piano.

Often at these meetings guests are introduced. Mr. Johnson might introduce students for a special reason. Singing is a routine part of the Friday meetings. Normally Mrs. Johnson plays her guitar and leads everyone in a song about the earth. One Friday she played a new song called, "One World One Light" about how we all live in the same world under the same sun.

Commonly Mr. Johnson reads a poem at the meeting. Recognizing heroes is a regular part of the Friday meetings. Mrs. Knox leads this part of the program and one Friday talked about a hero, Jane Goodall. One Friday she asked me to talk about one of my heroes. I told the people about my hero, Mahatma Gandhi, and that he stood for peace. I talked about his long walk to the sea to get salt, and how he gained independence for England for India.

The Walden School has a player piano in the large room. It was donated to the school. The school's player piano is another ritual and is played once a week, on Friday morning, to signal the start of the weekly all-school meeting. The player piano brings the classes to the room. The children come in single file and sit in rows east to west in the large room, with the youngest students in the front and the oldest students in the back. The player piano signals the end of the meeting, and everyone goes back to their classrooms.

Book buddies is a ritual the students anticipate. On the first day of school and the first day of my research I noticed that at recess the students were paired up - fifth and sixth graders with the preschool-kindergarten and third and fourth graders with the first and 2nd graders. They were called "Book Buddies." In addition to walking with their buddy hand in hand to and from recesses each day, they read to each other at various times during the week.

There are rituals that are less frequent, like the first day of school root beer floats. I recall on the first day, as I walked down the hall, a student handed me a root beer float. I learned this is a Walden School tradition. On the first day of school (and last day also) the fifth and sixth graders prepare root beer floats and take them to everyone in the school.

Talking about heroes is an important part of life at Walden. One day I noticed on the bulletin board Mrs. Knox put up black and white pictures and stories about heroes: Jim Henson, Albert Einstein, Jane Goodall, Pablo Picasso, Mahatma Gandhi, Miles Davis, Amelia Earhart, and Cesar Chavez.

Some heroes are closer to home. One day as the first and second graders sat down in a semicircle for reading, and Mrs. Knox asked the children if they knew what

“quillows” were. She explained the pillows they were sitting on had quilts inside them, so they were called “quillows.” She explained they were made by her mom, who is now 82 years old. She said her mom was her hero. So one of the students handed out the “quillows,” and the students sat on them on the floor.

This year was the first family retreat. The family retreat is a new ritual for Walden and a great success. I spent the weekend with 13 families and 54 people of Walden at Mountain Ranch, in the mountains. This was described by Mr. Johnson as the “Walden School Weekend Family Camp and Retreat.” I stayed by myself in a tent and mixed with the families and teachers at the camp lodge and around the area.

For World Harmony Day we had a new song. The students, teachers, parents, and guests sang a song about “weaving” “weave us together in love.” The 11th of September may be a new ritual. At Walden it is called World Harmony Day. After singing the “weaving song,” Mrs. Knox pointed to a poster of children playing together and at the bottom it said, “Let us join our hands and hearts to build a better world.”

The highlight of this day is the making of the Harmony Quilt. The children each had a design on paper they cut out. They then picked a square of material from among hundreds of choices of color and design. They placed the design on the material and cut out the design. Then they took the material to one of the mothers to have the Wonder sticky material ironed on the back of the material. Then the design was ironed on to a square piece of muslin. Then the muslin was put in a hoop, and the children began to sew around the edges of their design.

The environment is often a topic of discussion and activity at Walden. At one Friday meeting Mrs. Schmidt talked about the different kinds of trees - evergreen,

deciduous, and fern. She passed around small specimens of each variety for the children to see, touch, and smell.

One day I attended yoga class (twice) with Becky. I take off my shoes and socks at her suggestion to us. She says yoga means connecting the sky to the earth through the body, and how our breath is like the wind; that we should focus on our breath. She urges us to be strong, gentle, and kind. I think the yoga fits with the culture of the school - non-competitive, gentle, non-violent, appreciation for the earth.

Even the school environment is of concern. The school has a garden, which is now nearing the end of the season. One day I noticed three new hanging baskets of flowers, impatiens, in front of the school facing east.

The family retreat was steeped in environmental experience. I wrote, "As I sit here jotting I am enjoying the clean, fresh air, the smell of pine, and I look forward to sleeping outdoors. I am relaxed and feel a sense of comfort for my soul. I enjoy this out of doors. What a gift and blessing. I see this opportunity as a chance to observe the intersection of the family and school cultures in this nature setting, to be close to the environment, relaxing, and a chance to observe these families and watch their interactions."

An important theme that is emerging is the ethic of caring. I observe evidence of it in many of the rituals (i.e., book buddies). Caring involves both caring for and caring about.

Perhaps one of the best examples so far of caring is: While chatting in the large room with Mrs. Knox I saw Mr. Johnson come into the room and interrupt Mrs. Baker's

Spanish class with the first and second graders. He then hugged Mrs. Baker and said, "She had a big weekend." Then he left the room.

An example of the ethic of caring was when the preschool-kindergarten class then went to the sandy play area to play on the equipment, see-saw, monkey bars, etc. A younger child was there, and two students wanted to help her cross the monkey bars and solicited my help.

One day I made an observation of shirts worn by the children. That observation revealed no shorts with slogans related to beer or sex, and one jersey related to sports. This theme of caring is coming through loud and clear. The community is the sense of where all can flourish because they are accepted where they are and encouraged and helped to improve. And this school is full of rich ritual that creates an air of expectation and reliability. The rituals support this healing culture. I want to keep observing and begin interviewing some folks. At the same time I want to be open to new interpretations.

International awareness is one of the five strands of peace education. An example is when I went into Mrs. Schmidt's class. I learned she was in the middle of an assessment about the Middle East.

Perhaps the most stunning example of international awareness was World Harmony Day at Walden. That is what the announcement called this day, the first anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. The school flag was flying at half mast in the front of the school and reminded us of the specialness of this day.

Human dignity and respect is another strand of peace education. Once I was observing the fifth and sixth grade students (11 boys and 1 girl). They were learning about multiple perspectives using shapes and what do you see in those shapes. Then the

exercise expanded to we are each different. As they engaged in a silent exercise of learning about unique traits of each other, Mr. Johnson played classical music in the background. He made reference to a poster on the wall, "No one can do everything. Everyone can do something."

Teacher to student respect. Mrs. Knox uses the "Walden credit card" for children when they need to use the bathroom. The student gets up from their chair and gets a "Walden credit card" and places it under the "restroom" sign on the green board. Mrs. Knox' use of the "Walden credit card" honors the dignity of the students. They do not have to raise their hand or ask permission of the teacher to go to the bathroom. Their privacy is honored.

Community in the sense of a place where all can flourish and all for all is another theme that comes up at Walden and is often described as teamwork.

One day at recess the students engaged in the usual games: soccer, tag, running, and a circle game. Football dominated the play area, which was marked by orange cones and dominated the middle of the play area. The other play activities took place around the perimeter of the football field. I noticed a new girl standing by herself, and other girls came over and invited her to play. The boys playing football seemed to include everyone, not just the best players. I noticed the ball being thrown to the smallest boy who is playing, and he missed the throw.

One day at noon I went outside on the sidewalk by the front door of the school and ate lunch with the students. I watched older students talking to younger students - advising them about the school rules and exchanging food with them.

One morning the student made book covers. I wrote," 8:45 - Mr. Johnson class is in the large room and soon joined by Mrs. Schmidt class. Mr. Johnson leads the students in how to make a book cover for their math books from grocery bags. Some students have stretch book covers they bought - camouflage in different colors. Others have a slick premade cover paper they bought. The majority of the students are making the paper bag covers. The ones with the stretch covers help the students making the paper bag covers. I jump right in and help the students carry out Mr. Johnson directions."

The most striking example for me occurred when we were on the family retreat. I wrote, "Rather than take a nap, I went to the lodge to see what was going on. Mr. Johnson told me the fort building activity was well underway, up near the rocks area. I expected to see several forts being built. To my surprise the children and parents, one father in particular, were creating a great fort in the rocks. They decided right away to work together to build this fort. They created a plan for how to build it, and then children of all ages and both genders worked together to get it done. Children contributed according to their ability. I heard no comparisons, no put downs. I did not hear complaining or criticism of one another. Rather, I heard encouragement and praise for a job well done. They helped each other. By the time I arrived several parents were there, admiring the hard work and taking pictures. Again, what I thought would be a competitive event, was not. The participants in the project were obviously proud of their work."

