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Affect in the Classroom: A Psychoanalytic and Cultural Exploration of Social and Emotional Learning

Clio Stearns
University of New Hampshire, Durham

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AFFECTIVE CLASSROOM LIFE:

A PSYCHOANALYTIC AND CULTURAL EXPLORATION OF
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

By

CLIO STEARNS

A.B. Bryn Mawr College, 2000
M.S.Ed. Bank Street College of Education, 2005

DISSERTATION

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This dissertation has been examined and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D. in Education by:

Dissertation Chair Paula Salvio, Professor of Education

Leslie Couse, Professor of Education

John Hornstein, Affiliate Assistant Professor of Education

Jonathan Silin, Professor of Education

Winston Thompson, Professor of Education

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Original approval signatures are on file with the University of New Hampshire Graduate School.

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ABSTRACT

AFFECT IN THE CLASSROOM:

A PSYCHOANALYTIC AND CULTURAL EXPLORATION OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

by

Clio Stearns

University of New Hampshire, December, 2017

This dissertation explores the contemporary educational construct known as Social and Emotional Learning, or SEL. It investigates how the child, the teacher and the relationship between children and teachers are figured in the SEL-managed classroom. The dissertation also examines the extent to which SEL is produced by, and productive of, culture, as well as what becomes of negative and unruly affect in the context of SEL. The dissertation triangulates data from Critical Discourse Analysis of selected SEL materials, classroom observations in two different public school elementary school classrooms, and interviews with participating teachers. A combination of Kleinian psychoanalysis and affect theory are drawn on as a theoretical frame. The dissertation argues that SEL figures the child as someone feral and in need of external control, which can be provided by the teacher as knowing subject and emotional expert. Further, analysis shows that SEL contributes to and is influenced by an ongoing cultural disavowal of race, class, sex, and the body in the childhood classroom. Finally, the dissertation argues that SEL contributes to a phenomenon called hegemonic positivity, refusing to take seriously the lessons and possibilities constituted within negative affect and conflict.

Chapter One: Introduction

Two Kindergartners Had a Trouble

Lara, the teacher, circulates with her attendance roster while the kindergarten students play at different stations around the room. After the morning announcements from the intercom are over, she turns off the light and the children stop to look at her. "How is everyone doing today?" Lara asks before explaining, "It's time for us to clean up." Luca and Taylor immediately put their reading down and start shelving books in the library corner. Jared adds three more blocks to a tower, watches it collapse, then shrugs, placing blocks methodically into the bin where they belong.

As the class continues to straighten up and head toward the rug for their daily morning meeting, it becomes clear that Bernie and Adam are engaged in a struggle. Bernie has built an

elaborate truck from Legos, and Adam, presumably to clean up efficiently, broke it into several pieces. Now, Bernie is throwing Legos at Adam's chest in a back corner of the room. Lara gravitates toward them.

"Bernie," Lara says after briefly assessing the situation, "would it help to take a minute to rebuild the truck again? Where can you go to rebuild the truck?" Bernie glares toward the floor and kicks at Adam with his right foot. Adam looks toward his teacher, "He keeps throwing things and kicking me and I'm not going to help him and it was clean up time and…"

Lara interrupts, putting one hand on each boy's shoulder. "Hmm" she says, looking at Adam, "where could we go to work out this trouble?" Adam shrugs, and Bernie sits down again, gathering Legos toward him. Lara points to a table in the back of the room. "Adam, I want you to look in Bernie's eyes and ask him to come to the friendship table with you. Let's go over there together." Lara starts walking, "Adam and Bernie are walking over to the friendship table." Both boys stay firmly in the Lego area. "Here they come," Lara continues, "One, two, three…" The boys walk over to the table and sit opposite one another, glaring, mouths closed, with tears streaming down their cheeks.

Lara moves back to the middle of the room, where three other children are visibly crying as they sit in a circle on the meeting rug. "Let's sing our song about planting," she announces, "Adam and Bernie, you can join us. Bernie might take a minute and rebuild something that is broken." Most of the children join their teacher in a song and hand motions about gardening. Bernie sits down with his Legos but does not touch them; instead, he returns to a disposable Cheerios container and begins quickly and noisily slurping. The assistant teacher, Delilah, sits beside him.

The class begins their morning meeting. As is customary, the line leader chooses a daily greeting and a hand motion to send around the circle. When Bernie finishes his cereal, he joins the group and sits right next to Adam. Lara makes observations as the greeting progresses, "I noticed that Jasmine looked into Aiden's eyes when she greeted him… I noticed that Rodrick used his smile to show how much he liked the feeling of being greeted." When it becomes Bernie's turn, he glares at Adam and only mumbles a greeting. Lara asks, "Did you feel like you got greeted Adam?" Adam nods.

The children elaborately greet the whole class at once, then Delilah. Lara asks me, "Clio, would you feel comfortable if we greeted you?" Startled, I nod, and the children shout a greeting my way. Then, Lara turns back to the class and says in a hushed tone, "I just want to say that this morning at warm up, two kindergartners had… well, they had a trouble. I have trouble too, you know. We all do. It's part of life. And these two kindergarten kids knew how to fix their trouble. And they moved on with their day." She pauses, then gestures toward the three guidelines posted on the front classroom wall, "What guideline are these two kids following? Elyse?"

Elyse promptly answers, "Taking care of others." Lara nods and continues, "And those two people feel really good now. They feel good because they followed that guideline and they moved on with their day. Do either one of those people want to say who they are by raising a hand?" There is a silent pause while the whole class turns to look at Bernie and Adam. The boys, for their part, look only into their laps. Adam has rolled a pants leg up and is picking mightily at a large scab, and Bernie rocks subtly back and forth in place. "Well," Lara continues, "I just noticed them and I was proud of them."

Lara asks Delilah to pass out snack while she explains the game the class will play together next.

This anecdote took place in a public school kindergarten classroom using the Responsive Classroom (RC) approach to Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). The RC approach maintains that classrooms run best when children are constantly reminded of the three basic guidelines that they agree to at the beginning of the year and when the teacher guides them to a specific location in the classroom for conflict resolution (Responsive Classroom, 2016). Underlying these stipulations are some normative assumptions: namely, the classroom ought to run smoothly and with a veneer of management, conflicts ought to be neatly and quickly resolved, and children ought to move through school in "a safe and joyful learning community" that "sets a positive tone for learning" (2016).

RC is not alone in perpetuating these culturally scripted assumptions about the relationship between affect and learning, the need for positivity, safety, and comfort, and the prioritization of management and regulation. The Collaborative Association for Social Emotional Learning defines the phenomenon it propagates as "the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (CASEL, 2016). That the word "positive' is used twice in this definition should not go unnoticed, nor should the implication that there is, in fact, a reified skill set that will lead to understanding and management of emotional life.

Lara, who has been teaching kindergarten for fifteen years and who considers her RC training "life altering," works hard to establish comfort in her classroom. Almost every day, she

draws her students' attention to their three guidelines, "Take care of yourself. Take care of others. Take care of our classroom and materials." She runs a regular morning meeting according to the routinized RC formula: first a greeting, then a game, and then a group reading and discussion of the morning message. Adhering to these routines and guidelines does help Lara's classroom, where I spent time running a pilot study and developing research questions for this dissertation, run smoothly. At the same time, I had questions about the SEL-imbued language Lara so consistently used, particularly around children's feelings. Does Adam, in fact, feel "greeted?" Does Bernie consider that he has had a chance to rebuild what, for him, was broken? Do the boys "feel good" because they ostensibly followed the guideline? What happens to learning and relationships when conflicts are relegated to the friendship table, where they are neatly and efficiently sealed up, and children are explicitly instructed in what they should or even do feel?

I chose this anecdote to open the paper not because what happened between Bernie and Adam was remarkable- my pilot observations in the kindergarten revealed rife and continuous conflict, fury and aggression- but because Lara's brief acknowledgement that "we all do" have trouble, that it is "part of life" indicates something about the struggle between the significance of conflict, challenge, excitement, anger, and all that is unruly in the self, and the predilection toward prescribing management, regulation, and positivity as intractable necessities in learning and mutual coexistence.

Understanding SEL

SEL is a popular topic in education today. It is important to distinguish between that phenomenon, whose nature and history will be described in detail, and the concept of social learning or emotional learning, broadly understood as any learning (with or without explicit teaching) about the self, interactions with others, internal experiences, feelings, and what it

means to share space, time and resources with an other. Because many proponents of SEL ostensibly the consider the phenomenon and the concept as one and the same, this can be a tricky distinction to draw.

Schools across the country are adopting SEL approaches and curricula, and states are establishing standards and metrics for unifying work around SEL (Blad, 2016). Anecdotally, when I describe my dissertation topic to teachers and parents as "Social and Emotional Learning," I receive responses like "oh, that's a hot topic!" or "it seems like all schools are trying to figure out how to do that right these days." The quest to get it right, to corner the market on SEL, is an important part of the phenomenon's narrative. Yet this dissertation is not a 'what works' study, nor is it a philosophical explication of SEL. Rather, this study offers an empirically based exploration of SEL's underlying principles and cultural etiology, and eventually argues for some transformation in how schools think about children's affective and interpersonal worlds.

Usually, research that offers critique also offers alternatives. This dissertation will not offer an alternative model for SEL, because the study critiques not simply one SEL curriculum or toolkit, but the underlying assumptions of SEL. Writing about what it means to ethically encounter the other in an educational context, Todd (2003) describes, "it is really the affective, sensible dimensions of that encounter that escape such codification" (p. 71). Todd writes about higher education and, specifically, about teacher education with a social justice orientation, but her interest in the interplay between affect and discomfiting social encounters helps explain why there is no ethical alternative within SEL. "Ambiguity," she writes, "and the transcendence that it implies, depicts a being-for that moves beyond the acquisition of knowledge as the purpose of communication" (p. 80). The significance of ambiguity in affective experience and knowledge

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makes a critique of SEL somewhat different from critiques of curriculum that purport not to touch on affect. SEL operates with the assumptions that emotion can be taught and learned, that there are right and wrong ways to feel, and that all of this can be codified, documented in language, bought and sold. To offer an alternative would be to participate in this codification only via subtle, maybe helpful alterations. Instead, as an alternative, the dissertation will recommend eradicating SEL entirely in favor of looking toward, learning from, more deeply understanding, and honoring the social and emotional learning that happens all the time in schools.

In offering a nuanced exploration of SEL, I also hope to avoid reifying a split, which is the psychodynamic rendering of a simplistic worldview in which there are purely good and purely bad objects (eg. Steiner, 1987). And in fact it is not the case that SEL is completely bad. I will work to present SEL as a transitional phenomenon, one that works to disrupt contemporary cultural understandings of school as sites of asocial, unemotional academic instruction. I will further argue that the problems with SEL can, if understood properly, function as catalysts for creativity, curiosity, and resistance in education. In many schools, including the one where Lara teaches, it is difficult to carve out time dedicated to work around children's social and emotional worlds. This makes it doubly important that such time be considered carefully. Hoffman (2009), one of few to have systematically critiqued any aspect of SEL, writes, "Although few would disagree with the goal of having a positive emotional climate in their classrooms, and in principle there is nothing wrong with the idea of pursuing success, the larger question concerns what the consequences are for human relationships when the focus is on behavioral and cognitive skills and when emotion is valued as a means to success rather than a good in itself" (539). This quote shows that there is in fact potential for movement in SEL even if many of its underlying

assumptions are problematic. At the same time, I am perhaps one of the few who disagrees with the goal Hoffman names, and the dissertation is theoretically oriented around showing the significance of this disagreement.

Why I Came to this Study

Like many researchers, I have reflected copiously on what drew me to this particular dissertation topic. As Mruck and Breuer (2003) point out, the social sciences struggle with the historical burden "to exclude the researcher's subjectivity" in the name of achieving scientific status. On the other hand, feminist theorists have long maintained that research cannot be depersonalized, and the thoughts, feelings and prior experiences of the researcher will inevitably (and not necessarily problematically) impact findings and interpretation (eg. Lather, 1991). My subjectivity as it relates to this research is further complicated by my strong belief in the unconscious and the essential impossibility of fully understanding myself and what motivates me to conduct this study.

I come from a family with a long and complicated history of mental illness, suicide and also work in the mental health professions. My mother's diagnosis of bipolar disorder and her struggles with severe depression and manic episodes over the course of my childhood and adult life have ineffably colored my interest in negative affect and its meaning. These experiences, as well as my own intermittent struggles with depression, make me terrified of sadness, anger and despair, yet they also help me see this terror as part of a cultural displacement of a potentially aesthetic, political and creative part of development and continual existence. Like many SEL proponents, perhaps, I fear what will happen if we let children be sad and angry, but I also long to understand precisely what this fear circumvents. Even this rather tidy paragraph betrays my desire to tie this aspect of the narrative up neatly and render it explained and explanatory.

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My father, for his part, seems to share my interest in affect, though he does not really talk about it. He has authored multiple books on the history of emotions: jealousy, happiness (I copy edited that one as a teenager), anger (co-authored with my mother). I like to think that he is seeking answers similar to the ones I am looking for in these pages, answers to why he told us so often to "buck up," to why he lost his mother mysteriously when he was nine and why he has so often transiently lost each of his children, but his chin is up and he does not linger in these conversations, so I can only speculate. At any rate, my fantasy remains that this is a scholarly and personal interest we share.

It is also as a mother of two young children that I am interested in SEL. Over the course of my daughter's three years in public school, I have witnessed the impact of censorial language and rigid emotional and behavior expectations on her as well as her peers. I see a connection between the coercive repression of bad feelings and their virulent sustenance and damaging groundswell in economic and political arenas. Perhaps more importantly, watching my children become angry- even feral and monstrous- on a frequent basis as I conduct this work contributes to both my understanding of a sociocultural desire to repress these kinds of affect as well as the tremendous relational closeness and creativity that emerge as a result of allowing them to continue. It is a real dilemma, the desire to control the other situated alongside the knowledge that the other evades control.

My identity as a former elementary school teacher also influences my work. My earliest teaching experiences were in Russia, where I found a different approach to emotion from any I had ever previously experienced. "A smile," I was often told by friends there, "is American. A smile is a sign of a fool." While teaching fourth and fifth grade in New York City, I was elaborately trained- to great cost on the part of my not too affluent school- in Responsive

Classroom. My own negative reaction to this training was unusual among my teacher peers, and part of the challenge of this study is to understand what it is that many teachers, students and families love about SEL when it has seemed instinctively problematic to me from my earliest encounters.

Donald Trump's election as president occurred one month before I defended my proposal for this dissertation, and he was inaugurated while I was beginning my observations. My outlook on the interplay between politics, affective life, and the education of children has never been optimistic, but it has reached a nadir during the time I spent doing this work. The election and its fallout have, for better or for worse, made it feel urgent to underscore the aspects of my work that are political and oriented toward justice, and this interpretive lens altered the observations I made, particularly in Samantha's classroom.

Finally, I am five years into a psychoanalytic treatment that not only offers me insight into myself and my motivations but gives me an intimate understanding of concepts like transference, countertransference, and the unconscious in terms of how they inform experiences and encounters. I cannot pretend objectivity about psychoanalytic theory, since I believe that its outgrowth in clinical practice has enriched my life and helped me regain lost curiosity and the capacity for critical thought. At the same time, my experience as an analytic patient has helped me become more measured and reasonable in my evaluations. I am aware that sometimes I argue and provoke because doing so is enlivening for me, and this understanding will help me establish a less dramatic but more meaningful and ambivalent stance in observation and interpretation.

It is also important for me to acknowledge the assumptions about children and emotion that I bring. These normative assumptions helped me develop my pilot study and research questions, and they inform my interpretation of results:

*One individual should not dictate to another what the other is feeling.

*Emotions are always permissible.

*Teachers and curricula should strive for consciousness and honesty when it comes to what they want from children.

*Social and emotional existence should be dissociated from instruction in compliance.

Three Windows on SEL

This dissertation aims to develop a well-rounded, valid, and adequately complicated view of SEL. To that end, I will triangulate data from three different sources: Critical Discourse Analysis of SEL materials, observations of children in SEL-managed classrooms, and phenomenologically informed interviews with participating teachers. The purpose of triangulation is traditionally seen as lending validity to research by drawing from a variety of methodologies, all oriented toward the same findings (Holtzhausen, 2001). Though I find this framework laudable, I am more interested in what Lather (2007) describes in terms of complicated inquiry "to constrain our interpretive will to power, saving us from narcissism and its melancholy through the very otherness that cannot be exhausted by us" (p. 10). Referring to the need not for simplified validity but for complex and layered research narratives, Lather describes how her articulation "foreground(s) the limits and necessary misfirings of a project, problematizing the researcher as 'the one who knows' " (p. 11). To this end, I triangulate data

less to present a comprehensive, overarching narrative about SEL than to show the impossibility of just that sort of linear tidiness when it comes to descriptions of affect in learning.

The research questions addressed by this dissertation, and via the triangulation described above, are:

1. How does SEL discourse and implementation situate and influence the child, the teacher, and their relationship to one another?

This question grows out of a conviction that while SEL can be historically situated in a neoliberal epoch that privileges compliance, control, and the commodification of emotion and learning, it also grows out of the influence of developmental psychology and the learning sciences on education. Some of the earliest proponents of SEL based their arguments on the premise that "the world is a rapidly changing and increasingly dangerous place, requiring stronger networks of support than ever, particularly at transitional stages" (Matthews, 1998). This iteration of childhood, as well as adolescence, positions the child as feral, frightening and in need of control, and it accepts as unarguable the idea that "the world" is, in some monolithic sense, newly and increasingly dangerous. How, precisely, is the child figured in this framework? What is the child for SEL? On a related note, what is the teacher under SEL? How do the child and the teacher relate to one another, and what about this relationship is SEL trying to manage or prevent?

2. What aspects of culture does SEL represent and reinforce?

My literature review presents numerous examples of peer-reviewed SEL program effectiveness studies claiming that children in SEL-based classrooms not only behave in a prosocial way but actually feel better about themselves and about school. At the same time, the

field of affect theory, emerging out of literary criticism and psychology, takes an interest in how emotion gets categorized, symbolized, explicitly treated and (mis)understood in culture and scholarship. This dissertation puts affect studies and psychoanalysis into conversation with SEL, exploring which parts of SEL discourse and implementation grow out of broader cultural movements as well as how these cultural turns get explicitly represented in the educational setting. The classroom observations in this dissertation are oriented toward illustrating precisely how this interplay among culture, curriculum and the child looks on a daily basis.

3. How do SEL programs influence teachers and children when it comes to handling conflicts, negative and otherwise unruly feelings, or difficult issues that come up as part of classroom life?

This research question grows out of a combination of the thoughts that came up repeatedly during my pilot study and the issues I raised in my subjectivity statement. Halberstam (2011) argues that "…positive thinking is a North American affliction… that emerges out of a combination of American exceptionalism and a desire to believe that success happens to good people and failure is just a consequence of a bad attitude rather than structural conditions. Positive thinking is offered up in the U.S. as a cure or cancer, a path to untold riches, and a surefire way to engineer your own success" (p. 3). In the midst of this cultural and historical phenomenon, it becomes important to consider what SEL offers teachers and children faced with the reality of negative affect, unruly internal experiences, and conflicts that do not easily resolve. This question speaks to the potential significance of negative and unruly experiences for learning, partly in the sense of sustaining excitement and curiosity necessary for learning about codified subject matter, and partly in the sense of ongoing learning about the self in relation to others. Further, wondering about what becomes of negative affect opens questions regarding the

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tension between compliance and resistance. If Bernie and Adam were permitted to stay with

their anger, what might they and their classmates be liberated to push back against? What form

might this resistance take?

Why Now?

Educational thinkers have dealt with the significance of emotion at least since Plato and

Aristotle, who worked respectively with ideas about the need to regulate emotion to hone

curiosity appropriately and the possibility that emotional education is part of character education,

leading to moral behavior (Kristjannson, 2006). However, SEL as a codified phenomenon did

not really come into existence until the mid-1990s. Since then, it has gained traction quickly in

scholarly and practitioner circles. The CASEL clearinghouse alone identifies 23 separate,

marketed SEL programs for early childhood and childhood classrooms, and many states, districts

and universities develop their own toolkits, institutes and curricula propagating SEL (CASEL,

2016; Blad, 2016). At least 92 peer-reviewed scholarly articles, uncritical of SEL, have been

published since 1998. Why this sharp uptick in interest in SEL over the last two decades?

Neoliberalism

First, SEL discourse and practice grow out of neoliberalism, with its twin emphases on

individual narratives of success and marketplace control of human behavior. Moss (2014)

declares, "So loud, so confident, so influential has the story of neoliberalism become… that it is

easy to forget there is nothing innate or essential, natural or neutral about it" (p. 67). This

explanation helps make sense of why SEL has been accepted so uncritically by both practitioner

and scholarly communities in education. Indeed, Lippman (2011) references the neoliberal

subject, someone who is "recruited to or align(s) themselves with education markets and

privatization" (p. 218). The neoliberal subject participates in a "depoliticized discourse" (p.

219), like the compliant, regulated child who manifests cheeriness, self-control and satisfaction.

Moss (2014) further explains how "important to neoliberalism's identity… are individualization and the primacy of individual choice, with freedom consisting of the unfettered exercise of such choice" (p. 64). SEL emphasizes choice and individualism repeatedly, deemphasizing collectivity and relationality in the process.

Further, under neoliberalism, "the idea of contract- with its insistence on exchange, pre-specification, compliance, monitoring and accountability- is also pervasive, defining all relationships and spelling out agreed inputs and expected outputs" (p. 65). In some sense, SEL is a meta-contract, delineating how children's behaviors and relationships ought to work and preparing children to take on economic roles that will ultimately require compliance, regulation, and positivity.

The footprint of neoliberalism is a hard one to avoid. Some popular discourses within SEL, for instance, frame frustration and failure as necessary pathways to productivity. Angela Duckworth's "grit" and Carol Dweck's "growth mindset," both ubiquitous right now in schools, are just a few iterations of this appropriation of negative affect. Keeping in mind the reach of neoliberalism, this dissertation works toward a theory of affective classroom life that is not unproductive but a-productive. Staying with, for instance, anger is not oriented (toward learning, growth and progress), but instead disoriented, disorienting, but enlivening.

A number of recent studies (eg. Bednar, 2017; Powerful Youth, Powerful Communities, 2017; Preparing Youth to Thrive, 2017; Racial Equity Tools, 2017) regarding community organizing and political mobilization among young people rely on the possibility that political action teaches SEL skills like self-regulation, motivation, and positive attitudes. Organizations cite this work in an effort to get more community organizing programming into schools. There are many reasons to bring opportunities for political action and community organizing into

schools, but the trend to take up this particular reasoning illustrates the pressure even among social justice advocates to buy into a neoliberal narrative of instrumentalism and productivity.

The Learning Sciences

The second, related explanation for SEL's rise has to do with the increasing significance of cognitive psychology, positive psychology, and the learning sciences more broadly in education. Taubman (2012) shows how beginning in the 1980s and under the "historical amnesia" that comes with education's "aligning itself with and aspiring to the perceived status of science and medicine" (p. 157), pursuit of freedom, willingness to truck with madness, excitement and aggression, and the sense of learning as related to curiosity and exploration became obscured. He describes how "Emotional life has been shuttled off to the guidance counselor or social worker. We are so fearful of emotional disturbances that any sign… that a student might feel violent toward him or herself or others sends us running to the experts" (p. 156). Indeed, many SEL programs and toolkits feature recommendations placing the onus of expertise on the guidance counselor or school psychologist, positioning teachers as gatekeepers whose work with the explicit SEL curriculum or approach empowers them to pinpoint students who respond poorly to instruction in positivity and self-regulation.

It is also important to examine the role of the learning sciences in prompting SEL's definition of childhood. Taubman (2009) explains that "the learning sciences attend to the interests of students insofar as these will contribute to or predict learning" (p. 190). He explains how the hegemony of measurable outcomes, personified by the internalization of audit culture, figures both student and teacher as non-agentive, instrumental characters oriented toward a definitive end. "Such a definition of learning," he writes, "cannot tolerate questions that have no final

answers, or speculations that raise further questions or that… make no sense within pre-established rules" (193).

