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**“Hello Mrs. Scribbles”: Storytelling, Identity and
Teacher Research in the Kindergarten**

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**Thesis presented to the School of Graduate Studies of the University of
Ottawa as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Education**

January, 1997

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0-612-22019-2

ABSTRACT

The value of storytelling in a primary classroom is well documented in the literature. Researchers and classroom teachers recommend storytelling to help young children to hear rich story language and enhance discriminating listening skills, to assist in the learning of predictive skills for reading, and to add to their knowledge of story genre. In addition, the told story allows the child listener to create his or her own images for the story rather than have them supplied by a talented illustrator.

While these are all valuable goals for storytelling in the primary classroom what has been overlooked in storytelling research is the nature of the classroom itself. Who are the students? Who is the teacher? And what stories are being told within this diverse environment? In today's classrooms children come to school from a variety of cultures, speaking a variety of languages, with diverse economic backgrounds and different abilities. If the storytelling teacher tells only stories of the dominant culture to these diverse children then she is helping to support the dominant culture and she is excluding the children from other cultural backgrounds.

Using the framework of critical ethnography, one that offers an insider's view to understanding processes, I entered my own kindergarten classroom and tried to place my own storytelling pedagogy under critical scrutiny. I tried to find answers to such questions as: 1) what impact my storytelling praxis had on the identity of the children, 2) how my teacher belief about storytelling and literacy learning of young children informed my classroom praxis and 3) how the children

responded to this praxis.

This research was conducted over ten weeks in 1994 in a small English speaking school in a mid-sized city in central Canada. Forty-two children took part in the study; twenty-five were five years old and seventeen were four years old. Twenty-six of the children were English speaking. Sixteen children were from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

Each week I told the children one story, taken from my annual "Fairy Tale and Nursery Rhyme" theme. I taperecorded these tellings and demonstrated the use of the taperecorder for the children. The taperecorder was then made available to the children and they were encouraged to go and tell their own stories into it. During this time I also collected field notes and kept a reflective journal.

An analysis of the data revealed a storytelling praxis rife with problems. The themes of the teacher-told stories offered a very narrow Eurocentric world view. Most child storytellers were five years old and had strong English skills. Four year old children or children with weak English skills tended to stay away from the taperecorder. Finally, while acting as both a teacher and a researcher is a creative means of bringing the classroom teacher's voice into the literature, it proved to be full of tension.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research could not have been completed without the thoughtful assistance of several people. I am particularly grateful for the positive support and the clearheaded wisdom of my advisor Dr. Diana Masny. I would also like to thank Dr. Janice Ahola-Sidaway, Dr. Judith Robertson and Dr. Richard Maclure for their insights and constructive feedback.

I would like to acknowledge my family who ignored my bad moods and who supported me when I was overwhelmed with self doubt. Thank you Kate, Rebecca and Lee. Lee also acted as technical troubleshooter and helped me to sort through my battles with the computer. Lastly, an affectionate nod goes to my dog, Zoë, who sat long hours with me at the computer.

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Chapter One

If you are a dreamer, come in,
If you are a dreamer, a wisher, a liar,
A hope-er, a prayer, a magic bean buyer...
If you are a pretender, come sit by my fire
For we have some flax- golden tales to
spin.
Come in! Come in!
-anonymous.

“Come in close for a story”, I say to my kindergarten children in hushed tones and they move about my feet, settle themselves and turn their faces up to me expectantly. They are waiting for the story magic to begin and their bodies visibly soften and we begin to breathe as one. “This is a once upon a time long time ago story” I say to set the mood for my little story tribe, and for a small space of time the story lets us “sink all antagonisms and create an essential - albeit short-lived - harmony” in the classroom (Rosen, 1988, p. 43).

This is the superficial apolitical view I held when I first began telling stories in my kindergarten class eight years ago! I viewed the storytelling experience as a magic, harmonic, inclusive experience of colourless, genderless, cultureless, language-sharing teacher and student. This view was compatible with my earlier humanistic education in preparation for teaching and with my own lived experience.

I entered my kindergarten classroom not only influenced by my humanistic training but also by my lived experience as a white, almost middle aged, English speaking female with six years of teaching experience. Being married with two school aged female children also influenced my teaching and

my world view. I was raised in a large economically struggling family in Northern Ontario and I was the first child to attend university. It was my parents' belief that a university education would allow me to escape their economic difficulties.

As stated, my education at university was within the humanistic tradition - a tradition that viewed the small child in the classroom as a "rational, independent and autonomous child...who progresses through a universalized developmental sequence towards the possibility of rational argument" (Walkerdine, 1985, p. 203). The child was viewed as non-gendered, from a universal class and culture. The child was also viewed, under Piagetian tradition, as "actively produced" in the classroom through "hands on" interaction with teacher-provided situations and materials. The rational child was actively produced by the faceless, genderless teacher. In this tradition, the teacher, who is a woman, was placed in the conflicting position of providing nurturance to the universalized child and to aid in the production of an "autonomous and rational individual who was class - and gender - neutral" (Walkerdine, 1984, pp. 204 & 207).

Informed by this tradition I opted out of the work place for nine years to be an at-home Mom with my two daughters. It was my belief that I had an important role in creating the appropriate experiences to assist them in their journey toward rational autonomy. Once I returned to the classroom I designed my kindergarten program to begin with an active ninety minute period with a multitude of hands-on activities designed to help facilitate the developing child

with an abundance of free choice. As a teacher I saw myself as a facilitator to the actively produced child - a role compatible with my view of mothering. I set the activities each day based on a theme of study integrated throughout the classroom. While the children interacted with the provided materials and each other, I was available to help negotiate their individual learning journeys.

I did not question my role. I did not consider my identity and its impact on the child, the classroom design or the choices being made for the benefit of the child. In my pedagogy I was nurturer and teacher/facilitator. I did not question the individual identities of the children in my charge. I did not consider how facets of each child's identity (gender, race, ethnicity, religion, language, abledness or disabledness, or economic status) might be supported or compromised or in conflict with what was being constructed within the classroom. In my pedagogy the child was universalized. If I provided the correct experiences the child had every opportunity to become a rational autonomous being.

Informed by this pedagogy I began to tell stories in my classroom to my small story tribe. And while I told the stories I never questioned the issues surrounding who I was in the classroom or what I was doing or what I was telling or how the individual child's identity was being influenced or suppressed or supported by the act of telling stories or by the stories themselves.

For one term each year I dedicated classroom activities to the theme of "Nursery Rhymes, Fairy Tales and Folk Tales" - with an emphasis on storytelling.

I told stories that I was familiar with, ones drawn from European tradition. All subject areas in the classroom became integrated into this umbrella theme. The wooden climber was transformed into a castle. Aided by the children we covered it in kraft paper and paint and added waving paper flags. Paper crowns, long dresses, sponge vests for knights, chairs adorned with bottle top jewels were added to the castle to augment dramatic play. The art table became the place to create stick puppets based on nursery rhyme or fairy tale characters. Influenced by Jack and the Beanstalk, assorted dried beans filled our rice table to be used for mass and volume activities. The books in the class library were drawn from my own private collection, augmented by trips to the school and public libraries, and enhanced this theme. At the paint station and the big block area children had the opportunity to create paintings and build structures based on this theme. Puzzles with nursery rhyme or fairy tale themes were unearthed from the teacher cupboard. At the printing table, children were invited to copy teacher-created fairy tale and nursery rhyme word cards into their individual printing books. At the teacher directed circle time, I taught the children traditional European nursery rhymes, finger plays and songs. At the end of the circle time a fairy tale would be read or, once a week, a story would be told.

My little story tribe seemed to listen with rapt attention to the told story. On the surface it appeared to be a highly successful pedagogy. We retold the stories. We dramatized the stories. We sequenced the stories and made puppet plays. We drew big books about the stories and created artwork surrounding the

story theme. Throughout I felt content that I was providing my young students with a sound basis for becoming sound readers and autonomous, rational individuals.

That is until my university studies collided my comfortable views with those of critical pedagogy - with the writings of Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, Valerie Walkerdine and Roger Simon. Suddenly my humanistic philosophies were in question. Suddenly it mattered who I was in the classroom and what I was doing and why I was doing it and what I believed about what I was doing. Suddenly it mattered who the individual child was and what she brought to the classroom. I wrote in my journal:

As I struggle and wrestle with the ideas that we
toss about so cavalierly in the class I find
that I am dismantling myself and my beliefs.
Dismantling in an effort to understand and to
transform. Recreating myself. Gaining new
language to recreate. Re-storying. (Stewart, 1993)

As I re-entered my classroom that fall I began to question everything that I did in the classroom and the impact it might have on each child. I began to change how I viewed the child. I began to see the children as individuals of gender and ethnicity and culture and religion and language and ability. I also began to question if they actively produced themselves or if they were produced (empowered, suppressed, influenced) by the social messages that surrounded them based on the social meanings of their individual gender, culture, race, religion, class, language and ability.

Using these musings as a beginning I decided to analyze and interpret my

own classroom pedagogy or praxis by scrutinizing the praxis about which I was most passionate - storytelling. I determined to continue my tradition of dedicating one term to storytelling under the theme "Nursery Rhymes, Fairy Tales and Folk Tales". I decided not to change or enhance my storytelling praxis in an effort to reveal it, to try and understand the issues that were raised by it.

And so I was changing. I was beginning to question my long held romantic assumptions about storytelling. My original humanistic belief of storytelling was beginning to change from a linear, developmental and inclusive one to one that defined storytelling as a very complex and politically charged praxis. Influenced by my study of and my philosophical agreement with critical pedagogy, I now looked beyond these romanticized surface features of storytelling and agreed that storytelling in the classroom was much more complex than simply telling a story and listening to a told story. Because I viewed storytelling and story listening as a shared meaningmaking event, then I also recognized that "meaning is produced through the construction of forms of power, experiences, and identities that need to be analyzed for their wider political and cultural significance" (Giroux, 1989, p. 237).

Taking Giroux as an entry point for analysis, and considering "the power, experiences and identities" at work during a storytelling praxis, then contrary to the romantic opening poem with its notion of a welcoming and all inclusive storytelling pedagogy, there are many issues and problems at play when a classroom teacher tells a story to a group of small children. These lead to my

question, namely, how do the “ideas, concepts, values and beliefs...[of the storytelling] ideology” affect and effect the social construction of the child’s identity - the child’s concept of gender, language, culture, race, religion, ability and disability? In order to explore my question I need to look at: 1) who tells the story, 2) what story is told, 3) who listens to the story, 4) where the story is told, and 5) how the story is understood and used by the young children.

These are but a few of the problematic issues that arose once I moved from viewing storytelling as an apolitical neutral event in my kindergarten classroom to one which sees a storytelling pedagogy as a part of a narrative discourse, and as a “form of power which [has the potential to] both literally and metaphorically inscribe the collective and individual social body” of the child listener and the teacher teller (Luke,1992, p.112). In this study, I want to consider how ideas in a storytelling pedagogy are inscribed upon the individual identity of both the teacher and the child.

Within this framework, in the next chapter, I will discuss how I perceive storytelling. I will discuss how each word imparts a cultural message that has the power to situate each individual in a different place within a society. I will describe why I believe stories need to be told in today’s classrooms and what other researchers have discovered about stories and storytelling.

Chapter Two

Telling Stories in the Kindergarten

For six years I told stories in my kindergarten confident that I was assisting in the healthy development of the children in my charge. My collision with the beliefs of critical pedagogy caused me to rethink the very underpinnings of this praxis.

Story Begins with a Word

Storytelling begins with the spoken word. The word itself is not neutral. It, too, is surrounded by issues of “power, experience and identity”. According to Chase (1954),

Some words are considered so holy they must never be spoken aloud...Some words are so shocking that they must be spoken only in subterranean circles. Some words are so magical that people believe they can cause injury, dementia, even death. Some words make us sick, and others make us well. (p. 4)

The word has the power to situate the individual in power, out of power or offer access to power. Consider how the language of our society has historically situated woman and man. “Human” and “mankind”. These two words situate man in power and woman out of power. Further, consider how the words “student” and “teacher” situate the child and the adult in the hierarchy of the school. One is situated as powerless and the other powerful. However, what happens to the power relationship when the student is a young man and the teacher is a woman? Or the student is a black Somali speaking girl and the teacher is a white English speaking male? How each of these roles or

subjectivities has been socially constructed historically in our Canadian society affects the power structure in each of these relationships. And our very words carry the definitions of these social constructions every day in our dealings with each other. Thus, a word, a language is a “social phenomenon, implicated in sets of social relations, imbued with power and authority, embroiled in conflict and struggle” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 9).

And, we as people, take these words - words “imbued with power and authority and embroiled in conflict and struggle” - and link them together to create stories, narratives that recount the mundane details that outline the boundaries of our lives. The bus ride home. The meeting with the boss. The television program we watched the night before. All of these narratives are stories. And all of these narratives are essential to our understanding of the world around us, to the making of meaning in our lives. We think in narrative, we dream in narrative, we recount our lives in narrative (Erasmus, 1989, p. 268; MacIntyre in Tappan and Packer, 1991, p. 8; Rosen, 1986, p. 230; Stein and Policastro, 1984, pp. 113-115). Narrative is the essential means for understanding the chaotic events in the world around us (Rosen, 1986, p. 230). Hayden White goes further in this analysis of narrative and suggests that-

far from being one code among many that a culture may utilize for endowing experience with meaning, narrative is a metacode, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of shared reality can be transmitted.
(White, 1981, p.2)

White's analysis concurs with Ross Chambers, who labelled narrative a

“transactional phenomenon”, “a metanarrative” (Chambers, 1984, pp. 8&32).

Storytelling formalizes this essential human activity of narration - this “metacode” or “metanarrative” - and creates a shared event of story, storyteller and listener. It moves beyond the mundane issues of our lives to a new level of narration. Anne Pellowski describes storytelling as:

the entire context of a moment when oral narration of stories in verse or prose, is performed or led by one person before a live audience; the narration may be spoken, chanted, or sung, with or without musical, pictorial, and or other accompaniment, and may be learned from oral, printed or mechanically recorded sources; one of its purposes must be that of entertainment or delight and it must have at least a small element of spontaneity in the performance. (Pellowski, 1990.)

Although Pellowski captures the mechanics of the storytelling event, her definition ignores the essential almost inexplicable power that occurs, the powerful interaction of the storyteller and the story listener as they negotiate the meaning of the story. But is this negotiation of meaning equitable when the teller is an adult teacher and the listener is a small child? Does the authority of the teacher/teller voice override the voice of the child/listener? Does the social construction of the child’s identity conflict with the beliefs, values and ideologies of the told story? Finally, does a storytelling pedagogy “serve to empower the student, and to what extent ...[does it] work as a form of social control that support[s], stabilize[s] and legitimate[s] the role of the teacher as a moral gatekeeper of the state” (McLaren, 1989, p. 173)?

Why Tell Stories in School:

The value of storytelling in a primary classroom is well documented in the literature. Researchers and supporters of holistic literacy practices, practices that model literacy acquisition on infant language acquisition, laud the power that occurs when the authority of the book is set aside and the contact between the storytelling teacher and the student listener is direct. The repetitious language of the told story often has the power to draw the listener to join in and become a co-creator of story. There is the benefit of setting the book aside to allow the listener to create the images for the story rather than have them supplied by the imagination of a talented illustrator. Storytelling is a sound vehicle for developing discriminating listening skills in young children. It can also assist children in developing predictive skills necessary for becoming a strong reader. Storytelling can also help introduce children to a variety of story genres which supports prediction in reading (Aiken, 1988; Barton and Booth, 1990; Beardsley, Marecek-Zeman, 1985; Dyson, 1990; Hough, Nurss, Wood, 1987; Rosen, 1988).

And so the story is told. The humanistic storytelling teacher feels secure in the literacy benefits for the child. But what happens next? Sometimes nothing. Sometimes a story is simply there to allow for quiet reflection and for needed calm in the classroom on an otherwise boisterous day. However, a storytelling event can be the basis for further follow-up literacy events in the classroom. My experience of storytelling leads me to agree with Betty Rosen and her storytelling experiences with adolescent working class boys in a racially

and ethnically diverse school in England. She writes, "My experience tells me that a told story gives rise to a wider scope of responses than any other language stimuli in the repertoire of an English teacher" (B. Rosen, 1982, p. 91). Harold Rosen writes that each story "contains within it the seeds of other potential stories" (H. Rosen, 1986, p. 235). He expands this idea - "There should be no need to plead for more retelling. We accept without question Shakespeare as a reteller of Plutarch and Holinshed, Chaucer of Boccaccio...We are all translators in the basic sense of that word carrying over and changing one discourse into another" (H. Rosen, 1986, p. 235).

Using the told story as a vehicle, the children with the support of the teacher can interpret the story through discussion of main events, asking questions and considering "what if", through dramatizing the story allowing different children to assume the main roles, and through using puppets or children's drawings to sequence the story. Individual children can retell the story from their own perspective. Retelling may be the most powerful outcome of storytelling in the classroom. Informed by the writings of Mikhail Bahktin, MacIntyre writes;

When another's words are retold in one's own words, in contrast, they become internally persuasive. Internally persuasive discourse is much more open, flexible and dynamic than is authoritative discourse. When another's words are internalized they become one's own, or as close to one's own as is ever possible. Thus, when an individual speaks in internally persuasive discourse she becomes, essentially, the "originator" or "author" of those words. (MacIntyre, in Tappan and Packer, 1991, p. 17)

And here is the crux of one of several critical and, oft overlooked, problems with storytelling in the classroom - especially in the socially and ethnically diverse classroom of today. As I have argued, stories are constructed of words, words that are rife with problems of "power and authority and imbued with conflict and struggle" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 9). Just as the words are not neutral, neither are the stories themselves. If children are encouraged to retell and dramatize and sequence and discuss stories that, by their themes and politics, situate the child/teller as powerless and marginalized or dominant and marginalized, and this story becomes "internally persuasive" for the child/teller, then the story has a hegemonic potential -by adding one more message of marginalization to the child's own social construction of identity (MacIntyre, in Tappan and Packer, 1991, p. 7). Peter McLaren (1989) defines hegemony as

the maintenance of domination not by sheer exercise of force but primarily through consensual social practices, social forms, and social structures: produced in specific sites such as the church, the state, the school, the mass media, the political system, and the family. (p.173)

If the marginalized child hears only the stories of the dominant culture in school, then the stories can help to keep the child marginalized. Alternately, if the child of the dominant culture hears only the tales of domination, then this too can be inscribed on the individual identity with negative results. bell hooks (1988) explains how this process might work:

If the identified audience, those spoken to, is determined solely by the ruling groups who control

production and distribution, then it is easy for the marginal voice striving for a hearing to allow what is said to be overdetermined by the needs of the majority group who appears to be listening, to be tuned in. It becomes easy to speak about what the group wants to hear, to describe and define experience in a language compatible with existing images and ways of knowing, constructed within frameworks that reinforce domination. (p.14)

And so the apolitical neutral storytelling event is not apolitical or neutral once its layers are removed. Storytelling is a discourse replete with issues ripe for critical investigation. Here is what other researchers have discovered.

Current Storytelling Research

The field of storytelling is replete with a wide variety of research issues and methods of investigation. They are presented here as 1) critical ethnographies of storytelling, 2) the link between the child's home and school, 3) the child's understanding of story, 4) story as a therapeutic tool and 5) story as an instructional tool in the classroom. More recently researchers have begun to investigate the critical issues that surround a storytelling praxis using the tools of a critical ethnographer. Due to the nature of my own research, critical ethnographic studies are an important source of information and reflection for me. For this reason I will begin with this category of research, but first I will give a brief explanation of why critical ethnography is a powerful method for investigating issues at play in any classroom pedagogy.

Anderson and Irvine(1993) express it best:

Ethnography, as a method of discovery that documents patterns in cultural behaviour and knowledge, can further our understanding of the processes and

effectiveness of critical pedagogies because it represents the “insider’s” point of view...
 Ethnographers can select unique instances of a teaching method and submit them to intense scrutiny, thereby providing us with case study data of the processes and problems associated with various approaches to critical literacy. (p. 2)

Anderson and Irvin’s belief in the importance of “insider” narratives supports Henry Giroux’s belief in the individual investment of the ethnographer in the field as a means to reveal how identity is shaped by culture. Giroux wrote,

The use of structured ethnographic-like field experiences make available narratives from a variety of voices that make up culture as a field of struggle for the production of knowledge, including of course, the discourses of education. The face to face investment of social self in such exercises is an important source of insight into one’s own and others’ presuppositions and is part of the continuing process of identity making. (Giroux, 1989, p. 121)

In the following studies, researchers try to make known the voices of children as they create a social self within a storytelling pedagogy.

1) Critical Ethnographic Research into a Storytelling Praxis:

Elizabeth Yeoman (1994) conducted critical ethnographic research into the use of “disruptive” stories in an ethnically diverse grade 4/5 classroom in a Toronto school. She selected stories that “disrupted traditional European storylines through presenting unexpected characterizations or outcomes” and caused the reader or the listener to raise “questions of justice or equality” (Yeoman, 1994, p.2). Four diverse groups of seven or eight children listened to the chosen stories and took part in follow up activities. Yeoman encouraged the

children to respond to the stories through informal discussion illustrating “marked” characters, making up new endings, rewriting classics, telling other stories, dramatizing the children’s own stories, telling a story from a picture, writing myths and conducting interviews. Yeoman audiotaped and videotaped these activities.

Yeoman concluded that “previous exposure to disruptive stories seems to add to the range of narrative resources which enable children to comprehend counter-hegemonic storylines and to participate in discourses of resistance” (p.196). She noted that the children in her research were highly influenced by story characters drawn from literature and popular media like television and that they helped the children make sense of their own lives (p. 196). Therefore, Yeoman recommends that children be exposed to disruptive stories so that they have tools to “participate in, or to resist, certain storylines” that are hegemonic (p. 196). She emphasizes that children need to read or listen to “‘potent fantasies’ that disrupt conventions of culture and race...and have children re-write stories to take place in a variety of different settings with hero/ines of various ethnic groups” (p. 198).