Conflict resolution is another strand of peace education. Two guest speakers came to Walden from the philosophy department of a local university, Michael Losonsky and Jane Kneller. Their children had attended Walden. They talked about harmony having to

do with different people, doing different things, in different spots, coming together. They made this a funny talk.

Then they turned to the idea of a quilt. In order to make a quilt you need to know and understand about the other pieces and how does your piece fit with the other pieces. The same with people. You want your people to blend in with the others. That is difficult, which is why harmony is hard.

So what happens when people don't get along? If two pieces of the quilt don't fit together, then we use a third piece of quilt to help the two pieces fit together. The same with people. When we don't get along we use a third person, "someone in the middle," a "Harmony maker." This third person is called a mediator. At Walden we are all becoming mediators to bring harmony to the world.

Friendship Circles is the reason I came to know about this wonderful school. On the first day of school Frank came by and joined in the social time with the parents. He and I chatted about the Friendship Circle curriculum and walked into Mrs. Schmidt' class to confirm that everything was a go for the class. The emphasis of the course is on teamwork, empathy, and conflict resolution. Frank talks about the ground rules: human dignity and community.

Parent involvement is an integral part of school life. Mrs. Johnson told me when they started the school they were surprised by the parent involvement and how bonded the parents are.

The first day of school I observed parents were taking pictures of their children outside by the school sign that sits on the nicely groomed grass, and in the classrooms, with their teachers and friends. The parents stood around, some with a coffee cup in hand,

until 8:45, chatting with one another, occasionally recognizing with a hug and perhaps a small kiss, their child who ran up to them. As a regular routine the parents gather in the morning. As the parents stand gathered in the large room, the students begin working, seemingly without prompting, on some project at their tables.

The parent involvement in the class seems to be a way of transition from home to school, without the abruptness of dropping a child off at the front of the school and leaving. At this age this transition seems to work well, and the parent involvement helps all the students. This transition time appears to be informal - parents are dressed informally. They talk quietly with their child and the other children in the classroom. Everyone seems to know what to do with little or know direction by Mrs. Knox. She does chat occasionally with the parents and is constantly interacting with the students about their work.

Walden is concerned about the safety of the children, particularly when visitors come to school. A great example of teaching children safety occurred one day in physical education class for the preschool-kindergarten children. I wrote, "I headed to the city park with Becky and the preschool-kindergarten children. She talked to them about treating the bodies of ourselves and others with respect and in a safe manner. She said when they do exercises like running, they want to not run into each other and hurt other people. They want to learn how to play without hurting each other by slowing down, stopping, and listening. She suggested they pretend they are cars on a race track going side by side without hitting each other.

Vignettes

Vignettes were written after reflecting on the original data and the constant comparative analyses of that data and determining what themes and patterns emerged from those sources that helped answer my research questions. Two vignettes were written for this set of fieldnotes, a confessional and an impressionist. The confessional vignette allowed me to explore my interpretation of the events and to talk about what I learned in the field. I used the impressionist vignette to give the reader a sense of what it was like to be in the field in the manner of an interesting story that is true to the data.

Confessional Vignette

I started this study with great excitement. I was able to do a study for my dissertation for which I had great passion. I was able to combine my expertise in restorative justice with a new peace education theory model. My doctorate committee approved my study and the human subjects committee gave me the green light, just in time to start gathering data at the beginning of the school year.

I actually started acquainting myself with the people in the Walden community the weekend before school started at the picnic Sunday evening. Mr. Johnson introduced me to the group. Several parents introduced themselves to me, and I said hello to those parents I already knew.

I plan to spend the entire 2002-2003 school year in the Walden, so being present for the first day of school was important to me. I was excited to be there for the ringing of the school bell on the first day. All of us present became quiet when the bell rang. This symbol of the beginning of a new year was “magical” as Mr. Johnson is fond of saying.

Immediately I began to observe and participate in the daily life of the school. I was given permission to wander about the school as I wish and to participate in the activities. I could come and go as I desired. I feel free to roam about the school and learn about the people of the school in a way that adds richness to my study.

In the initial classrooms I observed I noted that the teachers laid the groundwork for how the students were expected to behave in the school. Human dignity, valuing diversity, and individual uniqueness were key areas covered by this learning. The teachers also spent time assessing the individual abilities of the students in the fields of study they planned to cover.

I was excited to learn about the family retreat weekend in the mountains. I would be able to spend an extended period of time observing and interacting with the parents, students, and teachers from the school. I had wondered how I was going to be able to observe the students with their families without going to the individual student homes. This opportunity was that chance, and I was pleased it occurred at the beginning of the year.

I wondered about acceptance in the community, and I soon found I was an accepted member of the school. I was assigned a mailbox by Mrs. Cook in the workroom, along with the teachers. I sat on the stage with the teachers at the Friday all-school meetings.

I soon found out that four of the strands of peace education theory are present in this school. Human dignity and respect for one another was obvious, even to the manner in which students use a pass to go to the bathroom, rather than asking permission of the teacher. Nature and the environment is a matter of constant discussion and learning. I was

touched the day Mrs. Schmidt brought three samples of trees to the Friday meeting, talked about the specimens, and passed them around. International awareness is at the forefront. Celebrating the anniversary of September 11, 2001, as World Harmony Day was a magnificent example of that idea. I knew I would see conflict resolution demonstrated, particularly through the Friendship Circle course. The strand I have not seen demonstrated is the systemic oppression, particularly of the vulnerable people of the world.

Interestingly, I have learned that the five strands of peace education theory are not adequate to describe the meaning of peace at Walden. While there is consciousness raising in four of the five strands of the theory, the school has created a culture that supports those strands. Learning regarding the five strands does not stand in isolation; rather that learning is an integral part of the overall culture of the school. In other words, the daily lived experience of the teachers, staff, and parents associated with Walden is the culture that is consistent with the peace education theory model.

I have seen little evidence negative peace in the school, that is, zero tolerance and an atmosphere of rules and punishment. Rather, my experience was one of positive peace, many activities and a school culture that supports peacebuilding.

Impressionist Vignette

The first day of school for Walden was August 21, 2002, and the weekend before was the first event of the new school year. Students, parents, and teachers met at the park near the school for a potluck picnic. New teachers, new families, and I were introduced to the community. There was a mixture of conversation, play, and eating at the event.

This is the tenth year since the school began. The first day was marked with the ringing of the school bell. Since the bell was installed last spring, this was the first time the bell heralded the beginning of a new year. We stood in silence as the bell rang -- inside the school building, out on the lawn, wherever we were. Parents lingered at the school, taking pictures, talking to the teachers and other parents, and helping their children make the transition from summertime to school.

As the school year began, there was a sense of easing into the new routine, making the transition from spending most of their day at home to school. The parents appeared to want the same transition time, as they lingered at the school, sometimes with a cup of coffee in hand, chatting with the other parents. By the start of the second week, the parents of the grades two and below were doing less chatting with each other at the door of the classroom of Mrs. Knox and spending more time in the classroom helping their child and other children get started for the school day. They would stay at the school for as long as an hour.

I learned the first day that the school is rich with rituals. In the early afternoon a student handed me a root beer float. I asked what was going on and was told traditionally on the first day the fifth and sixth grade students make and deliver root beer floats to all the people in the school.

At the first recess the students already knew who their Book Buddy was, and I noticed older students holding the hands of younger students as they went to and from recess. If the older student had the job of holding a stop sign as they crossed the street to the park where they played during recess, the younger student would help. This was the first indication I had that this school had created a deliberate culture of caring -- caring

about and caring for. In contrast to this culture of caring, I observed little evidence of competition. I thought I would see evidence of competition when I watched the boys playing football. However, the focus of their game was on including everyone in the fun rather than winning.