In fact, it was Goleman's 1996 popularization of Salavey and Mayer's 1990 framework for Emotional Intelligence, spawned respectively by Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, that initially precipitated SEL. While Chapter 2 provides a literature review that explicates this link more clearly, it is important here to note that the concept of emotional intelligence, sometimes called EI or EQ, did not exist before 1990 and was initially defined as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salavey and Mayer, 1990, p. 189). This explicitly instrumentalist view of emotion is rooted in a learning sciences and behaviorist framework that goes unquestioned in the subsequent, more popularly oriented literature. Emotions exist that they may be utilized, and "…positive emotion may alter memory organization so that cognitive material is better integrated" (p. 198). Salavey and Mayer argue that "the construct of emotional intelligence is of heuristic value in drawing together literatures that are often left unintegrated" (p. 200). In fact, though, they draw together cognitive psychology, education, positive ego psychology, and, without saying so, economics. They leave out, for instance, philosophy, literary theory, history, and humanist branches of psychology. Their theory reifies the possibility of "deficits in emotional intelligence," arguing that "people who do not learn to regulate their own emotions become slaves to them" (p. 201). Though Salavey and Mayer's work is rarely cited by SEL proponents, who draw instead on journalist Daniel Goleman's lucrative popularization of their theory, I dwell on this article here because its firm yet unacknowledged roots in a learning sciences and cognitivist framework contribute to historicizing SEL.

The Role of Culture

While culture cannot be understood separately from politics and science, it is important to think about the specifically cultural dimensions of affect and emotion that SEL aligns with. Affect theorists, building on the work of psychologist Silvan Tomkins, have shown in recent years that affect and emotion are both cultural phenomena and that positive emotions in particular are culturally mandated.

The field of affect theory emerges out of literary criticism and psychology, taking an interest in how emotion gets categorized, symbolized, explicitly treated and (mis)understood in culture and scholarship. Ahmed (2004) describes affect theory in terms of the attribution of feelings to objects, the residence of feelings within subjects, and the contagion of emotion on both personal and individual levels. She later (2010) describes the affective turn in cultural studies as "tak(ing)… 'feelings' as the starting point" toward developing more nuanced understandings of culture and relationships (p. 14). Sedgwick (2003) considers affect as a performative representation of emotion and argues that it is through "explicit performative utterances" that we come to understand affect, which simultaneously performs and produces emotion (p. 24). While resisting a pseudo-empirical psychology that constructs discrete affective categories, Sedgwick encourages readers to attend to "the formidably rich phenomenology of emotions" in even the most problematically scientist work (p. 94). This reminder of the ubiquity of affect and its cascading effects is relevant to educational studies, implying that even scholarship void of explicit mention of affect is in fact rife with its expression, performance and sequelae.

Many leading writers in affect theory take up the prominence of negative emotions. Ngai (2005) calls attention to what she calls "ugly feelings," which "can be described as dysphoric or

experientially negative, in the sense that they evoke pain or displeasure" (p. 11). Berlant (2011) analyzes affect as related to "cruel optimism" which "exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing" (p. 1). Cvetkovich (2012) and others involved in the Public Feelings Project take up the notion that depression is political, an affective outgrowth of neoliberalism, racism, and socioeconomic inequity. These scholars, among others, point to a long cultural tradition of glossing over the negative and wonder what can be learned culturally, socially, and politically from attending to what feels bad. Notable exceptions include Ahmed's (2010) work, which takes up happiness as an affective starting point, and the contributions of Stewart (2007), which attempt to remove affect from overtly political or even sociocultural constructs, seeing it instead as a poetic and ethnographic outgrowth of ordinary life.

In general, the cultural frameworks that affect theorists point to also help account for the rise and success of SEL. Though I did not begin this dissertation with a cultural studies perspective in mind, my observations and interviews raised persistent questions about the extent to which SEL and the teachers enacting it (as well as, to possibly a lesser extent, the children involved in it) are informed by cultural pressures to express and even experience emotion in specific ways. Cultural prescriptions for happiness and tidiness, which have strengthened over the last century, help explain SEL as something transcending individual human actions. The cultural explanation is meta-human, raising knotty questions about whether SEL might simply be the codification of something that exists anyway in education because it exists in culture.

Changing the Frame

This dissertation relies in part on a psychoanalytic theoretical frame. Psychoanalysis is a marginalized theory in educational studies, and education and psychoanalysis have a mutual history fraught with controversy (Taubman, 2012). The website of the International

Psychoanalytical Association (2014) explains, "Psychoanalysis is both a theory of the human mind and a therapeutic practice… a treatment method for psychic problems… a method of research, and… a way of viewing cultural and social phenomena." Psychoanalysis has also put forth theories of development that rely primarily on affective and psychosexual stages, sometimes to the exclusion of or taking priority over cognition. Education has for its part tended to rely on understandings of knowledge that rely more readily on conscious awareness and experience and on cognition and morality more than affect (eg. Jackson, 2014). Obviously, this is an extremely general understanding, but it is a fruitful one for comprehending why psychoanalysis and educational discourse have often come into conflict.

In spite of what is essentially an absence of psychoanalytic influence in educational policy and formal educational settings, though, there is a subset of educational scholarship, particularly in curriculum theory, that draws heavily on psychoanalytic theory to understand how curriculum works, what learning is, and how students and teachers might interact in educational settings (eg. Britzman, 2009, 2011; Farley, 2009, 2011; Salvio, 2006, 2009, 2013). This line of scholarship also draws on psychoanalysis to help establish a nuanced and non-linear framework for development that might trouble solely cognitively oriented iterations of stage theory (Silin, 1996).

In working with psychoanalysis as a major part of my theoretical framework, I hope to join the chorus of scholars who believe that it offers insight into affective classroom life that potentially moves emotion out of a neoliberal domain and away from the grip of the learning sciences as well as culturally hegemonic demands for positivity and conflict resolution. Yet I acknowledge that psychoanalysis is a minority view at best and, at worst, a dying field (Webster, 2011; Grunbaum, 1984). My literature review offers a careful explication of the psychoanalytic

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ideas I work with precisely to render them authentic and relevant, but I understand that the mainstream uptake of psychoanalysis in educational discourse is an improbable outcome.

Throughout this dissertation, I return frequently to Kleinian psychoanalysis and its related ethics. Though psychoanalyst Melanie Klein is only infrequently referenced in educational discourse, Spillius (1998) shows how "in her earliest work Klein was very much interested in the epistemopophilic instinct and in the way children's anxieties interfered with their intellectual curiosity" (p. 153). My reading of Klein is an orthodox one, though I am more interested than some in the potential political dimensions of her work. I consider Klein a fundamentally educational thinker, since much of her corpus deals precisely with the desire to know or not know and the ways that affect is intertwined with learning. Here, however, it is crucial to emphasize a definition of learning that turns inward at least as much as outward; learning, in Kleinian analysis, means internal integrity, attentiveness to or curiosity about self and other and the capacity to symbolize. I draw on Bion, Joseph and Segal, three key Kleinian theorists whose ideas are expanded in the literature review, to respectively illustrate this definition. These thinkers' work contributes to theorizing SEL while constructing an alternative, though less concrete, vision for the relationship among social lives, emotional lives and learning.

Organization

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. Chapter two is a bipartite literature review. Here, I begin by outlining the academic literature on SEL and showing how SEL has evolved since its inception. I show the importance of definitional articles, propagandist work, program evaluations, and SEL literature oriented specifically toward academic achievement. I also review the few extant critiques of SEL, which the dissertation will draw on but also differentiate from in offering an articulated alternative and using triangulated, qualitative data to theorize SEL

broadly. The second part of the literature review looks at scholarship bringing psychoanalysis into conversation with education. Here, I define key psychoanalytic concepts and get into detail about the ways Klein's work has been used and misappropriated in curriculum theory. This portion of the literature review avoids repetition of the concepts already explicated above, focusing instead on fundamental psychoanalytic ideas and their history in relation to educational scholarship.

Chapter three outlines the methods for the empirical portion of the dissertation. I explain my decision to triangulate data from critical discourse analysis, observation, and phenomenologically informed teacher interviews. I also explain the protocols used in data collection and the assumptions that the data collection processes disrupted for me. Finally, I offer a detailed overview of the ethical precepts I maintained research involving children.

The following three chapters present results from the three data sources I used. Chapter four offers results of the Critical Discourse Analysis of SEL materials. Chapter five presents results from my classroom observations, and chapter six shows the results of the interviews I conducted with participating teachers.

In Chapter seven, I analyze and discuss the results from the preceding three chapters. This chapter constitutes the most substantive interpretive section of this dissertation. Finally, chapter eight offers my conclusion in the form of suggestions for readers, summary ideas, and implications and questions for future research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

While theoretical information is important as a background to this project in a variety of ways, two specific areas of literature must be reviewed to provide adequate grounding. This literature review focuses first on the research around SEL, most of which has been published since 1996, and then on scholarship pertaining to psychoanalysis in education. Though this review examines these areas discretely, the remainder of the dissertation will show how they can in fact be fruitfully intertwined.

Social and Emotional Learning: A Literature Review

I conducted a literature search using the databases Academic Search Premier, Google Scholar, Ebsco and ERIC. Searching with the keywords "social emotional learning," I found 491 articles. After reviewing these abstracts, I determined that 96 of the articles were relevant to the present study. A detailed review of these articles reveals a historiography of SEL and its status in educational discourse. Though many of the articles have more than one function, they

can generally be categorized into five different groups. These groups are: definitional pieces, promotional works, program evaluations, instructions or advice for practitioners, and critiques. Many of the pieces, especially since 2005, also include sections on research methodology, with suggestions for scholars aiming to contribute to the academic conversation around SEL. It is noteworthy that out of 96 articles, only six critiqued any of the premises underlying SEL. This literature review is organized around the categories denoted above.

Definitional Articles

Social and emotional learning are alluded to in educational literature beginning at least in the late 1960s, especially in works that focus on school violence and special education. The middle of the twentieth century saw the rise of the mental hygiene movement; during this time, character education was on the rise and schools were increasingly seen as sites for monitoring students' mental wellness and emotional health (Taubman, 2012). However, it was not until journalist Daniel Goleman (1995) codified the concept of "emotional intelligence" that SEL became discussed expressly in the educational context. Goleman, borrowing from and extending Gardner's (1991) theory of multiple intelligences, wrote a best-selling book based on the idea that IQ is an excessively limited version of intelligence and that, in fact, an individual's emotional intelligence (abbreviated alternately as EI or EQ) is paramount to her success. Goleman breaks EQ into the following components: self awareness, self regulation, internal motivation, empathy, and social skills. His book continues to be cited by SEL proponents in both scholarly and popular works, and he writes on his website, "Most gratifying for me has been how ardently the concept has been embraced by educators, in the form of programs in social and emotional learning or SEL… the active ingredient in programs that enhance children's learning while preventing problems such as violence" (Goleman, 2016).

Indeed, the concept of EQ is foundational to SEL programming and discourse, and subsequent to Goleman's initial publication, there was a proliferation in educational literature of articles attempting to define SEL and EQ as they relate to work in schools. This section offers a close examination of definitional pieces, with the aim of solidifying both an understanding of what SEL is to its proponents and how it positions the work of children, teachers and schools.

One of the chief proponents and theorists of SEL from its inception has been Maurice Elias, a psychologist who defines his work in terms of "the development of positive, constructive life paths for children and youth" (2016). Elias' early scholarship characterizes SEL as "the process through which children and adults develop the skills, attitudes and values necessary to acquire social emotional competence" (1997, p. 6). Like Goleman, Elias divides his concept of SEL into discrete domains, which include appropriate expression of feelings, the ability to self-regulate emotion and problem-solve, the capacity to negotiate interpersonal conflicts, and the valuation of social norms. Though Elias values these capacities as normative educational goals, he does not define them explicitly or explain what constitutes appropriate expression or a social norm that ought to be valued.

In 1994, Elias and several other SEL proponents founded CASEL, the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning. Graczyk (2000) explains CASEL's underlying goals as advancing SEL as a science and simultaneously translating its underlying theory into practice. CASEL saw and continues to see the focus of SEL as problem solving and conflict resolution, with parallel interests in drug prevention, enhancement of student health and well-being, and academic achievement. Funded by the US Department of Education, the Surdna Foundation, and the Joseph P. Kennedy foundation, among others, CASEL takes on program review related to SEL as well as, increasingly, research on educational outcomes (Graczyk, 2000, p. 6).

As SEL became more ubiquitous, increasing numbers of scholars began writing about it for a practitioner audience, often still with a definitional purpose. Elksnin and Elksnin (2003) explain for a teacher audience that SEL ought to be oriented toward teaching educators and students the precept that "feelings cue me to thoughtful action" (p. 65). These scholars consider the purpose of SEL as teaching students to become "effective problem solvers" (p. 68). Norris (2003) also writes for a practitioner audience, arguing that SEL has important implications specifically for classroom management. The idea behind SEL overall, Norris argues, is to reduce negative interactions in the classroom, whether among students or between children and adults. Hemmeter, Ostrosky, and Fox (2006) suggest that teachers must understand that SEL will lead to more positive relationships in the school setting. SEL according to these scholars means explicit teaching of social and emotional skills as well as the development of necessary interventions in early childhood settings.

Cohen (2006), a theorist cited ubiquitously in contemporary SEL discourse, also offers a detailed definition of SEL and its principles. Cohen argues that SEL responds to what he sees as a pervasive and excessive focus in schools on academic goals alone; educational goals, he believes, should be structured so as to focus on emotions as well as academics. Importantly, when Cohen refers to this excess in academic focus, he describes policy initiatives rather than classroom practice. Cohen argues that the dispositions taught by SEL are human rights and necessary for participation in a democracy. Essential SEL skills and dispositions according to Cohen are the "ability to listen to ourselves and others… responsibility or the inclination to respond to others in appropriate ways… appreciation of and inclination toward involvement with social justice… inclination to serve others and participate in acts of good will…

collaborative capacities… communicative abilities… abilities to be flexible problem solvers" (p. 209).

Of the theorists attempting to define SEL, however, Cohen places perhaps the greatest emphasis on social or political participation. He differentiates SEL from character education by explaining that instead of focusing on honesty and doing good, SEL teaches to individual competencies and behaviors which will presumably and eventually lead to greater democratic participation. He also argues that SEL will lead to "prevention of more serious behavior problems… of at-risk individuals" (p. 211). According to Cohen, more widespread SEL programming and better relationships among educators and sympathetic mental health professionals will lead to improvements in school climate that will in turn help students learn more and feel safer in school. They will also lead to improvements in relationships between schools and families, particularly if the same conflict resolution skills used in school are also taught to parents. Indeed, Cohen describes the SEL-oriented school and educator as responsible for spreading the precepts of SEL beyond the school building by teaching them to families and introducing them into community life.

Zins (2007) and Zins and Elias (2007) attempt to bring what they call a "scientific" lens to understanding SEL and how it works. Zins posits SEL primarily as an intervention framework; like Cohen, he faults schools for a narrow academic focus and aims to examine SEL as related to a broader measure of scholastic success that includes behavior and attitudes as well as academic performance. Zins' definition of SEL includes "self awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self management, (and) relationship management" (p. 195). The language of "management" is important to Zins, conveying a focus on individual responsibility and a high level of disciplined regulation of self and other. He argues that a focus on SEL within

a school "can enable students to become knowledgeable, responsible, caring, productive, nonviolent, ethical and contributing members of society" (p. 196). A sound instructional approach to SEL, Zins explains, must have theoretical grounding but teach the applicability of SEL to daily life and "build attachment to school through caring, engaging, interactive, cooperative classroom and school-wide practices" (p. 198). Like Cohen, then, Zins does not see SEL as specific to the school setting, but portrays it as something that can be taught in schools toward the betterment of society.

Overall, definitional papers attempt to contextualize SEL in theoretical work rooted in intelligence theory and other theories of learning. Key concepts defining SEL are the centrality of self awareness, the import of appropriate interactions and behaviors, the sense of safety in and positive attitude toward the school environment, the capacity to self-regulate, the ability to express feelings in words, and the capacity to resolve conflicts and solve problems. The fact that these are defining concepts does not, however, indicate that the concepts themselves are clearly defined.

Promotional Articles
Another subset of scholarship around SEL, related to the definitional pieces but with a more obvious slant, explicitly argues for the merits of SEL. These pieces tend to emphasize the various kinds of good wrought by SEL, oriented toward convincing educators, administrators, policy-makers and other scholars to appreciate its significance. The earliest such article I could find is premised upon the idea that the world is a rapidly changing and increasingly dangerous place, requiring stronger networks of support for children particularly at ostensibly transitional stages like adolescence. Traditional support systems like family and community are dissolving, argues Matthews (1998), so schools need to step in and provide more explicit courses in

emotional development. These courses will help "girls and some minority group members….

stay engaged in school and increase their chances for high level career achievement" (p. 68).

Elias and Weissberg (2000) call Goleman's contributions in theorizing EQ

"revolutionary" (p. 186). They argue that SEL will prevent smoking, keep children away from

drugs and help them develop "life skills and social competencies; health promotion and problem

behavior prevention skills; coping skills; conflict resolution; positive contributory service" (p.

187). Further, SEL programs will teach families how to help their children solve problems via

programs like Emotionally Intelligent Parenting, which bring the doctrines of SEL from school

to home (p. 188). Kress and Elias (2001) argue additionally that SEL programming can be

helpful in reinforcing the goals of religious, in this case Jewish, education and identity. Smith

and Gill Lopez (2016) argue that more ubiquitous use of SEL will lead to a decrease in school

shootings because children will learn to care more about one another, and Smith and Low (2013)

cite research linking SEL programming to decreases in bullying.

A series of conceptual articles argue that SEL programs will help children not only

behave better, but also feel better. Devaney (2005) maintains that SEL will help children feel

more ethical and promote positive relationships and greater care for others. In other words,

children who have been exposed to SEL will consider themselves more moral human beings, and

this will improve their overall self esteem. It is important to note that Devaney is not arguing

that SEL will actually impact students' ethics but rather their feelings about their ethical lives.

Bird and Sultmann (2010) contend that SEL can help students feel better and like and appreciate

others more. Again, the emphasis on the feelings of individual students, rather than their

perceptions of or relationships to others, is paramount in this work.

Sheras and Bradshaw (2011) argue that policies should enforce SEL programming in schools so that all students will feel better during their education; schools will be more positive environments with SEL, these scholars argue, so it should be required. More positive environments in this case are environments with less violence, less anger, and a happier outlook on learning. Richards (2011) argues that any school interested in mental health as well as academic success should enforce SEL work in the classroom. Minikel-Lacocque (2013) makes the unique argument that social and emotional learning happens all the time in school as part of an unofficial curriculum; she contends that teacher awareness of and participation in this learning can only improve the scholastic experience for children and help the youngest children feel more positive about their transition into school. Here, SEL in its codified sense is an adult-articulated iteration of something that might be happening among children anyway, but in Minikel-Lacocque's formulation, adult intervention is what will make extant social and emotional learning opportunities more powerful and meaningful for all children.

Increasingly after 2010, SEL proponents began to write articles speculating about and then empirically documenting the positive impact SEL will have on academic achievement. Carlson (2011) argues that SEL will inevitably improve reading comprehension because of its focus on empathy. Rivers and Brackett (2011) write that academic standards across the board will be easier to achieve if students are taught problem-solving skills via strong SEL programs. These articles are likely motivated by a need to secure attention and funding from educators and policy makers by showing measurable academic input. Overall, then, articles that promote SEL make sweeping claims for the good it can do; SEL will reduce troublesome behaviors, increase good feelings in and about school, and help students perform better academically.

How To Do SEL Right

A third group of articles offers ideas for teachers, administrators and policy-makers about how SEL programs ought to be incorporated into schools. Some of these articles are conceptual in nature, while others cite empirical data. Elias et. al. (2000) begin the trend of how-to articles by identifying obstacles to SEL's success in schools over its first few years as a codified phenomenon. Elias recommends that an apt metaphor for SEL's early days in school is that of maiden voyage of a sailing ship. (In fact, Elias returns to this metaphor repeatedly across his corpus and explicitly rejects divergent metaphors proposed by other scholars.) SEL is successful, Elias argues, but only if it is implemented in coherent and thoughtful ways throughout whole schools and systems. Its implementers should stay positive and celebrate minor victories. Elias creates the sense that SEL is constantly under attack by educators and policy makers who believe that school should only be about academics, and he cautions SEL proponents that since they are almost by necessity on the defensive, they must be particularly careful about achieving standardization and rectitude in their implementation strategy.

Most articles in this category offer more specific guidance. Ross, Powell, and Elias (2002) argue that the school psychologist must play a central part in implementing SEL programming. In fact, they maintain, the psychologist has an entirely new role under SEL, for "schools have the potential to reach students with… important life lessons, and school psychologists can provide the leadership to enhance these educational experiences" (p. 45). Haynes (2002) concurs that SEL calls for a broader role of "mental health teams" in school, arguing that these teams need more monitoring and administrative support if SEL is to be carried out properly. Velsor (2009) argues that the job of the school counselor today is to ensure that all students have access to SEL programming; the way to do this is for counselors to reposition themselves as expert consultants on social and emotional skills. Maras et. al. (2015) also

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consider the importance of the mental health team in implementing SEL, explaining that a strong model might be a tiered response system similar to those frequently used for academic interventions. Mental health professionals, they write, must work closely with educators to identify students who would benefit from extra support in SEL domains.

Another common thread in guides to SEL implementation is the necessity of standardization as a metric for good practice and also external valuation. Greenberg (2002) argues that when SEL is not effective in schools, it is because programs have not been well enough coordinated with other programs in the school. Teachers need more standardized professional development, and schools need to focus on a more coherent vision for program implementation oriented specifically around prevention of problem behaviors, Greenberg contends. Kress et. al. (2004) argue that academic standards used widely in school ought to be broadened to include more emotional standards. Maxwell and Desroches (2010) also argue for standardization, but in this case of concepts and definitions of terms. For SEL to be effective, they argue, there must be commonly accepted definitions of concepts like empathy and conflict resolution.

Standardization can also mean the importance of a whole school or district prioritizing SEL at once, argue Banerjee et.al. (2014). These authors explain that students' experiences, attendance and academic achievement are all better if they participate in the same SEL program throughout their school experience. Evans, Murphy and Scourfield (2015) also argue that when SEL is ineffective, it is because of a lack of coherence. Lendrum et. al. (2009) maintain that teachers need consistent time and space for professional development in SEL competencies and that experts should be recruited by school districts to help implement these programs.

On the other hand, Slaten et. al. (2015) argue that standardization is actually the opposite of what should happen in order to make SEL effective. SEL must not be a monolithic understanding, these scholars say, but instead should be understood in relation to the cultural background of students and teachers and the demographic make-up and specific needs of a school community. In fact, aligned with Slaten et.al.'s argument, the past five years have seen a proliferation of "culturally modified" or "culturally relevant" SEL programs designed for use with very specific student populations, often defined in terms of culture which seems to operate as a proxy for racial identity and socioeconomic status. McCormick et. al. (2015) concur that context is very important in implementing SEL programs and that the specific characteristics of the school must be considered before a program is put in place. Garner (2014) also sees measurement problems in SEL studies, in this case because the constructs associated with SEL "are culturally bound" and thus analyses of their efficacy must be done using multi-level models that take cultural and other demographic factors into more careful consideration. SEL programs, Garner writes, should require that "those implementing the programs… learn more about their own cultures as part of their training to encourage perspective-taking and cultural sensitivity" (p. 180). Studies that argue for the importance of culture as a factor impacting SEL's efficacy do not take aim at the underlying premises or goals of SEL, but they generally argue that implementation must be demographically differentiated with a particular focus on the cultural backgrounds and norms of participating students. (Of course, these studies do assume segregated schools, for they are arguing that different schools take up different models or programs, not that teachers within one school or classroom rely on a variety of individualized approaches to social and emotional learning.)

Elias et. al. (2003) come to identify the lack of standardization and coherent support as a major obstacle to what they call "scaling up" of SEL programming, particularly in public schools. They argue that these failures are usually structural problems in public schools, including a failure on the part of adults to manage time effectively and insufficient attention given to the characteristics of implementing teachers. They emphasize the need to recognize that "academic success rests on a foundation of social-emotional competencies that must be nurtured as part of mainstream education," explaining that "the front line for efforts to address children's social-emotional needs systematically is public education" (p. 306). Currently, the culture of public school according to these authors, leads them to function as "incubators of anxiety, insecurity and maltreatment" (p. 307). More coherent efforts at introducing SEL specifically to the public school will help minimize "the cumulative impact of inadequate schools… which virtually consign a cohort of children to failure" (p. 306). This article also presents a call for more research on effective SEL for children who live in poverty, have experienced racism, or live in single-parent families.