Ann Haas Dyson (1994) also conducted a critical ethnography into the superhero stories popular with culturally diverse second grade urban American children to investigate the childrens’ “symbolic and social use” of these themes (Dyson, 1994, p. 219). Dyson was particularly interested in the “cultural constraints and transformative possibilities” of these stories on the social

construction of child identity (Dyson, 1994, p. 221). She observed the children in the classroom during daily writing time and audiotaped child directed dramatic re-enactments of these written stories during Author's Theatre (Dyson, 1994, p. 222). As her research progressed Dyson talked with the children and their teacher about the attraction of these popular media figures (The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and the XMen) (Dyson, 1994, p. 223). She and her assistants studied these programs with special attention to the representation of gender. What Dyson noted is that, like Yeoman and the children's discussion of disruptive stories, during the Author's Theatre children had an opportunity to question the representations of gender constructed by the child authors, representations which were based on popular superhero culture (Dyson, 1994, p. 234). Based on this research Dyson recommends that children need to have the opportunity in the classroom to investigate prevailing social constructs of identity through play. According to Dyson, "critical discussions of how stories represent women, men and power may, in and of themselves, have limited impact on children's imaginations. Children seem to examine gripping media stories from 'inside the experience', by playing and replaying them, rather than by holding them up as objects of scrutiny" (Dyson, 1994, p. 235-236).

Shalini Venturelli (1992) conducted an ethnographic study of seven culturally diverse children in a pre-school setting in a university town in the United States. She used critical theory and literary theory to investigate the "narrative experiences of multi-cultural children" juxtaposing the children's stories

against the “narratives of the dominant social order” (Venturelli, 1992, pp.5&6). Venturelli began as observer in the classroom and quickly moved into being participant observer with the children she had identified as multicultural. She used oral expressions of the children drawn from interviews, overheard conversations and observations, their gestures and their written texts (drawings, scribbles and dictated stories) as the texts for analysis (Venturelli, 1992, p. 22). Venturelli found that the children in her study “fabricated a very sophisticated, resistant, symbolically rich world in their tales and narrative discourse that reinvents both the dominant ideology and the cultural practices of their peers in terms of their own cultural codes” (Venturelli, 1992, p. 38). For Venturelli the tales and narratives of the children in her study illuminate the continual “process of consent and struggle between discourse systems” that these multicultural children experience in the classroom, a process of consent and struggle that is not acknowledged by the school (Venturelli, 1992, p. 4). As a kindergarten teacher I can attest that I did not acknowledge this process of consent and struggle experienced by the multicultural children in my classroom until I endeavoured to conduct this research.

Bronwyn Davies conducted critical ethnographic studies into the young child’s understanding of feminist tales and into her construction of gender. Her study was broken into three stages. Initially she worked with eight culturally diverse children reading tales to them and observing and studying their comments to try to discover how they were making sense of the tales. She then

moved into the preschool to read tales and observe play “so that [she] could fit children’s understanding of the stories into their actions in the everyday world” (Davies, 1989, p. ix). Finally she recorded readings of stories with more than forty children. Davies was concerned with how young children make sense of gender and she adopted a poststructural framework that assumed

that maleness and femaleness do not have to be discursively structured in the way that they currently are. Genitals do not have to be linked to feminine or masculine subjectivities unless we constitute them that way. Children can take up a range of both masculine and feminine positionings if they have access to discourse that renders that non-problematic. (Davies, 1989, p. 12)

Davies asked herself how young children adopt male and female subjectivities that appear to be contrary to the wishes of their parents and “how the boundaries between male and female are created and maintained despite the extent of actual similarities between individual males and females, particularly amongst preschool children” (Davies, 1989, p. 25). She observed in play just how important it was for the children in her study to be “correctly gendered for social and emotional survival” (Davies, 1989, p. 42). For this reason she recommends the search for new narrative forms for children, ones that challenge traditional and oppressive male and female patterns and offer children more gender identity possibilities.

Davies selected one dozen feminist tales to share with the children. However the feminist message was usually lost on the children and they

frequently chose to admire or support the behaviour and activities of subcharacters in the stories rather than the feminist heroines who did not fit with their notion of gendered correctness. In the case of the Paper Bag Princess most of the girls in the study said that the heroine was responsible for her predicament and that she should clean herself up and do what the prince told her (Davies, 1989, p.67)! Davies finds that gender dualism is deeply entrenched in the behaviour and thought of the young child. She believes that we need to broaden “the definition of ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ so that they are no longer bipolar, but rather bimodal - two ways of being that partially overlap” (Davies, 1989, p. 133).

Inspired by this research, Davies worked with Chas Banks (1992) and they decided to revisit seven of the children in the preschool study and conduct follow-up interviews with them. They wanted to compare their “talk now with their actions when they were in preschool” to see if they still maintained the same ideals of male and femaleness (Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 2). They were curious to investigate;

the ways in which individuals take up as their own aspects of a traditional and coercive gender order such that it is difficult to undo the patterns of desire that hold them in that order. While we realize that there must be a social order of some kind, we adopt a feminist poststructural position in relation to the current gender order, that is, we see the current gender order as problematic and locate the problem in its dualistic and hierarchical nature.(Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 3)

To fulfill their research mandate they investigated the “discourses about

gender that appeared in the children's talk" and they also looked at the "storylines that [made] each discourse a lived reality" (Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 4). In this way they hoped to determine how the child saw herself as a person and reveal the gender discourse the child had assumed as her own. (Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 4).

After their interviews with the children they grouped the children's beliefs into four positions: 1) "there is profound difference between male and females...[and] my own gender is well accomplished in action and in patterns of desire", 2) "differences between male and female... are probably superficial. My own patterns of desire, however, are very much in line with my sex/gender", 3) "difference between male and female is important. I value and want to do things that are thought proper for the other sex.", and 4) "essentially there is no difference between females and males and I can be both" (Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 6).

At the conclusion of their work, Davies and Banks were surprised to discover such continuity in belief in the children from the ages of four to eight. They suggest that this may be because "children use the same storylines to pull out the same threads over time and thus to constitute themselves as persons within continuity" (Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 22). As an outcome of their work they have become involved with a project to introduce groups of young school children to elements of poststructuralist theory - "introducing them to the concepts of discourse, dominant discourse, discourses of resistance, storyline,

positioning and desire” (Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 23). They hope that by introducing these concepts to young children it will provide them with the tools to make choice and to begin to engage in the kind of personal change that might “undo fundamental elements of the male/female dualism” (Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 23).

Using ethnographic methods Shoshana Blum-Kulka (1993) explored the “degree of cultural diversity in the dinner-table conversation narrative events of eight middle-class Jewish American and eight Israeli families”. She collected 264 narrative events during dinner table conversation of the observed groups. Blum-Kulka acknowledged that storytelling is universal but that “oral narrative styles vary by culture” (p.362). Taking her conclusion that narrative styles vary by culture, and considering our racially and culturally diverse classrooms, how is the culturally different child situated in a storytelling classroom when the storyteller is a white English speaking female and the stories told are taken from European tradition? What disjunctures or conjunctures exist for the identity shaping of the child? What “transcultural messages” are given about the “shared nature of reality” (White, 1981, p. 2)?

Research conducted by Caroline Steedman in the early eighties studied little girls’ story writing and the construction of gender and class identity. She analyzed two eight year old lower class girls’ writing and rewriting the tale of The Tidy House and what this tale revealed about their construction of a social self. Steedman found the story text most revealing and wrote: “It is then possible to

use their texts, in much the same way as children's spoken language has been used to reconstruct the theories they evolve in order to become part of a particular society in a particular place and time" (Steedman, 1982, p. 76). It is my belief that the small child's spoken story is a text that is as revealing about their own social theories as is the written story.

2) Research into the Link between the Home and School:

In England, Carol Fox (1993) investigated the link between the child's previous book experiences and the child's storytelling competency. Using qualitative methods, Fox collected more than two hundred tape-recorded stories created by five children between the ages of three and five. Fox's research site was the child's home and she employed the parent (with taperecorder) to encourage the child's storytelling. Her work offers many insights into the storytelling competence of the young child from the highly literate middle class home with recommendations to the classroom teacher to use storytelling as an evaluative tool, a listening tool and as a "scaffold" to help the inexperienced child develop their own stories.

Sunny Hyon (1992) investigated the spoken narratives of 48 black, low-income urban kindergarten children in the Northern United States. She was interested in studying their narrative styles and in contrasting her findings with those of Sarah Michaels (1986). Michaels had investigated the narratives of first grade black children and white children during "sharing time". She suggested that the classroom teacher had difficulty following the narratives of black children

and therefore did not value them because “they did not adhere to the conventions of literate narrative cohesion” (Michaels in Hyon, 1992, p. 4). Hyon wanted to discover if black children would “display a more literate” topic centred style in a different narrative task”, in an effort to identify if the task had an influence on the narrative style (Hyon, 1992, p.6). In Hyon’s study the children worked one on one with an adult interviewer and were asked to tell a story of choice into the taperecorder. The children’s transcribed narratives were categorized into either “topic centred” or “topic associating” narratives - categories established in Michaels’ earlier work. Hyon’s findings suggest that the black children in her study used both styles of narrative when given a choice and that they used the “topic centred” style - the style Michaels associated with white children - with more frequency. Hyon suggests that her findings differ from Michaels due to the “differences in narrative task” (Hyon, 1992, p. 24). She suggests that by having the adult interviewer ask the children to “tell a story”, they adopted a more literate style. During Michael’s sharing time children may have adopted a “personal style”. Hyon’s work on the narrative styles of young black children extends our knowledge of the narrative styles of young children in an ethnically mixed classroom and also challenges normative versions of “literate” style.

Shirley Brice Heath (1982) investigated the bedtime literacy events of children in three very economically and ethnically diverse American communities and the inadequate literacy fit of the school experience for many of these

children. Her work and findings correspond with those of Gordon Wells and his study of British preschoolers and their oral development. Though Wells demonstrated that children from diverse backgrounds generally enter school with rich oral competence, the school does not tend to value this competence or build on it (Wells, 1985).

Patricia Nichols (1989) conducted an ethnographic investigation to look at the “contrast between most teachers’ assumptions, traditions, and cultural groundings and those of their students” (p. 32) in her study of the storytelling styles and themes of South Carolina children of African and European heritage. Nichols’ work came out of an earlier linguistic study she conducted on Creole. Nichols worked as a volunteer in an elementary school with a population consisting of 90% African American students observing one hundred children in grade four, five and six. She heard stories, taperecorded small groups telling stories and used these stories in the classroom as reading activities. She identified two different styles of storytelling - “participation, immediacy, and entertainment for the African-American children; distance, reported action, and moral instruction for the European-American children” (Nichols, 1989, p. 243). She recommends that school curricula acknowledge and value these “diverse perspectives and traditions” (Nichols, 1989, p. 243). Did the stories told in my kindergarten respect these diverse traditions and perspectives?

While these researchers are concerned with the match between the home experience of the child and the school experience, the following researchers

focus on how the young child understands the story discourse and when the young child is able to use it.

3) Child's Understanding of Story:

Williamson and Silvern (1992) used traditional fairy tale reenactments by kindergartners to investigate young childrens' story comprehension ability. Working against the Piagetian theory of the role of play in the cognitive development of a child, they decided to "examine the relationship of naturally occurring metaplay within thematic-fantasy play (TFP) to story comprehension" (Williamson & Silvern, 1992, p.77). Metaplay occurs when a child steps out of her play role to negotiate some specific aspect of the play scenario with her play partners. For the study 120 kindergartners from a rural school district in Alabama were read three familiar fairy tales, then they participated in two play sessions, one play/test session, one story/test session and one delayed test session. Taperecorders and videotapes were used. Researchers found that metaplay, when children step outside their play roles to talk about play, is very important, more important than rehearsal, to story comprehension. They recommend that children in the early school years be given more opportunity for dramatic play around story themes to develop opportunities for metaplay and thus increase story comprehension.

Researchers are also concerned with the concept of story itself - when people first recognize it as a specific form of discourse and how this becomes refined with development. Margaret Benson examined the circumstances that

enhance young children's storytelling in play situations by working with forty four and five year olds. Her work took a developmental approach to storytelling. She was interested to discover when the young child is able to understand and utilize a story as a specific form of discourse. Her research indicates that while four-year old children understand that a story is a specific kind of discourse, they are unable to use it when they are specifically asked to tell one. Five-year old children do have a strong mental model of story and can tell one when asked and can incorporate conflicts or problems (Benson, 1993, p. 220). Her findings comply with my own. In my research the five-year old children were much more able to go to the taperecorder to tell a story than the four-year old children.

While Benson worked only with the young child, Nancy Stein and Margaret Policastro (1984) accepted story as a "metacode", an organizer of thought that crosses cultures, and they decided to investigate story from both the young child and the teacher's point of view. They wanted to see if "differences in story knowledge [are] a function of development and experience" (Stein & Policastro, p. 114). They utilized two groups in their research - group one contained 42 second grade children from an upper middle class school in Chicago and the second group contained 38 elementary teachers from the Chicago area. Each group was given 31 passages to rate as stories. Both the teachers and the children were able to identify the best story and worst story passages. Teachers had a more refined definition of story and included passages that the children did not. Stein and Policastro suggest that their

findings point to a need for more story instruction in the school to help the children refine their knowledge of what makes a story (Stein & Policastro, p. 152).

4) Story as a Therapeutic Tool:

The value of the story as a therapeutic tool is also an area of interest. Mark Tappan and Lyn Brown (1989) evaluated the uses and power of children's storytelling as a vehicle of moral development for adolescents and young teenagers. They were interested in how teenagers presented themselves in oral narrative, how they represented their moral decisionmaking and how they developed morally by "authoring their own moral stories and by learning the moral lessons in the stories they tell about their own experiences" (Tappan & Brown, 1989., pp. 184 & 185). They suggest that by encouraging teenagers to tell stories from their own experiences, educators can help young adults claim responsibility for their own moral decisions and actions and they can also be encouraged to explore alternatives (Tappan & Brown, 1989, p.199).

In the same vein, Dennis Wolf, Jayne Rygh and Jennifer Altshuler (1984) conducted a cognitive developmental longitudinal study to try to understand how small children "gradually realize that other people's actions, feelings and thoughts may differ from their own" through the use of play narratives. As with Tappan and Brown, the story in this study was viewed as a therapeutic vehicle. Nine children aged one year to three years were observed in their homes over three years. The children engaged in play with toys provided by the researchers

- props that suggested a play scenario like a dragon and forest scene. Audiotape, videotape and notes recorded the play of the children. Data were analyzed for situations where the children represented human behaviour in an effort to understand the young child's development of social cognition (Wolf, Rygh & Altshuler, 1984, p. 201).

These researchers demonstrate how powerful the story can be in terms of the child's social cognition and moral development. The value of storytelling in the classroom has also been praised by researchers.

5) Story as an Instructional Tool:

As noted earlier, Betty Rosen (1988) found the told story to be a rich vehicle for encouraging the creative writing of adolescent working class boys in an ethnically diverse school in England. She reported that when the boys retold teacher told stories, the retold story reflected the boys' own social circumstances.

Again investigating retelling, Maribeth Nelson Lartz and Jana M. Mason (1988) conducted a case study into one preliterate child's retelling of a story many times over eight weeks. The retellings were audiotaped and analyzed for change. They discovered that after many retellings the story became the child's own tale. This leads me again to contemplate the problems of the story itself. For example, how did this story that became the child's own situate the identity of the child teller?

Lesley Morrow (1985) conducted three studies into the practices

surrounding storytelling and story retelling in the kindergarten classroom. She wanted to investigate three questions surrounding a young child's story retelling: 1) if kindergartners retell heard stories would this improve their story comprehension, 2) how much story structure can a young child internalize, and 3) would "practice and guidance in retelling stories increase the syntactic complexity of children's oral language when retelling?" (Morrow, 1985, p. 871). Morrow worked in four public kindergarten classrooms. Each class averaged fifteen children. While Morrow does not discuss the ethnic backgrounds of the children in her study, she indicates that they came from diverse economic backgrounds and had diverse academic abilities (Morrow, 1985, p. 871). She concluded that retelling is a valuable instructional technique for emergent readers and that its effectiveness is ameliorated by teacher guidance. Through teacher guided retellings children significantly increased the syntactic complexity of their stories (Morrow, 1985, p.873). She recommends that teachers in the kindergarten tell stories and encourage child retellings. She also recommends that children be given the opportunity to play out these stories to help reinforce their internalization of the story (Morrow, 1985, p. 874). This finding about the importance of play and story complies with the findings referred to earlier by Williamson and Silvern (1992).

Retelling is not the only way to use storytelling in the classroom. Believing storytelling to be a significant literacy tool, Farrel and Nessel (1982) worked on a project labelled "Word Weaving" that strove to integrate storytelling into the

literacy curriculum. Working from previous research, they pointed out that storytelling offered all the advantages of reading aloud - "a valuable tool for developing listening comprehension, building vocabulary, and stimulating interest in books and stories" (Nessel, 1984, p. 379). However, Farrel and Nessel found that the advantages of the told story went beyond those of the read story in the quality of the attention of the listening child (Nessel, 1984, p. 379). Therefore they developed the Word Weaving program to help classroom teachers become storytelling teachers.

Backed by the same beliefs about the advantages of telling stories in a primary classroom, Jackie Peck (1989) investigated the variety of literacy outcomes from the use of storytelling in a third grade classroom. Using the local history of a circus giant, Peck told stories about giants in forty minute presentations to several grade three classes (Peck, 1989, p. 141). She taught the students how to map the action of the stories and then they "discussed the similarities and differences in their structure" (Peck, 1989, p. 141). Then she helped the students write their own stories about this theme. Afterward she taught them the rudimentaries of telling stories so that they could tell their classmates the stories that they had developed (Peck, 1989, p. 141). Peck discovered that despite the time constraints, the children "exhibited a surprising ability to effectively write, prepare, and tell a story. They were able to integrate components of language through classroom storytelling" (Peck, 1989, p. 141).

While Peck was concerned with the literacy outcomes of storytelling in a

primary classroom, Ruth Hough, Joanne Nurss and Dolores Wood (1987) wanted to investigate story stimuli. They analyzed the effectiveness of concrete material as a stimulus to oral language, for storymaking, in children from kindergarten to grade three. They used three different tasks to stimulate story language in 48 children from kindergarten to grade three. "Children were asked to 'tell a story' about a picture and an eight page wordless picture book...[as well as]...to make up a story of their own" (Hough, Nurss & Wood, 1987, p. 7). They found that few children developed a story using the picture and they suggest that teachers may be "misusing pictures and objects if we assume that they effectively stimulated elaborated language" (Hough, Nurss & Wood, 1987, p. 8). The results from the eight page picture book were similar, "instead of understanding the implied storyline and telling that story or making up an original story that fitted the picture, the children tended to simply describe the pictures, one by one" (Hough, Nurss & Wood, 1987, p. 10). However, when the children were invited to tell their own story they "frequently told long involved stories" (Hough, Nurss & Wood, 1987, p. 11). Some of these stories were based on known stories and others were originals. Based on their findings Hough, Nurss and Wood recommend that teachers using single pictures or wordless story books to develop elaborated language in young children need to be cautious about their value (Hough, Nurss & Wood, 1987, p. 11). They highly recommend that young children have opportunities to tell their own stories, "whether they are original make-believe stories, stories about their own lives and experiences, or

retellings of stories they have heard" (Hough, Nurss & Wood, 1987, p. 11).

What is Missing:

This is a sample of the rich and varied research into the field of storytelling. Most researchers acknowledge the story as an essential symbolic organizer of human experience. Most acknowledge the value of storytelling and the value of the outcomes of storytelling in the literacy development of the child. Shirley Brice Heath, Gordon Wells, Betty Rosen and Sarah Michaels all acknowledge, in their studies, the dichotomy between the ethnic background and economic status of the child and the literacy teaching style in school. Except in the work of Elizabeth Yeoman, Bronwyn Davies, Shalini Venturelli, Ann Haas Dyson and Caroline Steedman, critical issues like the power, experiences and identities of the student/listener in a storytelling pedagogy appear to be overlooked and beg to be investigated in the field of storytelling. What is needed is more critical ethnographic research into the diverse political issues that surround a storytelling pedagogy in the primary classroom - an analysis of the forms of power, experiences, and identities that surround this pedagogy. This present study attempts to investigate these very issues.

In particular, I took guidance from Anderson and Irvine and Giroux, who support critical ethnography because it offers the "insider's view" to "further our understandings of the processes and effectiveness of critical pedagogies" (Anderson & Irvine, 1993, p. 2 and Giroux, 1989, p. 121). I entered my own kindergarten class and tried to place my own storytelling pedagogy or praxis

under this very scrutiny. I did this in an attempt to analyze my own assumptions as teacher and also to try and ascertain the human outcomes of this praxis for the children. This meant that I had to explore the impact of my storytelling praxis on the power, experiences, and identities of the young student/listeners in my charge. I also needed to discover how my own teacher belief about storytelling and the literacy development of young children informed my classroom praxis. Moreover, I was concerned with how the children responded and with the tensions that existed between: teacher / storyteller / researcher, child / listener / storyteller. Rephrasing Giroux, an important aspect of the study is that, by investing myself in the investigation of my own praxis I hope to reveal some of my own assumptions about my storytelling praxis and the impact of these assumptions and practises on the identity making of the child.

Chapter three outlines my research approach to studying these issues. I describe the classroom setting and the types of data I collected. Chapter four investigates fourteen of the children who went to the taperecorder to tell stories. In chapter five I consider the children who did not tell stories at the taperecorder and consider why they were outsiders in the research. The themes and problems of the teacher told stories are the subject for scrutiny in chapter six. Chapter seven investigates the conflicts and struggles revealed by the data and makes suggestions for further work.

Chapter Three

The Study

Entry into the Setting:

I conducted my research over ten weeks in the early spring in 1994 in a small (260 children) English speaking city school in a mid-sized city in central Canada. The school is located in an economically mixed neighbourhood - many children are from middle class and lower middle class families with a few from poor families. Until the 1990's the neighbourhood had been mainly white Anglo Saxon but small numbers of children from many ethnic backgrounds began to enter the neighbourhood and the school. The school's student population tends to be quite stable with children entering at Junior Kindergarten and graduating from grade six. Teachers tend to remain at the school too, and the school had a well respected Kindergarten teacher prior to me who had been with the school for seventeen years before retiring. She set the standard for the Kindergarten program and parents often compared what I did to what she did with siblings of my students.