Every Friday the day begins with the weekly all-school meeting. I was struck by the ritual of two fifth and sixth grade students choosing a song and playing it on the player piano. As the students pumped furiously away on the piano so the music would be heard, the classes entered the large room one at a time and sat in rows, starting with the youngest in the front and the oldest in the back. Parents would either sit with their children or stand in the back of the room. Teachers and guests sat on the front of the stage. When everyone was seated, the school bell would start ringing, and we would all be silent. The meeting usually included a discussion about a hero, like Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr., a song about peace, our planet, or living together, introduction of a guest, and a poem read by Mr. Johnson. The meeting would end with the playing of the player piano.

My observations confirmed what Mr. Johnson told me, the focus of the school is on the individual student – accepting them where they are at and helping them improve. Students worked at their own pace. If a student was not doing well in a classroom they were moved. There was no talk about standardized tests, school report cards, and needing to do well on these tests.

This year was different in that soon after the beginning of the school year a weekend retreat was held in the mountains west of the school. Students, parents, and teachers spent the weekend together in a beautiful, relaxed atmosphere. The focus was on

individual families getting to spend time together and to share some of that time with other families in the school community. What surprised me was what I did not see – comparisons of families, competition, and other ways of setting up win/lose, better/worse, or right/wrong situations. Even events that could be competitive, like the Treasure Hunt Saturday morning, turned out to not be competitive. The event that I thought had the greatest potential of being competitive was the fort building. Mr. Johnson described the activities as each family building a fort. I was hiking while the fort building activity was going on. When I returned, I went to look at the results and found one fort being built. I learned right away the students decided they would rather work together and build one fort than many forts. The result was magnificent. I was impressed with the size and quality of the structure.

Later that night everyone was part of a randomly selected group that performed a short skit. The emphasis was on enjoying the entertainment. There was no mention of who did best or anything that would be competitive.

The event that made the greatest impression on me was World Harmony Day, held on the first anniversary of the terrible tragedies of September 11, 2001. The day began with an all-school meeting, which was announced by the ringing of the school bell. About 30 parents, grandparents, and guests were present. The students sang a new song, “Weave Us Together,” which one of the teachers found earlier that week. Later Mr. Johnson mentioned they had looked for a school song for ten years and finally found one.

Two speakers from the philosophy department of a nearby college were guests for the meeting. They talked about harmony in terms of creating a quilt, because the students were going to make a quilt later that morning. They talked about how each piece of the

quilt is unique and sometimes when you go to put them together, they do not fit well. So you find a third piece that can help the two fit together. In the same way, sometimes we need a mediator to bring harmony among people.

After the meeting, the quilt making started. I was impressed how the students worked to cut their harmony or peace designs (hearts, butterflies, hands, peace symbol) out of a piece of fabric, have it ironed on to a piece of muslin, and then to sew the edges of the fabric to the muslin. I watched in awe as the students worked on their quilt pieces as they sat together in groups chatting. I look forward to seeing the quilts when they pieces are sewn together.

Document Analysis

Walden Newsletter – May 2002

“The bell tower (housing the school bell) has come to symbolize Walden Community’s spirit of working together toward a common goal.” The ritual of ringing the bell will mean students are “preparing for a new day of lessons and activities, but also that they are linked to an earlier time in history.”

This bell has a long history, dating back to the early 1900’s, when it called children to school in New California, Wisconsin. A current parent at Walden listened to that bell as she rode her bike to school. Later her family bought the bell. Ultimately the bell was donated to Walden.

Janet, or JT, is a welcome sight at Walden. She sleeps underneath her owner’s desk, Mrs. Cook, who serves as the administrative assistant for the school, when she is not out at recess or lunch. A lab-golden retriever cross, she is friendly, well mannered, and fun to pet or shake her paw.

8/21/02 letter to parents

The letter talked of year being an opportunity to “reconnect with friends, establish routines, and stretch our learning.”

Mrs. Schmidt is returning as a teacher. She is Walden’s “resident naturalist.”

The new science curriculum in Mr. Johnson’s class will include “health; air, water, and weather; space; forces and energy; and animals.”

The school is committed to “maintain the strong individualized program” that is a hallmark of the school.

This year the “first world studies unit will be the eastern Mediterranean countries.” Later in the year students will learn about the first Americans and China.

Letter to 5/6 grade parents on First day of school

The first three days of school are “to get acquainted, build trust levels, stretch thinking processes, and develop individual and group strengths...to recall skills and rekindle interest in learning...and to “stimulate critical thinking skills, examine prejudices, and build confidence levels.

Mr. Johnson’s objective is “to help each student experience the excitement of investigating new territories, learn to trust his-her judgment, develop confidence and become a more powerful person,” while “respecting and valuing your child’s independent thinking.”

Mr. Johnson encouraged the parents to be involved in the school, and he identified the fifth-sixth grade as an opportunity “to solidify the foundation each child has been building during previous years.”

Hot Lunch at Walden

Parents run this program. It occurs on Thursdays. When I enter the school on Thursdays, the two moms ask me if I want lunch. To date I have not participated.

All-School Student List

I note that even though this is a private school and the students pay tuition, the stereotypical idea these are affluent families is not true for all students. A couple of parents explained to me they have modest means but are willing to make sacrifices (driving a used vehicle instead of a new SUV). We have two students at the school for about two months who are from South Korea. A student in kindergarten is an adopted child from Korea. Two students speak Czech with their father as he brings them to school and says goodbye. They easily switch from Czech to English and vice versa. One teacher, Mrs. Knox, is Asian. I note, however, the absence of Hispanic students and students with disabilities.

Parent Volunteer Information: Almost Autumn 2002

This note was sent to fifth-sixth grade parents. Parents were invited “to be involved in your child’s education” through “volunteer opportunities” to help the school create great

Staff meeting notes – 9/3/02

Mr. Price will lead the theater production.

Teachers will have a CPR class.

Class on 9/11 will focus on a “friendship quilt” and “peace song.” The program will be about “world harmony.”

Hot lunches will be expanded to three days a week.

Weekend Family Camp and Retreat

This event was held at the same place where the annual Environmental Studies Camp is held in the spring. It is located in the midst of the “Majestic Mountain Range peaks.” The purpose of the event is to provide “a great opportunity to spend a wonderful autumn weekend with family in a beautiful mountain environment.”

World Harmony Day 9/11/02

This day begins with a speaker and “a song of hope for the world.” The highlight of the day is making “World Harmony Quilts.” Parents were invited to help with the

After analyzing these documents by using a constant comparative analysis coding process, I made the following findings:

Relationships are an important part of this school – students, parents, teachers, and community members. Even though this is an expensive private school, diversity is apparent and that diversity is valued. Students are respected and their dignity honored. International awareness is a constant theme. An important part of the life of the school is the involvement of parents and community members.

APPENDIX D

Fieldnotes.2 – Open, Axial, and Selective Coding and Vignettes

Open	Axial
Staff description, Site description, School background, Hanging baskets	Site
Child, Parent helping student, Moms, Talk to one another, Child interaction, Great Books, Play, Visit	Parent Involvement
Motto, Model, Poster in workroom	Teachers
Small size, Bathroom etiquette, Dignity, Simon says, Laughing at others, Transition time, Turn off light, Give these kids a hand, Thanks for listening, Treat like college students, Schedule of day, School philosophy, Two grades together, Reducing noise, No religious holidays, Nonviolence, Quiet, Leave the room, Give these kids a hand	Norms
Wearing a costume, Viola Swamp, Halloween, Childhood fantasies, Dr. Boris	Celebrations
Hot cocoa morning, First day root beer floats, Friday all-school meeting, School bell, Player piano, Book Buddies, Graduation	Rituals, traditions, and symbols
Cabin names, Competition, Family activity, Drive up, First night, Fort Building, Hike with Joe, Mead, Saturday morning, night, and dinner, Shower, Skit, Tent setup, Treasure hunt, Song, The leader	Family Retreat
Football, Competition at home, Competition at school	Competition
Hugging, Saying goodbye to mom, Student helping student, Older students helping younger, Student passing out pencils, Helping others	Caring
Peacemaking circle, Friendship Circle, Talking stick, Peaceful conflict resolution, Student altercation, Ground rules, Negotiation, Fit together, Facilitate a conference, Need to be safe	Conflict resolution
Safety, Helping others, Researcher	PreK PE
Involving all, Indoors,	Recess
Roles, Giants and fairies	Gender
Problem Solving	Decision-Making

Play	Great Books
Speakers, School song, Quilt making, Poster, Puzzle	World Harmony Day
Tibetan Buddhist prayer flags, Mediterranean studies, Music	Global awareness
Nature	Environment
Honor, Read poems, Compliment, Show and tell, Student empowerment, Fundraiser, Blood donation demonstration	Recognizing Students
Teamwork, We all fit in, Cooperation, Working together, A family feel, Just like a hug, Unique school	Community
Best fit, Philosophy of respect, Individualized, Consistent with family values, Academic, Culture for learning	Why parents chose
Participation, Early themes, Parents, Gaia theory, Fieldbook, Notes, Helping with math	Researcher

Selective Coding

At Walden students are recognized, honored, and empowered. Parents interact with their children freely, help other students, conduct programs, and are involved with one another. The teachers serve as models for the students.