Jennings and Greenberg (2009) pick up on some of Elias' ideas when they argue that for SEL to work properly, teacher social and emotional competence must also be considered as a factor. Jennings and Greenberg consider "the prosocial classroom" as the desired outcome of SEL work, and they argue that programs should be used in teachers' professional development to help develop their own SEL competencies before they are asked to implement these programs for children. Helping teachers with SEL skills, they argue, might even lead to less teacher burnout. Morcom (2014) also argues for the importance of professional development, in this case particularly in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Teachers who understand the ideas of scaffolding and the zone of proximal development, Morcom states, will be better equipped to

help their students understand social and emotional skills. Wanless et. al. (2015) also argue that teachers and schools need to be "ready" to effectively implement SEL programs, meaning that teachers require substantial professional development and administrators need to provide adequate financial and temporal support to teachers (p. 1038).

In sum, articles focusing conceptually on how to implement SEL programs tend to emphasize three things. They argue for the significance of consistency and standardization (albeit sometimes with major culturally informed modifications), the importance of mental health professionals and their interaction with educators, and the preparedness of teachers to effectively work with students on SEL skills and competencies.

Program Evaluations
Since the inception of CASEL and the proliferation of discrete SEL programs for schools and teachers to use, a vast literature has cropped up for evaluating these programs. Articles in this category conceive of themselves as "efficacy studies" and primarily evaluate the impact of one program at a time. Alongside these efficacy studies, a methodological interest in how social and emotional growth can be adequately measured has also emerged. The studies described in this section are different from those in the previous categories in that they are empirical studies conducted in schools and are generally not conceptual in nature. I do not offer details about the programs being evaluated here but rather a synopsis of what the research on efficacy shows. Importantly, most of the information collected about children in these studies comes from survey reports from teachers and parents. I have indicated if the methodology is otherwise.

Some program evaluations focus on students' behaviors as causally linked to participation in the program. Heydenerk and Heydenberk (2007) focus their study on evaluating a program that teaches I-messages and affective vocabulary as SEL competencies. They find

that teachers and students became better at constructively managing conflict, and that these findings "manifested through statistically significant decreases in verbal and physical aggression" during the school day (p. 124). Hallam (2009) evaluated the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning program, a massive and comprehensive SEL program implemented in the UK. Using questionnaires and surveys, they found that children became visibly better able to control their anger after exposure to this program, but that few respondents believed there had been a decrease in bullying.

Kramer et. al. (2010) studied the Strong Start curriculum, one of the first to consider the feasibility of SEL programming for kindergarten aged student. An analysis of 67 kindergartners across four classes found that the intervention led to increases in prosocial behaviors as rated by parents and teachers. A follow-up study continued to find positive social and emotional outcomes among the intervention groups in this study (Harlacher and Merrell, 2010). Whitcomb and Merrell (2012) also argue that the Strong Start Program leads to fewer "internalizing behaviors" and a better capacity to articulate emotion. Gunter et. al. (2012) research the same program in a pre-K, finding that teachers using the intervention give students higher ratings on self regulation and interpersonal relationship scales. Kramer et. al. (2014) find that the Strong Kids programs, which exist in different iterations for different age groups, are especially effective when implemented on a school-wide level and have the impact of increasing prosocial behaviors.

Other program evaluations veer away from behavior and survey teachers about students' feelings and attitudes in school. These evaluations tend to work with the assumption that positive attitudes about school are desirable and measurable. Frey et. al. (2005) conducted a randomized control study of 1,253 students, half of whom were exposed to the Second Step

program. They found that "…intervention children were more likely (than control group children) to prefer prosocial goals and give egalitarian reasons for satisfaction" (p. 173). They also found that children in the Second Step Program were less aggressive and more cooperative and that teachers were more satisfied with their social behaviors. Smith et. al. (2016) find that Tools for Getting Along leads to student reports of less anger at school. Students in this study also reported feeling better about their own problem-solving abilities and their capacity to regulate emotions. Pahl and Barrett (2007) evaluate the Fun FRIENDS Program, geared toward preschool-aged children, and find that it leads to more positive attitudes toward school, better communication skills, increased confidence and persistence in spite of challenges.

Merrell et. al. (2008) looked at the program Strong Kids, Strong Teens and found that first and second graders became more knowledgeable about affective vocabulary and less likely to experience negative emotions during the school day after exposure to the program. Eeacott and Frydenberg (2008) have similar findings in their evaluation of Best of Coping. Studying this program among rural adolescents, they find decreases in depression among "at-risk" students and postulate that the program might actually improve long-term mental health outcomes.

The idea of "at-risk" students becomes prevalent in program evaluations, which look at students' emotional, economic and cultural origins as a factor of increasing interest. In fact, what many of these studies find is that students initially perceived as "at-risk" for emotional and behavioral challenges are the ones "helped" most by SEL programs. Caldarella et. al. (2009) note that the improvements caused by the Strong Start program are more significant among children initially perceived as at-risk by their teachers. Iizuka et. al. (2014) consider the possibility that students who are from lower socioeconomic backgrounds might especially benefit from SEL programming; they find that the FRIENDS program leads to reductions in

anxiety among the middle school aged students they studied from low-income homes. Castro-Olivo (2014) found that the Culturally Adapted Strong Teens Program produced statistically significant increases in resiliency among adolescent Latino English language learners, using this finding to argue that more culturally adapted SEL programs are needed. Slaten et.al. (2016), who also call for a less culturally monolithic approach to SEL, evaluate the program Fulfilling the Dream among urban African American students. They find that this program, which uses hip hop music and dance almost daily in the classroom and emphasizes critical consciousness and the individual's capacity to work for social justice, leads to reports of meaningful emotional change among students and teachers.

McCormick et. al. (2015) consider the possibility of temperament as something that can put a student at-risk. They find that the INSIGHTS program has a more significant impact on students who have "high maintenance" temperaments; eg. lack persistence, have high levels of motor activity and high levels of negative reactivity. McCormick et. al. find that these students show faster "reductions in disruptive behaviors and off-task behaviors" than those in control groups (p. 381). Evaluating the Second Step program for elementary schools, Low et. al. (2015) find the most significant improvements in social and emotional competence and behavior as rated by teachers among children "who started the school year with skill deficits in relative to their peers" (p. 463). Correia and Marques-Pinto (2016) find that Giant Leap 1 is most effective at helping students who were initially most disruptive develop better behavior. They also find the program more effective among children whose parents had higher levels of educational attainment.

Ransford et. al. (2009) research teacher-level factors in efficacy of the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies Program. They find that teachers who experience less

professional support or feel more burnt out in relation to their profession are less likely to implement the program faithfully. Reyes et. al. (2012) are interested in the teacher level factor in implementing the RULER program, finding that more program training leads to more faithful implementation. Brown et. al. (2010) examine the 4Rs program and also find that the teacher's perception of her own emotional abilities had a strong positive effect on her fidelity of program implementation. The program is in turn effective in improving classroom quality in the teacher's perception. Domirovich et. al. (2016) find that the behaviorally oriented Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies program had a positive impact on teachers' belief about their students.

A few scholars have conducted metaanalyses of research on SEL programs and techniques. Hromek and Roffey (2009) review literature related to playing games to teach SEL skills. They find that students overall report very positive feelings about playing games to learn SEL skills. SEL games, they write, help with "regulating negative emotions, taking turns and sharing" (p. 644). Durlak et. al. (2011) conduct a metaanalysis of studies evaluating a total of 213 different programs, and find that participants in SEL programs almost always experience gains in skills and positive attitudes. They summarize that SEL interventions lead to more positive attitudes toward and in school, more positive social behaviors, less emotional distress in school and better overall academic performance. They also show that SEL works best when implemented by a teacher and that the positive effect is higher when there are more sessions.

Increasingly after 2010, program evaluations tend to focus on improvements in academic achievement as caused by SEL interventions, alongside or sometimes instead of emotional and behavioral outcomes. Jones, Brown, and Lawrence Aber (2011) show that a two-year school-based interventions leads to fewer reports of depression and less aggression in interpersonal interactions as reported by students; they also emphasize that students in their intervention

improve in math and reading as measured by achievement tests. Jones et. al. understand this connection using developmental cascades theory, which essentially states that one aspect of development cannot be understood in isolation from another one and that improvements in one domain are often correlated with other realms of growth. Ashdown and Bernard (2012) find that the You Can Do It program reduces problem behaviors and increases reading achievement. Rimm-Kaufman and McTigue (2011) find the Responsive Classroom program effective in improving students' reading and writing, and Griggs et. al. (2013) document the same program's positive impact on students' self efficacy in math and science.

Program evaluations are ubiquitous in the SEL literature. These evaluations do tend to show positive impacts of intervention programs among students as well as teachers. One interesting trend to note from these evaluations is their unspoken normative assumption that more positive feelings about and in school, in terms of a decrease in aggression, a decrease in depression and internalizing behaviors, and more reports of positive feelings and good social interactions, are ultimately desirable. Also of note is the ubiquity of teacher and parent report as a measure of student experience. Many of these studies find a more significant impact of SEL programming on students who start school in some way aberrant, either due to temperament or behavior, or cultural and socioeconomic mismatch with the school. Finally, program evaluations are increasingly wedded to showing the positive impact of SEL programs on academic achievement.

Criticism

The scholarly works critiquing SEL are few, but they are of great interest to my study as I aim to add to this critical chorus. For this reason, this section focuses in a bit more detail on some of the work under review.

Kristjansson (2006) was perhaps the first to launch an explicit critique not just of one SEL program or implementation strategy, but of the premises underlying SEL. Kristjannson focuses primarily on the idea of emotional intelligence and Goleman's initial claims that EQ is an Aristotelian concept. Kristjansson argues that in fact SEL and EQ are phenomena lacking moral underpinnings and cannot be fairly classified as Aristotelian. SEL and EQ, he argues, place an excess of emphasis on success and is not the same as Aristotle's concept of emotional virtue. EQ, argues Kristjansson, means "positively evaluating emotions," whereas emotional virtue means "positive and negatively evaluating emotions;" for Aristotle, "the general aim of emotional virtue… lies in its connection to the fundamental good of human life" (p. 45). This "fundamental good" is distinct from success, whether understood in social, academic or monetary terms.

Kristjjansson argues that Aristotle theorized morality in the sense of possessing normative considerations about enhancing other people's good or well-being, whereas EQ and SEL focus on the emotions and behavior of the self. Further, Kristjansson writes, "one of the chief characteristics… of the Aristotelian notion of emotional virtue is that it straddles any ready-made distinction between 'negative' and 'postive' emotions" (p. 48). In other words, for Aristotle, anger can indeed be an emotionally virtual and moral emotion, and conflict resolution between people might not be as important as the alleviation of ontological conflict within the self. Kristjansson's primary critique of SEL is in its false claim to an Aristotelian genesis, but he makes the strong case for reconsidering the extent to which SEL can in fact be considered rooted in ethical and moral educational work.

Hoffman (2009) is more explicitly and directly critical of SEL overall. She claims that trends in favor of SEL are excessively focused on individualism and particularly individual skill

development. After reviewing literature published for practitioners, she concludes that SEL has

been inadequately defined and has suffered due to the burden it faces to prove its link to

academic achievement. At the same time, though, she maintains that "there ought to be critical

consciousness of how emotion can also become a romanticized distraction from pressing

educational problems" (p. 537). She argues that SEL is in some ways ideologically manipulative

and instrumentalist because of its palpable desire to create better and more cheerful citizens. In

other words, Hoffman believes that SEL constructs emotion as a tool to be used for management

of concrete behaviors and pursuit of academic achievement, possibly to the detriment of humane

and moral life in school.

Hoffman is also critical of what she sees as the hegemonic Western middle class values

propagated by SEL. Here, she focuses on the primacy of behavior control and the ability to

process emotion in language. She acknowledges culturally modified SEL programs but accuses

them of paying lip service to pluralism. She finds many referrals in SEL literature to teaching

self control by removing out of control students from classroom, an act which can "symbolically

erase the emotionality of the student" (p. 543). Hoffman questions whether calls for self

regulation and control can in fact be thought of as emotional learning, and she writes, "My

analysis indicates a need for more work in developing an approach to social and emotional

education that is not so much about developing better skills and measures as about developing

ways to link ideals with practices" (p. 546). Gillies (2011) echoes many of Hoffman's concerns

in arguing that SEL, in this case in the UK, focuses excessively on the individual and locates

problems within the individually. SEL, Gillies argues, perpetuates a sense of an ideal school in

which only rational emotions are present when in fact the emotions of school and learning are

likely not under control and cannot be expected to be.

A few shorter and less fully critical articles have also looked at the problematic precepts underlying SEL. Wigelsworth et. al. (2010) focus on the challenges in measuring SEL skills, arguing that many program evaluation studies have been questionable because of issues with construct validity and inconsistent use of terminology. Watson and Emery (2010) also explain that there are major problems in measurement as it relates to SEL. They argue for an increase in critical research about what concepts behind SEL actually mean, "Dispositions are important to regard as the emotional state of an individual is expressed through behaviors and actions" (p. 772). These writers see SEL research as mired in ontological and value-based confusion and further argue that practitioners and children should contribute their own understanding of the import and meaning of SEL skills in their lives.

Finally, Wright (2014) situates the movement toward SEL culturally and historically. She writes that the movement toward SEL must be understood as part of a broader therapeutic turn not just in education but in culture writ large. Wright also explains that SEL comes out of a long history of educational reforms toward character development and that it ought not be perceived as a wholly new field or phenomenon. At the same time, Wright maintains, the idea of mental health or well-being as central to education ought not to be accepted unquestioningly as normative.

Psychoanalysis and Education: A Literature Review

This dissertation will work with psychoanalytic theory as an alternate way of approaching the affective life of classrooms. It is therefore important to offer a review of psychoanalytic topics as they have been addressed in and in relation to educational research and practice. This literature review will begin by analyzing educational approaches to major psychoanalytic concepts, including the unconscious, transference and countertransference, and affective

positions. It will then focus on psychoanalytic ideas about the epistemic drive and what it means to learn.

A literature review of psychoanalytic concepts in education is inevitably complex because, as the introductory chapter mentions, a psychoanalytic frame is marginal in the broader context of educational studies (eg. Mayes, 2009; Taubman, 2012). While psychoanalysis has offered myriad theories of learning, many leading psychoanalysts have eschewed involvement with educators and worked to problematize analogies between the clinical and the educational setting (eg. Klein, 1945; Winnicott, 1965). Mayes (2009) explains, "Most psychoanalysts concerned with education have maintained throughout the 20th century that the goal of education should be the socially normative sublimation of libidinal energy" (p. 542), in contrast to the disinhibition of such energy characteristically considered a focus of clinical psychoanalytic work. Education has, for its part, tended to privilege other versions of psychology over psychoanalysis. Cognitive psychology, ego psychology, positive psychology and social psychology are among the "learning sciences" that get cited with much more frequency in educational discourse than psychoanalysis (Taubman, 2009).

This literature review is organized conceptually precisely because such a structure allows me to unpack relevant ideas in depth, juxtaposing the theoretical and clinical work of psychoanalysts with the work of curriculum theorists and some scholars from other disciplines who work psychoanalytically. Rather than provide a superficially comprehensive survey of all that has been published on psychoanalytic concepts, this review attempts to articulate major thinkers, schools of thought, and conceptual priorities in the relationship between psychoanalysis and education.

The Unconscious

All of psychoanalysis rests on the understanding of the unconscious, that aspect of the human mind which can never be fully known. Sigmund Freud initially theorized the unconscious as a psychic container of all that is repressed in an individual's memory and understanding. In 1899, S. Freud developed the understanding that dreams embody some aspect of unconscious life, in his interpretation primarily wishes that the dreamer might not previously have recognized because they required engagement with repressed material. When S. Freud deepened his theory of the ego, id and superego (1923), he came to understand the unconscious more complexly as all psychic matter, repressed and otherwise, that impacts human feelings and behavior without becoming known or formulated in language. He wrote, "…very powerful mental processes or ideas exist… which can produce all the effects in mental life that ordinary ideas do… though they themselves do not become conscious" (p. 3). For S. Freud, the unconscious never makes itself fully known, but it can become revealed gradually for provisional interpretation via parapraxes (the famous Freudian slip, for instance), humor, dream work, and in clinical psychoanalysis. It also becomes understood phylogenetically by examining the evolution of human civilizations (S. Freud, 1930). Understanding the unconscious and acknowledging its existence can help people understand what motivates their behaviors, what leads to a sense of internal conflict, and what might be inhibiting the attainment of desires over the course of the life span.

Later canonical psychoanalysts built on S. Freud's theory of the unconscious. A. Freud (1936/1992) understood the unconscious as in part a facet of ego that could be understood via the interpretation and, ultimately, deconstruction of defense mechanisms. This focus on the ego, in contrast to simply "irruptions of the id" (p. 17) represented A. Freud's primary divergence in analytic technique. She sought to understand the unconscious processes via which people defend

themselves from difficult feelings and, as a result, from participating fully both in individual life and in the social world. The powers but also challenges of psychoanalysis, she writes, "are at their greatest when we have to grapple with the unconscious elements of the ego" (p. 24). The unconscious, for A. Freud, has to do with the psychic structures the individual builds to prevent internal experiences of anxiety, guilt and aggression, among others; it is inextricably intertwined with defensive posturing that clinical analysis works to dismantle. Unconsciously determined defense mechanisms include excessive altruism, identification with the aggressor, regression, and sublimation. While children's unconscious processes are developing, A. Freud maintains, adults are well-situated to behave pedagogically toward them and capitalize on their inevitable, and mostly conscious, seeking of modes for acting in the world. A. Freud developed a theory of childhood based on "developmental lines" that could be sequenced and assessed in the nursery school setting; this work has been misappropriated to some extent in the name of developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood.

Klein, by contrast, understood the unconscious primarily in terms of the fantasies that underlie all mental activity. For Klein, the individual's psychic self grows out of somatic existence, and the unconscious is the subject's way of representing or symbolizing bodily experiences, often without cognition (1921; 1952; Hinshelwood, 1991). Further, the Kleinian unconscious grows out of experiences of internalized objects. For Klein, internal objects are aspects of the people in children's lives, usually parents, who children believe they have internalized and who constantly provide unrepresented motivations for behavior and emotion. She believed (1936) that introjected objects could be a tremendous source of anxiety, describing how one child, "through the internalization of his parents all the anxiety-situations… became internalized and thus multiplied, intensified and, partly, altered in character" (p. 282). For Klein,

"as the parents become internalized, the early aggressive phantasies against them lead to the paranoid fear of external and, still more, internal persecutions, produce sorrow and distress about the impending death of the incorporated objects, together with hypochondriacal anxieties, and give rise to an attempt to master in an omnipotent manic way the unbearable sufferings within" (p. 284).

Klein attended to the ways children cared for or persecuted their internal objects, such that a child's way of relating to him or herself was essentially a reflection of his object relations and his phantasmagoric understandings about bodies, sex and death, due to a lack of or a resistance to enlightenment. A hypochondriac, for instance, might have bad internal objects who he experiences as diseases inside his body. A child who does not want to eat might unconsciously be starving his internal objects, and similarly, a child who does not want to learn is anxious about what his internal objects might do with knowledge (Kristeva, 2001, p. 76). Overall, Klein placed tremendous value on interiority and children's ideas and worries over what was happening inside their bodies as reification of the unconscious and its development. In many cases, she worked with the idea that these anxieties were sexual, transferred from confused understandings of parental intercourse, for instance, or worries about pregnancy, sexual adequacy and so on. For Klein, children are almost constantly thinking about sex, death and aggression, and other worries or inhibitions are substitutes for these harder to articulate phenomena. She saw this as a trans-cultural and trans-historical reality that only psychoanalysis could alleviate but that would be undesirable to cure (1963/2002, p. 262). Since unconscious processes begin in infancy in Klein's formulation, the youngest of children are already heavily laden with their unconscious fantasies, fears and desires.

Like Klein, Winnicott saw the unconscious as an outgrowth of early object relations. Winnicott takes up the significance of play and fantasy for both expression and construction of the unconscious. Winnicott depicts the internal interaction that occurs unconsciously between a child and a love object, "The subject says to the object: 'I destroyed you,' and the object is there to receive the communication. From then on the subject says: 'Hullo object!' 'I destroyed you.' 'I love you.' 'You have value for me because of your survival of my destruction of you.' 'While I am loving you I am all the time destroying you in my unconscious fantasy.' " The subject trusts that she can think whatever she wants about the object, because these fantasies will not actually encroach on the object's well-being. This understanding of constant unconscious interactions among individuals enables creativity, for there is no push to comply with an object who can withstand such intense resistance. In Winnicottian thought, compliance is almost always problematic and signifies repression of the true self. Winnicott elucidates, "Here (in the absence of compliance) fantasy begins for the individual. The subject can now use the object that has survived" (90). The impermeability of the object to unconsciously constructed transactions operates as a pedagogical metonym, standing in for the safety of creativity, perhaps the most important by-product of the Winnicottian unconscious.

Curriculum theorists have examined the unconscious as it relates more directly to educational processes. Salvio (2009) works with the idea of the teacher as "unconscious father… who is unaware and does not know that he is dead, which, on a figurative level, suggests that he sleeps in an effort to avoid the deadliness of an answer" (p. 66). In this construction, the unconscious is that which renders simultaneously terrible and exciting the acquisition of knowledge. Salvio draws on the Oedipal narrative to invoke a version of the unconscious that allows for a nuanced understanding of a student's resistance to knowledge;

knowledge might, after all, kill the father, a tantalizing if terrifying prospect. Salvio describes

how "the idea of the unconscious… offers educators a new psychic topography with which to

work" (p. 13) by deemphasizing the importance of coherence and obvious intelligibility,

particularly in the ongoing acquisition of literacy. The unconscious might account for both

successes and troubles in learning and in educational relationships.

Taubman (2011) considers education's refusal to acknowledge the unconscious to be

both cause and representation of an overall rift between education and psychoanalysis. Like

Salvio, he points to education's distaste for that which is inchoate and resists coherent definition.

"The unconscious," he writes, "not only de-centers us, subverts our sense of ourselves as masters

in our own house, but also, because it remains outside our rational comprehension of the world

and always threatens to disrupt that comprehension, it bores a hole from within that

comprehension, exposing its precariousness and incompleteness" (p. 21). The idea of the

unconscious destabilizes so many epistemologies that there have been intense and repeated

efforts to argue logically for and against its existence (eg. Grunbaum, 1984). Yet Taubman

(2000) implores that such overwhelmingly cognitive approaches are deeply rooted in a cultural

desire for logic and efficiency, and that for education to act ethically would mean "to let go of

the desire to cure or rescue, to sit with the pain that compels us to reach for quick reforms… to

reframe the standards in terms of our ability…to articulate and reflect on what we are feeling and

experiencing, to face the terrors that gnaw at us, and to work through the fantasies that structure

our existence" (p. 31). In this understanding, the fact of the unconscious humbles the educator

who believes in the certainty of knowledge; acknowledging the resultant humility is a key

portion of psychoanalytic orientation in education.

Britzman (2009) writes of the unconscious largely in terms of the S. Freudian theory of the repetition compulsion; eg., the idea that much of human life and behavior is driven by a desire to repeat early experience and ultimately return to the womb (S. Freud, 1920/1950). This is the S. Freudian rendition of Thanatos, the death drive that leads humans to engage in a constant internal struggle simultaneously toward and away from the experience of pleasure. Britzman describes the influence of this unconscious battle on education; in the midst of the compulsion to repeat, "…where would one locate transformation or meaningful change? Can measures of experience stabilize the radical known of the unconscious" (p. 133)? The dilemma of the unconscious for education as Britzman sees it is partly that the unconscious would, on the whole, rather not be educated. Education is in fact a threat to the unconscious, since it wants to repress or sublimate the instincts for the purpose of perpetuating civilized life. Britzman's understanding of Freud (2011), in fact, states, "the unconscious itself is a resistance" (p. 74). Bound up in the idea of the unconscious is, for Britzman, the concept of difficult knowledge: that, like the primal scene and the Oedipal narrative, from which the learning subject turns insistently away.