The original school building was constructed prior to the First World War. It is now a daycare centre that provides care for 180 children drawn from the school and the other neighbourhood schools. Two additions to the school were constructed during the Second World War and in the 1950's. The school is a physically awkward building and the kindergarten classroom is positioned on its own near the front of the building, isolated from the other primary classes that

inhabit a back wing.

The kindergarten is a self-contained classroom with child sized cubicles and a washroom included within the class itself. The tradition at the school is that children go directly to the kindergarten on arrival to school. They remove their outerclothes at their cubbies and then begin to make choices of activities within the room. The room is well stocked with kindergarten equipment collected over many years.

Near the cubicles the children can use a watertable, a sandtable and a rice table with lots of containers and spoons for manipulation. Located in this area is also a small table with two chairs and a taperecorder with two sets of headphones for children to listen to taped stories. Further into the room they can move into finer motor choices with eight small tables set with art materials and four tables set with printing materials. Nearby four tables beckon with puzzles and small counting and matching materials. Two computers are open with software that introduces children to beginning math concepts like matching shapes or counting pictures. The wooden climber is centrally located on the orange rug and is always available for big muscle play. It is often transformed by the children, under the supervision of the teacher, to become a spaceship or a workshop or a grocery store. Nearby, a large cupboard is loaded with big blocks for construction. Children can build firetrucks and motorcycles and school buses. Another large cupboard is brimming with large toys to be used on the rug: cars and trucks, lego blocks, farm animals and a barn, a castle with figures, etc.

Behind this cupboard is the paint easel with three spots for children to paint. Next to this is a nook for reading with a cupboard filled with books and two bean bag chairs to curl up in. Behind this nook is the dress up house with a small stove, sink and china cupboard all stocked with dishes and soapy water for washing and pouring play. A cradle and high chair hold baby dolls and a clothes basket has my cast off clothes, scarves and purses for dress up.

Due to a small kindergarten population I was the only kindergarten teacher and I taught two half-day programs - both four year olds and five year olds in each program. All 44 students in the program were invited to take part in the research. With permission from my Board of Education and my principal, I sent home an information letter and held an information evening to answer parent questions. Student anonymity was assured through the use of pseudonyms. Parents signed consent forms to allow their children to take part. For parents with little English, verbal consent was given.

Forty-two children took part in the study; twenty five were five-year olds and seventeen were four-year olds. While twenty six children were from Canada's dominant culture - white Anglo Saxon - they brought diverse economic and cultural backgrounds to the classroom (British, French, Italian, Greek). Sixteen children were from ethnically diverse backgrounds (Chinese, Vietnamese, Somalian, Japanese, Inuit, Ethiopian, Phillipino). Thirty children spoke English as their first language and twelve children had other languages as first languages (Chinese, Somalian, Amharic, French, Vietnamese).

Once the children and their parents agreed to the research I began to conduct my annual theme of “Nursery Rhymes, Fairy Tales and Folk Tales”. All areas of the classroom conformed to the theme, from the books selected for the book nook, to the climber that became a castle, to the materials chosen for the printing and art tables. Each teacher-directed circle time concluded with the reading of a traditional fairy tale or folk tale and once a week I told a story.

Teacher Told Stories:

These teacher told stories were taperecorded for later analysis. I wanted to analyze them for recurring themes, gender and racial stereotypes, moral messages that support the status quo, and other categories that might emerge from the work. I selected the taperecorder over videotaping because I felt it would be less intrusive with the small children. In my kindergarten a taperecorder was already part of a listening centre and the children used it daily to listen to retellings of favourite story books. During the study, however, the taperecorder did take on a new role as children were discouraged from listening to stories and encouraged to tell their own stories into the taperecorder. A camcorder, in contrast, would be a novelty in the classroom, something to take notice of and comment on. It would require more time to set up and take down before and after the storytelling event; and the taping would have likely been much more distracting for the children. I was also concerned that I might find it inhibiting as well.

Taperecorded Child Stories:

As a teacher/storyteller I felt I would be modelling storytelling behaviours for the children as well as modelling the practical use of the taperecorder. The taperecorder was then made available to the children each day during the 90 minute free exploration part of the kindergarten program. I hoped that a few children would model teacher storytelling behaviour and enjoy it, thus influencing other children to try and tell stories into the taperecorder. This is exactly what happened. Taperecordings of child told stories were transcribed for analysis. They were analyzed for issues of power and identity.

Seven 90 minute audiotapes were filled with childrens' voices. I laboriously transcribed these tapes trying to recreate in written form the childrens' voices as accurately as possible. Each child was given a pseudonym and these were used in all transcribed notes. Pauses in talk were either used to indicate the end of a thought and were noted with a period or they were noted with a dash (-). Mispronounced words, swear words, nonsense words and sounds were reproduced as accurately as possible. Inaudible words were either left blank or a reasonable substitution was made. In this example, from Bonnie all of her pauses were indicated with periods for they seemed to suggest the end of thoughts. Her repetitions are all recorded:

Bonnie: Ready. Ready. I love you forever. I love you and I love you. This is called the story of the cake. Once upon a time the cake was beautiful and we ate some cake yum. You kissed the radio. no no. I said love for cake. What you kissed the radio. I don't think so. So they went on and went on. No

your story. (Child Stories, p. 5)

Classroom Field Notes:

Classroom field notes (quick, daily jot notes) of observed storytelling outcomes were taken. I watched for children to use story language, themes or characters in dramatic play situations in the classroom and on the school yard. I also watched to see if the children would employ story themes in their art work. Many of these incidents were noted and then later analyzed critically. One significant problem which occurred during the collection of my field notes was the ongoing dilemma of continuing to fulfill my responsibilities to the children as their teacher while attempting to also fulfill my research role of participant observer. Often notes on observed play incidents are incomplete in my notes because teacher duties would take me away from observation.

The field notes were hastily taken notes collected in four 22.9 X 15.2 cm. spiral bound notebooks - 743 doublespaced pages in all. I later transcribed these notes on the computer- which yielded 246 doublespaced pages in total. The following fieldnote provides a typical example of a jot note. In this excerpt I am observing three little girls at work with soapy water in the Housekeeping centre:

Marie, Penny and Cathy wash dishes, pour water and hunt through the dish cupboard in the house
 Penny: "Here plates." and sets them up on the table - "For Marie. There." goes to the sink, "I need water Mrs. Stewart."
 Teacher : "Tell Marie." - Marie squeezes sponge into a milk bottle, Penny pours bubbles onto a plate and returns to the sink - I move to the climber (Field Notes, p. 58)

Reflective Journal:

Observations in field notes were also fodder for reflection in my reflective journal. Lincoln and Guba (1985) became a guide for my journal in that I tried to use it as a site for “reflexive and introspective notations ...developing constructions...biases, expectations ...and a record of hypotheses” (p. 281).

The reflective journal was also intended to be a site to record the struggle with research problems and dilemmas. Very early into the research, the journal became the site for grappling with the problems of being both teacher and researcher. I faced the tension and difficulty of trying to fulfill the needs and demands of the children in the classroom, the research, the school administration and parents, as well as the needs and demands of my family and personal life. I coped with fatigue, self doubt, isolation and the conflict and tension of being both teacher and researcher. There were also the issues and conflicting aspects of my own subjectivity coming through into the research - something Alan Peshkin cautioned researchers to be sensitive to. Peshkin (1988) advised the researcher to be “meaningfully attentive” to her subjectivity and to “systematically identify” it throughout the research with the intention to identify the possible impact of these reactions to the research (pp.17 & 18).

Child Log:

My final type of data was a log compiled from individual interviews with the children. I took quick jot notes during short informal conversations to talk about their literacy experiences in the home. For example, while the child talked

about a specific, familiar storybook, we would also talk about bedtime story time at home. I would ask if the child saw her family members or caregiver read and ask what they read, all in an effort to see the literacy atmosphere of the home as seen through the child's eyes.

Conclusion:

At the conclusion of the ten weeks it was time to transcribe the teacher story tapes, the child story tapes, the field notes, the journal and the log, and begin the difficult job of analyzing and interpreting the storytelling praxis that occurred over those ten intense weeks. I scrutinized printouts rigorously looking for recurring themes, questions and problems. I probed to try and find some answers to questions I raised earlier, namely, what impact my storytelling praxis has on the "power, experiences, and identities" of the young children in my charge; how my teacher belief about storytelling and the literacy learning of young children informed my classroom praxis; and how the children responded to the storytelling praxis. In this process, I examine in Chapter 4, who is enabled to be a child/storyteller, what kinds of stories were told by the children, and what the child-told stories reveal about the children's construction of identity or their beliefs. In Chapter 5, I examine the children who did not tell stories at the taperecorder. Chapter 6 looks at the issues raised by the teacher-told stories, namely, if the stories support the status quo or do they allow for other voices or possibilities. Chapter 7 probes the changes required to make a storytelling praxis more accessible, the problems of being both teacher and researcher,

and finally, how a storytelling pedagogy be made more inclusive.

By acting as a participant observer within my own classroom and investigating my own praxis, with my own students, I hope that I have added one teacher voice to the knowledge base for teaching. As Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle (1990) wrote,

What is missing from the knowledge base for teaching, therefore, are the voices of the teachers themselves, the questions teachers ask, the ways teachers use writing and intentional talk in their work lives, and the interpretive frames teachers use to understand and improve their own classroom practices. (p.2)

By developing questions concerning the issues surrounding the classroom praxis of storytelling and by using the interpretive framework of critical pedagogy, the aim has been to find the means to recreate storytelling into a pedagogy of possibility - one that enables children to give rise to their own stories with their own voices (Giroux, 1989., p. 137). As so many researchers have documented, storytelling can be a powerful literacy tool in the primary classroom. However, if this powerful tool is used in a way that conflicts with some children and their identities while supporting others, then it is a negative force. It is necessary for reflective teachers and researchers to discover means to use storytelling as a positive force in the life of the young child, both in literacy development and the development of individual identity.

Chapter Four

Analysis

Who Told Stories: Issues of Power, Identity and Inclusion

The first day of the research I told the children, in both the morning and the afternoon classes, the tale of Philamondre. Philamondre is the first story that I learned to tell and I tend to tell it first because it is familiar and comfortable. It also has elements of great humour and great sadness which appear to appeal to young children. It is a traditional tale about a young woman who is unloved by her mother. She accepts her condition stoically and in the end she is rewarded with marriage to a prince. At the same time I demonstrated the use of the taperecorder for them and explained that it would be available on its usual table for the children to tell their own stories into it on the next school day.

This is exactly what happened. Children began to go to the taperecorder to tell their own stories. In this chapter I look at some of the stories that were told and who told them. I attempt to uncover what is revealed about the children by the stories. Fourteen children are discussed and were selected because they are representative of recurring themes. Some offered an individual voice and others worked in small groups to create a story. The children and stories are grouped into nine themes: 1) Carrie and the importance of being liked, 2) Alex and where is my mother, 3) Bonnie and teacher rules for girls, 4) Sam and male violence as power, 5) William, Steve and Susan and knowledge as power, 6) Nina and Sally and I wonder why, 7) James and the superhero, 8) Lily a child of

privilege and 9) Abby, Lucy and Nancy: cooperation and ostracism. I begin with a discussion of Carrie.

1) Carrie: the Importance of being Liked:

The second day of the research, Carrie was the first child to approach the taperecorder. According to my field notes (p. 3), Carrie initially wanted to listen to my telling of Philamondre but there was only a blank tape in the machine. After attracting a small circle of friends around her (Gary, Gordon and Paula) she told the first child story into the tapeplayer. It is a simple story but it is highly revealing about Carrie and the construction of her identity as a female and it is an example of a type of tale told by other girls in the classroom.

Carrie's Story: My story is about Paula and me going for a picnic. One day me and Paula went for a picnic. Me and Paula went for a picnic (Child Stories, p, 1).

Although this is a simple story it is rich with child identity and it is significant that Carrie, of all of the children in the morning class, chose to be the first child to tell a tale and emulate demonstrated teacher behaviour.

I noted in the child log that Carrie "is a very verbal, sensitive child at school and likes to emulate 'mother' type behaviours and likes to boss her friends" (Log, p. 1). Carrie's story demonstrates her verbal ability in her simple straightforward telling of her tale, her identification with female teacher behaviour by copying behaviour demonstrated only once, and the strong importance she places on female friendships by including Paula in the story.

Carrie continued her story after rewinding the tape and listening to her first telling:

Carrie 2: It's (the picnic) at my house and I like it. Sometimes Joe (her brother) doesn't like it and Paula likes me a lot. When we get mad at each other we hug each other and say sorry. (Child Stories, p. 1)

Carrie's second part to her story continues to impart her own identity - her verbal ability and her attention to relationships, both with her friend Paula and her struggle with her older brother, the importance she places on being liked, and of resolving conflicts with friends and family. These themes of being "liked", of working out relationships with female friends and family, would be repeated many times in the tales of other female children in the research.

In interviewing Carrie for the research I noted that she is a Caucasian child, a middle child of two parents who work outside the home. English is her first language. I wrote:

Her Mom places a high value on reading and makes large purchases from the Book Club for Carrie each month - when Mom visits the classroom she sits and reads with Carrie - When I made my home visit, story books and many expensive toys were highly visible. (Log, p. 1)

Thus Carrie appears to have a strong literate model in her Mom, a female, who buys books for her and reads books to her. She has a storytelling model in her female teacher. Carrie, who appears to identify with these female models seems comfortable to come to the taperecorder and try storytelling. She

is immediately included in the storytelling pedagogy. She tells a story in her own voice and reveals a little of her own identity. She appears to use the story platform to reenact her notion of what it means to be female. She does not use the story platform as a space to comment on, question or offer alternatives to her social construction of self. So while the story offers her space to speak about her condition, it is not a space of possibility for Carrie as she does not contest or comment on her condition or consider alternatives. Her story offers the teacher/researcher an opportunity to identify some of Carrie's subjectivities - how she is shaped by friendships, by relationships with an older male sibling and how it is important to her to be liked and to resolve conflict positively.

It is important to note that Carrie appeared strongly attached to her adult female models - her mother and her teacher. She emulated their behaviours in her storytelling activity and in her interactions in the classroom. Carrie did not see me, her storytelling teacher, contest or question the heroes or heroines or their activities in the stories I told the children. I suggest that if Carrie had witnessed such questioning she may have expanded her own storytelling activity to consider alternatives. This echoes the suggestions of Davies and Banks (1992) who recommend that young children be introduced to the basic concepts of feminist poststructuralist theory. They advocate that children too need to be given access to some of the elements of poststructuralist theory if they are to be liberated from the burden of the unitary self and the limiting storylines that some of them are caught up in" (Davies & Banks, 1992, p.23). Perhaps if Carrie had a

more open model she would have been more open in her own definition of female self.

Carrie only came to the taperecorder with a partner or small group throughout the research. She had conversations, sang songs and on one occasion she retold Beauty and the Beast as based on the Disney movie (Child Stories, pp. 49 & 50). She never behaved as Alex did the first afternoon.

2) Alex: Where is My Mother:

The first child to tell a story on tape in the afternoon class was Alex. He went to the taperecorder alone and told a long story.

Alex 1: Once upon a time there was three bears. A great big bear, a middlesized Momma bear and a wee tiny baby bear. They lived in a house in the forest. (Child Stories, p. 8)

Unfortunately the remainder of Alex's story was recorded over by other children. While it is slim evidence it is revealing. What is interesting is that unlike Carrie who told a tale about her relationship with Paula, Alex decided to tell a traditional tale into the taperecorder. (Alex adhered to the teacher model very carefully.) It is also interesting that whereas Carrie only worked with an audience, Alex chose to come to the taperecorder and tell a tale all by himself.

As I note in the child log: Alex is "a five year old, Caucasian male - only child- who lives with his Dad and has no contact with his Mom." Economically life was a struggle for Alex and his father, and Alex often coveted other childrens' snack foods at snack time. At home Alex said "My Dad reads Star Trek books"

and he [Alex] likes to “play Math games on my computer” (Child Log, p. 17). Alex is comfortable functioning alone, and just as he plays on his computer at home, he is confident to use the taperecorder alone at school. Therefore, his choice to tell his first tale alone may be a demonstration of his identity in that he is operating all by himself just like he would at home.

He also said in his interview that one of his favourite stories was The Three Bears and this is the story he chose to tell first into the taperecorder. By revealing in the interview that he witnessed his Dad read Star Trek books and that he had favourite stories, he demonstrated that he has literate models in his life and his told story demonstrates his comfort with the traditional European story form.

Alex recorded a second story that same session:

Alex 2: Once upon a time there was only one bear, he lived all by himself in the forest. He had to stay in the forest. I don't know why. He didn't want to stay in the forest because he didn't want to get caught. (pause and blows) One time he went somewhere to the grocery store and he wanted to stay. He wanted to eat food there but he could not.(changes his voice) Once upon a time this tiny bear stayed home. Why did he have to stay there? (Child Stories, p. 8)

In his second tale Alex quickly moved away from retelling a traditional tale and instead used it as a springboard for a personal tale. As an only child who spends time alone at home and who covets other children's snack foods, does Alex identify with the lonely little bear who cannot get enough to eat and has to stay at

home alone? Is he revealing more of his own identity in the telling of this tale? It would be speculation to give a definitive yes, but I wonder where a little boy would get the inspiration for such a story except from lived experience - especially a solitary little boy who envied the foods brought to school by his peers.

Alex did not always come to the taperecorder alone. Sometimes he was accompanied by a younger child named Stu. Alex told the story and Stu would offer comments.

Alex 3: Once upon a time. There was a little girl who lived with her mother in a tiny cottage. Her name was Little Red Riding Hood and that's why everybody named her Little Red Riding.

Stu: No.

Alex: And she said Little Miss Riding Mother.

Stu: Beauty and the Beast.

Alex: No!

Alex: And she said, "I don't want to go anywhere right now." And her Mother said, "You will have to go to your Grandfather's for lunch."

(Child Stories, PP. 41 & 42)

This snippet of Alex's story demonstrates that while Stu is present during the telling, his presence has no influence on the content of the story Alex told. When Stu does try to direct the content by suggesting Beauty and the Beast, Alex responds with an emphatic No! With Carrie, the people who accompanied her to the taperecorder were included in her tale. Again Alex used a traditional tale as a basis for his own story. Again he included the themes of food and mother.

In a later story Alex became more personal. Again he returned to the

theme of mother, again he was operating alone but this time he made an original story and included himself in the action.

Alex 4: Once upon a time there was a little boy who said to his Mother, "I would like to go in the summer days sunny warm. I would like to go to my Mom's house. But they wouldn't let me go so I screamed. And he heard this noise. (knocking sound) (Child Stories, p. 55)

Unfortunately the remainder of this story was recorded over by another child - an ongoing problem in the study. This is a tale of child powerlessness, a poignant tale of identity - Alex a boy with no contact with his mother screaming to see his mother. And who are the "they" who impose their rules and desires overriding the wishes of a small boy?

Further into the stories, Alex becomes more vociferous on this theme:

Alex 5: And when they got home from school yesterday her mother was very angry. And she said big bad word (whispers) "Fuck fuck". And then she thought and thought but she never find a thing to talk about with her son. (Child Stories, p. 59)

Yet again Alex's voice is apparent in this poignant story. Why does he include profanity in his tale? Is he merely experimenting with forbidden language or is he speculating on why his mother is absent from his life? Did she say a very bad word and broke the rules as Alex understands them? And because she broke the rules is she forbidden to be with him by the unnamed "they" and now she can "never find a thing to talk about with her son"?

3) Bonnie: Teacher Rules for Girls:

While both Carrie and Alex approached the taperecorder confidently and spoke in their own voices, about subjects of their own identity, Bonnie liked the taperecorder and its power for different reasons. Bonnie, unlike Carrie and Alex, is a child of mixed ethnic identity - her mother being from the Philippines and her father black. Like Alex she is a child of a single parent- her mother. Bonnie has been attending daycare since birth while her young mother completed high school and then became employed outside the home. Bonnie liked to go to the taperecorder with two female friends from daycare, Linda and Lisa. Linda is a black child whose parents came to Canada from Jamaica. Lisa is also black and her family originates from Guyana. Bonnie liked to direct the activity at the taperecorder with her friends just like she liked to direct their play in other areas of the class. Here is a sample of Bonnie's first interaction at the taperecorder:

Bonnie 1: I love the taperecorder and Linda do yours. No you have to say a song. No say words. (Linda and Bonnie hum together) No. Taperecorder me. Bonnie loves the taperecorder. No I'm turning it off. (Child Stories, p. 2)

Linda's voice is never audible in this section because Bonnie is totally in charge. She directs Linda and controls the taperecorder too. This behaviour occurred almost every time Bonnie used the taperecorder.

Bonnie was not quiet at the taperecorder and sometimes she came into conflict with me, the teacher, over what was appropriate behaviour for little girls in the classroom, as shown here:

Bonnie 2: (softly sings) Hello mister hello
hello.. (joined by Lisa and Linda making sneezing
sounds and screams)

Bonnie: And he lived in a big fat - achoooo
(echoed by Lisa and Linda) Ready ready (screams
and growls) Ready ready? This is called the cat
in the house and the cat was eating some food
and after the Mom said come on kitty come on
its time for lunch....

Teacher: You better stop yelling.
(child Stories, p. 12)

Here Bonnie is being the boss with her two friends and leading them in a raucous tale. This becomes more than I can tolerate for the classroom or tolerate from three girls and I intervene and impose my voice of authority over Bonnie's voice of authority at the taperecorder.

In my field notes I refer to this dilemma.

Bonnie, Lisa, _____ using the taperecorder for loud roaring sound effects - escalating - (Observer Comment again a dilemma - what is the rule of the taperecorder?)