Walden is a school where norms form behaviors rather than rules. Students are treated with dignity. The small school/classroom size and having two classes together in one classroom contribute to the use of norms. The school philosophy of accepting students where they are and helping them improve fits with the norms.

Celebrations, rituals, traditions, and symbols are important parts of the school. A recent celebration was Halloween, which is also a tradition. Other school traditions are first day of school root beer floats, hot cocoa of the first day of snow, Friday all-school meeting, graduation, and book buddies. Symbols include the school bell and the player piano. The Family Retreat was new this year. Family activities dominated the weekend, with such things as a treasure hunt, fort building, singing together, and skits.

Caring and competition are noticeable at the school. Competition is present at home and at school. Caring is evident in the hugging between teachers and parents and students, in students helping other students, even in such things as passing out pencils to students. World Harmony Day was a demonstration of caring, with singing of the school song, "Weave Us Together," quilt making, and looking at the World Harmony puzzle and poster.

There is a sense of community at Walden where "we all fit in," people work together and cooperate, and the school feels like a family or "just like a hug." Parents choose Walden for their children because it is a "best fit"; it is consistent with family values. The school has a philosophy of respect and a culture for learning that is individualized.

Conflict resolution is present at Walden, primarily in the Friendship Circle course and also the Peacemaking Circle. Students learn the ground rules of peaceful conflict resolution, how to use a talking stick, negotiation, how we fit together, and the need to be safe.

The school demonstrated global awareness by displaying Tibetan Buddhist prayer flags and studying about the geography, music, and people of the Mediterranean countries.

Vignettes

Impressionistic Vignette

Walden is a small private school. The school has a deliberate culture that focuses on peaceful resolution of conflicts, individual learning, respect for the dignity of one another, and caring.

The community involves everyone. Teachers are models for the students. Parents are involved in the school and are encouraged to participate. Parents also bond with one another. Students are recognized and empowered. One student arranged for a demonstration of blood drawing. Often students are recognized at school meetings where there poems and stories are read. The students, parents, and teachers relate to one another in a climate of nonviolence. The students are taught peaceful conflict resolution beginning in the third grade.

Interesting, this school has no written rules. I have learned there are definite norms guiding expected behaviors of students. I believe the size of the school and classrooms is directly linked to the school having norms rather than written rules. Having two grade levels in one classroom also supports the use of norms. Norms guide everything in the school from bathroom etiquette to noise. Younger students learn these norms from older students, particularly in the same classroom. New students learn the norms from students who have spent years at Walden.

Along with norms, traditions, rituals, celebrations, and symbols are important in the life of this school. The school bell and the player piano are the two principal symbols at the school. The bell sits atop a tower on the north end of school. When it was rung the first day of school, it symbolically called everyone to another year of schooling at Walden. The player piano is used every Friday morning to call the teachers, students, and parents to the all-school meeting. Traditional holidays are celebrated, like Halloween. However, no religious holidays are celebrated. Then there are rituals, like the root beer floats on the first day of school and hot cocoa of the first day of snow. A new event was the family retreat.

These norms, traditions, rituals, celebrations, and symbols appear to support the caring at the school, which is exemplified by another ritual/tradition at Walden called Book Buddies. An older student is paired with a younger student for reading to one another and for walking together (hand in hand) to and from recess. Caring is not only evident in helping one another but also in the appropriate physical touching and relationships between parents, particularly moms, and children.

When asked why they chose Walden for their children, parents said it fit with their family values, that the school felt like a warm hug, and it was the best fit for their family. They liked the individualized academics and how the students are treated with respect.

Confessional Vignette

As I continue my time in the field, I find I am going away from my original conceptual framework, and another framework is beginning to emerge. I am beginning to understand that there is more to understanding the meaning of peace in this school than studying the five stands of Harris' (2000) Peace Education Theory Model. The totality of Walden is more than the sum of its parts. Early themes indicate this Gaia effect has to do with the norms, rituals, traditions, celebrations, and symbols of the school, all happening in an environment of caring and peaceful conflict resolution. This overarching environment includes and is supported by the students, teachers, and parents.

APPENDIX E

Fieldnotes.3 – Open, axial, and selective coding; vignettes; and document analysis

Open	Axial
Culture of peace, justice and caring, Alternative thinking, Substitute, Predictability, Dad gives hug, Demonstrating caring, Wheelchair student, Ethic of caring, Hug from Megan, Informality, Karl call from England, Krys and girls hugging, Scrapbook, Continuity, Relationships, Spiritual values are glue, Civility – students say thanks, Teacher storytelling, Teamwork	Caring
Respect, Ritualized, Free choice, Size and norms, Bathroom pass, Birthday hat, Friday all-school meeting, Thanksgiving, Traditions and caring	Norms/school and class size; traditions
Collective problem solving, Conflict resolution tools (arbitration), Empathy, Flourishing, Get along, Comparisons, Meaning of peace, Mediation and mediation climate, Peace trees, Pledge of Nonviolence, Culture of respect, Peacemaking Circle, Epiphany and empathy	Nonviolent (not harmful) conflict resolution/peace
Students prepare skits, Planning, Talking spoon, Attempts, Activity success, Bias, Gender dynamics, Group rules, Students can't agree, Demonstrations, Not shake hands	Friendship Circle
Recess, Football, Stereotype joke	Violent (harmful) response to conflict
Restorative justice and caring	Human consequences
Detention, Discipline, Suspension	Legal consequences
World Studies Night, Hanukah story about difference and game, Honor multiple religions, Mediterranean food, song, and dance, Holiday season (not Christmas), Spirituality rather than religion, Turkish Kilims, World Citizens	Global awareness/diversity appreciation
Food and clothes for poor, Serving homeless with dignity, Students lead clothing drive	Poverty awareness
Environmental learning, Subsidiarity and nature	Environmental awareness

Involved with play, Involved in research	Parents
Junior Great Books play, Playing violin, Poets recognized, Student hero of the week, Student Subsidiarity, Shared leadership, Student newspaper begins	Student empowerment, recognition, and creative activities
Changing from observer to participant (Halloween), emerging conceptual framework, extended time in the field, friendship and trust as methodology, On track, Openness of school, Themes intertwining	Researcher

Selective Coding

An important part of creating a caring school environment and an advantage of small schools is the amount of communication among the teachers. The teachers at Walden School meet regularly and socialize together occasionally (i.e. “Xmas Holiday Staff Party”). In addition, the school works at communicating with the parents in multiple ways, including sending home a weekly folder with documents about the school, student papers, and letters to the parents.

The school combines learning in the strands of peace education theory with local community awareness. An example is the school-sponsored night of holiday gift buying at the local Ten Thousand Villages store. I talked about this awareness in these terms:

I am impressed how the school community has an awareness of the larger community and responds to the community needs, particularly regarding the people who are poor and vulnerable (Documents, November 22, 2002).

Poverty awareness is another area that combines with local community awareness at Walden School. A teacher explained it in a letter to parents (Documents, November 17, 2002) this way:

A recent article in the newspaper reminded me again just how fortunate I am, A loving family, a comfortable home and a fulfilling job are just a few

of the many things that I have come to take for granted. Most of us never have to think about whether we will be able to feed or clothe our children, yet there are many people in our own community who must make difficult decisions every day about how they will use their very limited resources.

The students are learning about the history of their local surroundings. A part of environmental awareness is appreciation for our pets. The students at Walden School share thoughts and drawings of their pets in the "Pet Corner" of the student newspaper. Environmental awareness is also part of the science curriculum. "Air, water, and weather" was the topic for science before the holiday vacation.