Farley (2011), relying on Winnicott, considers "the unconscious as a visual site of memory" (p. 7), that knowledge which may not be spoken but can in fact be symbolized, for instance through drawing, play and other creative acts of representation. Like Winnicott, Farley considers the unconscious attainable, understandable via the educational process only if diverse forms of symbolization are permitted. Bibby (2010) concurs, describing the unconscious in terms of thinking that does not get expressed by language but via fantasy, gesture and group dynamics. "A process we come to call 'thinking,'" she writes, "is wordless and resides in the unconscious" (p. 123). In younger children, symbolization might equally occur via play. Psychoanalyst and

curriculum theorist O'Loughlin (2006) argues the view that "a child's play (is) an expression of the unsymbolized aspects of a child's unconscious expression of desire" (188). For these theorists, then, the relevance of the unconscious to education is not its elusiveness or resistance but rather its demand that multiple versions of symbolization and communication be given due attention in educational contexts, and that symbolization be taken seriously as more than simply a means to a cognitive or measurable outcome.

Other educational thinkers have drawn on the concept of the unconscious as a way of understanding resistance to and success in learning specifically. Thompson (2001) considers the S. Freudian idea of "negative therapeutic reaction" as it relates specifically to classroom dynamics, speculating on whether unconscious guilt might lead both teacher and student to resist learning successfully from one another in a particular context. Price (2002) suggests that in fact knowledge itself is constructed from the unconscious and transmitted unconsciously, "the unconscious can enter into the very constitution of bodies of knowledge" (p. 319). By this reckoning, the unconscious also becomes itself an epistemological concept, something which can determine not only how knowledge is accessed but how individuals ever come to know. Learning, writes Watkins (2008), "is seen as a psychical process involving the vicissitudes of unconscious and conscious thought" (118). Working in concert, the unconscious and the conscious are what, for Watkins, constitute thought and its growth.

Transference and Countertransference

S. Freud initially understood transference by considering his own former relationship with a school teacher (1905). He believed that he was unable to relate to the teacher in any objective sense; instead, he transferred aspects of his familial experience of interrelationships, heavily grounded in Oedipal desires and competition, to the teacher-student dynamic. S. Freud

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understood that this transference occurred readily in the clinical psychoanalytic setting, and that an analysis of the transference laid the groundwork for understanding symptoms of neurosis (1925). He also theorized the significance of love and erotic feelings in the transference setting, explaining that in the throes of the idealizing transference, "(the patient) adores you, he trusts you blindly, everything you say is a revelation to him… this readiness toward emotion originated elsewhere, it was prepared within the patient…" (1920, p. 17). For S. Freud, the treatment of neurosis consisted in identifying and interpreting positive iterations of the transference as revealing of the patient's early experience and overall psychic life and working through the resistances caused by negative transference that might present an obstacle to treatment.

Later psychoanalysts, including Klein, considered the transference to indicate other phenomena besides the existence of neurosis. Because Klein (1945/2011) believed psychic life to begin at birth, she thought that even young children were capable of "making a spontaneous transference" (p. 24), and that the psychoanalysis of young children must focus on "systematically analyzing the transference-situation," including and even emphasizing its negative aspects (p. 93). This differentiated Klein from S. Freud, who saw transference as an adult phenomenon that reflected experiences from the Oedipal period of development. It also set the stage for major conflicts between Klein and A. Freud, who thought that children's interactions were based on ego relationships of an explicitly pedagogic nature and that the analyst took the position of protector and moral/sexual educator, possibly sowing the seeds for future transference but not themselves subject to the play of transference (A. Freud, 1935/1979; Britzman, 2005).

When a child comes to school, Klein would explain, he does not bring simply his own body and nascent mind, but all the internal objects he has already imbibed. His early love objects are

there, and not just in the way that the teacher has met them, for instance at parent-teacher conferences, but also as murderers, rivals, desperately needed nurturers, and so on (Hinshelwood, 1994). Further, the Kleinian concept of projective identification illustrates how a child might actually create in his teacher, for instance, a set of reactions and emotions generated from prior relational experiences. "Projective identification," writes Sedgwick (2011), "is related to Freudian projection but more uncannily intrusive: for Freud, when I've projected my hostility on to you, I believe that you dislike me; for Klein, additionally, when I've projected my hostility into you, you will dislike me" (p. 135). Transference under the power of projective identification can have a substantial impact on the affect and behavior of all parties involved in its dynamics.

Like Klein, Winnicott saw an important component of the transference to be its embedded aggression, hate and negativity. For Winnicott (1955), an initial positive or idealizing transference might be problematically interconnected with the patient's "false self", or "a pseudo-self which is a collection of innumerable reactions to a succession of failures of adaptation" (p. 296). By contrast, the negative transference, in which the patient entrusts the analyst with anger and aggression, "raises a hope that the true self may at last be able to take the risks involved in its starting to experience living" (p. 388). Unleashing a negative transference becomes a veritable therapeutic technique here, aimed at unearthing aspects of a subject patient's identity and creative potential.

Curriculum theorists have worked to bring the concept of the transference to bear on educational contexts. Britzman (2009) justifies the applicability of psychoanalytic thought to education when she contends "…as with analysis, much of what goes on in education is the transference, the uncertain exchange of confusion, love, and words" (xi). She defines

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transference as "the ways we lend old meaning to new events, the ways we give ourselves over to new authority, the ways we enact old dilemmas by projecting them onto new ones, and the ways we find new beloved objects in the world" (2003, p. 15). Like Britzman, Cohler and Galatzer-Levy (2006) argue for the fruitfulness of applying psychoanalytic theory to the educational project primarily because of the notion of transference, "Psychoanalysis and classroom education are remarkably similar endeavors. Both rely on the emotional bonds to promote development" (244). In Britzman's view, transference is a heavy concept, one inevitably imbued with uncertainty and the most intense conflicts and emotions. Mayes (2009) concurs, cautioning, "the teacher who does not understand mirroring and idealizing transferences may unconsciously misuse transferential energy in order to inappropriately satisfy his or her own ego at the expense of the student's legitimate need to define hmself or herself by finding and emulating an ideal self object" (p. 557). For these thinkers, teachers should know about transference so that they can proceed with caution.

Taubman (2011) takes a less weighty, more expansive and perhaps less overdetermined view on the transference, "Such transferences go on all the time in our regular lives. We meet someone who occupies the position of the one supposed to know, and we find ourselves acting as that person's rebellious servant or resentful victim or imperious boss or needy child" (p. 169). Referencing Lacanian ideas about the elusiveness of knowledge, Taubman explains how "the dynamics of transference and counter-transference interrupt any certainty of what is 'really' going on" (p. 24). For Taubman, this disruption plays an important role in the divide between the learning sciences, with their love for certainty and definition, and psychoanalytic orientations toward education. Salvio (2009) helpfully characterizes this schism in terms of "…ambivalence over the potential and pitfalls of the personal in teaching and learning;" she describes meaningful

ensuing questions, "What does it mean to bring into the classroom dimensions of our lives for which there is so little public acknowledgment? … How can we incorporate the personal into teaching without slipping into demand, confession, voyeurism, or unrefined reflection" (p. 4)? In other words, we might ask, how can we argue for the significance of the transference and still have our knowledge taken seriously?

Farley (2014) writes of transference to historical knowledge and other aspects of curriculum, describing the ways that traumatic events and histories can both inhibit and enable mutual exploration of difficult matter in the classroom. Here, transference is less a heavy-handed set of conflicts that must be minded delicately than an opening for questions, curiosity and creativity of thought and pedagogical technique.

Notably, writers taking up the idea of the transference in educational contexts focus primarily on high school and college aged students. Bibby (2010), one of few writers to explicitly invoke psychoanalysis in a theoretically based study of elementary school students, deals only casually with the transference and then in Britzman's terms as "a new edition of an old conflict" (p. 27). Price (2002) also writes that all learning, even among young children, is ultimately a by-product of transferences, and that educators must understand object relations- children's earliest relational dynamics with the important figures in their lives- in order to understand how, what and why children will learn.

Perhaps one reason for the absence of the transference from much of the discourse involving younger students is its implicit and sometimes explicit erotic dimension. S. Freud (1915) was very clear that transference will include love and sex, will involve bodily fantasies about figures in authority, and might even lead to various enactments of these fantasies. For S. Freud, all curiosity is to some degree an extension of sexual curiosity, all questions themselves

transferences of questions about the body and about the primal scene. Yet Tobin (2007) and others have shown the tendency in childhood education to pretend that bodies and pleasure are absent and certainly to construct a taboo against loving, erotically tinged relationships between student and teacher. How might these understandable inhibitions impact on the potential to learn and be curious together? Newbery (2009) writes that understanding the transference might be particularly valuable in classroom contexts where personal relationships and experiences are to be drawn on as part of the curricular material; if this is true in the context of higher education, then it is doubly true in the childhood classroom, where the separation between the personal and the academic is at least marginally less enforced.

At first blush, countertransference appears to be simply the converse of transference; those feelings evoked in a figure of authority by subjects with ostensibly less power. Yet S. Freud believed that countertransference was inevitably problematic and inappropriate. In his initial formulation, a fundamental aspect of the analyst's work in his own analysis and training was actually to rid himself of countertransference and become the proverbial 'blank screen.' Freud allows for no exception; he warns (1915) "we ought not to give up the neutrality toward the patient, which we have acquired through keeping the counter-transference in check" (p. 176). His writing about the countertransference can be read to contradict statements about the unconscious, since he implies via strictures regarding analytic work that an analyst's feelings about the patient might be fully known.

Ultimately, besides these sorts of cautionary points, S. Freud wrote little about countertransference, leaving it to his followers to explicate. A. Freud took up the idea of countertransference as it relates to children and their teachers, describing what she saw as the responsibility of teachers to unearth their psychic conflicts and work through them rather than

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bringing them to bear on work with children (1935/1979). Teachers must, for A. Freud, be

positive and ethical figures who children can seek to emulate; they ought not be projecting their

own psychic struggles onto their students. Like her father, A. Freud viewed countertransference

as that which can and indeed ought to be overcome for either therapeutic or liberating work to

take hold.

Klein and her followers, the neo-Kleinians, have taken a different approach to

countertransference. These thinkers see countertransference as something which cannot be

eliminated; at the same time, they do not necessarily find the pursuit of neutrality desirable.

Klein attended constantly and carefully to the way children related to her and vocally interpreted

her understandings of which aspects of their early relationships they were transferring to the

analytic setting. Hinshelwood (1994) explains that Klein's vision of the countertransference is

the analyst's handling of and response to the patient's transference. The analyst must, according

to Klein, attend to her internal experience of whatever material the patient brings; the analyst's

internal state, dream life, fantasies and reaction formations are as much part of analysis as the

patient's material. The countertransference becomes part of Klein's formulation of projective

identification. By becoming aware of the feelings she experiences in interactions with the

patient, the analyst may understand more about what the patient is unconsciously attempting to

project into him. Countertransference, then, has its own truth to communicate and ought not

necessarily be eradicated or repressed.

Winnicott (1949) explicates this view when he describes the significance of hate in the

countertransference. Winnicott states that every mother must at some point hate his child, " 'The

baby is not (her own) mental conception… He tries to hurt her… He shows disillusionment

about her… He excites her but frustrates" (p. 73). This hate is ultimately, according to

Winnicott, for the developmental good of both mother and child in that it produces separation, a motivational antagonism, room for the rest of the world and cultural experience to enter into a dyad. Klein would probably also add that the hate leads to feelings of guilt that allow for meaningful reparation and deepening love as well as the capacity to tolerate ambivalence.

Yet the hate these analysts depict must not be viewed as metaphorical; Winnicott describes explicitly telling a foster child "that what had happened had made me hate him" (p. 68) as he placed him outside for several hours. Winnicott describes the task of the mother to hate the child but express it only obliquely, via, for instance, nursery rhymes and scary stories that allow a vague and mediated enactment of aggression. Likewise, he explains, the analyst will always hate, compete with, find revolting, and have aggressive feelings toward the patient; this, for Winnnicott, is the crux of countertransference. He describes it as an obligation of the analyst to acknowledge this hate at part of a productive therapy. More recent thinkers, like de Robertis (2001) have argued that it is in fact unhelpful to consider transference and countertransference as separate phenomena; instead, we might fruitfully think about multiple simultaneous transferences within the same environment but emanating from different subjects.

In curriculum theory, Salvio (2009) has pointed out the importance of teacher emotional response and internal life as an integral aspect of educational experience. She writes, "Professional anxieties are too often deemed unworthy of attention. At the same time, they slip into our pedagogy uninvited" (p. 7). Countertransference might, for Salvio, be understood as the teacher's individual and collective experience of "professional melancholia" (2004). Salvio recommends not trying to cure this melancholia but rather to treat it as "a lyric lament through which we can protest our culture's narrow prohibitions on who can rightfully claim loss and which losses are worthy of attention" (60). Like Klein and Winnicott, Salvio thus considers the

countertransference unassailable and its eradication undesirable as well as impossible. However, this vision of the countertransference takes on a distinctly political tone that is absent in fundamental psychoanalytic text. Perhaps, Salvio suggests, in curriculum theory, the countertransference is not only the teacher's experience of and relation to the student, but the teacher's reaction to her social position and the mandates, oppressive authority structures, and sociopolitical limitations she faces.

Britzman (2009) writes differently about countertransference as it applies to teaching and learning. She describes the countertransference as "the educator's reply" to the student's transference (p. 4), though she also allows that a teacher may experience a countertransference "to education as such" (p. 69); in other words, unconscious or inchoate feelings evoked in response simply to the setting of school or the context of learning. Britzman describes countertransference as a vulnerability, something that might endanger learning, "Education… cannot proceed without the transference love, yet its procedures are vulnerable to the educator's pleasure principle, the countertransference" (p. 16). Unlike S. Freud, Britzman does not indicate a belief that the teacher might rid herself of countertransference, yet she does seem to see countertransference as more problematic than helpful, perhaps contributing to what she sees as the ultimate impossibility of the educational project.

Price (2006) offers a slightly less problematizing view of countertransference. She explains that the teacher's insight into, or at least awareness of, countertransference can be revealing of presumptions regarding what is and is not known and what the teacher's responsibilities are or ought to be, both with regard to student knowledge and academic performance and with regard to behavior. Countertransference according to Price can operate as

a cultural phenomenon, demonstrating all that is asked of teachers and all that teachers ask of themselves.

Melanie Klein's Affective Positions

Because this dissertation will ultimately draw on the work of Melanie Klein as a way of understanding some parts of affective classroom life, her theory and particular her formulation of affective positions deserves special attention in this literature review. One of the most important aspects of Klein's theory was her development of the notion of psychic positions which a person travels through many times over the course of development. The two positions Klein focused on were the paranoid-schizoid position and the depressive position.

For Klein, the paranoid-schizoid position takes its roots in earliest infancy and revolves around a sense of ever-present persecution and denial of desire and need. The infant, Klein postulated, quickly develops a relationship with the mother that embeds a good breast and a bad breast. The good breast is the one that is present and available for feeding and nurturing, while the bad breast is the absent, unavailable breast, who in its absence is deemed persecutory in the infant's mind. The very fact of the bad breast leads to anxiety, discomfort, anger, and a paranoid sense of persecution that may return again and again through an individual's life. This is called the paranoid-schizoid position, and while it is rooted in infantile experience, it is ultimately an affective state with profound implications for individual and communal existence.

Klein (1930) write that "…in the first few months of its life the child goes through paranoid anxieties related to the 'bad' denying breasts, which are felt as external and internalized persecutors. From this relation to part-objects… springs at this stage the phantastic and unrealistic nature of the child's relation to all objects… The object-world of the child in the first two or three months of its life could be described as consisting of histile and persecuting, or else of gratifying parts and portions of the real world" (p. 285). . The paranoid-schizoid position is

characterized by "splitting, idealization, and projective identification" (Steiner, 1987, p. 69). In this affective state, there are ideal and persecutory objects in the world, and a person's effort is oriented toward fending off persecutors. Importantly, the paranoid-schizoid position is developmental, catalyzing, and not inevitably pathological (p. 70). It can, however, cause tremendous anxiety about the possibility of survival (p. 68). The individual rooted deeply in the paranoid-schizoid position is so defensive as to circumvent learning, for that which is new or unfamiliar might be bad and ought to be warded off (Klein 1963/1996, p. 273). Sedgwick (2011) describes that in the paranoid-schizoid position, "The self and its constituent parts, like others and their parts, can only be experienced as either powerless or omnipotent" (p. 132). Learning becomes doubly unattainable then, because the omnipotent self need not learn and the powerless self actually cannot.

Klein believed that over the course of the first six months of life, the infant gradually develops a sense of the mother as a whole person, more than simply the partial object that is the breast. She writes (1935), "… while the persecution-anxieties and the anxiety for himself are still so strongly in operation he cannot endure the additional burden of anxieties for a loved object and, besides, the feelings of guilt and remorse that accompany this depressive position" (p. 271) The depressive position also includes "the introjection of good objects… (and) concern for the object's safety" (p. 278). The infant comes to be able to regard the mother as an object at least provisionally separate from his or herself, and this heralds the beginning of the depressive position. For Klein, the depressive position is a hallmark of maturity but not necessarily happiness. It is the ability to tolerate boredom, disappointment, ambivalence and other people in their wholeness. The depressive position can also be understood in terms of humility and forgiveness: the infant, in its paranoid schizoid position, may fantasize about murdering the

mother, destroying her insides, attacking her breasts; gradually, the infant begins to see the mother as a whole person and to experience guilt for these fantasies (Hinshelwood, 1994). The infant must then find a way to forgive himself these destructive impulses and, in doing so, forgive his mother and feel gratitude for the way the mother forgives him.

For Klein, love is to be understood in a cycle of guilt and reparation; it cannot exist separately from hate and hate's very bodily iterations (1945/2002). Again, though Klein believed the depressive position to be potentially present very early in life, she saw people as returning to it again and again over the course of development or sometimes engaging in an ongoing affective vacillation between the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions. Sedgwick (2007), applying Klein to literary theory, postulates that it is her almost nearly normative stance on depression and "the unchecked proliferation of the reader's sense of recognition" that makes Klein less popular than some psychoanalytic theorists in academic circles. She explains that it is genuinely difficult to understand Klein while simultaneously trying to learn or make intellectual progress, "the additional, unmediated charge of all that thematized bad affect (in Klein)- anxiety in particular- can be genuinely disabling to cognitive function" (p. 128). It is also important to understand that while the affective positions make their initial appearances in chronological order, they are not developmental stages. People never finish with one position and move on to the next, and features of early experiences in each position continue to impact the personality throughout the life span.

In current psychoanalytic contexts, a group of clinicians who refer to themselves as neo-Kleinians have tried to adapt Klein's theory and work to a contemporary setting (Schafer, 1997). These neo-Kleinians focus on the importance of the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions, and in understanding when a patient is lodged too deeply in the paranoid-schizoid or vacillating

with uncomfortable quickness between the two positions (Schafer, 2016, p. 411). Neo-Kleinian psychoanalysis focuses intensely on the patient's affect rather, for instance, than on reconstructing an allegedly real early experience. Neo-Kleinians also focus on the importance and omnipresence of the transference as fodder for an analysis. Neo-Kleinian analysis might take up internal experience much less than the patient's external life, believing that working in the transference is the most helpful way to address patients' symptoms and inhibitions.

Unlike Klein, neo-Kleinians do not ascribe such cognitive and psychic wherewithal to earliest infancy; rather, her statements about infancy are drawn on as metaphors for development writ large. Neo-Kleinians are also unlikely to work with overt statements about the body and about aggression of the tenor of Klein's own. Schafer (2016) explains, "…these Kleinians no longer consistently or prominently emphasize bodily organs as primitively conceived part-objects representing total relationships… They focus much more on what might be called organ modes such as taking in or emptying out, and also on functions such as thinking, understanding, connecting, remembering" (p. 413). Direct, constant and overt interpretation is more likely to be viewed now as intrusive and disruptive of the patient's natural psychic processes.

Klein's theory of affective positions calls into question the very idea that feeling good all the time and resolving conflict neatly is ultimately desirable. As Kristeva (2001) describes, "The dread of what lies at the origin became… a courageous coexistence with the negative" (p. 201). Negative or Kristeva does not imply bad feelings but, rather, a sense of absence, of that which is not. For Kristeva, the Kleinian subject must truck with the unattainable, the eternally and existentially unsatisfying.

Klein describes the process of maturation in terms of the capacity to move from paranoid-schizoid experiences, in which the world is filled with enemies that must be warded off or

defeated, to a depressive position in which the acceptance of the world's disappointments is paramount and enables not only love and forgiveness but also necessary ambivalence that allows acceptance of the real, "When judgement is not blurred by persecutory anxiety and idealization, a mature outlook is possible" (1963/1996, p. 273). Klauber 2009) offers insight into the significance of the Kleinian affective positions in the context of learning. According to Klauber, Klein uses feeding as a metaphor for "taking in love, care and comfort" (p. 307). In this framework, the paranoid-schizoid position is connected with attempts "physically and psychically to get (desirous and aggressive) feelings out of their minds" (p. 308). These attempts are part of the development of "the epistemophilic instinct" (p. 307), or desire to learn but simultaneously to ward off knowledge. The paradox that ensues from the individual's work within the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions is at the root of Kleinian theories of learning.

Invocations of Klein's work in educational discourse have been minimal. Two curriculum theorists who have worked with Klein explicitly are Tarc (2015) and Britzman (2016). Britzman's book on Klein is an overview of her life and work with an eye toward answering the general question of how Klein might be best applied in educational contexts. Britzman posits, "(Klein) tells us why and how denial of mental pain obliterates the second chance we have for thinking and symbolization. And in this sense Klein can become a key thinker of the guts of education" (p. 9). Britzman considers that Klein's most important contribution to the educational realm is the understanding of the importance of play, not just in the sense of playing with toys but in the sense of understanding that creative, affective and fantastical work expresses something important that can eventually help with learning, "Klein saw in symbolization the

emotional situation of learning. At first, learning will be equated with punishment… repressive education is a key factor in the child's intellectual inhibition" (p. 41).

Brtizman also interprets Klein as saying that the depressive and paranoid schizoid positions prime the individual for entering into learning relationships that, like psychoanalytical relationships in clinical settings, will inevitably echo what has come from primitive internal objects, "The teacher can resemble the child's phantasies of mother and father…" (p. 43). Britzman points to Klein's preoccupation with anxiety as an ever present affective state, one that can both motivate learning and embody the uncomfortable aspects of learning and resistance thereto, describing Klein's as "a theory of anxiety that is radically relational" and imbued in the transference (p. 53). Supplying close readings of Klein's clinical works that focus on children having articulated problems in school, Britzman shows Klein's strength at emphasizing affective dimensions of learning and the way relationships between students and teachers echo earlier experiences. This, Britzman contends, is hard for education as a field to hear because "Klein felt the enterprise of education was of a different order from the imperatives of psychoanalytic practice… psychoanalysis cannot assume that communication is conscious, that people know their emotional word, and that enlightenment resolves anxiety" (pp. 17-18).

Tarc (2013) also references Klein, though her book is about literacy and affective education more broadly and does not carry the pretense of biography. Tarc has a particular focus on the way Klein places primacy on the mother/infant dyad and the learning that takes place within this dyad about the nature of what Tarc calls the mother tongue. For Tarc, "Klein suggests that the maternal scene writing the infant's internal sense of the world prepares the psychical grounds for a socializing literacy" (p. 13). Tarc draws on Klein to show that literacy in the context of formal education must be understood as a transference relationship, one that echoes the child's earliest

experiences of symbolization and repeated affective encounters. Tarc reads Klein to show that a good early experience of mothering primes the child for later learning because learning, like nursing, involves the nurturing taking in of the other. For Tarc, children who struggle with literacy might benefit from therapeutic interventions that seek to recreate and repair the mother/infant dyad, reconstructing an object relationship that might lead to greater openness and humanity. She claims to "turn to the work of Klein in search of a hospitable pedagogy of literacy that supports the inhibited child's efforts to symbolize a sense of her shaky insides to others" (p. 16).

Like Britzman, Tarc relies on Klein to support the notion that learning is primarily and importantly an affective experience rooted in object relations (p. 31). She considers the possibility that contemporary education disregards the extent to which object relations theory might fruitfully be applied to support learning, and that this is a significant contemporary educational problem. Tarc places emphasis on Klein's "special gift" and how she "gave children words… to support them to develop an in-mind communication with their inner worlds" (p. 45).