Teacher: The tapeplayer is for stories. If you are going to roar and scream then I am going to move you away. (Field Notes, p. 8)

Bonnie was telling a story, however raucous, into the tapeplayer. Was my message that only quiet, contained stories were allowed in a classroom setting? If this is the case, where is the space for Bonnie's wild, jubilant voice in this pedagogy? Is it the constraint of the classroom only that forces me to impose my authority? Or is it the gender of the noisy storyteller that draws my attention and brings my ire? This became an issue I wrestled with in my field notes as noisy Bonnie was often admonished while noisy boys were sometimes ignored. To

contrast here is a part of a recording of Peter and Kevin:

Peter and Kevin: Cowabunga. Ahhhya.
 Peter: Coconuts. I said you are dog meat.
 I said tongue lip.
 Peter: Hi eyeball head.
 Peter: I will smash this taperecorder in 15 and 18
 pieces. Bam bam bam.
 Kevin: what about this button. Let's press this
 button.
 Peter: Swing your head from your face. Put your
 boobie in your bumbum.
 Kevin: And peepee pee penis.
 (Child Stories, p. 19)

My field notes demonstrate that I overheard this conversation and that Peter and Kevin were loud and aggressive in their tone (Field Notes, p. 14) yet there is no direction to change the violent content or to desist from loud behaviour from the teacher on this tape like there is in Bonnie's tale. Bonnie's tale did not contain the violence or the sexuality demonstrated here. Why did I not respond to Kevin and Peter when I was so quick to react to Bonnie when her tale about a kitty became raucous? I speculate about these issues in my field notes:

(O.C. - how do I respond when two white blonde boys behave the same at the tapeplayer as two dark females? I seem to feel ambivalent about their [boys] behaviour. Do I expect less of them [the boys] in terms of telling a story? Is this maturity, gender, colour, knowledge of background?)
 (Field Notes, p. 14)

Is a storytelling pedagogy, or any pedagogy, only a place where blonde, white children like Carrie, Alex, Peter and Kevin, children of the dominant culture, are enabled to explore their voice and not black minority female children like Bonnie,

Lisa and Linda? Are stories from female children only valued when they are quiet and contained but stories from boys are allowed to be violent and sexual and loud? If a storytelling pedagogy is to be a place of possibility, then should it not follow that girls like Bonnie should have the opportunity to be raucous and noisy and explore that facet of being female?

This dichotomy plagued me and I went home and mused further about the incidents in my Journal:

Is this because I expect different behaviour from girls and boys. That boisterous disruptive behaviour of the two girls was behaviour that I subconsciously felt the need to stop or change, while the boisterous behaviour of the boys seemed expected? And how does this play out daily in the classroom in other areas - areas I do not censure? (Journal, p. 12)

And how are the power roles played out in these incidents? Teacher imposing power over female children? Male children imposing power over female teacher through unspoken compliance to violent and sexual talk? And how does this teacher behaviour contribute to the social construction of gender for both boys and girls? Valerie Walkerdine confronted this issue when she researched the instruction of mathematics in the humanistic nursery school in England (Walkerdine, 1989). She witnessed small boys subjecting their female teacher to sexually explicit talk.

Terry: Shit Miss Baxter, shit Miss Baxter.
 Sean: Miss Baxter show your knickers your bum off.
 Sean: Take all your clothes off, your bra off.
 Terry: Yeah, and take your bum off, take your weewee off, take your clothes, your mouth off.
 (Walkerdine, 1989, p. 66)

In Walkerdine's discussion of this behaviour she sees the teacher in this situation as not merely a figure of institutional power for the boys but a woman and the boys not just as "little" boys but as boys who have been produced as subjects of different gender discourses. She explains that the boys' behaviour toward their teacher can be understood

as an assertion of their differences from her and their seizing of power through constituting her as the powerless object of sexist discourse...Their power is gained by refusing to be constituted as the powerless objects of her discourse and recasting her as the powerless object of theirs - 'woman-as-sex-object'. (Walkerdine, 1989, p. 66)

Just as I silently complied with Peter and Kevin's violent sexual talk, Miss Baxter is strangely silent in this excerpt except to politely admonish the boys by saying: "Sean, go and find something else to do, please" (Walkerdine, 1989, p. 66). How does Miss Baxter's silent compliance and my compliance to this male behaviour help to perpetuate and maintain it?

Gender posed other problems for Bonnie and storytelling. Bonnie who liked to be boss and lord over her two friends, Lisa and Linda, at the taperecorder became a quiet, disgruntled and powerless follower when accompanied by her friend Sam.

4) Sam: Male Violence as Power:

One morning Bonnie went to the taperecorder to show her Mom what she was doing:

Bonnie begins the tape and lets her Mom listen for a few minutes - Sam joins Bonnie
Bonnie: I don't want you.

Sam: Bonnie won't let me tell a story.

Teacher: Bonnie was there first. You wait while she makes a story. (O.C. - power relationship between Sam and Bonnie - Bonnie calls on me to support her power - Sam tends to dominate their relationship - Bonnie appears more inhibited with Sam beside her at the tape.)

(Field Notes, p. 32)

While Bonnie called on the authority of the teacher to bolster her power and authority at the taperecorder, it was not successful. My response as teacher, symbol of institutional authority, was as polite and ineffective as Miss Baxter's response to the boys in the British Nursery school. Sam began to tell a story and Bonnie drifted silently away from the taperecorder. The power and authority of an adult woman and a girl child meant nothing to Sam - perhaps they did not exist for him in this situation in his construction of male self. He began to tell three very long, complicated and violent stories all about a little girl who killed a witch. Each telling became more violent than the last. Here is the last half of the second telling about a hungry little girl who knocked on a witch's door looking for something to eat.

Sam 2: And she [witch] had nothing to eat for supper and that little girl said, "Stop it you are eating all my breakfast" and she said, "Oh I didn't know you were a little old faggot" and she killed that woman. (Child Stories, p.21)

In Sam's third telling of this same tale the violence escalates the gender of the child changes from female to male:

Sam 3: And she went to school that day and she said to her friends "I killed a witch today" and they said "That's impossible" and then he and then the little boy "You are right. It's cause I killed

her with her broom. I wacked her and wacked her and wacked her on the face and wacked her on the butt and wacked her on the dink and wacked her on the head and now she's dead and that's the end of the story. (Child Stories, p. 21).

Once Bonnie moved away from the taperecorder, Sam told his tales alone, just like Alex. Unlike Alex who used his tales to speak of highly personal issues, Sam investigates an issue of interest - action and violence. The killing of the witch is almost like a Nursery Rhyme in its rhythmic nature, especially the line: "I wacked her and wacked her and wacked her on the face and wacked her on the butt and wacked her on the dink and wacked her on the head..." Spoken aloud this has a very melodious though sinister and sexual quality. Its tone, content and melodious rhythm are very similar to the excerpt cited earlier from Valerie Walkerdine's research, "Terry: Yeah, and take your bum off, take your weewee off, take your clothes, your mouth off" (Walkerdine, 1989, p. 66).

It is interesting that in his second telling a girl kills the witch with little detail. In the third tale, once the killing begins, the gender of the killer changes to male - a child male killing an adult woman. Where does this fascination with male generated violence originate in Sam? One possibility comes from his interview for the child log. He said that at home his "Mom reads him Wrestling Magazines and Batman - likes to watch Wrestling, Zorro and Power Rangers on TV". Add to this that Sam is the only child of a single Mom and he has no contact with his Dad (Child Log, p. 10). Sam's Mom is a university student by day and a waitress in a bar on weekends when Sam spends time with his aunt - his Mom's

younger sister. Sam often came to school late and tired because he had no set bedtime and was allowed to make the decision for himself. He liked to stay up watching adult television programs or rented movies with the two female adults in his life. Sam had easy access to adult information and violent male media characters through this lifestyle that other children in the class did not. Some of his strongest male models appear to be ones he witnesses on television - wrestlers and comic characters who "wack" each other mercilessly. When Sam's violent stories are viewed through this lens then his stories do seem to be a space for Sam to work out his gender identity. How do boys and men behave? For Sam it appears that many of them behave violently!

This construction of male gender as violent superhero is similar to the findings of Ellen Jordan who conducted a poststructuralist study into young school age boys' attraction to the warrior narrative of the superhero. She notes that

In the early school years most of the boys' cooperative play revolves around such fantasies, and boys who are not capable of positioning themselves within these narratives are excluded from peer play. The choice of narratives is eclectic...It depends on what stories they have heard or seen on television. (Jordan, 1995, p. 76)

The narratives of wrestlers, of Batman and Power Rangers are all available to Sam through print and through television. He appears to draw on these models of masculinity in his tale of killing the witch. These models seem to offer him a model of domination and power through violence and this is the model of

masculinity that attracts him.

5) William, Steve and Susan: Knowledge as Power:

William, Steve and Susan would sometimes go to the taperecorder together. They are three five year olds from ethnic minorities. William and Steve are five year old cousins. William was born in the United States of Somalian parents and is the second of four children, the oldest boy. His father was a university professor in Somalia and is currently pursuing his PhD, which means he is often absent from his family. Somali, Arabic and English are spoken in William's home. His father likes to instruct William, his older sister, Steve and his sister in the Koran in the evenings at the kitchen table. This is a home where literate cultural and religious activities are valued.

Steve, William's cousin, was born in Somalia. He lives with his Mom and an older sister and they await uncertainly for their father to join them in Canada. William's father seems to fulfill the male role in Steve's family until his father arrives.

Susan's parents came to Canada from Hong Kong and they speak Chinese in the home. Susan has two younger siblings and she often has responsibility for them while her father sleeps during the day. (Her father works evenings and her mother works days.) At school Susan would tend to lead William and Steve at the taperecorder and they used it as a medium to talk about themselves and other students in the classroom.

Susan, Steve, William 1:

Susan: (Steve echoes) - Once upon a time there was

William and he lived in his bum and he kissed on it.

Susan: One person at a time. You go.

Steve: Okay. William made fun of his friends every day and every time he kicked his head off. (laughter)

Susan: Ha. Ha. Okay my turn. And he always goes outside and he fights. We play Power Rangers. But we do a race and William always wins but Alex loose.

Steve: Yeah and he's rough.

(Child Stories, p. 53)

Susan dominates this excerpt as she does most of their interactions at the taperecorder. Steve reacts to her opinions and William is a silent witness to the action. Even when Susan and Steve comment on William, even talking about his body parts in a sexually explicit way, he does not interrupt to disagree. In other excerpts he is a more active participant. It is possibly a comfortable way for these three children to operate considering their roles in their own families. Susan is the oldest child of three with a great deal of responsibility for her siblings in the home and both William and Steve are second children with older sisters (Child Log pp.12, 13, 14).

In a later story, Susan, Steve and William investigate what they know about marriage and human sexuality.

Susan: Once upon a time (joined by William) Steve kissed Penny and they were married. And they took their pants off and stuck their butts together (Susan, William and Steve all laugh).

William: And they kissed with their penis.

Susan: And they have a long bum. (more laughter)

Steve: Susan is a chicken.

Teacher: William and Steve and Susan I want you to calm down a little bit.

Steve: They are calling me bad names.

(Child Stories, pp. 56 & 57)

Susan definitely dominates this tale of the marriage of Penny (another student) and Steve and offers her graphic albeit infantile knowledge of adult sexual relations. Does she use her knowledge to dominate the two boys and the teacher? Does she experience pleasure as she speaks the forbidden into the taperecorder? Does she recognize the power of her sexually explicit talk just as Peter and Kevin did and the boys in the British Nursery did with Miss Baxter? This appears to be a pattern of behaviour that marked their relationship - knowledge for domination.

In my field notes I document an occasion where William tries to dominate Susan by asking her to speak a phrase of greeting in Somalian. When she is unable he responds that she is "not smart" (Field Notes, p. 144). On this cited occasion Steve laughs at first but as the tale develops he reacts by calling Susan a "chicken". When I intervene to quieten them, Steve tries to express his unhappiness with the story by saying Susan and William have been calling him names. Why does he use this familiar child behaviour of name calling as an explanation instead of explaining the real situation? Is he uncomfortable telling an adult white woman, his teacher, that his friend was using forbidden sexually explicit information to dominate him? Or does he lack the language to explain what upset him? Where is the space for Steve?

Steve, William and Susan are children of ethnic minorities unlike the majority of the children who came to the taperecorder. They do not use the taperecorder to tell tales of superheroes like Sam or to tell tales of relationships

like Carrie. They appear to use the storytelling forum as a space of domination. This departure from the story styles exhibited by the children from the dominant culture is similar to the research findings of Shalini Venturelli (1992) who found that the multicultural children in her study “fabricated a very sophisticated, resistant, symbolically rich world in their tales and narrative discourse that reinvents both the dominant ideology and the cultural practices of their peers” (p. 38). Susan, William and Steve appear to reinvent the use of the taperecorder in a way that seems to resist the request to tell a traditional story.

6) Nina and Sally: I Wonder Why:

Nina is a twin and her sister is in the morning kindergarten with her. Nina, like Carrie, prefers to tell stories at the tapeplayer within a group, sometimes with girls, sometimes with boys. Nina’s first story draws on her own family and on what she understands to be the conventions of telling a story into the taperecorder.

Nina: Hmm. Let me see. Start and tell what it is called. Mean Jan. This is called Mean Jan. (note: Nina has an older sister named Jan) Once upon a time I was sleeping. Jan sneaked a toy spider into my bed. When I woke up I saw it and I screamed : Ah, I hate spiders. I hate spiders.
 Lee: The bat woke up.
 Nina: And then I screamed to Jan.
 Lee: Hey listen. How do we listen?
 Nina: Do we press this and then ask?
 Gary: No we have to tell a Story.
 (Child Stories, p. 4)

Like Carrie Nina draws on her own relationship with her older sister for fodder for

her story. This story points out the cruelty that exists within sibling relationships. Jan frightens Nina by putting a spider in her bed. We do not learn how this is resolved because Lee diverts Nina's attention with his question about the mechanics of the taperecorder. Gary on the other hand is concerned about the rules of using the taperecorder - "No we have to tell a story"!

In her third story Nina turned to a theme that dominated many of her future stories - original animal adventures. In this story Nina works with Sally, a collaboration that would continue.

Nina: This is called the Runaway Cat. Once I had a cat that was named Bonzo. And once, he he, you will do the cat meowing and you will do the cat meowing in trouble. This is how it sounds. (demonstrates) And then the cat was walking down the street when he saw a car in front and the cat (meow). (Child Stories, p. 7)

Nina's cat adventure continues through a near car accident, to a fight with a rat that concludes with the rat's death, and ends in an elevator in a building. From such a confident telling of an apparently original story one might think that Nina had a strong literate home model. However, in her interview for the child log she reported that Mom and Dad, who were divorced and shared custody, did not read to her "anymore". While it may be true that her parents no longer read to her, this expression of change may also be a statement of Nina's desire to have her parents reunited. It is also interesting that Nina gives her adventuresome cat a male gender rather than female like herself. Did Nina just want to tell a story about a male cat or does Nina believe that in the world of stories heroes are

male?

Nina's cat story continued over three visits to the taperecorder and he maintained his male identity. Later Nina decided to tell a story she called "The Troll in the Cave".

Nina: A brave knight was walking in the forest and he heard.

Sally: brybaba brybaba

Nina: And then he quietly walked into a cave and what did he hear?

Sally: brybaba brybaba

Nina: So he walked along the path until he came to a dragon and then he did out fire.

Ahhh. Do your noise.

Sally: brybaba brybaba.

Nina: And then he got eaten. Do your story.

(Child Stories, pp. 66 & 67)

Like her cat story, Nina again chooses a male to be the active heroic central character to her tale. Her two tales are very much in the traditional Eurocentric style of the teacher told tales Nina heard during the research with the male hero who faces many tests before reaching his reward. In this tale of the knight however, Nina adds a twist. Her male hero is not rewarded; he is eaten by a dragon! Nina appears to have learned the gender correctness for story heroes well. Later, when she wants to look at issues that concern her life she uses a different style of storytelling to do so. It may be she feels there is no space for her to examine issues in the traditional story model provided by the teacher. This could be an example of the possible benefit of offering young children poststructuralist tools as recommended by Davies and Banks (1992). They

suggest offering young children the basic elements of poststructuralist theory in order to liberate them from “the burden of the unitary self and the limiting storylines that some of them are caught up in” (p. 23). They recommend introducing children to the concepts of “discourse, dominant discourse, discourses of resistance, storyline, positioning and desire” (p. 23). Obviously these terms would be too difficult for kindergarten children but the ideas could be offered in a more simplified form.

Later in the research, Nina and Sally tell a story made of questions, questions that concern them, a story called “Wonder Why”.

Sally: My story is first.

Nina: Gary is on the Thinking Chair.

Sally: I know. But then he got off. I wonder why?

Our story is called Wonder Why?

Nina: Yeah. Why did my mother go to the market?

I don't know. To get some vegetables? There is Gary right now.

Sally: I wonder why my mother had to go some place called Mexico? Maybe to have a trip with work?

(Child Stories, pp. 54-55)

Nina and Sally's Wonder Why story covers two complete pages of transcription as they muse about various subjects from their lives. From relationships with people in the classroom - “I don't know why Paula pulled my ponytail” to relationships with their families at home - “Why does my Mom and Dad have to get married together”. This cooperative discussion of the world according to Nina and Sally was the only time the child storytellers really deviated from the traditional storytelling format. Sally initiated the endeavour but Nina was a full

collaborator once the tone was set. The questions they pose seem unconnected and random. Why did Gary sit on the thinking chair and then leave? Why do Moms shop for food? Why do Moms go away from their children on business trips? Are jobs more important to Moms than their children? Why do people marry? This appears to be the only incidence when the child story tellers used the storytelling forum to discuss issues of self in a unique way. By taking personal situations like Sally's Mom being away on a business trip to Mexico and posing it as a more universal question rather than a statement, there is a wider dimension to the thought. Why do Moms go away? Why do teachers put children on thinking chairs? These two girls seem to use their questions to consider the power of adults to influence and manipulate their lives. Adults leaving, adults providing, adults imposing power. Perhaps I give more credence to this Wonder Why episode but I see this story as one of the most powerful of the child told stories. I see it as having the potential of becoming a story of possibility for Nina and Sally - a place to contest their situation and to try on alternatives -had the girls had the encouragement to let it grow. But they did not. If the storytelling model provided to them had exhibited the questioning of themes or gender stereotypes, then Sally and Nina might have had the motivation to continue their questioning Wonder Why story and maybe taken their questions further. This again points to the importance of Davies and Banks' (1992) recommendation that young children be given the tools of poststructuralism to contest the inequities in the world around them (p. 23). It also echoes Yeoman's (1994)

suggestion that disruptive tales be used in the classroom, with follow-up activities like informal discussion of important ideas, making up new endings, rewriting classics, and dramatizing the childrens' stories (p. 73). These activities would allow children like Nina and Sally to explore alternate possibilities. If Nina and Sally had been exposed to a storytelling pedagogy that included these possibilities, who knows where they would have ventured with their Wonder Why musings.

7) James: Superhero as Male Model for Gender Construction:

James' story visits to the taperecorder surprised me. Based on what I knew of James as a student and what I knew of his homelife and his parents' expectations of him I had an expectation that James would create original tales at the tape. James is a child of mixed heritage - Japanese and Romanian. Both his parents are university educated and his mother gave up her career to be at home with James and his younger brother. James said he was read to regularly at home. "He has a mature spoken vocabulary and a strong memory for general knowledge" (Child Log, p. 9). These facets of James' personality and homelife led me to expect that he would use the taperecorder for highly literate offerings - to tell original stories like Nina. Instead James seems to have resisted this model. Perhaps his resistance is due to his notions of male gendered correctness, ideas of appropriate male behaviour, [ideas discussed in the research of Bronwyn Davis (1989), Anne Haas Dyson (1994) and Ellen Jordan (1995)]. He uses the taperecorder to talk about The Power Rangers from

television, to comment on his friends' gender, and to make silly sounds.

James: Now today on Power Rangers (speaks like a TV announcer) Rita sends the evil fairy to defeat Kimberly and puts some sleeping juice in his final drink. Today on the Power Rangers Rita send the evil baby, the evil spider to school. Find out next on The Mighty Morphin Power Rangers.
(Child Stories, p. 39)

James talks clearly and unhesitatingly into the taperecorder throughout this offering. His voice is confident and very much like a television announcer. At first reading it appears to be a retelling of what he has witnessed on the television. However, the reference to the "baby" who quickly becomes a "spider" may be a reference to his own brother who was a toddler at the time. While this is not an original story, it does reveal a little about James. His sophisticated vocabulary, syntax, and his excellent memory are very evident. His strong interest in the Power Rangers is obvious and perhaps a little sibling rivalry is there too.

James continues this theme and adds some comments on gender and sexuality in his next excerpt.

James: (using a girl's voice)- Oh Tommy my dear.
(makes kissing sounds and sings) I'm a little girly
and I kiss all the boys. Jaunty Alouette. Hey is
that Gordon speaking on the speaker? Okay one two
three one two three. One my baby smash Tim. Two my
my baby I'm gonna kill Gordon. Four my baby free
Gordon. (Child Stories, p. 39)

There are many different themes in this excerpt. When James begins his tale in a girl's singsong voice making kissing sounds it is reminiscent of the research of

Anne Haas Dyson and her work with second grade children and their superhero stories and especially the “heterosexual teasing” she witnessed by boys toward girls (Dyson, 1994, p.237). This also intersects with the previously mentioned work of Ellen Jordan and her research into the construction of male gender in young school age boys. She argues that boys “have appropriated the role of hero in the warrior narratives of little boys’ fantasy games...This leads the ‘good boys’ to adopt an alternative definition of masculinity as ‘not female’, and in many cases leads also to the scorn and rejection being redirected to girls as a group” (Jordan, 1995, p.69). It is interesting that James first tells of the Power Rangers, certainly media heroes in the warrior style of narrative, who combat and defeat evil regularly. While Rita (a female) is included, she is not a hero but a villain who functions in these stories much like the evil witch does in traditional fairy tales. This then moves into the contrast of the imitation of a girl’s voice talking about kissing boys - male as not female or female as not male. He then moves into the singsong rhyme “One my baby smash Tim” (Tim is James’ friend) which is a violent rewording of a song from the first teacher told story, Philamondre [see Appendix]. This violent little song/rhyme is very similar to Sam and his violent “I wacked her and wacked her and wacked her on the face and wacked her on the butt and wacked her on the dink” (Child Stories, p. 21). It is also similar to the expression of Terry in Walkerdine’s (1989) work: “take your bum off, take your weewee off, take your clothes, your mouth off” (p. 66).