As part of the Friendship Circle course, the students fill out a survey at the beginning and end of the course to gauge how much they have improved in their skills.

My document analysis noted:

The students fill out this survey at the beginning and end of the Friendship Circle course. The survey has a five-point Likert scale, ranging from never to always. The students are asked to circle "the level that best describes you" in the following categories: 1) working as a team member, 2) good listener, 3) empathy, 4) practices peaceful conflict resolution in class, 5) practices peaceful conflict resolution outside of class, and 6) respect for human dignity of all people.

I was interested to see an article in the sports section of the first issue of the student newspaper about the recess activity of running. One of the older boys that participates in football regularly wrote the article. I expected the article would be about football.

On the last page of this newspaper (Documents, December 13, 2002) was a poem titled "Friendship." The student wrote:

Friendship

Friendship is a very powerful bond,
That brings us all together,
In fact it's so strong.
We can't measure it.

Friendship pushes
Sadness out of the world.
It's hard to think all that
Comes out in one word.

Perhaps the best metaphor for this school's culture of caring is the quilt. One of the teachers said this, "Each of our children are unique individuals with unique views that should be treasured." She gave me this quote to further explain her thoughts:

Quilting is a way of expressing ourselves, of sorting out thoughts and emotions, of sifting through daily experiences, frustrations and joys, to produce a visual, tactile record of a day, a month, a minute...It is a way to wrap our children in love at night, to delight them during the day. Quilting...has given me self-confidence and helped me to see that I am a unique individual with a unique view of life (Brainard, 1997, p. 36).

I am impressed that in addition to caring, the students are encouraged to form their own views about current events. An example of this was found in the student newspaper (Documents, December 13, 2002):

The next piece is an expression of a student's political views and is titled, "Gobbledygook: A Stick Figure Comic Tragedy." At the bottom of the page, it says, "NO WAR. I apologize." The prelude to the cartoon states, "Newspaper reporter Joey is interviewing President Bush. However, no one wrote Bush's speech for him, so this is the result." The cartoon goes on to make fun of the current president of the United States.

The newspaper also engages in recognition. This time the students are recognizing the adults in their life at school. I was impressed that the students picked the two local college students that oversee preschool activities for their first article, rather than a teacher. In another article they recognize the work of the new art teacher and talk about the importance of art. In the same paper, the students of the week are recognized, and the editor (a teacher) recognizes the work of the students in these words: "Helping this group

of creative, bright, positive, and wonderful girls and boys start the Walden Post has been the most fun I have had in ages” (Documents, December 13, 2002).

This is the first student (or school) newspaper in the ten year tradition of Walden School. One of the teachers is the “Editor-In-Chief.” 16 students from grades 1-6 are on the “Staff of the Walden Post.” The newspaper allows the students to be creative with drawings, poems, and even movie reviews.

Vignettes

Confessional Vignette

I am learning much from my experience at Walden School. A theory of creating a culture of care is emerging. I am finding much thick, rich description of the elements of this culture of caring at the school. However, paradoxically I am beginning to realize that recess, and particularly the game of football, offers a look at quite a different culture – one of competition in terms of win-lose, right-wrong, good-bad. This paradox is confusing to me, because the same individuals that play football also participate well in the culture of care at the school building.

This school has a culture of caring that begins with norms. Norms here are not written down. Rather, I find they are ritualized, such as the School Buddies and the Friday All-School Meeting. I believe that a school’s ability to ritualize norms is dependent on school size. The size of Walden and its classrooms are small. I am not sure large schools could ritualize norms, at least to the extent this school does. At what number of students does it become difficult to ritualize norms, I don’t know.

The next phase of the culture of caring is how people in authority (teachers) react to wrongdoing and conflict. In this school the human consequences are the priority for

responding to wrongdoing and conflict, rather than the legal consequences (rules and punishment). A good example of this is a teacher asking me to facilitate a peacekeeping circle for a problem in her classroom involving bullying, rather than simply punishing the student(s) she thought were causing the problem. This contrasts with the trend in most schools for zero tolerance and other retributive measures for reacting to inappropriate behavior.

Peace and nonviolence is the next phase of the culture of peace. In this school the students are not only expected to behave in a nonviolent way, they are taught conflict resolution skills and even sign a pledge of nonviolence. The Friendship Circle course is the best example I have found where these skills are taught and practiced. This contrasts with schools where nonviolence is expected but conflict resolution skills are not taught. Also a school with a climate of zero tolerance creates a retributive atmosphere and leads students to use violence to react to situations they consider to be harmful to them as a result of wrongdoing and conflict.

The end result at this school is a culture of caring, caring about and caring for. The children in grades preschool to third grade learn how to receive care, acknowledge it and express gratitude. From the third through the sixth grade the students assume a greater role of giving care, particularly to the younger students. The School Buddies program is an excellent example of this phenomenon. However, the school culture paradoxically has an element of competition, particularly among the older boys while they play football at recess. Football causes conflict. Often the students in the Friendship Circle course choose football as the theme for the skit they prepare for their role play.

Impressionist Vignette

Dan is in the fifth grade at Walden School. He is relatively new to the school, having started there last year. It was difficult for him to fit in at first because he didn't understand the rules of the school. Obviously the school had expectations for student behavior but they weren't in writing. So Dan had to learn the rules from his classmates and by making mistakes. His parents still don't feel they fit in with the other parents who have known each other since preschool. All three of them find fitting into this unique culture difficult, even though they like the school.

Dan is quiet, small for his age, sensitive, and not competitive. He does participate in sports, like swimming and music. He learned soon after coming to Walden School that football is the game the older boys play at recess, if you don't play fantasy games with the geek of the class. Dan did not want to be labeled a geek, so he agreed to play football when Charles nagged him to play. Dan really didn't want to play, and he found participating in the game was not fun. He didn't like how the two boys who led the game always played quarterback, decided who played what position and when they played, and refereed the game. Dan figured out these boys were in control of the game, and the rest of the boys did not appear to be willing to confront the two boys.

Sometimes sportsmanship during the game was awful, Dan thought. One day the boys even started tackling one another, even though they were not wearing gear to protect themselves. Dan really would rather not play football and is looking for a way out where he can save face at the same time.

At school, however, Dan shines. He is doing much better at this school because the teacher gives him the attention he needs when he has problems, particularly with math. Dan likes this and is gaining in confidence all the time because he is doing so well.

Dan gets to initiate ideas for science projects. He likes that because science is his favorite subject. His parents help him. Recently they helped him arrange for the local Red Cross to come to the school to demonstrate the drawing of blood. Dan's dad volunteered to have his blood drawn. Dan was pleased to hear the students ask lots of questions and the teacher to praise him in front of the other students and his father.

Dan participates in Junior Great Books. The group participated in a play recently, "The Three Pigs: The Real Story." Dan wanted to play one of the pigs, and he wanted to play a female pig. He was concerned the other boys would make fun of him. He took a chance and said he wanted to be a female pig, "Lucy." The other students didn't make fun of him, and he was pleased.

Dan doesn't play with the other boys after school. He spends time with two friends. He doesn't like to play video games and play competitive sports, so he doesn't play with the boys except at school. Dan's parents and he are okay with that.

Dan and his parents like Walden School and are happy they made the switch to the school. However, there are some things they are not happy about.

Document Analysis

The Walden Post – Edition #1 – December 13, 2002

This is the first student (or school) newspaper in the ten year tradition of Walden. Mrs. Knox is the "Editor-In-Chief." 16 students from grades first through sixth are on the "Staff of the Walden Post."

The first article is an interview of the two local university students who oversee the preschool activities at Walden, titled "Daycae Personalities." Sean did the interviews. He noted both the young women were not married. I was impressed that the students cared about introducing these two people to the Walden community. I have not introduced myself to them, even though I do see them from time to time. They do not play a major role in the life of the school. However, that does not diminish their importance. On the other hand, I wonder if Sean is somewhat smitten by these young women, and that is what motivated him to interview them.

Next Lori wrote about the school's music and Spanish teacher in an article titled, "How Did It Go Mrs. B?" The interview was reported in question and answer style. Obviously the intent of the author was to get to know Mrs. B's personal story better and to share that story with the readers.