Britzman and Tarc both make an important move when they argue for Klein's applicability to the educational realm, widening and diversifying the psychoanalytic canon used to support educational scholarship. However, both thinkers (though Tarc in particular) rely on a reading of Klein that overlooks her intensely negative side. Britzman is wedded to a vision of Klein that leads to understanding education in relation to freedom and learning as a mechanism via which imagination and freedom, as its corollary, might be achieved, "Klein's theories of thinking and her theory of play could lend to pedagogy a third space devoted to the order of imagination" (p. 9). She focuses on Klein's thoughts about love and the idea that "children were capable of creative reparation" (p. 57). Yet it is not at all clear in Klein's corpus that she valorized freedom

or saw it as even provisionally possible, and she certainly does not supply a definition of freedom that easily translates into an educational context. Freedom for Klein was not to be found in learning, for although her vision of sexual illumination might lead to the alleviation of some inhibiting anxieties, she also understood and saw in practice that new anxieties would inevitably develop, "even if the hitherto good and approved principles of education have achieved much for the cultural development of humanity, the upbringing of the individual has nevertheless remained, a the best pedagogues knew and know, an almost insoluble problem" (1945/1996, p. 46). Freedom in its political sense was not of interest to Klein, who believed that the human psychological state would always transcend sociopolitical context (1963/2011, p. 263).

Tarc's reading of Klein relies on a romantic vision of motherhood that is simply not part of Klein's actual theory. It is, as Tarc suggests, the case that Klein sees great import in the mother/infant dyad and that she developed a theory of object relations that sees constant repetition of primitive experience throughout an individual's life; again and again she points to "the specific factors which underlie... super-ego formation", tics, ego formation and identity more integratively (1945/1996, p. 414). At the same time, though, Klein saw infants as inevitably persecutory toward their mothers, filled with envy toward the feeding breast and persecutory fantasies related to the mother's insides (eg. 1963/1996, p. 176). The relationship, according to Klein, is at least partly if not primarily important precisely because it is not for the most part a beautiful one but rather one in which the basest aggressive and sexual fantasies might be repeatedly acted out over the course of development; "negative affect (can be traced) back to original objects and situations" (1932, p. 24). To consider literacy as a transference situation is not necessarily unfaithful to Klein, but to theorize this situation only in terms of love and mutual

empathic understanding, with the worst case scenario being the need for therapeutic reparation, indicates a misunderstanding of Klein's thought and an ignorance of what she thought was the utmost importance in staying with the negative transference (p. 21). For Klein, children are as likely to want to hurl feces at their mothers and destroy their insides as they are to want to cuddle up with a lovely picture book.

Intriguingly, it is not only in educational scholarship that Klein gets misappropriated in precisely this way. In her biography of Klein, Kristeva (2001) points to Klein's interesting potential to get interpreted in either a positive or a negative side (p. 201). On the positive side is the Klein of love, reparation and gratitude, the Klein who sees the real potential in object relations for a humanity imbued with mutual understanding and who views ambivalence as a path toward an almost transcendent forgiveness. On the negative side, though, is the Klein who writes of inescapable anxiety endemic to the human condition precisely because of the existence of death, who believes humans to be capable of tremendous narcissism and mutual injury, and who sees power relationships as representative of an omnipresent desire we all harbor to rob, overtake and murder one another. This is the "perpetual return of the negative and to the negative that functions as a sort of black hole at the center of her systematization" (p. 200); to understand the possibilities for applying Klein to the educational setting, we must look toward the negative as well as the positive. Kristeva in fact describes the implication of Klein's negative for cognition, "…the intrusion of the negative into reasoning itself: it is the negative of the drive, and then the negation of that first negation, constructed as a formulation that is itself always negative, that always see the worst" that makes Klein unique, fruitful and, for Kristeva at least, genius (p. 201).

Todd (2003) brings Kleinian theory to bear on educational thought, and though she does not work explicitly with the significance of the affective positions, she takes seriously Klein's articulation of aggression and dread. She explains, "…in order for the Kleinian subject to move beyond the despair of destruction… Klein is compelled to reconsider how guilt and love together structure the very possibility for human relationality" (p. 103). Todd draws on Klein to argue that guilt has been excessively problematized in education and especially in social justice education. Students' articulations of and avoidances of guilt are actually, Todd argues, sites for learning and relational growth. She maintains, "…Klein's text continually iterates that it is the presence of both love and guilt that is necessary for forming moral relationships with others" (p. 104). It is possible that Todd ascribes more interest in ethics to Klein's writing than Klein herself intended, but it is nonetheless important to note that she takes up Klein's important work on negative affect as relevant to teaching and learning.

Psychoanalysis and Learning

This section reviews literature from the last decade that deals specifically with the relationship between psychoanalysis and learning. Much of the relevant scholarship deals with psychoanalysis as a possible intervention in cases when students are resisting learning. Kindred (1999) describes learning as a "constructive and deconstructive process in which learners forge bridges between pasts and presents" (p. 198). Here, resistance to learning and working is seen as ineffably colored by the transference, rather than by cognitive capacities or features of curriculum. Bush (2005) similarly argues that resistances to learning and in fact most educational underachievement might be part of a transference dynamic in which the child reenacts a refusal to be fed and nurtured by the intrusive other.

Granger (2010) describes the desire to split affect from cognition, or feeling from thinking, as a Winnicottian phenomenon in which the maternal nurturer is disavowed by the cognitive child.

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Pitt and Rose (2007) also address this problematic split, remarking that it is not just troubles in learning but also ostensible successes in learning that can be informed by unconscious fantasies and transference dynamics. Archangelo (2010) further complicates this dynamic, showing how student resistances to and struggles with learning might lead to feelings of frustration and failure on the part of the teacher, who may enact these emotions in troubling ways. Finally, Wasaka (2010) draws on Klein to show how knowledge can lead to undesirable feelings and a sense of loss or terrible disappointment; as such, many individuals make conscious or unconscious decisions to ward off not only specific knowledge but the entire process or experience of learning. This body of scholarship dealing specifically with a psychoanalytic understanding of resistances to learning relies an acceptance of both the unconscious and the transference as relevant concepts in educational thought. While this work is not necessarily theoretically novel, it functions as a repertoire of scholarship that shows how psychoanalytic concepts might be meaningfully applied to understanding contemporary educational life and problems. In fact, Garfath (2015) has relied on Winnicott to question the idea that emotional outbursts and unruly classroom behavior are inevitably problematic; perhaps, Garfath maintains, a classroom environment that took the vicissitudes of play and its embedded aggression more seriously would require a more relaxed attitude toward that which is deemed chaotic and troublesome. Ryther (2016) concurs, drawing on literary and cinematic case studies to argue for the psychoanalytically informed significance of hate as a pedagogical motivator.

Some other contemporary work has tried to theorize a relevant relationship between psychoanalysis and learning. Baker (2006) wonders whether educational staffing issues might be considered psychoanalytically by understanding unconscious role rigidity that leads to particular assignments for individuals in schools and universities. Watkins (2008) writes about

the role of desire in learning through a psychoanalytic lens, arguing that psychoanalysis helps us see teachers' and students' bodies as relevant to learning. Watkins claims that "the mainstreaming of progressivist thought… has led to this view of student desire as an innate motivational force developing into a truism" (p. 117). Conducting a discourse analysis of syllabi, Watkins maintains the importance of "psychoanalytic conceptualizations of desire (that)… have a bodily dimension (though) the determination to act… is seen as a psychical process involving the vicissitudes of unconscious and conscious thought (p. 118).

Finally, and of particular relevance to this dissertation, a few contemporary scholars have tried to put psychoanalysis in conversation with demands for emotional work in today's schools. Notably, Cohen (2007), and SEL proponent, has advocated for more psychoanalytic involvement in the schools, though he stipulates that this involvement would involve an increase in the number of psychoanalysts doing therapeutic work with school children and writing social and emotional learning programs. Similarly, Hyman (2012) calls for psychoanalysts to get involved with making schools "holding environments," drawing on the mentalization theory of Peter Fonagy to argue that with psychoanalysis "security is bolstered, learning is optimized" (p. 206). These arguments are selective in precisely what psychoanalytic theorists they are willing to draw on and perhaps excessively limited or rigid in the role they define for psychoanalysis in the schools.

Kleinian Epistemology

Bion (1961) justifies the relationship between Kleinian psychoanalysis and theories of learning when he theorizes something he calls K, or knowledge of self and other. K exists in each person, but so does –K, or the firm desire not to know. For Bion, -K is an evasion of the truth exacerbated by anxiety and by attacks the individual makes on intolerable but internalized

knowledge; attacks on the self. Learning, here, does not mean imbibing further external material but rather allowing to be incorporated that which already exists in the self. In this sense, learning is not different from psychic survival and ego integrity. Bion also explains that it is via containment that integrity, thought, and knowledge become possible (Brown, 2010). His definition of containment, importantly, does not imply the regulation and diminution of unruly emotion but rather the reverie of the mother (understood both literally and metaphorically), which functions to translate the infant's feelings, whatever they are, back for himself and render them digestible. Bion calls this transformation the alpha function, which is a structural aspect of the self with its own capacity for communication (Brown, 2009). Bion argues that thought becomes possible when the infant (or patient, or student) can perform the alpha function himself. In other words, thinking is not the evacuation or dispersal of difficult and excess emotion but the awareness and palatability thereof.

Joseph (1987) shows how attention to and curiosity about self and other are also important in a Kleinian framework for learning. She explains how coping with internalized ambivalence allows anxiety to be assuaged just enough to make space for the feelings and experience of the other. For Joseph, a major portion of learning is openness to experiencing and interpreting the impact of projective identification, and it is thus crucial to understand and acknowledge the various ways the other affects the self. Experiencing a full range of emotion and remaining open to aggression and its vicissitudes is thus key, since if only certain emotions are tolerable, the other cannot necessarily be seen or known.

Segal (1955/1970) deals with a final Kleinian contribution to an understanding of learning when she explains the importance of symbolization. Working with Klein's depiction of the affective positions, Segal writes how an iterative, nonlinear aspect of development can be seen in

the capacity to represent objects via symbols, even when the objects are separate. In infancy, this begins with the capacity to represent the feeding breast via a thought, something that is not always possible but precipitates other thoughts and symbols. What Segal calls "symbol proper" occurs when the symbol "becomes available for use to displace aggression and libido away from the original object to others" (p. 154). This capacity to represent is of course necessary for most tasks in literacy and math, though it is rarely acknowledged in cognitively oriented treatises on these subject areas. More importantly here, though, is the understanding that anger, aggression, extreme excitement, and anxiety must be permitted existence if the compromise entailed in symbolization is to occur.

Conclusion

This literature review has offered a summary of scholarship around social and emotional learning as well as psychoanalytic literature that has relevance to the present study. The discussion portion of this dissertation will draw on the major concepts outlined in this review and contribute to scholarship around both SEL and psychoanalysis in education.

Reviewing the literature explicitly available around SEL reveals the entrenched nature of the discourse within education today. There is so little criticism of SEL and its associated practices, and the criticism that does exist does not come into conversation with teachers or children. SEL proponents and scholars are dogmatic in their views and their sense of rightness about the practice.

Psychoanalysis is not popular as a theoretical frame within educational scholarship. Psychoanalytic theories of affect and development portray such a different view of interiority from SEL literature, and there are many challenges inherent to bringing these perspectives into

conversation with one another. I draw on the theoretical material from this chapter frequently as

I discuss and draw conclusions from my results.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

       This dissertation aims to explore Social Emotional Learning both as a codified concept

and as it is applied in primary grade classrooms. The dissertation will triangulate data from the

following sources and methodologies:

- Critical Discourse Analysis of published SEL materials;

- Observations in two classrooms using SEL programs; and

- Phenomenological interviews with the teacher whose classrooms has been observed.

The research questions addressed via this design are:

1. How does SEL discourse and implementation define the child, the teacher, and their

relationship to one another?

2. What aspects of culture does SEL represent and reinforce?

3. How do SEL programs influence teachers and children when it comes to handling conflicts, negative and otherwise unruly feelings, or difficult issues that come up as part of classroom life?

This chapter will provide an overview of the theoretical basis for each of the methods described above and will rationalize the importance of triangulation in this study. The chapter will also give special attention to the ethical precepts for research involving children.

Triangulation as Methodology

A key aspect of my methodology is reliance on triangulation of data to increase the validity of my findings. O'Donoghue and Punch (2003) refer to triangulation as a "method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data" (p. 78). One data source will tell a particular story or suggest a particular set of interpretations; confirming these interpretations by using a variety of sources makes findings richer as well as more valid. Altrichter et. al. (1996) argue that triangulation "gives a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation" (p. 117). In this formulation, to triangulate is not to cross-check so much as it is to deepen and flesh out its findings.

Cohen and Manion (1986) support this view when they describe that triangulation tries to "map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint" (p. 254). Here, triangulation is something that can get at multiple perspectives and thus offer a more pluralistic iteration of truth in a social science. Though I recognize the importance of triangulation in pursuit of validity, it is in fact this complicating aspect of the approach that I find more important and appealing.

Lather (2007) describes the need to complicate data as an ethical imperative in educational research, "…Accounting for complexity and contingency without predictability is what now shapes our conversations and expands our idea of science as cultural practice and

practice of culture… the educational research of most use will be produced out of and because

of the paradoxes of projects that develop a better language to describe a more complicated

understanding of what knowledge means and does…" (p. 106). At the same time that

triangulation works toward the attainment of at least a provisional validity, then, it works against

the sense of knowledge as certain and "problematize(s) the researcher as 'the one who knows' "

(p. 11). Triangulating data means trying to discern similar strands across data sources and from

different methods, but it simultaneously means allowing for the complexity of what Lather might

call "transgressive validity" which 'foregrounds the insufficiencies of language and the

production of meaning-effects, produces truth as a problem… goes too far toward disruptive

excess, leaky, runaway, risky practice… works against constraints of authority via relay,

multiple openings, networks, complexities of problematics" (pp. 128-9). Triangulation ought not

work to simplify knowledge or streamline truth; its purpose as a methodology should be to

contribute to the understanding that the strictures positivism places on knowledge inevitably

silence some ways of knowing.

  The triangulation I will work with in this study is what Denzin (1970) calls

methodological triangulation, or the use and interpretation of data gathered via different

methods. The methods I rely on include Critical Discourse Analysis, classroom observations,

and phenomenologically informed teacher interviews.

Critical Discourse Analysis
  This section deals with the portion of the dissertation that takes on a Critical Discourse

Analysis of SEL materials. I outline Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodology, proceeding

with a description of the materials to be analyzed and ending with a description of precisely what

procedures I will follow in undertaking my analysis. The CDA portion of this design aims

primarily to address Research Question 1 but also gets at some aspects of Research Questions 2 and 3.

Rogers (2011) describes the underlying premise of critical discourse analysis, "critical perspectives require attention to discourse- language use, sign media, and the social worlds they both presuppose and bring into being" (p. 18). In other words, critical discourse analysis focuses on the understanding that language and other forms of discourse shape human consciousness at the same time that consciousness shapes discourse. Rogers specifies that CDA offers "a critical theory of the social world, the relationship of discourse in the construction and representation of this social world, and a methodology that allows them to describe, interpret and explain such relationships" (p. 20). To understand culture and, in the case of this dissertation, curriculum, is by necessity to understand discourse. Critical discourse analysis believes that this understanding must be intertwined with the sense that power dynamics are always at play in discourse. When we look at the meaning of a text under a CDA framework, we must always keep power in mind, considering who constructed the text, who the intended audience is, and how the text portrays or might be interpreted by different readers. Critical discourse analysis presupposes practice as part of text, and this presupposition impacts the way the analyst reads.

Though CDA has consistent underlying precepts, it is not a monolithic or rigid methodology. Gee (2014) focuses on the aspects of CDA that involve careful analysis of language. According to Gee, people conduct most communication with "figured worlds," or typical stories in our minds, and these figured worlds undergird most of our assumptions. Gee finds that the portion of a clause that is situated first indicates what the speaker assumes, or what is part of his figured world. CDA might unpack this sort of grammar, which Gee refers to as "thematized." By focusing not only on language at the word level but also on the "utterance

token," or how language is situated, Gee thinks we can achieve an understanding of how language constitutes particular social practice and what these social practices might imply for status and power, among other things. For Gee, CDA must focus intently on language and as what language renders significant, novel, or assumed. To carry out CDA with validity, the analyst must undertake an ever-widening of context for each situated utterance; only when the context seems to make little difference is the analysis valid.

Fairclough (2010) differs somewhat from Gee in that his focus is at least as much on the enactment of text as on the situation of language within text. It is because of the social effect of the text, as well as the ways the social worlds affect texts, that CDA is particularly relevant to educational research, Fairclough argues. The way that text is performed in the world constitutes a type of learning, and CDA must therefore address learning and the concept of curriculum as part of its work. Fairclough explains that most texts, and perhaps especially most educational texts, are simultaneously structural and interactional. Therefore, whereas Gee focuses primarily on the structural elements of text for critical analysis, Fairclough considers it equally important to focus on how text is performed. Fairclough also emphasizes the concept of interdiscursivity. He defines this as one discourse becoming embedded in another and explains that the researcher working with CDA must pay particular attention to interdiscursivity since its complexities can make it very challenging to code. Methodologically, Fairclough suggests a system in which the researcher begins with three different coding categories, like genre, discourse, and voice, then codes for all three within one text to enable attention to overlapping discursive categories.

Finally, Kress (1990; 2011) focuses on the idea of discourse as much more than language and advocates for educational researchers to attend to multimodality in CDA work. Multimodality assumes a variety of means for representation, including images, gesture, and any

other sort of sign making. Of the three CDA theorists cited here, Kress understands text most broadly and reminds researchers that language is not the only important unit of analysis. Design for Kress is not necessarily secondary to rhetoric in significance. Kress emphasizes the need for the CDA researcher to consider the epistemology and expression of motivation, interest and knowledge that goes into every construction of a sign.

My analysis will borrow elements from Gee, Fairclough and Kress. Like Gee, I consider the methodological approach of widening contexts "to see what information and values are being left unsaid or effaced in a piece of language" important and relevant (2013, p. 5). My CDA will thus attend to the situation of language and what it says about the assumptions and figured worlds of its constructors. Fairclough's emphasis on the performativity of text is also especially important in a CDA of curricular documents, since these texts are created with performative intent. Finally, Kress' interest in multimodality is also of great import for this study. I will consider not only the language in the texts I analyze but the ways that they are designed, the images they incorporate, and the use they make of varying symbol systems to more thoroughly unpack and convey their significance.

I will perform CDA on three different sets of texts for this portion of my data collection. The texts are:

-Official Massachusetts documents regarding SEL in public schools, including the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's "Guidelines on Implementing Social and Emotional Learning Curricula" (2011) and the Massachusetts "Preschool and Kindergarten Standards in the Domains of Social-Emotional Development" (2015)

-Materials from the Responsive Classroom approach to SEL, including the RC website (2016) and one key text from each of the four domains that RC defines as integral to its approach

-Materials from the Second Step SEL curriculum, including the Second Step Website (2016) and all of the curricular materials for the program in first grade.

Here, I describe my rationale for selecting each of these text sets and my procedures for analysis of each text set. Since the texts are structured quite differently, the units for analysis will also vary, but the strategies for interpretation will ultimately align.

Rogers (2011) notes that CDA in educational research has tended to work either in the domain of specific policy analysis or in analyzing discourse that occurs within the intimate context of a classroom. In analyzing curricular documents as texts, my work will deviate somewhat from these two categories. However, the principles that guide CDA in other genres continue to apply.

Massachusetts Documents

Because the empirical portion of this work takes place in Massachusetts, analyzing state documents pertaining to SEL is important. Blad (2016) explains that increasing numbers of states are expressing interest in adopting discrete SEL standards rather than simply incorporating SEL concepts and skills into other sets of standards across the curriculum. In this sense, Massachusetts has been progressive in establishing a set of statewide guidelines, publishing pre-K and kindergarten standards, and commissioning a policy brief that looks into the role of and purported need for a more standardized approach to SEL across the state (ASCD, 2015). These documents are also of interest because they are freely accessible online and presumably provide a reference point to teachers and administrators in the state hoping to understand the role of the

school in SEL. The texts for analysis in this section are composed almost exclusively of language, and I analyze them in sentence-long units.

Responsive Classroom

Responsive Classroom is one of the most ubiquitously used SEL approaches in public education in the United States (RC, 2016; CASEL, 2016).   Founded in 1982, Responsive Classroom trains teachers, school administrators and sometimes parents in methods for behavior management, academic instruction, and teaching emotions in the classroom. The program has an impressive reach; each year they train more than 10,000 teachers and administrators, and they work in Canada, the UK and India as well as 40 U.S. States and the District of Columbia (RC, 2016). My decision to work with RC mostly has to do with precisely its ubiquity, since the analysis of a program with this reach provides more opportunity for interpretation of the performative aspects of curriculum.

RC is also important because it is not precisely a curriculum but rather an "approach" to SEL. Immediately, then, CDA of RC documents answers to the potential argument that perhaps SEL ought to be taught not as a codified, step by step curriculum but rather as a sort of toolkit that teachers can draw on differentially depending on the situation and their needs. Analyzing RC as a toolkit, rather than a curriculum, will help with the unpacking of not just specific, daily lesson plans but underlying assumptions and ideals.

However, because RC is organized complexly, it was difficult to pinpoint texts for analysis. I chose to focus on the website with the understanding that it is one of the first aspects of the program with which a teacher will interface, and it provides insight into the program on multiple levels (eg., monetary, curricular, epistemological, design). RC also claims to focus on four domains, "engaging academics, positive community, effective management (and)

developmental awareness" (RC, 2016). Analyzing one text from each of these domains helped me understand what RC is attempting to construct as knowledge about SEL. Within each domain, I analyze the text RC calls its best-seller, with the idea that these products represent the key ideas of RC most clearly and also that they are presumably the texts most frequently accessed by teachers and administrators. These texts are, respectively, *Teacher Language for Engaged Learning Kit* (a book, a DVD, and several pamphlets); *The Joyful Classroom* (a book); *Responsive School Discipline* (a book); and *Child Development Pamphlets* (a set of pamphlets).

Because these texts are long, complex and multimodal, I worked with longer units of analysis, operating at the paragraph level. I coded for genre, discourse and voice as well as for design and images, taking seriously Kress' point that multimodality is key in understanding the performativity of discourse. Further, because these texts represent only a small fraction of what RC publishes, and even an analysis of the website is complicated by the nearly hourly updates to the various blogs and teacher testimonies it includes, this section of the discourse analysis will necessitate a discussion of limitations in scope and temporality.

Second Step

Second Step is also used ubiquitously and has been in publication for twenty years (CASEL, 2016; Committee for Children, 2016). In Massachusetts, Second Step has been adopted by a diverse array of districts, ranging from affluent suburbs like Newton to towns like Holyoke with high poverty quotients and performance levels so low that the state has put them in receivership. The publishers of Second Step have also been involved in lobbying for pro-SEL legislation in Massachusetts. As with RC, it is Second Step's ubiquity and relevance in Massachusetts that led me to include this curriculum in the study.

Second Step also presents a counterpoint to RC because of its very different structure. Though Second Step does have an articulated underlying approach, which I unpack via my analysis of the website, it also publishes a specific curriculum organized by grade level. Therefore, it enables an examination of how SEL can look when taught in a carefully structured and codified way rather than via an approach or toolkit frame.

In addition to analyzing the website, which offers a sense of the beliefs of the Second Step program and again represents the first interface that an interested educator or administrator would likely have with Second Step, I analyze the Classroom Kit for grade one. This includes 22 photo-lesson cards, a teacher's notebook, letters for families, classroom posters, listening rules cards, two puppets, a lesson DVD and a CD of music. I decided to work with the first grade materials rather than a different year for the reason that the empirical portion of this study takes place in grades k-1. I am also interested in first grade in that it is not yet covered by the SEL standards in Massachusetts and is, anecdotally, often a year when teachers struggle with the transition from a more play- and emotions-based curriculum to intense pressure for rigorous academics, the inculcation of literacy, and a more rigid scholastic structure.

As with the other sets of texts, I coded Second Step texts with an eye toward genre, discourse, voice, design and images. I generated codes based on these categories and offer examples representing each of these codes, and theoretical interpretations of my examples, in my analysis.

Limitations

The CDA portion of this dissertation has limitations both in process and scope. First of all, CDA can only provide a limited window into how a particular text will be read or performed in context. While I acknowledge this significant limitation, I also contend that my dissertation

partially addresses it by triangulating these findings with empirical data from observations and interviews. The issue of scope is more pressing. There are at least 50 SEL programs that call themselves "evidence-based" (CASEL, 2016), and individual towns, districts, universities and states develop SEL programs and toolkits frequently. While RC and Second Step represent two different kinds of SEL programs, they cannot be taken as representative of SEL writ large. In part, this is why my literature review takes seriously a wide range of scholarly work around SEL and evaluations of diverse SEL programs and practices. However, in conducting this CDA, it is also important to simply acknowledge the limitations and be clear about the fact that even these programs are only being partially analyzed; by no means can their analysis stand in for a comprehensive read of everything that is being published (and sold) under the heading of SEL today.