In the teacher story the song is about mother love and rejection - “One my

darling come to Momma/Two my darling come to Momma/ three my darling come to Momma/Stay Philamondre, stay where you are". James' version appears to be a rejection of the female, as it is constructed in the original, a rejection of tenderness and a call to union or as Jordan suggests - male is not female. "Smash Tim...Kill Gordon" is very overt violence directed toward two of his friends and classmates. The violence in the female version is less overt - mother love for three daughters and mother rejection of one daughter. Is James' story one of working out gender correctness as he sees it played out by his favourite superheroes and by a rejection of what he sees as the construction of female gendered identity? So while James did not approach the taperecorder in the way and with the intent that I expected, he used it in his own way, with his own voice and raised difficult issues of gender and violence and sexuality and how these issues are constructed within our society, represented in the popular media, and re-interpreted by cultural readers.

8) Lily: Child of Privilege:

Melany and Lily told many tales into the taperecorder throughout the research. They told one of the first stories and they told the very last. Here is part of their final offering:

Melany: Once upon a time there was Lily.
 Lily: Don't tell them a story about us. Tell them a once upon a time there was...Once upon a time there was an old lady. She lived happily ever, she lived in a white house, she lived with a wood cutter. "Our kids cannot leave. They have to stay here." But the stepmother said, "They have to leave. We have to get some food to eat."

Melany: Lily can I do some too?

Lily: The second one he said, when I point to you that means yes. (Child Stories, p. 82)

Lily and Melany always went to the taperecorder with either each other or another partner. Lily liked to take the lead in the storytelling. This is a change from other storytellers in that Lily is a four year old and the majority of the storytellers were five years old. Generally the four year old children came to the taperecorder to listen, watch or act as a chorus to the older tellers. Lily does not take that role in any of her interactions at the taperecorder. It may be that Lily's homelife, her school situation, her personality and her academic ability all contribute to the leadership she shows in her taped stories.

Lily is a fair haired Caucasian child, the youngest of four children of two university educated working parents who emigrated to Canada from England. Her mom is a teacher and encourages Lily to read at home. "Lily's parents encourage her to do things other than watch t.v. - family library visits, board games and reading. Lily's parents desire her to be accelerated to grade one but this is against school board policy" (Child Log, pp. 1 & 2). As a fairhaired, English speaking child of well educated parents Lily is certainly part of the dominant culture of Canada. Add to this, Lily is encouraged to take risks by her parents. She is also academically advanced and as this excerpt demonstrates she has very well developed verbal skills. Lily has everything to make her comfortable to take a leadership role despite her young age. Her story excerpt also demonstrates a very astute understanding of story when she says to Melany

“Don’t tell them a story about us, tell once upon a time there was”. She also recognizes that though she is at the taperecorder with Melany stories have an audience - need an audience to be successful stories when she declares “Don’t tell them”. The snippet of Lily’s story is loosely based on Hansel and Gretel, though very quickly Melany and Lily add vampires, talking ladybugs and nasty sisters and friendships. Throughout the two page transcription they negotiate the rules of cooperation - “Lily - I put my finger like this. It’s not your turn anymore” (Child Stories, p. 83).

9) Abby, Lucy and Nancy: Cooperation and Ostracism:

Lucy is a five-year old Caucasian girl from the afternoon program who preferred to tell stories at the taperecorder with two four-year old girls, Nancy and Abby. Their stories are marked by cooperative telling and by themes of friendship and family relationships and are very representative of “girl stories” in this research. Abby, Lucy and Nancy told many stories throughout the study. Sometimes they told stories in partners because one friend was being ostracized at the time. This ostracism occurred during rug play too, where the three friends played out the same kind of story scenarios as the ones they told on the taperecorder as this excerpt demonstrates:

Abby, Nancy, Penny set up the pony game and exclude Lucy...Penny sings and flies ponies in a train car...“You are my friends. You are my friends. Come on you guys.” (to Abby and Nancy, Lucy is at the Book Shelf)
 Lucy: “I don’t want to play ponies or mermaids”
 - she seems to withdraw
 Abby, Nancy and Penny continue their pony game

Lucy exempts herself (O.C. - does she [Lucy]
hope to control them through her sad silence?)
(Field Notes, p. 45)

This is typical of their play and their relationship as friends. The three girls seemed to need to feel an equilibrium in the power of their relationship. If the equilibrium was destroyed - if one tried to dictate to or become more powerful than the others - then that girl was often on the outs with the other two and ostracized for a time. Usually the one on the outs would hover near the game in solitary silence until the other two found a way to return her to the game or a new game began. This same power struggle occurred at the taperecorder as well - two telling a tale while the ostracized one hovered silent nearby awaiting the opportunity to rejoin the relationship.

In this excerpt all three friends cooperate to tell. However, the telling ended when one child exempted herself because she was unhappy with the direction of the tale.

Lucy: Once upon a time a long time ago when
Indians were around one Indian daughter went.
He had two pet bears.
Abby: And a cat. No one would like a cat.
Nancy: Let me do it.
Abby: No one else.
Nancy: And there was a Mother and a Baby
Bear.
Lucy: So everyone knew and the daughter or
the Indian was walking around. "Oh" Said the
Witch, "I know what to do" and turned her
daughter into a cat.
Abby:- So no one would like her if she was
a cat. (Child Stories, p. 68)

Cooperation is very evident in this excerpt as the three girls easily go

back and forth and add details to one another's offerings to extend the story. It is interesting that the worst thing that can happen to the Indian daughter is to not be "liked". This is mentioned by Abby on two occasions and it seems to mark the very relationship of Abby, Nancy and Lucy - to be ostracized, to be not liked as the worst fate in their friendship. [This theme of being "liked" marked Carrie's stories too.] This tale continues well for two pages of transcription but then the balance of power is disrupted when two different girls make endings. Abby feels unhappy and leaves the taperecorder. A new story is left incomplete when Lucy says "I'll go and try to get her feelings unhurt okay Nancy?" (Child Stories, p. 70).

Conclusion:

The stories told by the kindergarten children reveal many things about the individual children and their beliefs and about the storytelling praxis in my classroom. The majority of stories were told by five-year old children. With the exception of Lily, Nancy and Abby, four-year old children did not tell stories but acted as chorus or audience for older tellers. The four-year old children who did not tell stories at the taperecorder may have felt excluded from this activity because they found the teacher model and the teacher instruction too daunting. As the model I told stories that were long (usually 25 to 30 minutes), all in English, with very intricate plots. For instruction, the children were all told that the taperecorder was to be used to tell a story. Perhaps the four year olds felt they could not match the teacher model and therefore did not try. If this is the case then this seemingly simple beginning to the research offered seeds of exclusion

for many members of the classroom. This suggests the need for more models than merely the teacher model, but child models as well.

The fact that five-year olds were much more comfortable or able to tell stories at the taperecorder may also reflect the findings of Margaret Benson (1993). In her work, which is referred to earlier, she investigated when a young child has a mental model for a story and when the young child is able to use it effectively. Her research demonstrates that the four-year olds in her study did recognize that story is a specific form of discourse but the majority were unable to use it when asked. However, she found that the five-year olds not only had a mental model of story and could invent stories when asked and could also build in problems and conflicts to enhance the story (p. 220). In my study while the four-year olds were generally silent at the taperecorder, the five-year old storytellers did tell stories that included problems or conflicts.

Furthermore, all stories were told in English by children with strong verbal abilities. While members of the class came from diverse backgrounds and spoke a variety of languages, English was the only language used at the taperecorder. As well, most of the stories told by the children followed the Eurocentric tradition of the hero following a quest and receiving a reward for his efforts, and none of them demonstrated other oral traditions. As Shoshana Blum-Kulka (1993) and Isidore Okpewho (1992) discuss in their research, narrative styles and tradition vary with culture. The children in my classroom were from diverse cultural backgrounds yet the culture on display in their stories

is very European. This again points to the shortcoming of a single teacher model operating in English and telling stories drawn from European tradition. In addition, this demonstrates another exclusionary aspect to the storytelling praxis - stories told only in English and only in a Eurocentric style. This reaffirms the need for more storytelling models, especially models that operate in other languages and employ other traditions to provide more inclusion for a variety of children.

As well as all stories being told in English, by older children and in a Eurocentric style, the childrens' stories also demonstrate differences by gender. Abby, Nancy and Lucys' stories and their cooperative approach to storytelling are very much typical of the girl stories in this research. Girls told stories within the support of a friendship group. They referred to subjects of family, of friendship and the fear of not being "liked" by friends. So while the boys in the study seemed to be working out their gender within the framework of the aggressive and often violent solitary superhero narrative, the girls seemed to be working out their gender within the narrative of relationships and family. This gender dichotomy is in keeping with the findings of Bronwyn Davies and Chas Banks (1992), Bronwyn Davies (1989), Anne Haas Dyson (1994) and Ellen Jordan (1995) who found the a similar gender duality in the young children in their research. Davies also wrote of the need for the young children in her research to be correctly gendered. The girls in my study seem to sanction correct female gender behaviour by offering inclusion to girls who behave

appropriately and exclusion to girls who moved outside correct behaviour.

Only Bonnie and Susan, two girls from ethnic minorities, seem to be outside this gender trend. Bonnie did operate within a support group but she liked to dominate and not cooperate. She liked to be noisy and raucous and was admonished by me for these anti-female behaviours. Susan, too, went to the taperecorder with a group but of male friends and she seemed to like to use the visit as a time to dominate her male friends. As discussed, this behaviour may reflect her family role where she was the oldest of three children and given many responsibilities. The behaviour of these two girls is in keeping with Shalini Venturelli's study of multicultural children and their resistance and reinvention of dominant discourse (1992, p. 38).

As revealed, teacher compliance to violent boy behaviour and teacher suppression of loud female behaviour is evident in the incidents with Bonnie and Peter. The question can then be posed, if there is unspoken compliance to a violent construction of male gender in one small part of the kindergarten program, where else does it occur in the school day for young boys and girls? How is this compliance, this teacher silence, understood by boys like Peter and girls like Bonnie as they negotiate the construction of their gender? How often do girls like Bonnie face negative responses from teachers when they try out alternate constructions of what it means to be a female? How does this shape their construction of gender? And finally, how pervasive is this teacher response?

While the children who told stories revealed a great deal about how they constructed their gender through their story themes and storytelling styles, very few of the children used the story as a vehicle for pursuing alternate possibilities of self or condition. They did not move beyond revealing their construction of their current condition. They did not use the story as a platform to question what they knew about themselves or the world around them. It was only in the “I wonder why” story by Nina and Sally that I saw the potential of storytelling becoming a pedagogy of possibility. As Sally queried “How did the world exist? I don’t know how. But how did the stars exist? How did the moon exist? The sun exist? I wonder why. I still wonder why beanstalks exist” (Child Stories, p. 58). Sally was already an insider, a child with the homelife, the skin colour, the language and the academic ability to feel included in the school culture. How much more powerful a storytelling praxis would be if one of the silent children had told a story, especially a child whose first language was not English. A child like George.

While not all of the children in these two kindergarten programs were fluent in English, all of the stories at the taperecorder were told by children with strong English skills. The model I provided was of traditional European style tales told in English. Children who did not have strong English skills did not go to the taperecorder to tell stories - it seems there was no space for them. Their voices were not heard; and their identities did not have the opportunity to be revealed in this space.

In the next chapter I will discuss the children who did not tell stories. These were children who had English as a second language or who had difficulties with English due to a disability. These were the very children who needed the opportunity to express themselves in English, who needed the opportunity to tell stories to help to develop their language and to enhance their knowledge of story. As stated earlier, part of the purpose for using a storytelling pedagogy in kindergarten is to provide a strong model for language use and a strong model for story for young children who need to develop these to become competent readers and English language users in the primary grades. In this study, children with strong English skills did come to the taperecorder and did tell stories. However, if only the children who already have strong language skills in English and strong story models take advantage of this opportunity, then the pedagogy is misdirected, for it is supporting children who already have a strong basis in the language and culture of the school and it is failing the very children who need it most. The children who may feel excluded within the classroom continue to be excluded. The children who already are included continue to be included.

Chapter Five**Analysis****Who Did Not Tell Stories: Issues of Exclusion**

My research suggests that the children who ventured to the taperecorder and told stories were individuals who had reasons to feel included in a storytelling pedagogy in the kindergarten. They all demonstrated strong English ability and they all had a sense of what it means to tell a story. Many of the children were five years old, but some like Lily, Abby and Nancy were four years old. Many of the four-year old children came to the taperecorder to act as a chorus or to simply listen to their friends. Some children never came at all. In this chapter I will discuss the children who were not heard at the taperecorder, children like George, Lea, Jake and Jane, Cathy and Evan who all appear to have had different reasons for being silent in this storytelling praxis.

In critical pedagogy, silence can be viewed as either compliance or resistance. If viewed as resistance, then silence becomes a political statement. According to Peter McLaren (1989), silence as a form of resistance can mean that the student "rejects the culture of classroom learning because...it is delibidinalized (eros-denying) and is infused with a cultural capital to which subordinate groups have little legitimate access" (p. 188). As discussed in the earlier chapter, this storytelling praxis seems to have provided access to children with strong English skills and a strong sense of Eurocentric story tradition. The silent children may have resisted this praxis because they did not have legitimate access to it for these same reasons.

1) George and the Superhero:

George is a four-year old who never ventured to the taperecorder, not even to act as chorus to a friend. George is the only child of parents who emigrated to Canada from Vietnam. George's first language is Vietnamese. George lives in a small subsidized two-bedroom apartment in a building built by the Vietnamese community. While George was learning English at school his mother and father were also attending adult classes to learn English. His mother told me that she came from a well educated well to do family in Vietnam. George's mother knew that some parents volunteered in the classroom but her schedule precluded this so she offered to make drawings or paintings to decorate the classroom. I asked her to make a "Welcome to School" sign in Vietnamese and she very kindly did and it was placed near the classroom entrance. At home George liked to play Power Rangers with his figures and likes to watch them on television (Child Log, p. 17).

While George's voice is absent from the child story tapes, his presence is almost ghostlike in the first half of my field notes. George's silence on the taperecorder could be interpreted as a cultural response - George being respectful of his adult teacher. This would be acceptable if George were a quiet, respectful boy when he was engaged in other areas of class life. He was, however, a very boisterous, active child who had difficulty sitting for any length of time at the teacher directed circle time. He was also a bit of a class clown at circle and liked to make faces and direct noises at his friends to make them

laugh!

Despite his active personality he hovers on the periphery of classroom events in my field notes. It is significant that a child who needs teacher attention because he is learning a new language is so remote in notes about classroom life. One thought is that I was looking for a specific type of story behaviour in my data collection - behaviour reflecting a European notion of story - and George did not have access to this behaviour because he did not have a strong access to the language or the culture being observed. George may have needed direct teacher modelling and teacher permission to help him try a new activity. Two other possibilities exist in the research. Margaret Benson's (1993) work suggests that George, at four years of age, did not have a working mental model of story and therefore he was unable to tell a story at the taperecorder in any language or in any cultural tradition. However, in play, George was drawn to the superhero role and liked to enact storied play with his friends. Hence, while he might be unable to tell a story, he did demonstrate stories in his play. A second possibility from the research is Shalini Venturelli's (1992) work with multicultural children and her finding that the children in her study resisted and reinvented dominant discourse to fit with their own discourse (p. 38). Perhaps George's absence from the taperecorder was a form of resistance.

Notes about George are superficial. I write that George did not listen to a read story ["at Circle Stu, George and Evan did not attend to the Rough Faced Girl" (Field Notes, p. 98)] or I describe George working on a craft at the art table.

Later in the notes, George receives a longer mention when he enacts a superhero role with Mitchell: "George wears a baby blanket as a cape, "I'm Batman". Mitchell puts on long brown gloves - "I'm Catwoman."" (Field Notes, p. 102). Once George takes up the Batman persona he gains more mention in the field notes because it became a popular drama for him and for his friends and they enacted it many times. His storied enactments of Batman are similar to James who liked to use the taperecorder to look at his admired superheroes too. The superhero theme, whether storied at the taperecorder or storied in play, was a significant theme for little boys in the classroom. As Anne Haas Dyson (1994) wrote: "Young children seem especially drawn to popular media stories that tap into themes already deeply embedded in common kinds of child play, like boy/girl chasing games and the encounters between good guys and bad guys" (p. 221).

Do I write about this behaviour because "Batman" is a story scenario that I can identify too? ["George and Donny set up the Fisher price street with small people and vehicles - they are still dressed as Batman and Robin." (Field Notes, p. 116) or later "George strides around the rug with the white baby blanket as a cape - "Where's Robin?" he asks me - George - "Where's Donny?" Donny pops his head up from behind the Math cupboard" (Field Notes, p. 144)]

Early in the research George is not mentioned in field notes because he does not function in a mode that I recognize as storied play. Once he assumes the Batman superhero role, a role that I recognize as part of the warrior narrative,

then he becomes a more frequent subject of my field notes. This absence suggests researcher bias in data collection. His absence from the child story tapes suggests several possibilities. George may have understood that only children with strong English skills were candidates for the taperecorder - only children who told stories in a foreign European style. It may also have been that George, at four years of age, did not have a strong mental model of a story and did not feel able to tell one. It may also be that George did not feel drawn to the activity for personal reasons. It was an activity of choice. There are not enough clues in the data to answer why George did not feel compelled to go the taperecorder and tell a tale, perhaps in Vietnamese? Or tell a tale about his hero Batman or the Power Rangers? If George did feel excluded from this pedagogy, then his silence and possible exclusion, suggests that the model of one English speaking storytelling teacher is a very limiting one in today's ethnically diverse classroom. It also points out the need for diverse storytelling models, models that offer stories in other languages and other traditions.

2) Lea : a Four Year Old Adult:

Lea did go to the taperecorder on one occasion. Her offering is a tentative whisper about her relationship with the teacher.

Lea: Mrs. Stewart tell a Story. Mrs. Stewart and me play in the sand.

Teacher: How about some more.

Lea: Nancy, Abby and Lucy play in the water. Mrs. Stewart and me play in the ducks.

(Child Stories, p.16)

Lea is four years old and the only child of a single mother. Lea was born in Somalia and while her first language is Somalian she functions very well in English. Lea's mom is fluent in English but Lea says that they speak Somalian at home. Lea shares a small subsidized apartment with her mother. Lea's mother is going to college to study computers and while she is away Lea spends time with a female Somalian neighbour who has two daughters of her own. Lea visits a male neighbour, with other Somalian children, to study the Koran (Child Log, p. 12).

As Lea's taped story demonstrates, I was present while Lea spoke into the taperecorder. Lea used my presence in the same way that other girls used the security of friends when telling stories at the taperecorder. In the classroom Lea was often my shadow and wanted my attention. She seemed to want me to be her friend rather than children her own age. Lea had difficulty making friends with the other children and sometimes she was teased about her size because she was taller and heavier than the other children. Her size and her habit of coming to school in dressy clothes which she felt she must keep tidy made her awkward on the playground and made it difficult to take part in running, climbing, and digging games. While the other girls were playing on the climber Lea was often my shadow on the playground too. This behaviour may stem from Lea's culture or her personality. As a young Muslim girl she may have been encouraged to take part in quieter tidier activities at home too. This may have been the model she was most accustomed to and most comfortable with - being

with her mother, her adult neighbour caregiver, her male neighbour who taught her the Koran - and pursuing quieter activities.

In the classroom she tried solitary activities. ["Lea is roving the classroom taking pictures with the camera - she takes every child and the teacher's picture - she is very serious and careful" (Field Notes, p. 24)] Lea was also highly aware of the rules of the classroom and would go to me to see them enforced. ["Lea to me 'You must tell Ronald to put his gum in the garbage'" (Field Notes, p. 40) or "Lea - 'Jim put his tongue out to you'" (Field Notes, p. 58)] In various spots in the field notes, I record how Lea is doing teacher type functions - sorting the children's name cards, picking up spilt stickers or organizing the counting bears. Lea appears to identify her role in the classroom in adult terms and not child terms. Her only visit to the taperecorder is with me, the teacher. Had I been more available to her she might have made further trips, and she might have developed into a storyteller rather than a reporter as she is in her only story. My limited physical availability may have been the key to Lea's exclusion from a storytelling pedagogy. It is difficult for a teacher to be more available to a child like Lea, when classrooms are so full and the demands on teachers so great. Perhaps Lea would have responded to an older buddy, a child from the junior grades who could spend a part of the school day with her and support her entry into classroom events like storytelling.

3) Jake and Jane: the Problem of Siblings:

Both Jake and Jane are four-year old children in the afternoon

kindergarten program who share the classroom with older siblings. Jane is a four-year old child of Chinese descent. She is a middle child, with her older sister Susan in the five-year old program and her younger brother at home. Her first language is Chinese, but like Susan, she is fluent in English (Child Log, p. 14).

While Jane's sister Susan figures quite prominently in field notes and child stories, Jane is on the periphery much like George. Her voice is never heard on the child story tapes and she is mentioned only superficially in the field notes playing pony games with her sister and two other girls or at the playdoh with Penny or working at the math table with Nancy (Field Notes, pp. 45, 65, 97). There are no real reported incidents that demonstrate Jane's identity but many that reveal Susan's. Jane may be on the periphery of the classroom because Susan is at the centre. Her exclusion may be due to family position - younger sister dominated by older sister. Jane's shadowy presence in the Field Notes may be a clue to Jane's construction of self - a self that does not seek attention but functions quietly on the sidelines. How can a storytelling pedagogy, or any pedagogy, offer a child like Jane other possibilities? It is too easy for a teacher to overlook a quiet unobtrusive child like Jane in a classroom. Teachers often do not take the time to reflect upon each child's needs in this way. Jane's continual absence from the centre of classroom events was not revealed to me until I began to sift through the research.

While Jake's voice is heard on the story tapes, Jake is there as a chorus to his older brother William or his older cousin Steve. Jake is a four-year old

boy, born in Canada, of parents who emigrated to Canada from Somalia. He is the third of five children. His Father was a teacher at a university in Somalia and is currently working on his PhD through an American university. Jake has access to a computer at home and he says his dad has all of the children sit down in the evenings to do their homework together (Child Log, p.13).