On the next page the students wrote an article titled simply "Art." This article shows the students' appreciation for art and that art permeates all of our life and is not just found on a canvas. Some of the students' artwork is found on this page.

The next piece is an expression of a student's political views and is titled, "Gobbledygook: A Stick Figure Comic Tragedy." At the bottom of the page, it says, "NO WAR. I apologize." The prelude to the cartoon states, "Newspaper reporter Joey is interviewing President Bush. However, no one wrote Bush's speech for him, so this is the result." The cartoon goes on to make fun of the current president of the United States.

I am impressed that the school allows students to begin to think critically and to express stands they take that are critical of the dominant paradigm in this country.

The next page is titled, "Pet Corner." The students extend the idea of caring from people to pets. They even took a survey of the students of Walden to find out what kind of pets they have and provided the results in a graph. This is impressive work for these young students. Oh, dogs were the most frequent answer, with cats second. In addition to quotes from various students about pets, the article included hand drawn pictures of students' pets.

The next three pages contain 11 stories and artwork by students in Mrs. Schmidt's class. The stories are creative and imaginative, about themselves, their families, pets, and even speculative stories about the beginning of language and why leaves "ruffle."

Next are the "Movie Reviews." "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" got a great review, with the author suggesting readers who had not seen the movie to put the paper down and go see it immediately. Zelda wrote about "Treasure Planet," an update of the classic, "Treasure Island." However, did not make a recommendation.

On the next page three students who were named "Student of the Week" were congratulated. The quote from the letter of recommendation that appeared on their award was quoted under the name of each student.

The tradition of poetry at Walden (Friday all school meetings) is continued in the paper with two poems. One is about the things the student loves and ends with I like everyone and I like everything including you."

Quite appropriately, the first "Letter from the Editor" appears in this paper. Mrs. Knox congratulates the students and praises their work. "Helping this group of creative, bright, positive, and wonderful girls and boys start the Walden Post has been the most fun I have had in ages."

The “Weather” is captured in a picture of a snowman drawn by one of the students.

Interestingly, the first “Sports” column is about “Running for Chips.” Randall, one of the boys who plays football at recess wrote the story. Randall explains it this way, “These are the chips you get for running a lap at the park during break.” The photographs depict Betty handing out chips and two students running laps. This story is not about competition and does not mention competition.

On the last page is a wonderful poem about “Friendship” by Zelda:

Friendship is a very powerful bond,
That brings us all together,
In fact it’s so strong.
We can’t measure it.
Friendship pushes
Sadness out of the world.
It’s hard to think all that
Comes out in one word.

The rest of the page is devoted to “Classified Ads.” Students seek work babysitting (the school jock), walking dogs, and parents and students are trying to sell various things. There is even a coupon for a buy one get one free ice cream cone at one of the local candy stores.

I wonder if Mrs. Knox initiated the idea of the paper or was carrying through on a student idea. The interview of the two preschool facilitators is an example of caring enough about someone else to want to know more about them.

The idea of caring at Walden includes both people and animals, particularly the students’ pets.

Staff Holiday Party

I was invited to this party. However, I was already committed to go to Monica's staff party at the same time. Two or three of the staff members asked me if I could attend. I was touched that they wanted to include me in their party.

Letter to parents from Mrs. Knox – November 22, 2002

Mrs. Knox wrote a letter to the parents. She wrote about several things, including the new science unit, "Air, Water, and Weather." This topic correlates with what I observed another date in Mrs. Schmidt's classroom. Also she talked about how the class was beginning to study "Fort Collins History" with a field visit to "The Avery House." I am impressed how the students are encouraged to learn about their local surroundings. At the end of the letter is "An Arabian Proverb," which says, "All mankind is divided into three classes. Those that are immovable, those that are movable, and those that move."

Classified Ads of the Walden Post

Obviously this document was distributed prior to the newsletter. It is asking for classified ads and drawings of pets from the students for the new school newspaper.

Staff Meeting, Walden Staff, November 19, 2002

The minutes from this meeting talk about the annual "Xmas Holiday Staff Party" and a presentation about "Hanukkah" one of the parents wants to make at the school.

Letter to parents and students from Mrs. Johnson – November 17, 2002

Mrs. Johnson makes an appeal for people to donate food to the Food Bank in the local county, an annual project of the school. She says they want enough food for one meal for 45 families, the number of families at Walden.

Mrs. Johnson wrote, "A recent article in the newspaper reminded me again just how fortunate I am, A loving family, a comfortable home and a fulfilling job are just a few of the many things that I have come to take for granted. Most of us never have to think about whether we will be able to feed or clothe our children, yet there are many people in our own community who must make difficult decisions every day about how they will use their very limited resources."

Again, I am impressed how the school community has an awareness of the larger community and responds to the community needs, particularly regarding the people who are poor and vulnerable.

Eastern Mediterranean World Studies Night -- Friday, November 15, 2002

"Please join us for food, song and dance to celebrate the culmination of our World Studies Unit." A celebration at the end of a unit of study rather than grades and parent teacher conferences. In this case the students demonstrate what they learned.

Scale for Goals of Friendship Circle

The students fill out this survey at the beginning and end of the Friendship Circle course. The survey has a five-point Likert scale, ranging from never to always. The students are asked to circle "the level that best describes you" in the following categories: 1) working as a team member, 2) good listener, 3) empathy, 4) practices peaceful conflict resolution in class, 5) practices peaceful conflict resolution outside of class, and 6) respect for human dignity of all people.

Ten Thousand Villages -- Giving Twice Shopping Night

Ten Thousand Villages is a local fair trade retail store. The school was asking students and parents to shop at the store during one evening for three hours. Any sales

made during that time would not only benefit artisans from third world countries, and ten percent of the sales will be donated to the school.

Family Matters – November 2002

A division of the local university distributed this document, and one showed up in my box at the school. In it were sections titled, “model good manners” and “working in the kitchen,” which focused on children.

Star for the Night – October 4, 2002

Mrs. Knox gave me this document because it has a quote she thought I might appreciate. The quote is, “Quilting is a way of expressing ourselves, of sorting out thoughts and emotions, of sifting through daily experiences, frustrations and joys, to produce a visual, tactile record of a day, a month, a minute...It is a way to wrap our children in love at night, to delight them during the day. Quilting...has given me self-confidence and helped me to see that I am a unique individual with a unique view of life” – Katherine R. Brainard. Mrs. Knox wrote, “Each of our children are unique individuals with unique views that should be treasured.”

APPENDIX F

Formal Interviews – Open, axial, and selective coding, and vignettes

Open	Axial
Acceptance, Book buddies, Caring for and about – transition, Contrast between caring and competition, Caring teacher, Choices – the theory of caring creates choices for schools, Students differentiate between time/place for caring and competition, Fear is a barrier to caring; with little or no fear leaves room for joy, School is a safe place, A place where all students flourish, Kindness and politeness are results, Quilt is symbol of caring; school song supports culture of caring, Unconditional caring	Caring
Football – primary indication of competition, Well-planned, Ended by students’ choice, Basketball, Contrast between caring and competition, Students differentiate between time/place for caring and competition, Academics are not the driving force but the result of a caring environment, External competition versus internal motivation, Competition seems to naturally occur among siblings	Competition
Bathroom pass, Book buddies, Cooperative, Students learn norms from one another, Norms ritualized and not written as rules similar to family	Norms/school-class size
Bell tower, Book buddies, Rituals support continuity, Quilts, School song, All-school Friday morning meetings, Hero of the week, First day of school root beer, World Studies night, Pioneer night, First snow, hot cocoa (new person in charge this year), Halloween , Rituals reinforce norms and help students learn them, Family retreat at Sky Ranch, Lunch routine	Celebrations, traditions symbols - rituals
Teachers, Norms, Predictability	Continuity
Looking at the vulture, Raptor program contributions, Collecting clothing and food for the poor	Placed-based education
Students receive natural consequences for	Human consequences (restorative justice)

behavior, Focus on restoration (not expulsion and suspension)	
Creates community (school) awareness, Friendship Circle, Peacemaking Circle	Nonviolent (not harmful) conflict resolution - peace
Educate the parents about Friendship Circle, Empathy is a fundamental part of Friendship Circle, Students enjoy participating in Friendship Circle, Two programs: (a) conflict resolution skills and (b) cliques and friendships, fifth-sixth graders not using Friendship Circle skills; having conflicts. Need program for these students	Friendship Circle
Two grades in one classroom, Classrooms referred to by name of teacher (not grade levels), Teacher-owned school (no hierarchy), Lack of diversity at Walden, Considered a Geek school, Individualized learning – accept students where they are and help them be successful, School has “rich culture,” Small size results in individualization, consistency, student responsibility and problems addressed promptly, Iowa Basic tests are standardized testing	Site of study
Ballet, Flat social structure, All sixth grade students going to IB program next year, How do students transition to secondary school, Walden creates “powerful” students, Students have good sense of self, Problem solving part of learning approach, Students make mistakes, not fatal.	Students
Accessibility, Affluence, Minority of parents want a balance between caring and competition, Teachers didn’t anticipate parent involvement when created Walden, Reflective field memos were accurate, Parents allowed and encouraged to contribute; there’s room for them to contribute and make things happen, Few barriers to involvement, Parents have access to the school, Parents bond with each other, Match between school and family values	Parents
Bonding with teacher, Caring teacher, Walden is deliberately non-competitive,	Teachers