Classroom Observation

The second kind of data informing my findings comes from observations in classrooms using SEL programs or curricula. The purpose of the classroom observations is multifold:

- Working in classrooms presents a unique opportunity for the researcher and readers to understand something about the daily experience of teachers and children in the SEL-managed classroom. This is a major gap in current SEL research, and this portion of the dissertation attempts to fill the gap. It is difficult to get a real sense of what SEL instruction looks like among young children without offering observational data that documents some of these moments.

- Children's language and behaviors during SEL instruction can be documented to help answer Research Question 3, How do SEL programs influence teachers and children

when it comes to handling conflicts, negative and otherwise unruly feelings, or difficult issues that come up as part of classroom life?

- Classroom observations can be read and coded to gain insight into what aspects of culture are represented via SEL curriculum and instruction. Moments of synchrony between children and teachers as well as moments of asynchrony help illustrate some of the cultural norms that SEL enacts as well as how they play out in the lives of children and children's relationships with teachers.

- Classroom observations provide empirical evidence to draw on in informing teacher interviews about SEL practices.

Challenges

The observational portion of this dissertation posed many challenges that I did not foresee.

First of all, recruiting teachers and children for participation in this study was very challenging. I began with the following inclusion criteria:

- The teacher must work in public school, since I am especially interested in how public school demographics are addressed via SEL programming and discourse.

- The teacher must teach in grades K, 1 or 2. I make this specification partly in order to narrow the age band of children I am observing, and partly because these children are more likely to be in early stages of exposure to SEL programming.

- The teacher must use an articulated SEL approach or a specific SEL curriculum in their classrooms.

To recruit teachers, I used social media, mass emails, discussions with principals and other administrators, and personal conversations with contacts at schools of education. I estimate that I made contact with about 300 teachers via these efforts.

Initially, six teachers responded to my recruitment efforts. However, three of their principals declined to allow them to participate. The reasons given were, respectively:

- A sense that there were already too many researchers working in classrooms at the school and that parents would not want to sign more consent forms;

- A concern that behavior was too significant of a problem in the class in question, that there were "SEL emergencies" in the classroom daily, and that therefore parents would be too sensitive about allowing children to participate in the study; and

- A similar concern that the emotional well-being of children in the classroom was too precarious and that research might expose their lack of well-being in a way parents would feel uncomfortable with.

The fourth teacher did get permission from the principal but then dropped out of contact.

The two remaining teachers in the study are Jeanette and Samantha. Jeanette was a friend and colleague of Lara, who participated in the pilot study for this dissertation. I had some contact with her when I was working in Lara's classroom, and she was familiar with my observational style and protocols. I met Samantha on social media, and she was motivated to participate primarily out of a sense that she needed help and "an extra body" in her classroom during SEL instruction.

In addition to recruitment, I struggled with obtaining consent for participation in the study, particularly in Samantha's class. I received consent from both participating principals and

teachers, but few parents responded to the forms I sent home in Samantha's class. This is discussed in more detail during chapter 5.

Protocols

Establishing protocols for the classroom observations was complex in part because I got very different parental consent numbers in each of the classrooms, and in part because the rhythm of each classroom was very different; this becomes apparent when I present the results of the observations in chapter 5.

I conducted ten observations in each of the participating classrooms. In Jeanette's classroom, observations took place during morning meeting, and in Samantha's, they took place during a Second Step block in the afternoons. Each observation lasted for approximately one hour.

Initially, I planned to follow consistent protocols for my observations in each of these classrooms, but the reality of each classroom's life and the different percentages of consenting parents obviated this possibility. In each class, however, I focused on documenting teacher language, student language that responded directly to the teacher, and student behavior that indicated something about a response to the SEL programming taking place. I also focused on key incidents, such as obvious moments of conflict and upset. In Samantha's class, where I had fewer participating students, I followed the body movements and behaviors of my participants closely even when they were not speaking. I took notes on a laptop while simultaneously recording each classroom using an audio app on my phone. I subsequently transcribed these recordings into the notes I took. At times, students in each classroom grew so interested in talking with me or touching my phone and computer that I chose to take a break from taking notes in order to engage with them.

The students in each class were told that I was there to learn about their classroom. I gained assent from all participating students. However, I had less opportunity than I initially hoped to understand what my presence meant to students. Undoubtedly, it influenced their behavior somewhat, but in each class, they seemed to grow more accustomed to me with each passing week and mostly went about their business as usual. Students in Samantha's class were much more interested in talking with me directly than students in Jeanette's class, and I began coming early to sit with them during snack so that we could make time for more of these conversations.

As I conducted my observations, I found myself consistently privileging language in what I documented. In part, this is because SEL itself privileges language, and the participating teachers paid more attention to children's language than their other modes of expression. With each passing observation, though, I became more careful to attend to other kinds of communication, including play, writing, gesture, and interpersonal relational styles. I noted children's words, but also their body movements, gestures, facial expressions, and play.

Following each observational session, I wrote a research memo documenting what I noticed as well as my affective response to the session. Because it was difficult for me to conduct this work in a vacuum, I wrote my memos in the form of letters to my sister. I did not send her the letters, though I discussed their content frequently with her. The memos were especially important in my work in Samantha's classroom, because the classroom had a more chaotic and difficult to capture feel than Jeanette's. Also, though, the extent to which Samantha's students and her school were blatantly impacted by poverty was deeply upsetting to me, and I used the memos in part of a way to make sense of my perhaps naïve and privileged reactions. Further, there is no question that I became attached to my research subjects- the

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children as well as their teachers- and the memos provided a way for me to reflect on these

attachments and whether and how they might influence my observations and interpretations. The

memos, together with the observational data itself, inform my discussion in Chapter 7.

Analysis

Subsequent to the series of observations in each class, but prior to the interviews with

participating teachers, I conducted two rounds of coding on my running records. The first round

was in vivo coding based on short phrases, words, or transcriptions of gesture, facial expression

and body language; the purpose of this round was to establish categories for understanding the

data using participants' own words and other modes of communication (Saldana, 2013, p. 45).

Round two was oriented toward understanding broader categories of analysis and bringing

observation data into interplay with the other data sources in this study, as well as understanding

it in light of the theoretical frameworks underpinning the project (p. 149). I interpret and present

based on the findings from the second round of coding. Finally, each participating teacher had

an opportunity to review my findings and comment on my codes and interpretations, both in an

effort at achieving validity via member check and as part of an ethical approach that takes

seriously subject involvement in interpretation and report. However, neither teacher took

advantage of this opportunity; both said they were too busy and trusted me to get it right. The

lack of a member check is another important limitation to my findings.

Phenomenologically Informed Interviews

Subsequent to my series of observations, I conducted two interviews with each

participating teacher. We scheduled the interviews according to teachers' convenience,

interviews were conducted in the teachers' classrooms, with many follow-up questions and

answers via email. The interviews were designed to address Research Questions 1 and 3 as well

as to get at the teacher's own views on Research Question 2. The interviews were

phenomenologically informed in that they aimed to gather descriptive and detailed data, and questions were catered to explore teachers' experiences of the observations.

Seidman (2013) suggests that to use phenomenological interviewing as qualitative research, the researcher should conduct a series of three interviews with participating subjects. Interviews focus respectively on the participant's life history, the details of the experience of interest, and reflections on the meaning of the experience. While my interviews borrowed from Seidman's framework, whose tripartite structure aims to address validity concerns and ensure greater depth in the interview, I conducted only two interviews with each participating teacher for three different reasons. The first is practical: the study already asks quite a bit of a teacher's time, especially since the research questions are only partly oriented toward understanding teachers and teaching and focus more intensively on the experiences of children. Asking teachers to make time for three interviews seemed both excessive and limiting; only teachers with a very high level of motivation for reflection and participation in scholarship would agree to engage. Second, as indicated in the literature review, a great deal of the extant research on SEL focuses on teacher reports on and reactions to student behavior. While I consider teacher reactions and reflections important, my methodological goal is partially to move away from the sense that teachers are knowing subjects when it comes to social and emotional development. Dedicating extensive time and space to teacher interviews and the analysis of teachers' own experiences would run the risk of inadvertently positioning teachers as experts in contrast to their students. Third, and finally, juxtaposed against a psychoanalytic framework, phenomenological interviews are limited and place excess privilege on language and consciousness. Seidman's framework is premised on the idea that individuals know their own minds and are able to communicate experience via language; I find this framework provisionally helpful but ultimately

problematic. In part, this is why interview data must be triangulated with other findings; however, I also think limiting the amount of time devoted to the interview helps reify the sense that lived experience can only be communicated consciously through language to a very limited degree.

With those caveats, though, the phenomenologically informed interviews provide an important set of material to work with. The purpose of the interviews was to understand teachers' experiences of the SEL curriculum or approach they are working with and their understanding of their own behaviors during the sessions I observed. Hayashi and Tobin (2015) employ this method when they ask "teachers… to explain the thinking behind the practices" (p. 17). These authors make the important claim that teacher behavior happens for a reason, often cultural and sometimes personal, and that teachers can make use of the interview to explicate their own motivation. The assumption here is twofold: first, teachers will be able to lend an interpretive quality to observational data by explaining at least the conscious motivation behind their data and language. Second, teachers will benefit from the opportunity to reflect on their practice.

The first two interview questions were predetermined:

--Describe how you came to use the SEL curriculum or approach in your classroom.

--How do you feel the use of SEL impacts your practice and your relationship with your students?

Subsequent interview questions were catered toward reflection on observation experiences.

I made an audio recording of each interview. Subsequent to the interview, following Seidman's framework, I wrote a research memo that records my own interview impressions.

Then, I created a full transcription of the interview. Using Saldana's (2013) approach to coding, I coded the transcription twice. The first round focused on words, short phrases and sentences that are relevant to the Research Questions. The second round was used to generate categories that frame my presentation of the interview findings.

Ethics

I address a separate section of this chapter to ethics for at least two reasons. First of all, I consider the articulation of an ethical stance obligatory to any research project and perhaps particularly to one that entails empirical research involving subjects, like children, who are too often marginalized and whose citizenship and subjectivity is frequently taken for granted (Tisdall, Davis, and Gallagher, 2009). Second, some of the ethical considerations in my study have informed aspects of my methodology and interpretation. In this sense, my work follows the path set forth by feminist researchers who consider ethics a live and informative facet of scholarship, rather than merely a stagnant doctrine underlying study design or bureaucratic processes (Lather, 2009; Fine, 2007).

The language I use in describing my research is intertwined with its ethics. The distinction between research on children and research with children, for instance, might at first blush seem only of superficial import, but these different syntactical arrangements implicitly make substantial claims about the relationship between researcher and subject. Hunleth (2011) has shown how the preposition at play in describing "child-oriented" research has deep implications for the power dynamics at play in such work. Yet Hunleth's choice to work with orientation connotes a sense of moving toward and constantly seeking to meet the child that is also problematic (Ahmed, 2014). Therefore, when discussing my questions broadly I will use the somewhat tedious but less circumscribed phrase, research involving children. Children might be

involved educationally in various ways: as passive subjects or agentive participants, for instance.

When I set out to conduct this research, I considered four major ethical precepts that it is incumbent on the researcher involving children to follow. Here, I describe each of these theoretical precepts, showing how my study does and does not live up to them and offering a brief discussion as to why. Then, I discuss an unanticipated ethical issue that arose as I conducted by empirical work.

Embedding Questions About Assumptions

Researchers who seek to learn from, with, or about child subjects must not take definitions of childhood for granted, and ought to consider precisely what assumptions are guiding research questions and design. This means, foremost, embedding questions about assumptions. To ethically ask a question about children, researchers must explain what we mean by setting children apart as a group to be studied. Lahman (2008) describes the ways that researchers' relationships to children are inevitably affected by our own memories of childhood and understandings of what it means to now be other than child, arguing that to ethically conduct research involving children, we must consider what children really are to us. Most frequently, researchers who do work involving children make assumptions about childhood as a provisional state in which cognitive and emotional wherewithal is more limited than it is in adulthood (Miller, 2008). A methodology that embeds questions about such assumptions calls on theoretical work to justify its definition of childhood or children and allows for differential interpretations of findings under different presumptive frameworks. Such a methodology questions whether its own pattern of inquiry, specific design, and interpretive lens can be used as well if the developmental and economic assumptions, eg. that children are in a state of becoming

and adults have already become, and that children are ultimately the property of their parents or legal guardians, that tend so often to be made about children were radically revised.

My decision to obtain informed assent from child participants in my study was an outgrowth of this ethical stance. While HHS and the UNH IRB both require assent from child research subjects, neither specifies the need for children to be informed about the nature and purpose of the study. Instead, informed parental consent is generally deemed sufficient to allow for child assent (HHS, 1993). Since consent is a legal construct and people under the age of 18 cannot provide consent, my dedication is to obtaining informed assent from participating children. Sumsion et. al. (2014) have adequately pointed out some of the challenges in obtaining informed assent from children, especially if children cannot read, struggle to make sense of abstract linguistic constructs, and are unaware of the implications participation in research may or may not have for their own lives. As a way of addressing these concerns, subsequent to obtaining informed consent from parents, I explained my project to potential child subjects, including reading them my research questions in unadulterated language as well as in modified language. I offered them the opportunity to ask questions. Finally, I met with potential child subjects individually and ask them whether they agree to participate in the research; I allowed them to sign assent documents, draw an icon of their choosing on assent documents, or decline assent according to their desires. Just as parents and teachers could choose to opt out of the study at any point, so too could children decline to participate.

In practice, the children who I gathered to discuss the project and ask for assent had few questions. They seemed surprised and possibly confused by the explanation of research, and in each case, their teacher interrupted me multiple times to alter the language to something simpler and diluted. I never reached a full point of comfort with the children's understanding of the

research; however, I wonder how many researchers involving adults truly believe their subjects comprehend the scope of their studies. All of the children did assent; again, I remain uncertain as to whether they actually felt empowered to say no, or if the culture of compliance they participate in so regularly basically ensured their assent.

Work Within Institutional Structures

There are so many different institutions that guide the way that educational research involving children unfolds. Three of the major relevant institutional structures are Institutional Review Boards, schools and other formal educational settings, and the family (HHS, 1993; Suissa and Ramaekers, 2012). My project works within the confines of these institutions but simultaneously resists them in pursuit of a broader and more nuanced educational project.

It is important to work within the confines of the IRB not because it has some sort of ultimate handle on what constitutes ethical research, but because work within its structures represents the only available codified system of mutual checks on the researcher's struggle for ethical behavior and, simultaneously, it is at this juncture the best system for ensuring the possibility that research reaches scholarly or public discourse communities (Leonard, 2007). My protocols received IRB approval from UNH.

At the same time that researchers must work within the IRB, though, we have an obligation to resist some of the structures that make it problematic. We would do well as a scholarly community to ask how our research designs might differ, for instance, if there were children participating in IRB reviews. Heath, Crow and Wiles (2007) interestingly argue for this process as one of negotiation, in which institutionalized policies, researchers and children are in constant conversation about what standards might be fruitful and reasonable. It is my conviction that children, were they allowed, would want a stronger voice in understanding and responding to

research design that led me to create a multi-faceted informed assent process. I also intentionally designed my observations to be minimally intrusive into children's school days, when they are already frequently negotiating myriad demands and pressures. Finally, I engaged in open and ongoing communication with the IRB about my feeling that children should be allowed to access my data and to have their assent formally documented; to my mind, these conversations are part of the broader ethical approach underlying my work (Leonard, 2007).

Educational research involving children often takes place within schools or other formal educational institutions. The way the public school is mandated to operate has practical and significant implications for the degree of freedom with which I could pursue inquiry; for instance, time was limited, vast numbers of gatekeepers had to consent to my work, and SEL is currently understood as something transcending critique. However, to work outside of these confines is inevitably to exclude a significant portion of the population from adequate representation in research. Harrell et. al. (2000) have shown just how difficult it is to do rigorous and ethical research in a school setting. For instance, it may be practically impossible to expect much participation from teachers and students in a public school during the school day, because the day is narrowly circumscribed and each hour given so much assignation and surveillance that there is little room for work that escapes these strictures. Esbensen et. al. (2008) have shown that parental consent is especially challenging to get when researchers work via public schools; this certainly bore out in my work with Samantha's class. Yet to valorize the precepts of particular methodologies over the realities of institutional life is to confine research to work outside of the school day or outside of the public sector, and this problematically narrows the population (eg. Moss, 2014).

I am dedicated to working within public school, but my work also resists it via ongoing conversations with teachers and administrators that help draw and sustain attention to the assumptions that underlie their days. David and Alldred (2001) call this working toward "educated" rather than "informed" consent and imagine school-based research in which the educational aspects of such work are integrated into the consent process. I documented all of my communications with participating teachers about scheduling and other logistical issues for reflection and use in future projects. Resistance is also embedded in my writing such that the project considers the ways the institution is affecting my results.

The institution of the family is a difficult one to problematize in part because so many children rely on their families for physical, emotional and economic safety and could not imagine it any other way (Suissa and Ramekears, 2012). Ethical research involving children must recognize that the family is a socially constructed institution that dictates certain truisms about children's lives (Lesko, 2004; Gilbert, 2012). I work with the understanding that families exert tremendous power over children's realities and that children will likely carry some of their experiences within the family to the research setting. At the same time, I question the valorization of the family and resist the economic assumptions currently underlying it. This questioning also leads me to prioritize informed assent from children alongside consent from families (ERIC, 2014; Brooks, Te Riele, and Maguire, 2014).

Positionality

It is the obligation of the researcher to define and continuously re-define her own positionality in relation to the work. It is only by defining positionality that we can resist power structures that see researcher as unrealistically omnipotent and omniscient (Lather, 1991; Behar, 1996). In the case of research involving children, it is important for researchers to define our

positionality in relation to children. For instance, do we consider ourselves former children (Lahman, 2008)? If we consider childhood something we have definitively relinquished, how does this inform the way we conduct and interpret our research? Do we live with children in our home, or have we in the past? Do we walk through groups of children, past schools, past bus stops and playgrounds each day? Barker and Smith (2001) have shown how researchers' personal experiences with children might affect research design and interpretation.

Though I have included a subjectivity statement in my introduction, I do not consider it a final and static articulation of my positionality. Rather, I constantly analyzed and reconstructed my subjectivity in relation to the work in my research subjects, personal reflections, and my own psychoanalysis. This live articulation of positionality is an important part of my own ethical stance and will doubtless problematize some structures of academic work such as, for instance, the rarely spoken assumption that the researcher's own family life exists separately from his or her own work. It is precisely by troubling these assumptions that children's voices can become more fully present in work that purports to represent them.

A Person Among People

The preceding tenets represent ethical thought that I did prior to conducting research and then attempted to carry out in my practice. What I did not anticipate, however, was the issue of how children and to some extent teachers might relate to me as simply another person in their daily lives and world. Many qualitative researchers have discussed the complexities of ethics as well as validity when it comes to observational research (eg. Behar, 1997; Lofland et.al., 2006; Lather and Smithers, 1997). McCoy (2012) argues for complicating qualitative research via a "methodology of encounters," in which accidents, "white noise," and dazzling impressions and behavior become part of the project.

When I entered each of the classrooms where I observed, part of my ethical obligation became one of basic humanity, being a person among people in a particular, coded space. Sometimes, this came to mean releasing the more rigorous aspects of research protocol to, for instance, help a child tie a shoe or let him lean on my body while he told me about a movie he saw last night. These moments happened much more often in Samantha's class than in Jeanette's, but once I started noticing them in one classroom, I became alert to their more subtle iterations in the other as well. These "accidents" or "encounters" often meant missing something else that was happening in the classroom. For instance, one of Samantha's students, whose parents had not consented for participation in research, frequently approached me and asked directly for attention. Each time that this happened, I was uncertain: was the ethical obligation to ignore the student because their parents had not given consent? To attend to them but simply not document the encounter? To alert Samantha to the ostensible request for adult closeness and attention?

I usually chose to be with the student without documenting, though I often wrote about these interactions in my research memos. Even as I include this quandary here, I am aware of how the lack of consent detracts from the authenticity and even urgency of these encounters. I also know how spending time with a child who explicitly requests attention can sometimes mean not giving the same time to children who only ask implicitly or, in this case, not noticing other things happening in the classroom. While I have no answers to this conundrum, raising it as a real ethical dilemma in research involving children feels crucial.

Further, I had interactions with some of the children as well as the adults in my project by virtue of being part of a fairly small geographic community. After finishing my final observation in Jeanette's class, I figured out that three of the students would be in an extracurricular summer program with my daughter, and I frequently ran into many of these students and their families in

local parks and stores over the course of my observations. Do these encounters impact the reports I make, the interpretations of results? Certainly they do not directly disrupt observational protocol, but they lend a certain self consciousness, a deeper awareness of the children's wholeness in life and of my own sometimes very harried, unprofessional and proximate daily existence. In the midst of the interview process, Jeanette had emergency surgery and a complicated recovery process. I sent her a get well card and brought her a meal to freeze. There is certainly some possibility that these actions influenced the interview process, but to not do anything could also have had an impact.

I never saw a student from Samantha's classroom outside of our observational times, and this, too, speaks to a socioeconomic and cultural gulf between the students and me, one that doubtless influences my interpretations at least as much as my encounters with Jeanette's students do. I did, however, see Samantha once. I was with my children at a local indoor park, and as I chased them around crowded Astroturf, I noticed her in animated conversation with a big group of family or friends. Her toddler son was in her lap, and she was nursing him. She looked relaxed and happy as she waved to me. I share this story simply because it was a different picture of Samantha from any that I saw in the classroom or in our interviews, and the fact of this accident undoubtedly influenced my way of seeing Samantha.

As I approached particularly the interview and observation portions of this study, though to a certain extent also the Critical Discourse Analysis, my understanding of my role as a researcher evolved. I oriented myself simultaneously toward exploring my research questions and simply to remaining alert to what I was seeing and hearing in different research sites. I found that an increasing openness and availability to my research subjects sometimes confused

my capacities for coding and analysis, but it ultimately enriched and complicated the overall

nature of my work.

Chapter Four: Critical Discourse Analysis Results

This chapter presents the results of a Critical Discourse Analysis of ten SEL documents,

including Massachusetts state guidelines, representative materials from Responsive Classroom,

and representative materials from Second Step. I begin by offering a descriptive summary of

each of the texts. I then illustrate the categories derived from my coding of the texts.

Text Descriptions

MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Guidelines on Implementing Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curricula

This nine-page document has an intended audience of school administrators and

educational policy makers but is in the public domain. The document is text only and is written

in an outlined form, with sections devoted respectively to SEL and the law, SEL skills, benefits

of SEL including evidence-based instructional practice, schoolwide implementation guidelines, and professional development recommendations, coordinating with community resources and services, collaboration with families, and policies and protocols.

The Guidelines define SEL largely in relation to anti-bullying. While the guidelines themselves do not function as legislation, they explain that the 2010 passage of anti-bullying legislation required DESE to create the guidelines. Quoting extensively from the CASEL website, the guidelines define SEL goals as self awareness, self management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

In explaining the benefits of SEL, the guidelines reference, in this order: academic achievement, healthy personal and social development, and improved school climate. They cite research stating that strong SEL instruction will reduce negative behaviors as well as emotional distress. The guidelines emphasize a need for age-appropriate and interactive instruction, advocating that school leaders and policy makers create comprehensive initiatives allowing for continuity across schools and districts with regard to SEL. The guidelines end by acknowledging important support from CASEL, UCLA, and unnamed individual schools and districts within MA.

Responsive Classroom Materials
Website
The landing page of the Responsive Classroom website includes a slide bar with images of children smiling at their desks and in meeting circles. One photo shows children with their hands raised, eagerly watching their teacher. Another shows a small circle of children bent into each other in earnest conference. The images move quickly across the middle of the page. All of the images that show groups of kids have kids who physically appear to be different genders

and have different skin colors. The landing page defines the Responsive Classroom Approach, "Responsive Classroom partners with schools to ensure a high-quality education for every child, every day." It explains that the program is researched based, and that "we believe that a high-quality education for every child is built on the foundation of a safe and joyful learning community."

The landing page prominently features links that allow visitors to register for nearby workshops, including, currently, one on self-assessment and goal setting, one on using RC in middle school, and one on RC for music, art and PE teachers. The menu at the top of the page includes links to an about page, an information library, on-site services, more workshops, conferences, and the RC store. The video emphasizes the four domains of RC: engaging academics, positive community, effective management, and developmental awareness. The about page also offers links to the CASEL website. It names sets of guiding principles, core elementary school practices and core middle school practice.