With education held so high in Jake's home and with Jake's fluent English skills, Jake would appear to have all the necessary attributes to be included in a storytelling pedagogy. However, like Jane, Jake's contributions seem to be influenced by the dominating presence of his brother and his cousin as they direct Jake throughout the exchange:

Jake: Okay. What is he? Story about Belle.
 William & Steve: Sususususu babababab.
 Steve: Susan is a bon. (Could be a Somalian word?)
 William: Go go ga ga Su su Susan... Jake we're not finished...
 William and Steve sing very softly, words inaudible.
 William: Okay that's enough Jake.
 (Child Stories, pp. 51 & 52)

In this excerpt Jake seems to want to tell a story about Beauty and the Beast with his reference to "Belle" but his brother William and his cousin Steve immediately take over and begin to make silly songs about Susan. Does Jake try to turn off the taperecorder when William stops his song to say "Jake we're not finished"? The two older boys sing more and finally tell Jake "Okay that's enough". It would appear that Jake's voice is overridden by his brother and his cousin. It is difficult for a teacher to make spaces for children like Jake and Jane

in any pedagogy. They need time that is distinctly their own within the activities of the classroom. They need a space where they have the opportunity to experience being the boss. However, this takes a teacher who is not overwhelmed by large classes and added responsibilities due to the present financial cutbacks in education. It also means reflection on the part of the teacher, for I was not aware of Jane's distance from the centre of classroom activity until I sifted through the data looking for her presence.

4) Cathy: Cautious and Careful:

Cathy did venture to the taperecorder once with Lea. Her whispered offering is inaudible.

Cathy: I don't want to.

Teacher: Tell a story Lea.

(Classroom noises)

Lea: Mrs. Stewart

Cathy: (Too quiet to hear)

(Child Stories, p. 16)

Cathy is a fair haired four-year old Caucasian girl. She is the only child of parents who began their family later in life - both being in their forties. Cathy was a difficult birth and her speech is delayed as a result. Her mother has taken a long leave from her career to be at home with Cathy. She is following a speech program at home with her mother and one through the speech teacher at school to develop her expressive vocabulary (Child Log, p, 15). Like George, who could use a storytelling pedagogy to help to develop his use and understanding of the English language, Cathy could benefit from storytelling to help develop her

vocabulary. Cathy only made this one silent visit to the taperecorder. She was not comfortable - "I don't want to". This response echoes the responses of the four year olds in Margaret Benson's (1993) study in which 60% of the four-year old children gave "non-responses" to the researcher's request to tell a story (p. 220).

While George held on to his Batman persona during free play, Cathy always wanted to be in the housekeeping centre, washing dishes and dressing dolls. Bronwyn Davies (1989) refers to this style of gender formation;

For many girls their major experience before coming to preschool takes place within the domestic sphere. There the one whom they most usually encounter as carer and nurturer is their mother, or some other female person who takes her place. Their idea of being a female person is inevitably learned to a large extent through this relationship. (p. 121)

Cathy's daily close relationship with her mother, a woman who gave up her career for four years to be at home with her only daughter and work with her language needs, would certainly suggest why Cathy would construct a female self as nurturer and caregiver. In the housekeeping centre she would operate alone despite the presence of other children in the house.

Donny, Jim and Cathy in the House - Cathy washes dishes at the sink - Jim and Donny play
 Jim: Let's make this place really messy. You be a robber and I'll be a robber...
 Cathy is not part of the "robbers" game and she continues to wash dishes quietly...
 Jim interferes with Cathy's dishes
 Cathy: Hey!
 (Field Notes, pp. 28 & 29)

Three children in one small confined space and two very different stories occurring concurrently - Jim and Donny are messy, noisy robbers while Cathy is quiet and domestic and she does not take part in their story until they intrude upon hers at which point she does object. Is this the construction of the female that she witnesses at home with her mother? Is she fearful or inhibited about taking part in other parts of the classroom or in other activities? It may be the opposite. Perhaps she feels empowered by playing with the role she sees her mother play, by nurturing dolls and caring for the house. Cathy's mother liked to volunteer one day per week in the classroom and she often would try to encourage her daughter to try other areas of the class but Cathy was always adamant, to the point of loud anger, that she wanted to work in the housekeeping centre which suggests just how powerful her attachment was.

So Cathy's favourite space in the classroom was the housekeeping centre. She was generally a solitary creature but one day she gained the attention of one of the more popular girls in the class because of the power of a doll.

Cathy shows me a baby doll from home - she holds it gently like a Mom would a newborn - she pats its back - Cathy: "Oops she had a burp." - Anne wants Cathy to play on the climber with her because of the doll - Anne takes the doll from Cathy and Cathy looks concerned but does not speak.

(Field Notes, p. 82)

Cathy continued to enact her story of a quiet and caring mother throughout the research. She continued to feel comfortable playing within the confined space of

the housekeeping centre. Did she feel most secure here? Did she feel at home here, empowered by the re-enactment of a nurturing female identity? Why did she not express her voice at the taperecorder? Cathy was a child who needed to develop her English vocabulary. She was very aware of this through work with her mother at home and with the speech teacher at school. Did Cathy believe that there was only space for children with fluent English skills at the taperecorder for that seems to be the message that George received. Was it more that Cathy did not value activities that were beyond the comfortable realm of the housekeeping centre? This, then, points out a limitation of the research design, that the taperecorder was too valued an object and other evidence of story within the classroom - like George's Batman play and Cathy's mother play - was not held in equal high regard. In any case both Cathy and George, children who needed to rehearse their language skills were outsiders in this storytelling pedagogy. Excluded from a pedagogy that was meant to be inclusive.

5) Evan: No Voice for the Disabled:

Evan's voice is not recorded on the child story tapes. Evan's existence is barely noted in the field notes. In the child log I write about Evan : "four years old, Caucasian male with Downs Syndrome - English beginning first language - two older never married professional parents - moves between the two homes - working in the homes with various professionals to stimulate his development" (Child Log, p. 10).

Evan's integration into the regular kindergarten program was at the

request of his parents and not on my recommendation or the Special Education department of the Board of Education who felt his needs could be better met in a congregated class. As his classroom teacher I felt very uncertain that I could meet his social, emotional, educational, language or physical needs within the kindergarten program and I felt frightened by the demands of his parents. Once in the classroom Evan was supervised by a teacher aide. She directed him through activities in the classroom based on my advice and the advice of outside professionals.

One goal was to help develop Evan's language. The young children around him were to be his models for language and the aide was to bridge play situations between Evan and other children. However these were rarely successful because Evan was not able to play with other children due to his egocentric state, and the children were not interested in playing with Evan because he did not do or say or play with toys the way they did. No one (including me) encouraged Evan's aide to include him in the storytelling research to help his language growth. He was not taken to the taperecorder to try to record his voice or to listen to his voice which may have delighted him because Evan loved to listen to sounds. On the computer he would often ignore the coloured graphics on the screen to listen to the noises that were prompted by his touch of the keyboard. He was often removed from story listening because the aide deemed that he was disruptive - squeezing the unsuspecting or rolling on his stomach and masturbating. Evan also liked to roar sounds repetitively. When

this occurred the aide would remove Evan to a favourite activity until the story was complete and I did not stop this practice. He was more of an outsider than any other child.

Conclusion:

Again the message appears to be that only children with fluent English skills, children with strong academic ability are full participants in this storytelling pedagogy - Evan, George and Cathy all appear to be excluded on the basis of English fluency and due in part by a research design that did not value their storied contributions to classroom life. Evan is also excluded on the basis of academic ableness. In a storytelling pedagogy grounded in a humanistic discourse, one that depicts the teacher as a passive facilitator who "observes and monitors the development" of the autonomous rational individual, I pathologized Evan. Due to his mental disability I deemed him unable to realize this goal of autonomous rational individual and I did not even try to include him. As Valerie Walkerdine writes: "If the normal child is self regulating, any overt conflict, a failure of reason, will be displaced on pathology" (Walkerdine, 1985, p. 210). Therefore my pedagogy appears to have excluded the one special child who needed inclusion to be more successful at school!

The contradiction is, that as the teacher/storyteller, I believed that storytelling was providing a platform to include those who needed language rehearsal by providing a strong language model. It appears that the model of teacher/storyteller was too rigid and did not allow the children to conceive of

alternative spaces. It also appears that the research design was too rigid because it only valued stories spoken into the taperecorder and not the storied play that occurred throughout the classroom daily. As well, a stronger storytelling pedagogy would allow for others to tell stories to a class, other adults, other children, using a variety of English skills and other languages so that the model was more flexible, more inclusive for children like George, Evan and Cathy. For a child like Cathy, additional adults or older buddies could offer her prompts to help her tell stories or talk about subjects that interested her. This would provide her with the language rehearsal she needed. Further, my storytelling pedagogy, grounded in humanistic discourse may have been flawed. A humanistic discourse portrays the teacher as a passive, nurturing facilitator for the development of the autonomous rational individual. In this discourse the silence of children like Cathy is pathologised. Valerie Walkerdine (1985) writes;

this move towards self regulation depends not only upon an active learner who develops through action on objects. It also depends upon the medium of argument, language, which itself emerges naturally through a sequence of development. Speaking and silence therefore become normalized as the facilitation of a universal linguistic system. Silence is pathologised as absence, for, although language is natural it develops only if facilitated by a family (or more particularly by mother) who interacts, extends, elaborates the utterances of the child. Silence is pathology if the school and family simultaneously permit and celebrate the possibility of speech. (p. 211)

Within a storytelling pedagogy, grounded in such a humanistic discourse, then

the children who did not speak at the taperecorder become pathologised because they are silent. But they are not silent in other areas of classroom life and these need to be valued and acknowledged. If storytelling was made more inclusive, if it respected a wider variety of storied activity and supplied a wider variety of storytelling models, then perhaps it could help to “create an agenda of possibility” for children who are generally devalued within the school culture (McLaren, 1989, p. 190).

To this point I have discussed who the insiders and outsiders were in my storytelling praxis. Now it is time to turn the attention on the model that I provided through the stories I told. In the following chapter I investigate the themes of the stories I told and discuss the model that I provided the children.

Chapter Six

Analysis

Teacher Told Stories: An Agenda of Possibility?

According to Peter McLaren (1989), "Teachers can do no better than to create agendas of possibility in their classrooms" (p. 190). Weighing the previous discussions of the children in this study and the stories they told into the taperecorder as well as the children who did not tell stories would lead one to question whether this particular storytelling pedagogy did indeed "create an agenda of possibility" in my classroom. Furthermore, as Chas Banks and Bronwyn Davies (1992) point out, stories are cultural vehicles that provide important information to children;

story provides a substantial and detailed manifestation of the culture, it is through story that children can learn patterns of desire appropriate for their gender...Children discover from lived and told stories what positions are available to members of their sex and how to live the detail of those positionings. (p. 5)

In this chapter I now turn to the story model provided for the children. I focus on the main themes of the teacher told stories to discover what manifestations of culture and gender are offered to the children. Are these manifestations examples of "possibility" or cultural maintenance?

I told my children ten different tales over the course of the ten weeks - one story a week. The stories were told twice in one day - once to the children in morning kindergarten and once to the afternoon children. The storytelling

routine was consistent. It occurred during our regular story reading time at the conclusion of the teacher-directed circle time. The children were grouped on the rug close to my chair while the taperecorder sat near my elbow to try and capture the telling. At the conclusion of the data collection these tellings were transcribed onto computer disk and a sample of these tellings is included in the Appendix.

As stated earlier, all stories were told in English by a white university educated woman to a diverse group of four and five- year old children. What model did I provide? What model did the stories provide for the children? Was storytelling a pedagogy of possibility or one of social maintenance?

During the research I told the same ten stories that I had used with previous kindergarten classes: two stories were original tales (Laurel and the Red Enchanter and Thomas and the Lake Monster), two stories were learned many years ago at a storytelling workshop (Philamondre and The Gunnywolf), one story was taken from my memory of the Brothers Grimm (The Elves and the Shoemaker) and five stories were originally taken from a battered copy of The Magic Tree and Other Tales, a collection of French Canadian tales by Michael Homyansky (The Magic Tree, The Princess of Tomboso, Scurveyhead, Sir Goldenhair and The Sly Thief of Valenciennes).

As recounted earlier, I had originally grounded the telling of these tales in a humanistic belief that the young child could benefit from listening to the oral story. I saw myself as the nurturing storyteller teacher facilitating the

developmental journey of the child toward rational, autonomous individuality.

This belief was reinforced through reading such authors as David Booth and Bob Barton (1992) who wrote:

Enough cannot be said about the importance of reading aloud or telling stories in your class. There is no better way for children to learn that their role as listeners is to participate in the creation of the imagined world. In having to construct an interpretation on the basis of words alone, they come to grips with the power of language to represent symbolically. As children absorb more and more stories they chime in readily and predict with increasing accuracy what is going to happen next. They relish old favourites, welcome new stories, and develop positive attitudes toward print even when the skills of reading pose a problem for them. (p. 62)

My past experience telling stories in the kindergarten reinforced the idea that the children did “relish old favourites”, they did “welcome new stories” and I hoped that I was helping to “develop positive attitudes toward print”. Further, I knew from the research and from personal experience that the told story is a powerful vehicle for delivering rich language and introducing new story genre to the young child. The storyteller is also a powerful figure, an individual who is able to use language to produce intense effects in the listener.

And while all of these goals are positive, what became apparent to me when I began to investigate critical pedagogy, was that I had never investigated the politics of the stories themselves. I did not question the messages that were being transmitted to the individual children - messages about the construction of gender, culture and ethnicity. I was uncertain as to how the stories situated me

as teller and the children as listeners. Was storytelling in my classroom a pedagogy of possibility or one of social maintenance?

To try to discover answers to these questions, I sifted through the story transcripts and three main themes emerged: the settings of the stories, the construction of the male in the story, and the construction of the female in the story. I begin with a discussion of story setting and the possible cultural messages transmitted by setting.

1) Story Settings:

As discussed previously the children in my two kindergartens came from diverse ethnic backgrounds - Canada, Somalia, Vietnam, Philippines, Jamaica, Guyana, Hong Kong and China. An inclusive storytelling pedagogy would be expected to have spaces for cultural and ethnic diversity but an analysis of the settings of the stories reveals little diversity in terms of setting and with the told story, the setting can impart many cultural and racial details that are left unsaid by the storyteller. Many of the stories are situated in traditional medieval European story landscapes with the poor village, and the rich castle, peopled with kings, queens, and brave knights. Philamondre, Scurveyhead, Sir Goldenhair, The Sly Thief of Valenciennes, The Princess of Tomaboso, and The Magic Tree all follow this model. In each tale the attainment of the castle is part of the hero or heroine's reward.

While the Elves and the Shoemaker and Laurel and the Red Enchanter do not mention castles, they too are part of this tradition. They both take place i

in humble homes in small feudal villages. While a feudal society is also part of African culture, other details would place these stories in Europe. Secondary characters in the stories are named as “prince” or “a fine gentleman” or “a lady in a fine dress” and could help to place these stories in the same medieval Eurocentric landscape as the previously mentioned titles.

Thomas and the Lake Monster, an original tale, is located in a small village at the shores of a mysterious lake hidden deep in the mountains. There are no lords or ladies, castles or witches. This story is centred on a lonely young boy’s developing friendship with a lake monster - a dinosaur. As creator of the story I envisioned the lake to be located in the Canadian Rocky mountains. These details are not stated in the tellings which may offer the potential for the listening child to place the lake, the village and the mountains in any mountainous country. However, would the language and culture of the teacher teller predetermine the story landscape for the child? Naming the child - “Thomas” - and cultural activities like eating peanut butter sandwiches or the situation of a mother being in the hospital to have a baby may narrow the possible cultural sites and times for the story. The inclusion of North American food could limit the listening child to placing the story in a North American landscape and not a Somalian or Ethiopian one.

The tale The Magic Tree offers the listener two settings. The story begins in the traditional medieval European castle with a king and his three sons. Once the youngest son sets off on his quest to stop the theft of apples of wisdom from

his father's orchard, he crosses a mountain of glass and enters the land of the sultan. The sultan is an adversary who plots the young man's death. The sultan rides an elephant, wears long black moustaches and a turban, lives in a palace rather than a castle, and has an exotic garden - all details which could lead the listener to believe that the sultan lives in a warm country like India.

Here at last is an alternate setting, however, it is cast in a negative light. The sultan and his land must be conquered by the hero. The hero then returns in triumph to his original Eurocentric setting with the sultan's daughter and the sultan's prized phoenix bird in tow. Therefore, while this story offers the child an alternate setting it is tarnished by its negative message. The European setting is the home of the hero and the exotic land of the sultan is cast as the home of the villain. Here is a negative racial message transmitted by the story. As Davies and Banks (1992) state, stories transmit cultural messages that teach children "appropriate patterns" of behaviour (p. 5). In this example, the transmitted message is a negative one and positions darkskinned listening child negatively. It also perpetuates racial inequities that already exist in our society.

The only story of the ten which appears to offer an alternate setting cast in a positive light is The Gunnywolf. This tale takes place in a village beside the jungle. There are no castles or princes or kings. The little girl in the tale enters the forbidden jungle and must outwit the notorious "Gunnywolf" character. Placing the story in a jungle immediately opens the range of settings beyond North America or Europe. For the child listener it could take place anywhere in

the world where the climate permits a jungle to exist. While the European castle setting could lead the child listener to envision the main characters to be white skinned, the jungle setting of the Gunnywolf could allow the child listener to envision the heroine to be dark skinned.

Therefore, nine of the ten told stories were set in a medieval Eurocentric landscape. Though the main characters of the stories are not described in terms of skin or hair colour, setting the stories in a Eurocentric landscape could compel the child listener to imagine the main characters as fairhaired and white skinned. Most children entering kindergarten have experienced the Disney view of the prince and princess in the story landscape even if they have never encountered them in a book. Disney's portraits are fairskinned and fairhaired. Further, would this not place the whiteskinned child listeners as insiders or part of the story culture and the dark skinned listeners as outsiders within this storytelling pedagogy? The telling of The Gunnywolf with its jungle setting may make it the only tale of the ten to offer alternate cultural possibilities to the child listener. However, in a ethnically and culturally diverse classroom it is not sufficient to tell nine Eurocentric stories and only one story which offers cultural and ethnic alternatives. The following discussion of the construction of male persona will also reveal how limiting these stories were in a diverse classroom.

2) The Construction of the Male:

The ten told stories offered five main constructions of the Male: the wise fatherly king, the young active decisive superhero, the young boy on a journey

toward heroism, the mischievous Devil and the evil villain.

The wise fatherly king figure has a small role in The Princess of Tomboso, The Magic Tree, and Sir Goldenhair. In the Princess of Tomboso the father/king dies at the outset of the story leaving his small kingdom in the greedy hands of his three sons. In the Magic Tree the king's wisdom is dependent on the eating of a silver apple plucked each morning from the magic tree in his orchard. When a thief begins stealing this apple the king fears that he will be unable to govern wisely and sets his three sons on the quest to return his apple of wisdom and stymie the thief. Sir Goldenhair's king, who is embroiled in a dispute with a nearby king, provides the setting for the young hero to display his superheroism before the princess he so admires.

Each of these three stories is set in a medieval European landscape and could imply to the child listener that these wise elderly kings are white English speaking men. The only king who acts unwisely is the king in the Sly Thief of Valenciennes. This king, who is identified as the "king of France", is characterized as making poor decisions. He relies upon three elderly wise men to advise him and they offer him poor advice. In this story, the king is outwitted four times by a notorious thief. While the king relies upon the advice of others he fails against the thief. Once the king relies upon his own resources and decides to offer the thief a deal - the hand of his daughter, a principedom and no legal repercussions for his illegal acts - then the king realizes some peace. The message here that the male must act alone and not rely on others for help. Here

is an example of a gender positioning being transmitted to the child listeners (Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 5). Further the wise elderly man must always act in a solitary fashion for the health of the society to be maintained. These are powerful and frightening models for the young male child. Other male constructions in the stories support this idea of male individuality and self reliance.

The male as superhero occurs in two of the stories: Sir Goldenhair and The Magic Tree. In Sir Goldenhair, the male hero must face and conquer the enemy king's army three times. Each time he charges into the opposing army with his lance lowered and his characteristic golden hair streaming behind him in the wind again tangible evidence that the male hero is white and fairhaired. Each time he singlehandedly defeats an entire army. On the third go he kills the enemy king by impaling him on his lance. His deeds are lauded by the people of the kingdom and he wins the hand of the princess in marriage. Sir Goldenhair grows in the story from being an uncertain hero who relies on the guidance of his magic horse, to being a decisive, self reliant, physically aggressive hero. Once he makes this transition, like the king in the Sly Thief of Valenciennes, he wins his rewards. Again the message is to be that the successful male must act, and act decisively, and alone.

In the Magic Tree the young hero sets off on a quest into the foreign land of the Sultan to solve the mystery of who is stealing the magic silver apple from his royal father's orchard, an apple that supplies his father with the needed wisdom to rule his kingdom properly. On his journey to the sultan's land he must

climb a glass mountain and follow a dark tunnel through the mountain's core. Inside the mountain he must conquer three mythic beasts - the unicorn, the giant lion and the hydra. He tricks the unicorn into impaling its horn in the rock wall of the tunnel. He slices the lion's head from its body in one swipe of his sword. He outwits the hydra and tangles all of its necks in one twisted mass. This story proved to be particularly powerful for many of the children. The action in the tunnel was replayed by children who liked to use the words "unicorn and hydra" and demonstrates how powerful stories are. In this excerpt from my field notes Donny and Mitchell are manipulating some teacher drawn pictures about The Magic Tree. This excerpt demonstrates the strength of their recall of story detail and again, demonstrates the power of story;

Donny and Mitchell organize the Magic Tree pictures

Mitchell: He saw the unicorn first.

Donny: Then he met...what's this called?- holds up the hydra

Teacher: The hydra (Mitchell looks at the picture)

Mitchell: Look there is more. He played hide 'n seek and he was a fish. Get the fish out.