Caring and competition can work together, Walden is teacher-owned, Reflective field memos were accurate, Mrs. Knox teaches empathy to her students, One teacher is the resident environmentalist, Don't label, rank, name call, or compare students, Teachers communicate often and well with each other	
Students receive natural consequences for their behavior (not punishment), Walden emphasizes increasing individual responsibility from preschool through sixth grade, Blood drawing – Dillon, Raptor program – Shean, PreK made phone directory and used it, Student newspaper	Student empowerment/recognition
The memos fit well with school; nothing unexpected	Researcher
Bright and bored, Looked around at other schools, felt good about Walden, Parents compare Walden to other schools children attended, Small size, Convenient location, Individualized learning, Foundation of care, People don't choose for status; school unknown in community, Parents and children felt welcome when visiting school	Reasons for choosing Walden
Sex education and sexualization	Miscellaneous

Selective Coding

Caring has emerged as the central theme of this data analysis. Teachers and parents interviewed agreed with my reflective memos focusing on the culture of caring. This theme of caring is contrasted with competition by Noddings (1992). However, a few parents have trouble with the contrast. The distinction to be made is between external competition and internal motivation. Rather than juxtaposing the two ideas of caring and competition, perhaps we want to create caring competitors, particularly differentiating between the appropriate time and place for caring and competing.

There are these key elements of this culture of caring: (a) norms are ritualized and not written as rules, (b) celebrations, traditions, and symbols ritualize the norms, (c) the number of students in the school and classrooms is small, (d) continuity exists in terms of teachers and predictability, (e) caring extends outside the school to the community, (f) students learn how to resolve conflicts nonviolently, particularly through the skills learned in the Friendship Circle program, (g) students are empowered and become “powerful,” particularly through increasing amounts of responsibility from preschool through sixth grade.

The parents talked about who they chose Walden for their children’s primary education. The parents said they visited several other schools, sometimes talked to others, and finally chose Walden because it fit and felt right, particularly because of the individualized learning and the foundation of care.

Vignettes

For this round of vignette analysis I decided to write two impressionist vignettes, one from the perspective of a teacher and one from the perspective of a parent.

Teacher Impressionist Vignette

Hello. Welcome to Walden School. I have taught here since the opening of the school ten years ago. In fact, I am one of three teachers that are the owners of this school. The three of us met for quite some time before we opened the school and played this what if we taught in the ideal school fantasy game. Then one day we decided to turn the dream into reality, and Walden came into existence.

We wanted to create a school that values individualized learning; where students are accepted as they are and helped to improve. We wanted to create “powerful” students

by giving them more and more responsibility, starting in the preschool and continuing until they graduate in the sixth grade as competent boys and girls.

I said preschool and sixth grade, but we prefer to speak of our classrooms by the name of the teacher, not the grade level. For instance, my classroom would be referred to as Mrs. Knox's room, not the first and second grade. Yes, we have two grade levels together. We believe that provides continuity for the student and teacher so they can get to know each other well over a long period of time. Also the students get to be both learners and teachers during those two years.

By not referring to the classrooms by grade level, we avoid labeling. We strive to not label or categorize our students. Rather, we cherish their individual gifts that they bring to the school. For that reason we are a non-competitive school, which isn't easy in our culture. We do not give the students grades. We don't rank or compare the students. We value each student for who they are, not how they compare to someone else or some standard.

Instead of competition we want our students to be inwardly motivated. We realize there is competition at our school, particularly at recess. The boys like to play football in the fall, and that is the most competitive event at our school. However, we use football as an opportunity for the boys to learn how to be competitive and caring. They learn how to differentiate between when it is appropriate to be competitive, such as playing football at recess, and when to be caring, such as walking with their book buddy to and from recess.

Over the years we have created a number of wonderful traditions here, such as the first day of school root beer floats, the first day of snow hot cocoa, Halloween, Thanksgiving, World Studies Night, spring ecology trip to Mountain Ranch, and, of

course, graduation. And we have regular rituals, like the book buddies holding hands to and from recess and the all-school meeting every Friday. We have symbols of who we are, like the player piano and the old school bell that sits in the bell tower on the north side of the school. We got that bell last year. However, the symbol that is probably most significant is the quilt. Each classroom makes a quilt each year, and we donate the quilts to a local non-profit organization at the end of the school year. To us the quilts represent harmony, both in the school and the world outside. The quilt also fits with our new school song we discovered this year, "Weave Us Together."

So, yes, I do think we have an environment of caring here at Walden. I think of myself as a person who has the care of these youngsters each day rather than a teacher. These children teach themselves. I care for and about them physically, mentally, and emotionally and provide a place where they can learn. If I do that well, the students will learn what they need to learn in their way and in their time. We believe that here at Walden.

Parent Impressionist Vignette

Good morning. I am the mother of two students here at Walden, and I just brought my children to school. I took Tammy to preschool. She started here this year. I made sure she had her math papers we worked on together last night. Then I went to John's classroom, with Mr. Johnson. I spoke to Mr. Johnson for a moment, reminding him John has a dental appointment today.

My husband and I chose to send our children to Walden after I investigated many of the other public and private schools in the area. In fact, we had already picked out another school for creative learners when a neighbor asked me if I had considered

Walden. I told her I did not know about Walden. She told me her children had attended Walden and found it to be a wonderful experience. So I visited Walden.

As soon as I entered the front door I knew this school was different. I liked that the school had a small enrollment and focused on individualized learning. The welcome that John and I received from the students and the teachers helped me realize right away that the people at this school really care. I felt like it fit and was the right place for us, even though it lacked diversity and some of the features of the other schools. I knew we would be involved with the school we picked for at least seven years, so it was an important choice. I'm just happy we have the income that we can afford to send our children here.

John started at Walden last year. He was in public school before and failing to flourish, as I say. He was bright and bored. He was in the fourth grade at that time and not motivated to participate in school. He thought he was king of the hill at that time. He struggled when he first came to Walden. The climate of this school is such there is no king or queen of the hill. He didn't like that, and he didn't understand the culture of his new school. For example, this was the first year John participated in football. He liked how much effort went into making sure the teams were fairly equal in ability and that everyone would get to participate, particularly in running and catching the ball. He was disappointed when the season ended abruptly but understood that the game was becoming competitive, with bad language and rougher play. I am proud that the boys recognized what was happening and took responsibility and stopped the football season. Now they are playing basketball, and things are going well.

Over time John has come to realize students at Walden are accepted each as their unique selves, which I believe is the essence of individualized education. We both came to realize that the teachers at Walden truly cared for and about John. They valued his individual gifts and encouraged him to be responsible and accept the natural consequences for his actions. So now he is doing well, although I'm not sure he would admit it.

Tammy loves preschool here. She comes home excited every day, and she is usually tired from a full day. She talks often about her Book Buddie. She likes Peter and thinks it's neat that he talks to her about things she likes to do. Recently her class made a phone directory, and she started using the directory to call her classmates right away. I expect Tammy will attend Walden all the way through the sixth grade.

Since coming to the school last year I have got to know some of the other parents. Sometimes our children play together after school and on weekends. When I help out at school with lunch or helping students with math or the Great Books Club I get to know the other parents. I like how the parents bond together.