The info library page offers resources for teachers, including blog entries in the "Time for a Brain Break Blog," from teachers who have dealt with difficult issues such as "children who defy us (and) get to the core of our fears." This page offers songs, self-assessments, activities, and frequently updated ideas for applying RC in the classroom and at the schoolwide level. The on-site services tab has a form for requesting RC training at individual schools and districts, including recommendations for how to receive federal and private funding. A sampling of upcoming workshops in Massachusetts includes "Introduction to RC for Administrations," which costs $199 per person for a three hour workshop, and "Responsive Classroom Course for Elementary Educators," which costs $729 per person for a four-day course.

The conference tab offers information about upcoming teachers' conferences and leadership conferences. These cost $445 to attend and feature sessions like "Anxiety in the Classroom," "Young Adolescent Development," "Strategies for Challenging Behaviors," and "The Joyful Classroom." Finally, the store page allows visitors to order pamphlets, books, chimes to use as quiet signals in the classroom, study kits and DVDs.

Responsive School Discipline

Responsive School Discipline: Essentials for Elementary School Leaders, by Chip Wood and Babs Freeman-Loftis, was published in 2015 by the Center for Responsive Schools. Written for school administrators, the book is organized into three parts: Foundations of Positive Behavior, Positive Responses to Misbehavior, and Positive Behavior Everywhere. Appendices include documentation of schoolwide rule creation, steps for understanding and solving problem behaviors, conversation formats for discussing schoolwide discipline, and recommended resources. The cover of the book features five photographs of individual children, each of whom appears focused and thoughtful. Similar photographs are included in black and white at the beginning of each chapter. Chapters also include text blocks called "Chip Reflects" or "Babs Reflects;" in these sections, the authors offer personal stories of experiences in school that illustrate the point of the chapter. Many of the chapters also contain offset sections demarcated by a key icon, with bullet lists of things schools should and should not do to promote positive discipline.

The premise of *Responsive School Discipline* is that it is the responsibility of the school leader to create a systematic approach to discipline, understood in terms of the prevention and management of behaviors frequently understood as problematic. This system should be firm, consistent, and schoolwide; bus drivers, lunch staff, and all adults involved in working in the

schools ought to be involved in the responsive disciplinary approach. Key elements of the

approach include clearly articulated rules, careful use of language so that all children understand

the rules and are acclimated to them without undue duress, the need to be "proactive" and

"positive" in relation to challenging behaviors, which must be firmly handled, and the

importance of relationships with families that include pedagogical conversations about

discipline. Under RC, the authors explain in the introduction, "There is a living ethic of care.

Children feel safe. They know what the expectations are and want to meet them because the

adults at school have helped them understand the reasons for these expectations" (pp. 1-2). The

book focuses on what it calls positive discipline, or "respon(se) to misbehavior… that restore(s)

safety and learning and preserve(s) the dignity of the child" (p. 2).

Teacher Language for Engaged Learning

Teacher Language for Engaged Learning is a video study session produced for teachers.

It comes with a DVD and CD-Rom, as well as a set of cards to be used in a staff meeting or in

study groups by teachers interested in the RC approach. Each of the study cards includes

instructions for getting started, for what to focus on while viewing the video, for reflection, and

for an extension activity; altogether, these activities are meant to take between thirty minutes and

an hour.

The four video sessions included in the set are focused around the RC precept of engaged

learning. They zero in respectively on open-ended questions, clear directions, high-quality

feedback, and focus on learning. Each video features several different elementary school

teachers who come from different schools and teach kindergarten through fifth grade. The

middle of the folder that contains the videos also offers tips for the facilitator, including advice

for preparation, an overview of the structure on the section outline cards, and a list of necessary materials, like chart paper and a DVD player.

The video on open-ended questions teaches that RC encourages teachers to ask open-ended questions. Examples of open-ended questions that it offers are:

*What do you predict is going to happen if I unscrew one of the lightbulbs (in a circuit)?

*What do you already know about mixing colors?

*What words can you use to describe the character in your book?

The video on clear directions focuses on the idea that children will learn better if teachers cue them to stop and listen, list expectations clearly, break instructions down into separate steps, and check for understanding. The video on high-quality feedback encourages teachers to describe specific behaviors that students engage in as a way of giving feedback and to proclaim each of their successes. The final video about focus tells teachers to keep students focused on learning by using reminders of expectations and redirections away from undesirable behaviors. An example of reminders and redirections is a teacher saying to her fourth-grade class, "We're going to be using rulers a lot… Evan, Tatiana…" The teacher in this video puts her hands together in a yoga pose, looks at Evan and Tatiana, and raises her eyebrows quietly for several seconds before resuming her lesson.

Each of the videos is narrated by a voiceover but organized as a montage of classroom scenes. Textual captions in bulleted lists often appear presumably to remind viewers of the video's major points.

The Joyful Classroom

The book The Joyful Classroom: Practical Ways to Engage and Challenge Students K-6 was published in 2016 by the Center for Responsive Schools and does not name an author. The book is organized into seven chapters: Getting to Know Your Students, Partnering and Grouping Students for Collaborative Learning, Making Learning Interactive, Using Activities Kids Love, Structuring Lessons for Maximum Impact, Giving Students Choices, and Teaching Students to Self-Assess. Appendices are Teacher Language, Interactive Modeling, and Planning Guides. The book also offers further resources.

The cover of this text features a photograph of three children who look to be of different races and genders bent over a table that holds a bin and several upright sticks. One boy is holding a pencil, and all three of them look intent on the project. Similar photographs are interspersed throughout the text, as are diagrams of classroom structures that facilitate more joyful experiences of learning.

The underlying premise of this text is that it is the job of the teacher to make academics engaging for all children. The text frequently references Dewey and Piaget as key theorists whose ideas support the RC approach to learning. It also includes side bars with sample letters to families describing the RC approach to learning, highlighted in yellow. Green text boxes offer "Classroom Snapshots," with scenes that showcase the precepts of each chapter. Every chapter closes with a final thought from the authors' points of view; these final thoughts mostly include advice to teachers such as, "We encourage you to take as many opportunities as you can to listen… to everything that makes each child shine. Finding those glimmers of gold will help you create learning environments that engage and nurture all the children you teach" (p. 17).

A key portion of this book is also devoted to directions for a wide variety of games and activities that can be used in the classroom. These sections focus respectively on activities that teach interactive learning, lesson plans that illustrate the RC-endorsed planning structure (these are all aligned explicitly with the Common Core State Standards), and templates that explain how to give children choices in their academic work. Each interactive learning example includes directions and tips for success. The book firmly explains that choice facilitates joy in learning. It comforts teachers who might be concerned about giving up control, "we never hand over all… the responsibility" (p. 120).

Child Development Pamphlets

Chip Wood's pamphlets on child development are written with an intended audience of either teachers or parents. Printed in English and Spanish, the pamphlets can be given out at school events and parent-teacher conferences. The pamphlets are trifold brochures that summarize developmental characteristics of each grade level. Each age group is then broken down into emotional, social, physical and cognitive characteristics. The RC website encourages teachers not only to share the pamphlets with families but also to "keep one handy for refreshing your own knowledge about developmentally appropriate teaching."

Adapted from Wood's book *Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14*, the child development pamphlets all have the same copy on their back. This copy entreats parents to "Enjoy your child at each age. Each age is unique. Each is a wonder." In small print, the back of the pamphlet also states, "The characteristics in this pamphlet are based on research on children in European and US schools. Children growing up in other cultures may show different developmental patterns." The copy also reminds parents that children go through stages at different rates, and that "children don't change suddenly on their birthday."

The characteristics of children listed in the pamphlets consider physical, social and cognitive development discretely. For instance, six year olds are described socially as "competitive; … sometimes bossy or critical… enjoy dressing up." Physically, six-year-olds "like lots of physical activity… tire easily and get sick often." In cognitive development, six year olds "love new ideas and asking questions… (are) beginning to understand past and present… like doing lots of work; not that concerned with the quality of the work."

Second Step Materials
Website

The Second Step Website is hosted by a broader organization called the Committee for Children. The organization's logo is a heart shape colored to look like a globe. The Committee for Children defines itself as "a global nonprofit dedicated to fostering the safety and well-being of children through social-emotional learning and development." In addition to Second Step, the Committee offers materials on bullying prevention and child protection.

The Second Step landing page features a large photograph of three smiling children, along with the tagline, "skills for social and academic success/ fun to learn, easy to teach and research-based." Copy explains that the curriculum has been helping teachers for several decades, and "Best of all, the student lessons are easy to teach, right out of the box!" The page links to focus pages on early childhood, elementary, and middle school, as well as an ancillary bullying prevention unit and a child protection unit. There are also links to PDFs with a K-8 scope and sequence, information about aligning with various sets of state standards, and teacher and staff training.

The page focusing on elementary schools features a picture of six children staring toward the front of a classroom while seated on the rug. Copy explains that elementary school is "the

prime time to nurture social and emotional awareness." There is a link for a short video with testimonials from teachers and students about the efficacy of Second Step. The page also offers a link for the Second Step "bundle," or the K-5 curriculum set including a separate bullying prevention unit and child protection unit, as well as an on-line training module. The bundle costs $2,259.

The landing page for the elementary program includes laudatory quotes from students, teachers and principals, under the heading "Meeting Everyone's Needs." A separate tab called "Success Stories" also includes quotes from teachers and principals as well as directors of charter school foundations. The landing page also offers a link to a page about SEL in general. There are bulleted lists of what SEL is and is not. What it is includes "recognizing emotions in oneself and others… managing strong emotions… controlling impulses… solving problems effectively." What SEL isn't includes "kids sitting around in circles signing songs… suggesting you're not doing a good enough job as a parent… psychotherapy." Quotes under the section on SEL and workforce readiness come from Microsoft administrators, a retired US army general, and a Harvard Business School director.

Second Step Package
The Second Step Grade 1 Classroom Kit costs $439 and comes in a large box that includes lesson cards (large, laminated cards with step by step details of each lesson in the unit), Unit Cards (summarizing each of the four units' scopes and sequences), and classroom posters (large posters with cartoon children and icons reminding them how to calm down by breathing from their bellies, how to have empathy by listening, how to play fairly). The kit also comes with four listening rules cards. Each card has a photograph of a child with his or her body in a particular position and large lettering like "Body Still (Hug torso with both arms)." Each of the

children on these cards looks to be of a different race. The four listening rules are body still, voice quiet, ears listening, eyes watching.

Also included in the kit are two puppets. These plush puppets are in the form of a puppy and a snail. The puppy and the snail as characters feature prominently in most of the lessons and the teacher is meant to wear them and make them talk to each other. The kit also comes with a DVD that reiterates most of the material in the unit guide and a CD that plays the music in the curriculum. The music includes such songs as The Learner Song, the Feelings Song, The Calm-Down Song, The Anger Song, The Problem-Solving Song, and The Fair Ways to Play Song. Finally, the kit comes with a teaching materials binder. This binder includes text descriptions of each of the four units and every lesson within each unit. The binder also includes activities for teachers to send home along with each lesson. The four units in the binder are Skills for Learning, Empathy, Emotion Management, and Problem Solving.

Unit Guide

The Unit Guide in the binder begins with a visual overview of the entire first grade scope and sequence. It includes the title of every lesson (each unit contains 5-6 lessons), the concepts in each lesson, and the objectives of each lesson. Every lesson includes 2-4 concepts and 2-4 objectives. For instance, the lesson called "calming down anger" has three concepts: "belly breathing calms down strong feelings; belly breathing pushes the belly out when you breathe in; being mean or hurting others when you are angry is not okay." The lesson also lists three objectives: "Students will be able to… explain physical and situational clues to feeling angry; demonstrate the proper belly breathing technique; use a three-step process to calm down: say 'stop,' name your feeling and do belly breathing."

After the scope and sequence, the guide offers a graphic model of research undergirding second step, including its contribution to academics and its help in preventing problem behaviors. There is then a two-page textual summary of the research, which quotes exclusively from journals and textbooks in developmental and school psychology. The next page offers an overview of the lesson format and an explanation on how to use the lesson cards. Each Second Step lesson, it explains, includes a warm-up with a "brain builder" and a puppet script, a story and discussion, sometimes with a video, a chance to practice skills, a wrap-up section, and instructions for follow-through. Teachers should tell students "explicitly… that these games (the brain builders) make their brains stronger… Students learn that when playing the games, they are building their brains' ability to focus attention, remember and follow rules, and control behavior" (p. 12). An icon shaped like a house also reminds teachers of the importance of engaging families in Second Step work.

After this prefatory matter, the guide goes one lesson at a time through each of the units in the curriculum, offering an overview, follow-through matter, and home links. For instance, in the lesson on identifying feelings, the overview lists the lesson concepts, key words ("jealous, surprised, disgusted") and a paragraph on why the lesson matters, "Students with high emotional understanding at the beginning of elementary school are more likely to show academic gains by age nine than those with lower emotional understanding" (p. 37). A section called Using Skills Every Day reminds teachers to incorporate practice and reinforcement by saying things like "I can tell you're frustrated because your forehead is wrinkled" (p. 37). A section called Daily Practice also advises teachers to play the Feelings Song frequently.

The subsequent page of each overview has an icon of a brain and instructions for a game that presumably reinforces the lesson's objectives. Finally, the last page of each lesson overview

offers a home link meant to be photocopied and shared with families. The home links include

sections on what the child is learning and why it is important. For instance, "Your child is

learning how to pay attention to other people's faces and bodies to figure out what they are

feeling" (p. 39). There are then instructions for how to practice this skill at home as well as an

activity families can do with their children: "Make an angry face for your child. Ask: What am

I feeling? Have your child draw your angry face and/or write the word 'angry' in the box."

Lesson Cards

Each lesson in the Second Step program comes with an 11x17 card that goes through

every step of the lesson in detail. The back of each card has a photograph that is presumably

meant to be held up for children; the teacher side includes a smaller version of the photograph.

The left side of each lesson card reiterates the lesson's concepts, key words, objective, materials,

and why the lesson matters. It also includes teaching notes. For instance, in lesson 21:

Handling name-calling, teaching notes say, "There is a fine line between playful and mean

teasing. Intervene early so teasing doesn't escalate to mutual conflict or one-sided bullying. The

rule with name-calling is: If the child being called the name doesn't like it, the name-calling

should stop."

The remainder of the lesson card is divided into the following sections: Warm Ups,

including Brain Builder, Review of the last lesson, and an Introduction; Story and Discussion

(the anecdote told here corresponds with the photograph on the back of the card); Skill Practice,

and Wrap Up. Many, though not all, of the stories and discussions ask that the teacher make use

of the puppy and snail puppets. Each story tells of a child or group of children experiencing

something related to the lessons objectives. For instance, "As (Nikki) walked down the hall

today, she tripped and fell… Brianna and Tiffany laughed, pointed, and called Nikki a name."

Discussion prompts encourage students to talk through the story. For instance, "How is Nikki Feeling? After Nikki is calm, she can solve the problem. What is the first problem-solving step? Let's say it together. S: Say the problem. What is the problem? (Nikki was called a name that hurt her feelings)." Words that the teacher is meant to say explicitly are in bold faced type, while the answers that children are presumably meant to provide are in a regular font.

The skill practice section asks students to enact the concepts illustrated in the story. The teacher might say, 'Now you'll practice being assertive… Puppy is going to help. You will pretend Puppy called you a name…" Finally, the wrap-up gives a scripted format for the teacher to reiterate the concepts ostensibly conveyed through the lesson. The teacher can read the entire lesson from the front of the card while holding it up so that students only see the photograph on its back.

Results of Coding

Each of the documents above was coded three times. The first cycle was in vivo coding, treating the texts as primary source documents with line by line analysis. In the second cycle, I grouped the chunks of text and images into conceptual categories. I derived twenty-two codes. This number was too high for a meaningful and deep analysis, so I conducted a final round of coding to consolidate and form broader conceptual categories. Ultimately, I derived six categories, which will be described in detail later in this section. However, some of the categories from the second cycle will be discussed under the heading of the code into which they were eventually consolidated.

Because the texts I was coding were different from one another in genre and structure, coding was not done entirely consistently across texts. For instance, one of the categories was "photographs of children." The Teacher Language for Engaged Learning DVD did not contain

any photographs but was of course rife with images of children; still, I decided that the images in this DVD played a different role and did not code them as photographs. The Second Step materials were shorter and less text-heavy overall than the RC materials, and the lessons were more repetitive, resulting in fewer total codes. However, since the purpose of the coding was not to compare and contrast texts but rather to group them together to determine underlying meaning and messages, this problem did not seem substantial in its impact on results.

Code	Number of Appearances in RC Materials	Number of Appearances in Second Step Materials	Number of Appearances in MA Guidelines	Total Appearances
Photos of children	34	25	0	**59**
Significance of rules, safety and control	106	68	11	**185**
Theories of child development and democracy	166	11	2	**179**
Positive behavior and environment	173	127	16	**316**
Role of the teacher	55	65	2	**122**
Parental involvement	25	13	5	**43**

The table above shows the frequency of appearance of each code. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to explaining the codes and offering examples. Explanations will proceed in order of least to most frequent.

Parental Involvement

The code "parental involvement" refers to all excerpts that either instruct teachers and administrators on how to get families involved in SEL curriculum and instruction, theorize as to

the importance of parental involvement, or function as templates of communication between schools and families. This code was initially called "family involvement;" however, I modified it when a review of the examples revealed that while the term "family" is often used, the texts in question are quite obviously speaking of parents and occasionally reference other adult family members. An example of text that was coded "parental involvement" comes from the Massachusetts state guidelines, "Parents and family members should be provided with information to support application and modeling of SEL-related skills at home." The guidelines further state that orientation into SEL will help "parents and family members… support the values and processes of the school initiative." Most of the "parental involvement" samples are oriented around the idea that parents should be taught the school's approach to SEL so that they can recapitulate it in the household.

Responsive School Discipline is the text that makes the most mentions of "parental involvement." The book contains an entire chapter called "School-Home Partnerships: Bring parents into the conversation about discipline." The chapter suggests that school leaders interested in taking a RC approach should begin the school year by having a family meeting about positive discipline. Parents, the chapter suggests, will be "surprised to find the chairs (at the meeting) arranged in a circle." An example of a message parents might read at a meeting will say, "Welcome Parents! This evening we will examine some different approaches to discipline and share some of our hopes and goals for our children" (p. 97). The text continues, "The positive discipline theme, the chairs in a circle… all add up to giving the parents an important first impression: This school wants to support my child, values community, and cares about what I want for my child" (p. 97). Teachers should respect parents, the chapter explains,

but "The more clearly parents understand the school's approach to discipline, the more fully they can help support positive school behavior in their children" (p. 105).

Responsive School Discipline also explains that teachers and school leaders ought to show interest in children's home lives and relationships with their families. Under a heading called "Show friendly interest in children's home lives," teachers are advised to say things like, " 'Good morning, Arjun. What did your family do for the Diwali celebration… Good morning, Malik. How's your grandmother doing?' (p. 57)." This invocation of family is important because "Such respectful interest allows children to feel valued for who they are and secure enough to take learning risks at school" (p. 57).

In *The Joyful Classroom*, teachers are encouraged to "learn about children's lives… to structure opportunities for them to share information with you and their classmates" (p. 14). Here, invocation of family is controlled via morning meeting routines in which teachers ask questions about "family traditions, family members, and pets" (p. 15). The book also explains that giving students a chance to share "helps build a positive classroom community and a sense of empathy and respect among peers" (p. 14).

The Second Step materials also speak extensively about family involvement. The curriculum describes Home Links as "simple, fun activities designed to encourage interaction between students and their adult family members" (p. 13). The introductory statement is, "Positive program effects increase when families are informed about the Second Step program and become involved in following through with the skills, concepts, and strategies" (p. 14). Second Step recommends that all teachers begin the year by sending home a letter, which states, "We want your child to be as successful as possible at school. Success in school is not just about

reading and math. It is also about knowing how to learn and how to get along with others…

Your child will be learning a lot this year- and he or she will need your help" (p. 15)!

All of the Home Link pages follow the same basic format. They have a section called "what is my child learning," which provides a one-paragraph overview of that day's lesson. Another paragraph, "why is this important," explains the lesson's rationale. For instance, lesson 15, Self Talk for Calming Down, includes the following text, "Your child is learning that some feelings are strong and need to be managed. You can manage strong feelings by saying 'stop,' naming the feeling, then using belly breathing and positive self-talk to calm down…" The sheet proceeds with questions the parent can ask the child, such as, "when you are having a strong feeling, what should you do next?" Then, there are guidelines for practicing at home, "When you notice your child having strong feelings, remind your child to say 'Stop,' then name his or her feeling… Help your child think of positive self-talk to use to remain calm." Finally, families are offered an activity to do with their children, "Help your child think of a time when he or she has a strong feeling and what he or she needs to do to calm down. Fill in your child's responses in the blanks below" (p. 61).

Photographs of Children

Items coded "photographs of children" are still photographs of children alone, in small groups, or in a whole-class setting. There were no photographs that appeared outside of the school setting. Photographs of children were absent from the MA state guidelines but rife throughout RC materials and frequent in Second Step materials. In the RC materials, the photographs are there for teachers, potential customers, and school leaders to view. In the Second Step materials, many of the photographs are also meant to be held up or hung around the

classroom for children to see. I was not able to get permission to reprint photographs in this dissertation, so I attempt to describe representative examples.

One photograph comes from the cover of the RC Child Development Pamphlet for first grade. The three children in the picture are presumably first graders. There appear to be two girls and a boy; the girls look white and Asian, and the boy looks black. The children are bent over a map or perhaps the back cover of a picture book. All six of their hands are visible as their eyes seem deeply focused on the text they are exploring together.

Another photograph comes from Lesson 22 of the Second Step Unit, "Reviewing Second Step Skills." Also first graders, eight racially diverse students sit on a rug facing their teacher, who is holding up a Second Step lesson card and sitting next to the two Second Step puppets. Three children have their hands in the air to participate; the other children look directly at their teacher.

An image on the Responsive Classroom Website is captioned with the text, "What are your hopes and dreams for the school year?" The photograph shows two students giving each other a greeting during Moring Meeting. The students, presumably of different races, appear to be smiling as they bump hands with one another. The students on either side of them, not directly involved in the moment of greeting, are watching them attentively, with legs crossed and hands in their laps.

Also from the Responsive Classroom Website, one photograph is captioned, "Strong Communities Build Strong Schools: Creating a Positive School Culture." The children are outside and smiling as they run. Students are racially diverse in the photograph and all look engaged in the activity.

Four important images come from the Second Step photo cards, meant to be used to teach the Listening Rules crucial to program implementation. Three of the four children in the photographs have smiles on their faces. Their bodies are intentionally positioned to demonstrate the posture described by the rule. There are two girls and two boys represented in the photographs, each with a different skin color; both girls wear pink shirts and bracelets and both boys have white t-shirts and cropped hair styles.

Role of the Teacher
The code "role of the teacher" refers to excerpts that meet one of the following criteria:

- They explicitly instruct the teacher in how to reinforce or model a specific SEL skill or concept;

- They describe the need for the teacher to be patient and calm when working with SEL; or

- They name the importance of school administrators providing professional development so that teachers can properly implement SEL programming.

The idea that the teacher's job is to model and reinforce particular kinds of behavior and affect is a strong thread throughout SEL materials. An episode in the Teacher Language for Engaged Learning video showcases the phenomenon of modeling and reinforcement. This segment features a first grade teacher representing the precept of clear directions. She is instructing her class in how to play a math game that involves scooping up cubes with a plastic cup before counting them. The teacher explains the game and then asks, "Who can remind me what I would do with this cup?" She repeats the directions and then has her students chorally repeat them. Then, she explains that if the cup only scoops up two or three cubes, they may need to use their hands to add more cubes because, "that's not challenging my brain… we all know that one." Students then raise their hands for questions about the game; every time a student asks

something, the teacher says loudly, "good questions!" before slowly answering. The video then switches to a fifth grade teacher using large arm gestures to show students how to listen to peer presentations. The teacher asks students how to be respectful listeners and then models being an audience member, "What do you notice?... My hands are free… You were quiet… Okay, so we're ready to present."