(Field Notes, p. 98)

Once in the land of the sultan he outwits the sultan three times as well. It is the sultan's plan to play a game of hide and seek with the hero in the palace garden. In the past the sultan has always won this game and put his unwitting opponents to death. This time the hero is able to find the magic sultan three times - in the guise of a fish, a rose and a pear. This enrages the sultan and he

further plots the death of the hero. The hero with the assistance of the sultan's beautiful daughter escapes in the night with the sultan's most prized treasures - his daughter and his golden phoenix bird. The hero returns to his homeland having solved his father's dilemma. He marries the sultan's daughter and later becomes king on the death of his father - rewarded royally for his action and his individuality.

This story, The Magic Tree, seemed to have the most impact on the children of all of the tales. They were particularly drawn to the contests the hero had with the three mythic beasts in the tunnel; and the language and the action of the story came out in their play.

The hero in The Sly Thief of Valenciennes is not a prince like the main male character in The Magic Tree or a brave knight like Sir Goldenhair. He is a thief who desires to be as rich as a king and to marry a princess. He is a stonemason by day and a notorious thief by night. He decides to rob the king to fulfill the first of his desires. To be as rich as the king he robs half of the king's wealth. The king tries to outwit the thief three times to try and discover the thief's identity. The thief outwits the king. Finally, the king offers the thief a reward - the hand of his daughter in marriage, the title of prince and no legal retribution for past crimes. The thief accepts and sees the realization of all of his wishes.

Again we have the gender positioning of the solitary active male who is rewarded for his decisive activity despite his being a criminal! The deed of the male is not as significant as the fact that he takes responsibility decisively for his

own destiny. The king appears to be in need of the thief's lesson because, as discussed earlier, the king does not act on his own but relies on the poor advice of three wise men. Therefore, the thief is never punished for his crimes, instead he is rewarded for his active individuality. What a powerful model for the young listening male. It is not the action that is significant, but the act of action.

In The Princess of Tombozo the prince hero is punished violently many times for his inability to act decisively. The hero is infatuated with the Princess of Tombozo and he uses his magic belt to travel to her chambers to witness her beauty first hand. So overcome is he by her charms that she tricks him out of his treasured belt. He is then beaten by her guards and thrown from the castle. Once he returns home he is beaten severely by his brothers. He makes two more attempts to see the princess and retrieve his stolen property. The princess outwits him each time and relieves him of more magic treasure. Each time he fails to act he is punished brutally by the castle guards and by his own brothers.

Finally the hero learns his lesson and devises a plot to outwit the princess. Once the hero begins to take control of his destiny he becomes successful in the story. He retakes his treasures from the princess and punishes her forever by disfiguring her lovely face with a long nose. While the hero is acted upon by the princess he is treated miserably in the story, at one point almost beaten to death! Once he takes control he is rewarded and takes the upperhand in the story. This reinforces the message of the active, self reliant,

dominant male who decides his own destiny.

Linked to the superhero character, is the young boy who embarks on a journey to become a superhero. In Scurveyhead we meet the young boy who will later become Sir Goldenhair. He runs away from home to escape an abusive father and lands in the castle of a witch. The witch is benign as long as the boy does her bidding - to clean the stable and care for her horses. He must not enter a mysterious little room in the castle or she promises punishment. While she is absent he does just that and discovers a fountain that turns all that it touches into gold. Thus his hair becomes golden. With the help of a talking horse, the boy escapes the witch unscathed and lands in the castle of a king there to develop into the hero Sir Goldenhair.

In this story, the male child is depicted as on a journey toward individuality. The talking horse acts as an advisor or teacher who helps the boy on his journey to solitary maturity. Again the emphasis is on male action and self reliance. With the advice of the horse, the boy thwarts the witch.

In my original tale Thomas and the Lake Monster the boy is on a different journey - one from solitary activity toward community. Thomas is staying with his grandparents in a small village in the mountains on the shores of a mysterious lake. His grandparents are not good playmates and seem to have forgotten what it means to be a child. The children of the village are not welcoming to a stranger. So Thomas heads off alone on the lake in his grandfather's rowboat to go fishing. Out on the lake a storm brews and Thomas is unable to row back to

shore against the wind. A dinosaur like creature rises out of the water and kindly helps the boy back to shore. The story ends as Thomas realizes that he has created a new friendship and he feels happy. This movement from individual to community is at odds with the development of the solitary male in the traditional tales. In this way this story offers an alternate construction of the male persona from one that is solitary and individual to one that needs to be part of a supportive community to survive happily. Therefore, this tale offers an alternate positioning for the male.

The male Devil character appears in Philamondre (see Appendix for complete transcript). This Devil is threatening, violent, active and decisive. He decides he wants to steal the daughters of the mother character so that they can clean his home, take care of him and he provides a punishment for the mother character who betrays traditional mother behaviour. He threatens the village plumber and the plumber is frightened into tightening the Devil's voice so that the Devil can imitate the mother and trick the girls into opening the locked door to their home. After two tries this trick works and the Devil steals the girls forever. They are never returned in the story and the Devil, like the hero in The Sly Thief of Valenciennes, receives no retribution for his evil activity.

Unlike the Devil and the thief two male story villains are punished for their activity. In The Magic Tree and Laurel and the Red Enchanter both the sultan and the red enchanter are outwitted and are punished for their decisions. In the Magic Tree the sultan attempts to outwit the hero and wishes to murder the hero.

The hero triumphs over the sultan and steals the sultan's daughter and the sultan's prized phoenix bird. Here the young hero is allowed to be active and decisive in the story and be rewarded for this behaviour while the sultan is not. It is possible that this difference is a matter of race. The sultan is a character who does not live in a Eurocentric landscape. He is depicted wearing a turban and long black moustaches and riding an elephant. These descriptors suggest that the sultan is not a white skinned fairhaired character like the hero. This difference of race may be the reason why the hero is rewarded for his activity but the sultan is not. In the Magic Tree the hero may be white skinned and the villain dark skinned. This may be part of the message transmitted by the story, that the acclaimed active male is fairhaired and white skinned and the punished villain is dark skinned. If this is the implication then what positionings does it offer the child listeners, especially in an ethnically and racially diverse classroom? It seems to support racial inequities that exist within present society. The story appears to include some members of the listening audience and exclude others. It sets a lonely, rigid standard for the construction of the white skinned male and a negative construction of the dark skinned male if he behaves in the same manner.

This also occurs in the original tale Laurel and the Red Enchanter. In this tale a tall red clad stranger steals princess Laurel from her adopted parents. He takes her to his barren stone tower in the middle of a barren plain with the intention of letting her slowly die away from the recuperative powers of her

beloved forest. In this way he plans to take control of the kingdom of magical beings in the forest who look to Laurel as their princess. Once he is deep in an intoxicated sleep Laurel's adoptive mother exposes the grey skin of the enchanter to sunlight causing him to smoke and burn and shrivel away.

Again the active male is thwarted. Is this because his plan is evil or because he is not white? White characters kill and rob and kidnap and are not punished. However both the sultan and the enchanter, the only male characters who are identified as dark skinned, are punished for these same type of acts. This seems to be the position of the story. The white hero male is constructed as active decisive and violent and is rewarded for this behaviour. The dark skinned villain male is active decisive and violent and is punished for this behaviour.

Therefore the construction of the male is very rigid in the stories offered to the children. The male is characterized as solitary, self reliant and violent. If he is white he is rewarded for these behaviours. If he is dark skinned he is punished. Only one story, Thomas and the Lake Monster offers an alternative to this narrow ghettoizing construction. How is the female constructed in the stories? What gender positions are offered to the little girls listening to the stories?

3) The Construction of the Female:

An analysis of the stories reveals three basic constructions of the female persona: the passive female as reward to the active male hero, the active beauty who is punished for her activity and the older woman witch or mother.

Two stories offer positive alternate constructions of the female: The Gunnywolf and Laurel and the Red Enchanter. In these two stories two dark skinned females are active decisionmakers who overcome an adversary and are not punished for their activity.

The tale Philamondre seems to be the ultimate tale of female passivity. The main female character is one of four daughters to a poor single mother. The mother loves three of her daughters but cannot love Philamondre. Philamondre does not express anger toward her mother for this lack of love. Instead she works quietly and passively about the house. The Devil moves into the neighbourhood and decides to kidnap the daughters to come and clean his home and care for him. He uses the mother's love song to her three daughters to trick the girls into opening the locked door when the mother is away at work. The Devil captures the three girls and Philamondre is left at home to greet her mother when she returns from work. Upon learning that her three treasured daughters are gone, the mother succumbs to madness and runs away down the road. The stoic and patient Philamondre packs her bags and moves to the nearby town where she gets a job and finally meets and marries a prince. Over time she becomes Queen Philamondre. She learns that her mad mother visits the gates of the castle each day at the same hour. Philamondre meets her mother and brings her to live in the castle forever.

In sharp contrast with the male model where the active self reliant male is rewarded with a royal marriage and a royal home, Philamondre is rewarded with

the same prizes for the very opposite behaviour - her passivity. She never expresses anger toward her mother for such poor treatment as a child and she even acts kindly and forgiving toward her mother at the end of the story - bathing her, feeding her, cutting her bird's nest hair and bringing her mother into the castle to live forever.

The mother character is punished for not acting as a mother should - for not loving all of her children. Because she behaves in a way contrary to story motherhood she loses forever the objects of her love, her three daughters, and descends into a madness that does not end until she accepts Philamondre at the conclusion of the story.

Passive beautiful young princesses appear in The Sly Thief of Valenciennes, the Magic Tree, and Sir Goldenhair. They act as helpmates to the hero and rewards at the conclusion of the stories. While the princesses in The Sly Thief and in Sir Goldenhair are not decisionmakers, the princess in The Magic Tree is more than passive reward because she acts as a helpmate to the hero. She offers him information to help him thwart her own father. Interestingly, if her father the sultan is darkskinned, then this princess too must be dark skinned. She the dark skinned beauty becomes the object of desire for the white prince hero and he steals her away from her father and returns with her to his medieval European home where they marry. Her race is not questioned in the story. This mixed marriage opens up the story to alternate possibilities in terms of relationships.

The princess character in the Princess of Tomboso is punished forever for assuming a male persona - being an active, decisive, self-reliant character in the story. The beauty of the princess is famous and draws the prince in the tale to her chambers because he wants to view her beauty for himself. She is startled by his magical arrival and questions him. When she discovers that he arrived through the use of a magic belt that will allow him to travel wherever he wishes she desires the belt and uses the power of her beauty to achieve it. Once she has the object of her desire she orders her guards to beat the prince and have him thrown from the castle. He later returns two more times to try and retrieve his possessions. Each time the princess uses the power of her beauty to take his magic possessions. Finally the prince becomes decisive and tricks the princess into eating magic apples that cause her nose to grow enormously. She is bedridden by this disfigurement and the prince promises to return her nose to its original size if she returns his belongings. She does and he leaves her with a permanently enlarged nose. She is punished forever for her lack of passivity through this disfigurement. Therefore, while beauty is a positive facet of the female, an active beauty, acting for herself is not. The active female must be punished. If, as Banks and Davies (1992) have written, that stories offer gender positionings for children, then this story certainly offers a powerful one to female and male listeners - positionings about what is acceptable behaviour for males and females and positionings about the nature of male/female relationships (p. 5).

Two witch figures appear in the stories. In Scurveyhead a witch takes in a runaway boy. She feeds him and houses him and only requires that he do work for her in her stable in return. She demands that he not enter one room in her castle and promises that if he does she will know and he will be punished. The witch leaves on a trip and while she is away the boy is drawn to the forbidden room where he discovers a fountain that turns whatever it touches into gold. His hair accidentally falls into the water and he immediately has a golden head of hair which he covers with an old sheepskin wig on the advice of a talking horse. When the witch returns she realizes at once that he has broken his promise and moves to punish him. The boy breaks her magic staff and steals her horse and escapes with the witch in pursuit. He tricks the witch, injures her black horse and escapes forever.

Therefore the witch, an old woman, who originally helps the boy, is game to be punished, robbed and has her magic property destroyed. Again what a powerful position for the old active female! The older male figures as a respected and wise king in the stories but the older woman only figures as a witch. What gender positionings are being offered to young females and males about aging and femininity and domination by males?

The mother figure in Philamondre is much like the witch. She is an older single woman who works to provide for her four daughters. She is active and she makes a sad decision in the story in that she loves three of her daughters but she cannot love her fourth daughter Philamondre. The mother is punished

cruelly for this behaviour. Her three beloved daughters are kidnapped forever by a Devil. Once she discovers their disappearance, she loses her sanity and runs away, wailing and madly pulling at her hair. The mother does not find any peace in the story until she returns to Philamondre and is taken into the castle to live. It is a horrible punishment for her sad but all too real crime of the inability to love a child. Therefore the role is a rigid construction for the mother in this story - the all loving self effacing mother.

Just as the roles for the male are rigidly defined so are the roles for the female presented in the stories. The dark skinned princess in The Magic Tree does break the passive mold in her active help of the prince. However, she still remains the beautiful reward for his activity. In two stories, The Gunnywolf and Laurel and the Red Enchanter alternate roles are offered for the female. Both tales offer active dark skinned female heroines.

As discussed earlier in the analysis of story setting, The Gunnywolf is set in a village near a jungle. This setting could offer the possibility of the characters being imagined as dark skinned though they are not identified as such. The little girl in the story is home alone while her parents go to market in a nearby village. They caution her not to enter the jungle for fear the notorious Gunnywolf will capture and harm her. The girl becomes bored with her play around her home and is attracted by flowers growing in the jungle. With the object of decorating her home with flowers she enters the jungle and eventually is caught by the Gunnywolf. Fearfully she sings him to sleep. She escapes but he wakes up and

catches her. She sings him to sleep again and again escapes. He wakes up and catches her. On the third time she sings longer and louder and makes certain that the Gunnywolf is in a deep sleep before she finally escapes for good.

Here the female is active and self reliant. She acts alone and is successful. However, she does not passively follow her parent's advice to remain at home and is caught by the dreaded Gunnywolf because she is not compliant. Therefore, while the little girl is active and is successful she is also punished for not being a passive little girl.

The female mother character in Laurel and the Red Enchanter, an original tale first told to my own daughters, is a decisive female who is rewarded for her actions. Wren is described as round and brown and quick like her namesake and she is married to a tall white man named Michelmas. They are artisans - Wren a weaver and Michelmas a carver. They are happily married but long for children. Michelmas gives Wren a strange flower he finds in the forest as a birthday gift. The flower presents them with a tiny girl and they raise her as their own. On the little girl's tenth birthday she is kidnapped by the red enchanter. Wren and Michelmas are devastated. They soon learn about Laurel's ancestry and discover the whereabouts of the red enchanter. Together they go to the tower where the enchanter lives. They discover Laurel in a locked room and need the key which is on the red enchanter's belt. Wren and Michelmas hide and watch the enchanter fall into an intoxicated sleep then Wren takes her sewing scissors and cuts open his clothing to reveal his skin. Once his skin is

exposed Michelmas opens the heavy drapes to let in the sun which kills the evil enchanter. In this tale Wren, who physically does not match the beautiful young heroine mold, works cooperatively with her husband to solve the problem of their kidnapped daughter. She is the instigator of the plan to reveal the enchanter's skin to the sun. She carried through the plan at physical risk to herself. Michelmas acts more as her helpmate which is an alternate role for the male too. Wren is not punished for her activity like the princess of Tomboso. Instead she is rewarded with the safe return of her daughter.

However, for all of Wren's active decisionmaking, Wren still fits the stereotype story mold for mother. Her action is directed toward protecting the well being of her child, not for a reward like riches and castles. She acts in a selfless and sacrificing manner for her child. Therefore while both Wren and the little girl in the Gunnywolf appear to offer alternate constructions of the female, they still retain elements of the story stereotype of selfless mother acting for her child and the compliant little girl. Therefore the ten stories offer a limited range of female behaviours - from the beautiful female reward, to the punished active female, to the witch. Wren and the little heroine of the Gunnywolf offer the only break from these narrow molds.

5) Conclusion:

Stories told in an ethnically and culturally diverse kindergarten should offer a variety of cultural, racial and gender positionings for the listening children. However an analysis of the ten stories told in my kindergarten demonstrate how

narrow a world view was provided by the stories. In terms of setting, the majority of the stories were situated in a medieval European landscape. Only one story of the ten was set in a warm jungle climate away from castles and kings and one, in a modern day mountainous village.

Models of male and female were very limited and rigid. The positive male was seen to be young, white, active, aggressive and self reliant. The positive older male was cast as wise and fatherly and self reliant. Males who did not fit this rigid model were punished. Males who were not white who followed this model were also punished.

The prized female was drawn as passive and beautiful - a reward for the male to attain. Many females who did not fit this role, like the beautiful, dominant princess in The Princess of Tombozo were severely punished for their active aggression. The witch figure, the old woman who acts and lives alone, was also a figure ripe for punishment. Only the little girl in The Gunnywolf and Wren, the mother in Laurel and the Red Enchanter, operated against this rigid mold.

Models of race were also very limited and limiting. Only five characters emerge as non white. The two male figures are objects of vilification. The three female figures are more positive and do offer alternate possibilities both as women and as non white women.

Overall this discussion demonstrates that the model provided by the teacher told stories in this research, while rich in story language, was very rigid and limiting for the child listeners from the view point of setting, gender

construction and race. These stories did not offer enough opportunities for possibility for children in a culturally and ethnically diverse classroom.

In the final chapter I will discuss what I understand from the data I collected and how it seems to fit together. How do the childrens' stories link to my stories? How does the literature link to what I have researched? What are the implications of my work for the researcher, the classroom practitioner and for the methodology? And finally what recommendations do I make for further work?

Chapter Seven

Telling Stories in the Kindergarten

When I began to tell stories in my kindergarten I was confident in a belief that I was involved in an inclusive pedagogy. I was confident that I was aiding in the development of the autonomous rational individual. I was confident that I was a storyteller for my little story tribe. However, as previous discussions in earlier chapters reveal, the storytelling pedagogy that occurred in my classroom during my ten weeks of research was not an inclusive praxis but an exclusionary one, making spaces for insiders and outsiders. It was not an apolitical neutral praxis but one riddled with problems that go to the root of the individual's construction of social identity. Today I still view the told story as a valuable part of a literacy program due to the promotion of rich language structures, the immediate contact between storytelling teacher and listening child, and the opportunity to extend the concept of story in the young child. Today, I also acknowledge that a storytelling pedagogy or any pedagogy is a site of "conflict and struggle" especially in today's culturally and racially diverse classroom. These conflicts and struggles grow out of the cultural messages transmitted by the stories themselves (Davies & Banks, 1992, p. 5). These conflicts and struggles must be revealed and acknowledged so that the classroom can be a site of possibility, places where diversity is validated. When a diversity of gender and ethnic positionings can be acknowledged in the kindergarten, then there is the possibility for diversity to be accepted in the child's later years.

In this final chapter I will discuss the conflicts and struggles revealed by the data. I will link the teacher told stories and the child told stories and see how they link to the available literature. I will also consider the “silent” children. From here I will look at the implications my research raises for further research, for storytelling classroom teachers and for the methodology. Then I will make recommendations for the future. I begin with the data itself.

1) What do the data reveal:

One clear site of struggle revealed by the data was the language of the stories. All teacher told stories were delivered in English. No other adult models were provided. No children models were provided. No other language models were provided. Analysis of the stories told by the children demonstrate that while there were many children in the classroom who spoke a variety of languages all stories were told in the English language into the taperecorder. Children who came to the taperecorder all had strong English language skills.

Children who had difficulty expressing themselves in English because they were new to the language or because they had special language needs did not come to the taperecorder to tell stories. Yet as the literature points out these were the very children who needed more English language rehearsal to become more proficient at the language, to extend their mental story model and help to become competent readers (Barton & Booth, 1990; Bearsdley, Maracek-Zeman, 1985; Dyson, 1990; Hough, Nurss, Wood, 1987). These were the children targeted to be assisted by a storytelling pedagogy yet they were not.

Therefore, children with strong verbal English skills were insiders in this pedagogy and children with weak English fluency became outsiders. This pedagogy appears to have excluded the very children who needed inclusion to be more successful at school and in an English speaking community at large. Therefore the language of the stories is a site of struggle because it creates insiders and outsiders (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 9).

The age of the child participants also provided a site of struggle. The majority of the child storytellers were five years old. Four-year olds, with the exception of insiders like Abby, Nancy and Lily, did not go to the taperecorder to tell stories. They tended to act as audience or chorus to older tellers. Margaret Benson (1993) points out it may be that the five year olds had a “cogent working model of story” and were able to employ it (p. 221). Employing her developmental view would suggest that the four year olds were excluded because their model of story was less well formed. However, four year old children did exhibit an understanding of story in their cooperative storied play which was captured in field notes. Therefore it may have been the use of the taperecorder for storytelling only that excluded these children from the research. If the teacher instruction for the use of the taperecorder had been broader, allowing for conversations with friends, or employing older students to act as scaffolds at the taperecorder, perhaps more four years have approached the taperecorder. If more than one taperecorder had been available it would have afforded more opportunity for the four year old voices to be heard. If the

research design had been broadened to value the taperecorded stories less, and storied play more, there would have been more inclusion for the four year old participants for field notes reveal rich storied play enacted by them. It would also adhere to the recommendations of Peter Williamson and Steven Silvern (1990) who urge educators to allow the time and the provision of dramatic materials for young children to engage in dramatic play to help work out their story comprehension (p. 92).

Gender positionings in teacher told stories and in child told stories also provided sites of struggle. The stories taped by the child insiders demonstrate many ideas that young children hold about gender and match many ideas that occur in the teacher told stories and in research literature. The boys who told stories, boys like James and Sam and Alex, and boys in play like George, were attracted to the superhero - the warrior narrative - the independent, self reliant, violent male. Nina and Sally also had active solitary male heroes in their stories of the Cat and the Knight. This model was recreated in many of the teacher told stories like Sir Goldenhair and The Magic Tree. In each story the male hero was rewarded with title and royal marriage for these independent and self reliant behaviours.