I also like how the school provides parents with an opportunity to contribute to the school. My friend Elizabeth is a professor at a local university, and she is helping the girls in Mrs. Schmidt's class to learn about friendships and the harm of cliques. I am free to be involved in the school and to interact with my children anytime during the day.

I particularly like how the teachers care about my children individually. They accept them for who they are and encourage them to become better. I like the fact that the environment here is non-competitive, although I realize a few parents are more competitive than my husband.

APPENDIX G

Fieldnotes.4 – Open, axial, and selective coding; vignettes; and document analysis

Open	Axial
Book buddies, Resolutions, Dad hugs daughter, Care receiver to caregiver, Caring about researcher's wife	Caring
Quiet music, Students teaching, Quiet	Norms/school size
Pioneer Night, Spring Program, Graduation, Gift to school, Hug the parents, Diplomas	Traditions
Entire primary school	Continuity
Peace means working together, Cooperation, Going together to IB	Community
Japanese teacher	Diversity
Families together, Volunteers recognized, Your children are not your children	Parents
Reading a story	Teachers
Lord of the Rings (cloaks)	Recess
Peace in a can, No TV for a week, Unique school	Nonviolent response to conflict
Hateful crimes, Trading insults	Violent (harmful) response to conflict
Gender and leadership	Friendship Circle
Heroes of the week, Shoveling the sidewalk, Birthday celebration, Clear boundaries, Individual presentations	Student recognition and empowerment
Where is Guam	Global awareness
Facts about the city, Mining camps	Locality
Boxer shorts	Sexualization
Participant	Researcher

Selective Coding

Caring continues to be a major theme in this study. Book buddies is a principal example of caring. Students demonstrate how they go from the role of care receiver to caregiver. The people here even extend themselves to care for my wife.

Quiet is an important norm here. Playing quiet music creates the environment for that norm. Because two classes are together in a room, students have the opportunity to be teachers.

I observe more traditions during this time: Pioneer Night, Spring Program, and Graduation. Graduation is full of traditions, like giving a gift to the school and hugging parents to thank them for choosing Walden for their children. Of the five graduating students, four have spent their entire primary school years at Walden, another sign of continuity.

Community means cooperation here and was exemplified by a sign that read, "Peace means working together." Even all the graduating students are staying together as they transition to junior high school.

Walden is not a diverse school. However, one of the teachers is Japanese.

The parents were reminded at graduation by song that "Your children are not your children." At Pioneer Night Mr. Johnson kept up his consistent theme of wanting families to do things together. I was part of a volunteer recognition ceremony one Friday morning.

One of the favorite activities of all the students is for teachers to read stories. Recess looks different now with football over and Lord of the Rings taking over as the major activity of the older children.

My observations include nonviolent as well as violent (hurtful) behaviors. I observed a can near the front door decorated with peace symbols, with the words, "Peace in a Can." Mr. Johnson asks the students in his classroom to spend one week with no TV. There are also harmful behaviors. One day at lunch I observed that the older boys were playing a game of trading insults. So I learned that this school is not perfect. Rather, what makes this school unique is how it responds to wrongdoing and conflict.

I continue to see examples of student recognition and empowerment. Student heroes of the week is now a permanent part of the Friday all-school meetings. Birthday celebrations are another form of student recognition. Students are empowered to shovel the school's sidewalk in the winter, to make individual presentation at graduation, and to have clear boundaries.

On one hand the students learned where Guam is after my trip there. On the other, they are learning about their own locality in terms of facts about the city and about mining in the west.

Gender and sexualization issues are interesting to me but not part of this study. By now I am very much a participant in the life of this school.

Vignettes

Impressionist Vignette

I am interested to observe how the students in Mrs. Knox' classroom start out primarily as care receivers, and by the time they are ready to transition to the next classroom they are becoming caregivers. I am impressed that this culture of caring extends beyond the school. When my wife became ill, people from the school brought food over to the house and visited with her. She had never been to the school.

Quiet is an important norm at Walden. Soft music is used to signal the students to be quiet. The school has many traditions. The three big traditions in the spring are Pioneer Night, Spring Program, and Graduation. Graduation itself has many traditions, like hugging the parents and giving a gift to the school.

Student recognition and empowerment is an important part of the environment of this school. One day I observed two of the older boys shoveling the sidewalk. They said Mr. Johnson hired them to do that. At graduation each graduate gave a special presentation, and Mr. Johnson spoke about the need for each student to have clear boundaries.

I continue to be surprised at the lessons in nonviolence the students learn. One week they had no TV, at Mr. Johnson's suggestion. I concluded the school is not perfect. However, it is unique in how the people at the school respond to conflict and wrongdoing.

So this school has a real sense of community in the form of cooperation. The sign at the school, "Peace means working together," underscores this idea.

Confessional Vignette

This is my last set of fieldnotes for this study. The theme of caring continues to dominate the meaning of the data. That theme is couched with other themes, like the norms and school size, traditions, community, continuity, nonviolent response to conflict, and student recognition and empowerment. The original themes that were formed by my initial conceptual framework are now diminished (i.e., global awareness and locality).

As a researcher I have become very much a participant in the life of this school. I spoke at the volunteer appreciation program at the request of Mr. Johnson. I spoke about

the “rich culture” of the school and that the parents play a large role in creating that rich culture.

Document Analysis

2002 Activities (so far)

Guest presentations – 17

Field trips – 8

Enrichment projects – 35

Other activities – 11

Staff Meeting January 6, 2003

Pioneer Night will be the World Studies Night for this month.

Letter to Parents January 10, 2003

Welcoming parents to the second half of the school year and reminding them about Parent-Teacher Conferences. Mrs. Knox.

Staff Meeting January 21, 2003

Discussion about bulletin board for alumni.

The Walden Post, April 4, 2003

This is the second edition of the school newspaper. 28 students are participating in this activity, under the direction of Mrs. Knox.

A cartoon spoofing the president. I continue to admire that the students are not prohibited from expressing themselves politically.

An article about basketball. Organized, with a coach, and playing against other local teams. More organized than the recess football games. The coach was interviewed by a student, and he said, “I wanted the boys to come together as a team because they

represent Walden, not themselves.” Then the paper features a basketball team player of the week

Mrs. Cook, the school secretary, was interviewed about her companion dog, Janice. I learned that the Spanish teacher also speaks at the local bilingual school.

Jingles written by students. Recipes by the students. “Pet Corner” about horses, a hedgehog, and pigmy goats, all pets of students at Walden.

Then some drawings. Book reviews. Art throughout the school.

March 28, 2003 letter to students and parents

Strings N’ Things is a musical program to allow the students of Walden a chance to perform for their family and friends.

Thank you letters from Friendship Circle students

Does television incite violent behavior?

A parent sent a short abstract of this longitudinal study.

Letter to parents, April 4, 2003, from Mrs. Knox

Two events mentioned are field trips for Walden Earth Day to a local park to plant a tree and clean an adjacent trail and to the local Recycling Center. Students are constructing a spaceship out of a refrigerator box and aluminum foil.

Letter to parents, April 17, 2003, from Mrs. Knox

On April 16th Walden celebrated its 10th birthday. A Publishing Party will be held May 16th for all the students who worked on the school newspaper. One of the mothers will make sack lunches for the students and asks for donations, which will be given to Habitat for Humanity.

Wanted Singers

An appeal is made to parents who are willing to sing with the students at the spring program.

Sixth Grade Graduation program

On the back page:

Go, my child
And find your way
Though I would rather
Have you stay.

Take now your chance
To reach for more
Than I have ever
Known before.

And not your tears
To those people cried
In mourning
For their dreams that died.

Look back
But now and then to tell
Of where you go
And are you well.

This thought to warm you
'Gainst the chill
We care for you now
And forever will.

Walden School brochure

This brochure announces the school: (a) encourages community involvement, (b) builds a solid foundation for lifelong learning, (c) provides strong, individualized, academic achievement, and (d) fosters independence, self-esteem, and responsibility.

One of the students is quoted in the brochure, "What I like about Walden is that it is not ordinary and it is exciting and warm." These elements of Walden are mentioned:

(a) atmosphere of trust and respect; (b) calm, caring environment, where children are physically and emotionally safe; (c) families are integrated into the school community; and (d) parents are given support and peace of mind.