This attraction to a dominating, violent, superhero construction of the male persona supports the research conducted by Ellen Jordan (1995) and Anne Haas Dyson (1994). Anne Haas Dyson investigated the writings and enactments of young childrens' writings and found young children to be overwhelmingly

drawn to the superhero persona taken from popular media culture. Ellen Jordan looked at how little boys construct masculinity by avoiding whatever is done by little girls. She investigated how little boys had appropriated the warrior myth and became “fighting boys” in the school yard (p. 69).

Little girls who told stories into the taperecorder usually came to the machine accompanied by supportive female friends who contributed to the telling. They told stories about relationships that seemed to suggest that the greatest punishment was to be not liked by other girls. This was especially apparent in stories by Carrie, Abby and Nancy. This behaviour was also supported in the teacher told stories with tales of passive stoic women like Philamondre and the beautiful princesses in The Sly Thief of Valenciennes and Sir Goldenhair. The Princess of Tombozo is cruelly punished for breaking this passive cooperative role and her beauty is disfigured for life.

This “correct” gendering by both the boys and the girls in the study corresponds with the work of Bronwyn Davies (1989) and Bronwyn Davies and Chas Banks (1992) who used feminist tales with young school children. Davies and Banks found that they rejected characters who did not behave with gendered correctness. Banks and Davies also investigated the invented storylines of these same children at the age of eight and found their notions of gender correctness very entrenched.

Therefore, the stories, told in English by both the teacher and the children, had matching rigid gender positionings. This narrow view of what it means to be

a successful male or female was also supported by teacher behaviour toward child tellers during the research. My censoring actions directed towards Bonnie's raucous storytelling and my silent compliance of violent language and behaviour exhibited by Peter is revealed in the research. Hence teacher stories and teacher behaviour, as well as child stories and child behaviour support these rigid ghettoizing constructions of the ideal male and female persona. They do not offer spaces for different constructions of what it is to be a male or a female for the young developing child.

Analysis of both child stories and teacher stories demonstrate that neither looked beyond current conditions and stereotypes to question or consider different positionings. The children tellers dealt with their ideas of gender and their current life situations. They did not use the story as a platform to pursue alternatives. Only Sally and Nina did some questioning on their lives in their "I Wonder Why" story. The teacher model did not encourage questioning or pursuing alternatives as generally traditional Eurocentric tales were presented to the children. Only three teacher told tales offered different constructions of gender or race: Thomas and the Lake Monster, The Gunnywolf and Laurel and the Red Enchanter. Further, in Bronwyn Davies' (1989) look at young children's reactions to feminist tales, Anne Haas Dyson's (1994) research on young children's writing, and Elizabeth Yeoman's (1994) investigation of the use of disruptive tales with junior grade children, they all recommend that children need more than presentation of different gender or racial positionings to accept them.

Davies found that children generally disregarded stories that presented them with boys and girls acting contrary to their mental model of gendered behaviour. In her follow up work with Chas Banks (1992) they found that the same children had retained their rigid notions of gender three years later (p. 23). Dyson recommends that children need to work through different positionings through dramatic re-enactments like an Author's Theatre, where a child authored story is dramatically enacted by child performers. Within this forum children take on roles and later discuss them. Elizabeth Yeoman used disruptive tales, ones that broke with traditional gender roles or ways of finding solutions and she offered the children in her study many opportunities to work out these new ideas through discussion, retelling, dramatic re-enactment and writing alternate endings.

In addition to Yeoman's recommendations, Bronwyn Davies and Chas Banks (1992) suggest offering young children poststructuralist tools - "introducing them to the concepts of discourse, discourses of resistance, storyline, positioning and desire" - to help them begin to engage in the kind of personal change that might "undo fundamental elements of the male/female dualism" (p. 23). While Banks and Davies were working with eight year old children, it is possible for younger children to understand these concepts using language/discourse appropriate to their age group.

Therefore, to open up this storytelling pedagogy to more diversity for children in terms of gender construction and ethnic construction, it would take more than simply presenting the children with stories that offer a variety of

positionings. It entails providing alternate models of storytelling. The teacher need not be the only storyteller, but the pedagogy needs to be opened to peers, to children from other classrooms, and to volunteers from outside the classroom and the school. English need not be the only language of the story. Children in diverse classrooms need to hear stories from diverse cultures and in diverse languages. As well it would be worthwhile to take guidance from Elizabeth Yeoman (1994) who recommends introducing children to disruptive tales and offering them opportunities to question the positionings of these stories. In addition, it would be valuable to try to implement the suggestions of Chas Banks and Bronwyn Davies (1992) and see if poststructuralist tools could be introduced to young children. All of these recommendations would result in a far more inclusive storytelling pedagogy.

2) Implications for Researchers, Practitioners and Methodology:

Participating as both a researcher and a teacher practitioner gave me a unique view. I experienced the challenge of fatigue and its implications for both roles. I continually had to negotiate roles that at many times conflicted. I discovered that the school is not organized to support a research culture and often I felt unsupported and alone.

I found that the physical act of collecting data in notebooks had a profound effect on many of the children who became quite aware of my activity. For some of the children, like Rosa, Sam and Lee, it offered a powerful model of literacy. Rosa brought a notebook of similar design to mine and began to write

notes to herself, sometimes sharing them with me. Lee and Sam also brought in notebooks and imitated my behaviour;

Sam works in a new notebook bought by a friend - a more expensive version of mine - we compare -
 Sam: Let's see the front. Oh 200 pages. Mine has 300 pages. - he has a retractable pencil and draws a picture for Lisa and hands it to her (Field Notes, p. 221)

Throughout the research children would ask me what I was doing in my notebook and I would explain that I was writing down what was happening in the classroom. Susan decided to dub me "Mrs. Scribbles" based on this activity - "Hello Mrs. Scribbles" (Field Notes, p. 51). Other children were intimidated by the notetaking activity once they understood what it meant. Here Lee and Carrie are playing in the sandtable and I stand nearby taking notes;

Lee and Carrie have constructed islands of mud and channels of water
 Lee: Look she is going to write it down.
 Carrie: Yes, she writes down everything I say.
 Later at snack time I walked toward Carrie's table - Carrie talking to Lisa as I approach,
 Carrie: Oh no she'll write it down! (the power of the Teacher and the notebook)
 (Field Notes, p. 50)

Beyond the impact of collecting research, participating in research in my own classroom about my own teaching revealed to me facets of my teaching that might never have become known to me without this powerful vehicle. I learned that my feminist beliefs were not presented in my storytelling. This may demonstrate how difficult it is to let go of our own social conditioning or or it

may be because the stories resonated with me on an uncritical subconscious level. Whatever the reason, my stories presented the children with old gender stereotypes that maintained an outdated social order. My storytelling model of the single English speaking white woman provided a rigid and exclusionary model for a classroom of children from diverse cultural and racial backgrounds. I also learned that my belief in equality was not always lived in my classroom, especially when Evan's experience, a child with Downs Syndrome, is investigated.

As Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle (1990) write: "Participation in teacher research requires considerable effort by innovative and dedicated teachers to remain in their classrooms while carving out opportunities to inquire and reflect on their own practice." (p.8) I discovered that this considerable effort contributed to on going fatigue. This fatigue did not just stem from being a teacher and a researcher but from all of my other subjectivities and their demands as well - the demands of teacher, researcher, mother, wife, daughter, and friend too.

Unfortunately fatigue can have its repercussions and helped to fuel an ongoing battle with self doubt as I worked through my research. This self doubt became a site of struggle in my reflections in my journal throughout the duration of the research. I believe that it influenced my data collection, my storytelling and my view of my research. At one point I wrote in my observer's notes: "I am a grouch today - I am still worn out from yesterday's hectic pace - I see the

children through a filter of an irritable woman and I look at my own research critically - doubting the validity of this research - doubting my effectiveness as a teacher" (Field Notes, p. 107).

Future teachers who wish to conduct research in their classrooms need to be aware of the trap of fatigue. It needs to be considered before the research begins and safeguards need to be established to protect the individual. In retrospect, I might have fared better had I built in small opportunities for self within the time frame of the research. I needed opportunities to be without demands, to be with my family and friends and relax. For each teacher researcher these opportunities for self must be determined individually. However, I believe that my research would have fared better had I acknowledged that fatigue was causing me a problem and found some solutions.

Future teacher researchers need also be aware that acting as both a teacher and a researcher within your own school and your own classroom with your own students can be a very difficult balancing act. I experienced continual conflict throughout the ninety minute free play portion of my morning and afternoon program when I was trying to facilitate child learning and also collect my field notes. Though I was a researcher collecting data, to the office staff, to the other teachers, to my students and their parents I was still a teacher. I still had all of the duties of teacher to fulfill while trying to remain alert to the story activities of the children around me. Teacher demands often intruded on research demands and vice versa. I write tersely in my field notes: "I cannot

keep up with fingerpainting demands and keep notes” or “Penny wants my attention and not me writing - when I write she knows that my attention is diverted and she makes comments to draw me back” (pp. 61, 153,). I expand on this in more detail;

I found trying to enrich the detail of my field notes very disruptive - but it also demonstrated what happens every day in this classroom and how challenging it is to be a Teacher Researcher, how difficult it is to observe one play scenario from beginning to end without disruptions - I see snippets because I must continue my Teacher duties. (Field Notes, p. 56)

Therefore the fatigue and the demands of trying to cope with the tension between teacher and researcher, must be considerations when a teacher is determining to conduct research in her classroom.

In addition future teacher researchers, who decide to investigate their own praxis within their own school, must be aware that a research culture does not presently exist within the school. As JoBeth Allen and Betty Shockley (1996) write the priority in the school is teaching. “Research must be on the teacher’s own time, an added activity rarely valued or even acknowledged by evaluators” (p. 221). Therefore the teacher researcher must walk into the school aware of how limited the support from the office and from other teachers will be. As more teachers take on the role of teacher researcher I hope that this will change and that school will develop a research culture. I hope that future teacher researchers will be able to develop a research dialogue and be physically,

academically and emotionally available to each other. This is especially important if teachers are going to add their important voices to the research.

While I acted as researcher in my classroom I remained a classroom teacher. My storytelling praxis was under scrutiny. What did I learn from this experience about my storytelling? I learned that while the storytelling model was rich in story language, it was very rigid in cultural and gender positionings - a white English speaking woman telling Eurocentric stories that provided a narrow view of the world. To open this storytelling praxis I need to offer more than one role model for the children. Other adults and other children need to be the models too. Other story genres and other languages need to be incorporated as well. Stories need to be sought out that disrupt present life views and roles. And acknowledging the findings of the work of Anne Haas Dyson (1994), Elizabeth Yeoman (1994), and Chas Banks and Bronwyn Davies (1992), children need more than to merely hear stories. They need opportunity to work through the story with their bodies through dramatic play, through discussion, re-enactment and retelling to make the experience rich and meaningful for them. These additional activities would support the needs of the younger four-year old children who continue to expand their knowledge of story model (Benson, 1993; Williamson & Silvern, 1991).

These changes to my storytelling praxis would change the methodology of the research. The power would move away from the exclusionary taperecorder to become a shared power where the taped stories of the five-year olds would

be just as valued as the storied play of the four year olds. This would place as much emphasis on the collection of field notes describing play as on the collection of child story tapes. However it must be noted that unless a third observer were added to the design, this would also add to the difficulty of being the single teacher researcher. Providing a taperecorder for children to go to record their voices takes less supervision than the constant surveillance of the classroom life required by the collection of field notes. Taking field notes was an on-going site of struggle for me because it conflicted with my role as classroom teacher. Thus, opening the research, while making it richer and allowing the opportunity for more four year old voices, would also add further difficulties for the teacher researcher to surmount.

Conclusion:

And so my stories are told. In the classroom I called my little story tribe to me to hear a story in the honest belief that I was involved in an inclusionary praxis, one that provided a magic harmony for all of the children. Through research and analysis the beliefs of inclusion and harmony are revealed to be a sham. The storytelling praxis created insiders and outsiders, by age, by language and by ability. It offered a reinforcement of present day gender and racial inequalities that were re-enacted by the children in their stories. It offered no real site for contestation of these stereotypes or for pursuing different positionings of gender or race. It was not a praxis of possibility but of social maintenance.

These serious shortcomings would have been perpetuated had I not assumed the role of teacher researcher and placed my own storytelling praxis under scrutiny. Without the rigor of personal classroom research I would not have acknowledged the need for rethought or for change of a praxis I love. This points to the need for more research to be conducted in the classroom by classroom teachers. While the role of teacher researcher is strenuous, demanding and mostly unsupported in the school culture, it is a creative and meaningful way for teachers to deeply understand personal praxis - what they live in the classroom each day. It is one of the ways for teachers to make significant change to praxis and to classroom life. It is the one of the ways for classrooms to become sites of possibility for children and for teachers' voices to be heard.

Appendix**A Transcript of Philamondre****(told March 1994, to A.M. Kindergarten)**

This is a once upon a time, long long ago story. And I know some of you like maybe Tim, Mary, and Nina, Joanne and Lee and Gordon have already heard it. We'll find out. Once upon a time a long time ago there was a very poor woman and this woman had four daughters. Now three of her daughters she loved very much but the fourth daughter she did not love at all. And the fourth daughter's name was Philamondre. Now the woman was so poor she had to go from her village to the next village to work every day and she had to leave her daughters all by themselves in the house. And when she would go away she would tell the daughters not to open the door to anyone and she would leave the door locked all day. And when the mother came home at the end of the day to let the girls know that it was her at the door she would sing them a song and this is the song she would sing: "One my darling come to momma, Two my darling come to momma, Three my darling come to momma, Stay Philamondre, stay where you are." And the three girls would come and open the door and hug their mother and Philamondre would stay right where she was working in the kitchen or cleaning in the bathroom and that was how life was in that house.

Until one day, the Devil moved into the neighbourhood and the Devil liked to make trouble for people. And he liked to make mischief and he liked to watch to see where he could make trouble. And one day he watched the mother leave

the house and lock the door and go to work and then at the end of the day he watched the mother come home and knock at the door and sing this song into the keyhole: "One my darling come to momma, Two my darling come to momma, Three my darling come to momma, Stay Philamondre, stay where you are." And the Devil thought of a plan. He thought that he would go to the door and sing the song into the keyhole and then the girls would open the door and he would be able to catch them and make them come and live in his house and make them clean it because it was so dirty.

So the very next day when the mother went off to work and locked the door the Devil got ready to play his trick and after the mother had gone down the road to the next village to work he went up to the door and he knocked on the door (knocking sounds) and he put his Devil voice to the keyhole and he began to sing (in a deep gruff voice) "One my darling come to momma, Two my darling come to momma, Three my darling come to momma, Stay Philamondre, stay where you are." And the girls thought "Who is making that terrible noise outside our house? It is not our mother singing that song." And the girls did not open the door and the Devil was really angry because his trick did not work. And he went into the village and he went to the plumber and he said, "You tighten my voice plumber and if you don't do it I'll play a trick on you." And the plumber was afraid of the Devil and he so tightened the Devil's voice but because he was so frightened of the Devil he tightened it too tight. And the Devil went back to the girls' house and he knocked on the door and he put his voice to the keyhole and

he began to sing the mother's song. (In a high voice) "One my darling come to momma, Two my darling come to momma, Three my darling come to momma, Stay Philamondre, stay where you are." And the girls' said "That is not our mother at the door. That must be a bird up in the tree. Our mother doesn't sing like that." Well the Devil was even angrier this time and he stomped back to the plumber's and he said, "You made my voice too tight! Fix it!" And the plumber was really frightened but he got out his tools and he loosened up the Devil's voice just enough so that this time the Devil went back to the door and knocked on the door and put his voice to the keyhole he sounded like this (mother's voice) "One my darling come to momma, Two my darling come to momma, Three my darling come to momma, Stay Philamondre, stay where you are." And the girls thought that it was their mother and the girls opened the door and the Devil caught three of the girls but he did not catch Philamondre because she stayed right where she was cleaning in the kitchen. And the Devil grabbed the three girls and took them off to his messy house where they would have to clean forever.

Now at the end of the day the mother came home from work. She knocked at the door and put her voice to the keyhole. "One my darling come to momma, Two my darling come to momma, Three my darling come to momma, Stay Philamondre, stay where you are." And no one came to open the door and the mother did not know what was wrong. And she knocked at the door and sang the song into the keyhole again and nobody came to the door and Philamondre

stayed right where she was working in the kitchen. And the mother walked all around the house looking. She walked up and down the streets of the village, calling the names of her daughters. Finally she went back to the house and the door was open and she went into the house and she found Philamondre there and Philamondre told her about the Devil's trick and how the Devil had taken the three daughters away. And the mother was so upset she started to pull out her hair so that it looked like a bird's nest and she went running down the road screaming.

Now Philamondre was not a stupid girl. She decided that she would move to the next village. She packed up all of her clothes into a suitcase and she moved to the next village and she found herself a place to live. And she found herself a place to work. And everyone who met Philamondre really liked her because she was such a nice girl. And one day the prince of the land met Philamondre and he liked her too. And he decided that he wanted to marry her. Now if you marry a prince you become a princess. So Philamondre became Princess Philamondre. It wasn't long after that that the king of the land died and then Princess Philamondre became Queen Philamondre and her husband became King. Now everyone in the land loved Queen Philamondre. Now one day when Queen Philamondre was walking along the walls of her castle she heard the captain of the guard talking to one of the soldiers who worked at the gate. He was telling the captain of the guard how everyday at 4 o'clock a very old, raggedy, skinny woman, with hair like a bird's nest would come to the gates

of the castle and start to sing a strange song, "One my darling come to momma, Two my darling come to momma, Three my darling come to momma, Stay Philamondre, stay where you are." Now Queen Philamondre decided that the next day at 4 o'clock she would go to the gates of the castle. Now sure enough, outside the gates of the castle she saw a very raggedy, skinny old woman with hair like a bird's nest. And when the old woman began to sing the song, Queen Philamondre took her by the hand and brought her into the castle. She washed her and gave her new clothes to wear. She cut her bird's nest hair and combed it and she gave her good food to eat and a place to sleep. And that is where the woman lived for the rest of her days, in the castle with Queen Philamondre. And that is the end of the story.

A Transcript of the Gunnywolf
(Told March 1994 P.M. Kindergarten)

Testing, testing, one, two, three. This is a once upon a time, long time ago story. Once upon a time there was a little girl who lived with her mother and father right at the edge of a deep dark jungle. Now the people of her village did not go into the jungle because they were afraid that they would meet the Gunnywolf. Everyone was afraid of what the Gunnywolf would do to them. One day the little girl's mother and father had to go to the next village to the market and they left the little girl at home all by herself and they told her that she could play inside the house and she could play all around the house outside but she must not go into the jungle or the Gunnywolf might catch her. Well for a long time the little girl played in the house. She played in her room. She played in the kitchen. She played in the livingroom. But after a while she got bored so she went outside. She played all around the house. She skipped around the house. She ran around the house. She jumped around the house. And then she got bored and the little girl stood and looked at the jungle and right at the edge of the jungle she could see something white. (Steve - "White flowers.") White flowers growing at the edge of the jungle. And the little girl, George, decided to pick some white flowers to put on the kitchen table for her mother and father. And while she picked the flowers she sang this song, "Kum qua qui qua kum qua qui qua." And her arms were getting full of white flowers when just ahead of her in the jungle she saw beautiful orange flowers. And she thought I will just go and pick those orange flowers and then I will go right home so the little girl went into

the jungle and she started to pick the orange flowers and while she picked the orange flowers she sang this song, "Kum qua qui qua kum qua qui qua." And her arms were getting very full of white and orange flowers when a little way ahead of her she saw some beautiful pink flowers the colour of Susan's shirt. And she thought I will just go and pick those pink flowers and then I will go home. So she went a little farther into the jungle and picked some pink flowers. "Kum qua qui qua kum qua qui qua." And her arms were bulging with white and orange and pink flowers when ahead of her in the sunshine she saw right in the middle of the jungle some beautiful red flowers. I will just get a few of the red flowers and then I will go right home. So the girl went to the middle of the jungle and began to pick the red flowers. "Kum qua qui qua kum qua qui qua." When up jumped the Gunnywolf! And he was big and he was shaggy and he was dirty and was smelly and he hadn't brushed his teeth in ten days and his breath was so bad! "Little girl" said the Gunnywolf, "Why for you move?" "I no move." said the little girl. "Little girl you sing that guten sweeten song again." "Kum qua qui qua kum qua qui qua." And the Gunnywolf fell asleep and the little girl started to run away and she sounded like this: pit a pat pit a pat pit a pat. But up jumped the Gunnywolf and he ran after her and he sounded like this: hunkercha hunkercha hunkercha. And the Gunnywolf caught the little girl. "Little girl why for you move?" "I no move." said the little girl. "Little girl, you sing that guten sweeten song again." (many children are echoing) "Kum qua qui qua kum qua qui qua." And the Gunnywolf fell asleep again and the little girl ran away again. Pit a pat pit a pat

pit a pat. And the Gunnywolf jumped up and ran after her. "Little girl why for you move?" "I no move." said the little girl. "Little girl you sing that guten sweeten song again." "Kum qua qui qua kum qua qui qua." And the Gunnywol fell asleep again and he started to snore through his big shaggy Gunnywolf nose and the little girl reached over and grabbed his dirty ear and she put her voice right into his ear and she went: "Kum qua qui qua kum qua qui qua." And the little girl went pit a pat pit a pat pit a pat all the way home. And do you think she ever went into that jungle again? (chorus) "No!"

Teacher: Do you think she told her mother and father what she did?

Children: No.

Teacher: Why don't you think she told her mother and father Lucy?

Lucy: Because she was bad.

William: They would put her in jail.

Teacher: Why was it bad that she went into the jungle?

Lucy: Because the Gunnywolf woulda ate her.

Teacher: Did her?

Lucy: No.

Teacher: Was the Gunnywolf really scary Penny?

Penny: ?

Other Children: No.

Teacher: You think he was scary. Why do you think he was scary?

Penny: Because I had a dream about him and he tried to eat me.

Teacher: You had a dream and he tried to eat you. Was the Gunnywolf really that scary to you William?

William: No.

Teacher: Why?

William: I could eat him all up.

Teacher: You could eat him all up. Was he very big?

William: No. He was through the world.

Teacher: Through the world?

William: I could eat him all up.

Teacher: Well, I am going to stop this.

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