The Second Step lesson cards also use the term "reinforce" to describe the teacher's significant role. The introductory card explains that each lesson will give the teacher opportunities to "Notice when students use the (skills in the lesson or unit), and REINFORCE (emphasis in original) the behaviors with specific feedback… Model out loud for students how you use the… steps to solve your own problems." Every unit comes with instructions for how the teacher might reinforce and model. For instance, Unit 3: Emotion Management, explains that teachers might reinforce students' capacity to calm themselves down by saying, "I notice that you are calming down by belly breathing. What did you say to yourself when you noticed you were having strong feelings?" (The language the teacher is meant to use is printed in bold on the lesson cards.) Teachers should also model their own use of calming-down steps, for instance, by saying, "I'm feeling frustrated that not everyone is listening to me with attention. I'm going to count to 10 so I can calm down." Finally, teachers should use "reminding" language as a way of redirecting students who are not properly following procedures. For instance, "Ryan, I notice that you are feeling frustrated trying to read that sentence. Let's take a break and look at the How to Calm Down Poster. We can read and practice the Calming-Down Steps together." As in the RC materials, the role of the teacher is defined in terms of reinforcement and modeling of appropriate feelings and behaviors.

Alongside the need for reinforcing language come explicit instructions that the "role of the teacher" is to remain calm and patient at all times. There are two related ideas underlying this theme; first of all, teachers must remain calm because it is their affect and presentation that will effectively demonstrate for students how they ought to behave. Second, teachers should remain patient and calm because SEL precepts will not necessarily pay off immediately. In *Responsive School Discipline*, a checklist with a little icon of a key explains the importance of the first of these concepts, "Always transmit empathy and calm. Even when- in fact, especially when- the child acts out in a forceful way, it's important to show empathy and calm. This is crucial both to the recovery of the misbehaving child and the restoration of calm and order for other students in the vicinity" (p. 78). "Calm" means using a quiet tone of voice and remaining unruffled and emotionally impervious to the challenges students pose to the teacher interested in working with SEL.

At the same time that teachers need to stay calm in front of students, they also need to maintain a level of patience with regard to the effect SEL will have on their practice and student behavior and experience. *The Joyful Classroom* explains that teachers must "Start slowly and build on success" (p. 27); incremental progress toward an SEL vision is key. "Allow students time," Responsive School Discipline entreats, "the Responsive School Discipline approach is not a quick fix, but a deep fix. Your school will be most successful if you model patience and persistence and allow your staff time to learn and practice positive discipline techniques meaningfully" (p. 5).

A final subset of excerpts coded under "role of the teacher" deals with the importance of professional development if teachers are to successfully implement SEL programming. These ideas are most evident in the online materials reviewed. The MA guidelines offer a section

dedicated to the significance of professional development for teachers and other school personnel, "to be most effective, teacher training needs to include guidance in how to integrate academic content and SEL… Data also suggest that ongoing technical assistance and performance feedback are vital. For teachers in all settings to succeed, the extent and quality of teacher training are critically important… All adult members of a school community should receive training to ensure that everyone can support, model, and reinforce SEL skills in a variety of settings beyond the classroom. Investment in initial and continuing staff development for all school personnel is one of the most important factors for program success" (pp. 7-8).

The professional development measures advocated by SEL are costly. The $2,259 Second Step K-5 Bundle includes an online training module for teachers as well as access to such webinars as "Improved Behavior, Improved Learning," "Safe, Supported, and Ready to Learn," and "In a Rush? A 30-minute Overview of the Second Step Programs (formerly titled A Foundation for Better Futures." The license to access these modules expires after the school year in which the Second Step suite was purchased.

The Responsive Classroom materials include frequent mentions of the need for professional development. It is by using RC professional development materials that teachers will be able to "design lessons that are active and interactive… encourage engagement by giving students meaningful choices… start each day in a way that sets a positive tone for learning… build a sense of community and shared purpose" (2016). The website showcases "multi-day and one-day workshops… on-side, whole-school professional development and consultations… annual national conferences… award-winning publications… a rigorous teacher certification process" (2016). The copy regarding teacher certification in RC states, "Teacher quality is the single most important factor affecting student outcomes, and research has shown that teachers

who implement the Responsive Classroom approach with fidelity create the conditions that lead to high academic and social achievement for students." Including the costs of the relevant courses as well as applications, the certification, valid for one year, will cost approximately $1,780. Teachers are also encouraged constantly throughout the coded texts to purchase other materials published via the RC clearinghouse, and school leaders are counselled to devote staff meetings to training using RC modules. RC materials also emphasize the need to train bus drivers, lunch monitors, and other school staff in the RC approach, "Make sure drivers know your school's expectations for bus behavior. The first step can by including the bus driver… in the modeling sessions… or you can simply inform these adults of what student behaviors the school expects" (p. 226).

Theories of Child Development and Democracy

This code represents a set of unspoken theories about who children are and how they ought to be involved in their own education. The idea of a normative developmental trajectory is probably illustrated most clearly via the Child Development Pamphlets printed by Responsive Classroom. The purpose of these pamphlets is to establish and communicate a clear sense of developmental norms with the idea that "understanding developmental stages can help you support your child's learning at home and in school." A closer look at the pamphlet for kindergartners reveals the generalities that these pamphlets communicate. This pamphlet offers lists about four, five and six year olds respectively. "Four-year-olds tend to be active, curious and adventurous, with lots of physical and mental energy. They are ready for everything and soak up information with incredible speed… Five, overall, is a time of great happiness. Life is 'good,' says the five-year-old. Five is also a time of great change. During this one year, children may go from being cautious and compliant to uncertain and oppositional… The bodies, minds, and social behavior of six-year-olds are changing dramatically. Sixes have lots of energy.

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Eagerness, curiosity, imagination, drive, openness, and enthusiasm- all are at their peak in the typical six-year-old." Though the pamphlets make caveats allowing for individual and cultural difference, they clearly establish discrete normative characteristics for each age group and grade level.

In the Second Step materials, excerpts coded under this category primarily contain the idea that the purpose of the curriculum is to either speed up developmental processes or ensure that they happen in a specific way. The invocation of "the brain" as a discrete yet crucial participant in the developmental processes catalyzed by SEL is typical of items in this coded category.   The Second Step unit provides one "Brain Builder" per lesson; these activities are printed in gray boxes in the guide, with a small icon of the brain in the upper right hand corner. Lesson 7, "Looking for More Clues," has the objective of teaching children to use situational clues to identify others' feelings, which "builds a solid foundation for the development of students' empathy and compassion" (p. 41). The Brain Builder for this lesson is a version of the game Simon Says, involving making particular facial expressions that presumably express particular emotions. The game, instructions say, will help develop "attention, working memory, and inhibitory control" in students (p. 44). Placing this game under the brain icon creates the implication that its purpose, and in fact the purpose of most play, is to develop children's brains efficiently, under teacher guidance, and toward specific endpoints such as self control.

All items involving choice were coded under "theories of child development and democracy" because the way that the materials define choice embed assumptions about what children are capable of and how they ought to be treated. A chapter in *The Joyful Classroom* called "Giving Students Choices" explains that academic choice is "a way of giving students a measure of teacher-guided control over what they learn or how they learn it" (p. 118). The book

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explains that choice is beneficial because it "contributes to students' sense of autonomy… helps to differentiate instruction… can lead to increased achievement" (pp. 119-120). The chapter proceeds with clear, systematic instructions regarding how teachers ought to scaffold choice-making for students; "Many students struggle with pacing their work so that they can complete it in the time allotted" (p. 130), the chapter explains. "To succeed with independent work, students need to learn how to… stay focused on a task; get help if you're busy with other students; respond if someone's bothering them; calm themselves if they feel frustrated" (p. 139). A separate FAQ section, printed in blue, calms the teacher who might be asking, "By offering all these choices, don't I give up a lot of control?" The text answers, "Although we offer students choices and some control over what and how they learn, we never hand over all of that responsibility… They just get a measure of control over how they'll do that work" (p. 120).

Responsive School Discipline promotes the idea that children should be involved in schoolwide rule creation and that teachers should scaffold classrooms of children to construct class rules each year. The text provides careful, step-by-step instructions for how school leaders might go about the process of rule creation and how teachers can mimic these activities in the classroom. At the same time, the text suggests that rules "can be sorted into these broad areas: responsibility for self… responsibility toward others… responsibility for the environment" (p. 35). The text then offers examples of how rule sets might look, "Always do your best to be safe, responsible and open to learning… Earn and give respect through your words and actions… Help keep our school safe, clean, and green" (p. 36). Rules should be "developmentally appropriate… few in number and brief in wording" (p. 37). "Improving school discipline should be a democratic process," the book explains; what this means is "keeping everyone informed of the goals, activities and outcomes of your work… you'll need to install efficient and

effective mechanisms to keep… communications flowing with all these people (including the children, who will be fascinated to know how the rules will be established)" (pp. 14-15).

A final subset of excerpts in this category suggests that children are less developed and worse off than they have been at undefined points in the past. This new set of deficits in child development contributes to justification of the need for SEL. The Second Step website calls this phenomenon "emotional illiteracy." Passages from Daniel Goleman, who rendered popular emotional intelligence as a concept, describe "this new and troubling deficiency" which is "different and more alarming" than academic gaps. "Signs of the deficiency," he writes, "can be seen in violent incidents… the heightening of the turmoil of adolescence and troubles of childhood…" Goleman proceeds with statistics about gun violence, rising numbers of rape and murder among adolescents, and juvenile arrest rates. He exclaims, "While any of these problems in isolation raises no eyebrows, taken as a group they are barometers of a sea change, a new kind of toxicity seeping into and poisoning the very experience of childhood, signifying sweeping deficits in emotional competences. This emotional malaise seems to be a universal price of modern life for children… No children, rich or poor, are exempt from risk… while children in poverty have the worst record on indices of emotional skills, their rate of deterioration over the decades was no worse than for middle-class children or for wealthy children: All show the same steady slide." *Responsive School Discipline* also references this "slide" as a way of arguing for the importance of SEL programming, "People who have worked in elementary schools for many years share the observation that children are coming to school today with less-well-developed social skills than in past years, regardless of their socioeconomic background… children seem to need more instruction in listening, staying on task, cooperating with a partner or small group, being a good loser… and being assertive but not aggressive" (p. 5).

Significance of Rules, Safety and Control

This category deals with items that emphasize the importance of rules in the SEL-managed classroom and school. Rules feature prominently in *Responsive School Discipline*; the text suggests that the school committed to the RC approach will have schoolwide rules, classroom rules, and separate rules for playground, cafeteria, hallways and buses. Cafeteria rules "create a calm, pleasant lunchtime," hallway rules "keep them orderly and friendly," and bus rules "ensure a safe ride to and from school" (p. 219). For example, bus rules should explain to students "how to get on and off the bus; how to walk down the aisle; how to select a seat; how to sit on the bus; what to do while riding (appropriate voice level, travel activities, etc.); how to get the driver's or supervisor's attention" (p. 224). This level of detail is offered in relation to each of the rules subsets the book recommends.

One of the most important rules proposed by RC has to do with a "signal for quiet attention" (p. 23). Schools should have these signals so that students can be efficiently and calmly brought together in silence any time during the school day. In teaching the signal, teachers should "not negotiate with students… insist on consistency among staff. This consistency shows students that all the adults are serious about the signals, which can be reassuring to children… Insist on quiet after a signal" (p. 27).

Children who do not respond to signals or follow rules under the RC approach should be responded to in clear and consistent ways. These include "simple reparation… increased structure and supervision… moving the child away from where the misbehavior occurred… taking away objects related to the misbehavior… narrowing a child's choices… taking a privilege or responsibility away… take-a-break" (p. 124-125). The RC materials refer to these eventualities as "nonpunitive consequences" (p. 124). If these consequences are ineffective in

getting children to comply with rules, the school should have a "chain of support and a crisis response team for extreme situations in which children's or adults' safety is at risk. This team should be made up of several people who are trained in behavior de-escalation techniques" (p. 129).

Second Step does not offer as much information about exactly how rules should govern a student's day. The first lesson of the curriculum emphasizes the teaching of listening rules and physical gestures that go along with each rule. One of the photographic cards illustrates the body language children are meant to emulate when they showcase that they are listening. "**Eyes watching**: Point to the corners of your eyes. **Ears listening**: Cup your ears with your hands. **Voice quiet**: Put your finger to your lips. **Body still**: Hug your torso with both arms" (p. 19). One of the Daily Practice assignments asks students to "…fill in the blanks of this sentence: 'My two favorite Listening Rules are ___ and ___.' Then have students draw a picture showing someone following those two rules" (p. 21).

The concept of safety, and the assumption that students who feel safe in school will learn and work more productively, is key to the perpetuation of rules under SEL. The Massachusetts guidelines claim that "Implementation of SEL programs in schools provides a foundation for creating a safe learning environment where all students can succeed" (p. 3). School leaders are encouraged to follow the acronym SAFE when selecting an SEL model for their districts or schools. The letters in this acronym stand for "Sequenced; Active; Focused; Explicit" (p. 4). A connection with safety is not actually made explicit, but the use of the acronym certainly implies a relationship between SEL's rules and structures and the concept of safety. Repeatedly, the guidelines claim that the cultivation of safety through rules and guidelines will increase attendance, make students more productive, and improve the learning environment, "…when

school members feel safe, valued, cared for, engaged, and respected, learning can measurably increase" (p. 5).

The Second Step website also references safety as an outgrowth of SEL and particularly of rule-following and careful management. A graphic under the "benefits of Second Step" link explains that the program promotes "safe and respectful school climate" and that participating children will have practice "generating safe and respectful solutions" to their problems. The website's landing page explains that the program "increases whole-school success by promoting self-regulation, safety and support." Second Step never exactly defines safety, but it does create the impression that the opposite of safety might be having one's feelings hurt. Lesson 21, "Handling Name Calling," teaches the concept that "It is not okay to call people names that hurt their feelings… If someone calls you a name, you can ignore the person or speak assertively. If the person doesn't stop calling you names, you should tell a grown-up." Nipping name-calling in the bud is important, the lesson overview explains, "so teasing doesn't escalate to mutual conflict or one-sided bullying. The rule with name-calling is: if the child being called the name doesn't like it, the name-calling should stop" (p. 79).

Rules are not there for safety alone, however. Another reason that the coded materials emphasize rules is that they help create an atmosphere of quiet and calm, which is essential to the school environment. The *Teacher Language for Engaged Learning* DVD tells teachers not only that they should always speak in calm, quiet voices, but emphasizes that children who talk too loudly or become over-excited might problematically disrupt the learning of others in the class. Again and again in the video, teachers tell students to calm their bodies (this seems to mean keeping bodies still), use quiet voices, and talk to each other calmly. The word "calm" is used interchangeably with "respectful" by the teachers in this video. Second Step also valorizes quiet

and calm, dedicating individual lessons to "calming down anger" and "self-talk for calming down." The "Visual Review of Research" at the Unit Guide's beginning explains, "Students who can recognize strong emotions and calm down cope better and are less prone to aggressive behaviors… calm students are better able to use other skills, such as problem solving, to help them get along better with others and make good choices" (p. 5).

Finally, under the category of rules, 72 items related directly to the importance of self control and management of the self. The MA Guidelines list one of the primary precepts of SEL, "Self management… includes impulse control and stress management; self-motivation and discipline; goal setting; and organizational skills" (p. 2). SEL materials take for granted the idea that managing the self is possible and desirable, and many of the rules proposed by SEL approaches are oriented toward helping teachers manage classrooms with an eye toward training children to manage and control themselves. In The Joyful Classroom, self management seems to be understood as a natural outgrowth of children being told exactly what to do in every potentially confusing situation. For instance, if a teacher is having students work collaboratively, she should "clearly define the expectations and responsibilities for each (role students will play in the group). And before students take on these roles, model what each role is and how to do it" (p 37). At the same time, "you'll also want to emphasize that students should take responsibility for their own work within the group" (p 38).

Another idea connected with self-management is that of learning how to make choices in a particular way. "Sometimes, even with your proactive support, a student will make a choice that you know is not the best one… making a less than optimal choice can provide a teachable moment… Having the child follow through on the choice and then reflect on it later can help the child make better choices in the future" (p. 129).

Responsive School Discipline gets more specific about the importance of developing self control and management. One of the goals of responding to "misbehavior," the book argues, is to "help students develop internal control of their behavior. Ultimately we want students not just to do as they're told, but to understand why expected behaviors are important and to develop the self-control to follow through" (p. 122). The text proceeds with ideas about right and wrong ways to help children develop this kind of control.

The Second Step lessons also prioritize self control and management. Lesson 16 focuses on teaching children about "managing worry." To teach students to manage worry, the teacher advises them using the Snail puppet, "Snail could count. Today you're going to learn how counting ca help you handle strong feelings." Students learn to do "belly breathing, counting, (and) positive self talk" as a way to manage themselves and maintain control. Lesson 13, "Strong Feelings," teaches students that while everyone has strong feelings, "Students need to recognize when they are having strong enough feelings that they should use calming-down strategies… interrupt the escalation of emotion… and stay in control." In this lesson, the teacher is meant to say to students, "Sometimes your feelings aren't very strong, and your body feels just a little uncomfortable. (Hold hands a few inches apart) Sometimes you have strong feelings. (Stretch arms out wide.) When you have strong feelings, it's hard to think clearly." The teacher then explains to students that if they breathe from their bellies and name their feelings, the feelings will become less strong.

Positive Behavior and Environment

The most frequent code assigned in these materials was that of "positive behavior and environment." Items coded into this category were those that suggested that the optimal educational situation entails positive behavior, productive learning, and a joyful school

atmosphere. Other items under this category are also problem incidents, which function as

counterexamples to how a positive environment looks and sounds. Some of the items in this

category do potentially dovetail with those in other categories, particularly those promoting calm

and quiet and those photographs of children that focus on smiling and attentive physiognomy. I

chose to code this category separately because all 316 of these items make some sort of explicit

mention of the significance of positivity, productivity and joy, or else they present clear

counterexamples offered as cautionary tales for what is to happen if SEL approaches are not

followed carefully.

The Joyful Classroom is an entire book premised on the idea that learning ought to be

joyful. While the concept of joy is not teased out explicitly, the book generally conceives the

joyful classroom as one where "students (are) engaged throughout the lesson… enthusiastic

about what they (are) discovering, interested in sticking in it even when things (don't) quite go

right, proud of there achievements, and eager to learn more" (p. 2). Drawing on Dewey and

Piaget, the authors argue that this version of joyful learning, eminently desirable, occurs when

"learning is active… learning is interactive.. learning is appropriately challenging… learning is

purposeful… learning is connected to students' interests and strengths… learning is designed to

give students some autonomy and control" (pp. 2-4).

Throughout the text, authors argue that children should love the things that they do in

school. The best way to make this happen is to incorporate a wide variety of predetermined

activities and games into most lessons, so that children are always busy doing something and

learning is made fun. At the end of each chapter, the authors present a "final thought" that

appears designed to inspire readers with the possibility of just how positive the classroom

environment will become if they use the RC approach. For instance, the conclusion to the

chapter called "Making Learning Interactive" reads, "Interactive learning structures are fun- and that's no small thing. But even more importantly, they're purposeful… Integrate these structures into your daily lessons and watch your class become a place where learning burns brightly for every child, every day" (p. 75). The capter "Using Activities Kids Love" concludes, "Make learning sparkle. The more students can approach learning in a spirit of play and exploration, the more invested they'll be… Incorporate some of the ideas in this chapter… and watch students become enthusiastic participants in classroom life" (p. 92).

Responsive School Discipline also places strong emphasis on positivity in the establishment of a school environment. Chapter four of the text is called "positive adult language." Trademarks of the kinds of language staff are to be taught to use in interactions with children are, "Convey belief in children; be direct; use reinforcing language when children show positive behaviors…" School leaders are encouraged to provide teachers with their own positive reinforcement when they talk to children appropriately. The text even gives examples of how exactly teachers should modify their language to sound more positive. A chart entitled "Direct Language" entreats, "Instead of 'You're trying to test my patience aren't you? I think you enjoy starting arguments during recess,' Try, 'It looks like recess is a hard time of day for you. What's happening at recess that makes it hard to remember our safety rules?' " (p. 51). The emphasis on positive language extends to consequences (punishments are never used, or at least not under that name, within the RC approach). Chapter 10 is called "positive time out." A positive time out is one that is "handled in a safe, respectful and supportive way for all involved" (p. 138). The positive time out "keeps the teaching momentum going" and "prevents power struggles… When teachers prevent a power struggle, they preserve their relationship with the child, which is so essential to the child's positive learning" (p. 139).

The emphasis on positivity extends beyond the classroom in *Responsive School Discipline*. Chapter 13, "Cafeteria," explains that school staff should work to limit negative affect and behavior during lunchtime. Discussing the moments when children must wait for lunch to begin or end, the authors write, "Waiting breeds boredom, and boredom often breeds behavior problems… schools can guide children in doing simple, positive activities to amuse themselves while waiting" (p. 200). For instance, to prevent children from feeling bored, teachers might engage students in a puzzle or "provide conversation starter cards" during lunch (p. 201). In chapter 14, "Hallways," a cautionary tale about dismissal warns, "Multiple classes converged from two main hallways into a raucous bottleneck near the exit. As a result, dismissal time was tense and irritating for both the children and the adults." The text continues with instructions for how the school can ensure "that the day ends on a positive note." For instance, if teachers maintain more control over students at dismissal time, a "manageable routine peacefully wraps up the day and sends students off feeling relaxed ad accomplished, rather than anxious and rushed" (p. 212).

The Teacher Language for Engaged Learning DVD also illustrates the RC commitment to positivity. "Positive and specific feedback helps students become successful, independent workers," the voiceover explains in the section on Reinforcing Language. Teachers, the video elucidates, should name children's efforts and successes and then invite students to reflect on what is going well for them. In one classroom, a teacher bends over a second-grader holding a leveled book and exclaims, "You are reading like a reader! What's working well?" The child stares up at her and the teacher continues excitedly, "You're looking at the beginning sound to help you!" A third grade teacher exclaims over how quietly her students are working and tells them how great they must feel about the details they are adding to settings of their stories to

make them more descriptive. While she gives this "feedback," other children filter in, presumably from a different classroom, and take their seats quietly, staring at her. In a fourth grade class, the teacher gives students positive feedback about their mastery of social skills. She has them mill around to choose a reading partner, then asks them to pause, "When I was listening to that I heard you using kind voices with each other… you remembered what we practiced today." She points to the guidelines hanging on the classroom wall, "That helps us to be respectful to everyone and everything in our classroom."

The Second Step website refers repeatedly to the ways that the curriculum can "make learning fun," "decrease problem behaviors," and offer "easy ways to integrate lessons into everyday learning." Many of the individual lessons promote the idea that positive feelings are always preferable to negative ones, and the unit overall teaches that feelings can be managed. Lesson 9, "Feelings Change," explains, "being inviting and welcoming can change people's feelings;" the objective of this lesson is "Students will be able to demonstrate welcoming and inviting behaviors" (p. 3). Lesson, "Showing care and concern," argues that the purpose of empathy is "People feel better when others show them care and concern." Objectives state, "Students will be able to recall that listening, saying kind words, and helping are three ways to show caring, and demonstrate caring and helping in response to scenarios" (p. 3).

The Second Step Unit Guide explains that much of the reasoning behind the heavy emphasis on self regulation in the curriculum also has to do with desiring positive feelings. Citing research on the impact of SEL on attitudes toward school, the guide states, "The Second Step program teaches students to have empathy, manage emotions, and solve problems. Students with these abilities are better able to participate in and benefit from classroom instruction… They have more positive relationships with teachers and peers, thereby increasing their feelings

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of school connectedness… Students who feel connected to school and to their peers are more likely to have positive academic self concepts… and less likely to be rejected, isolated, and bullied. They are more motivated for academic success and more engaged in learning… Socially and emotionally competent students are also protected from healthy-compromising behaviors" (p. 7).

In the interest of teasing out what positive behavior and affect mean in the context of Second Step, it is worth taking a close look at Lesson 14, "Calming Down Anger." The lesson tells a story of two boys named Chad and Bruce who get into an argument playing basketball. The photograph shows Bruce running away from Chad carrying a ball. After showing the children a video of the story, the teacher is meant to say, "We all feel angry sometimes, but it's never okay to be mean or hurt someone when we're angry. Raise your hand if anger is a comfortable feeling. It's an uncomfortable feeling. Raise your hand if it's a strong feeling." The teacher is the meant to remind students that when they have strong feelings, they should put their hands on their stomachs and say 'Stop.' "Everyone feels angry sometimes, but it's important to calm down so you don't let those feelings get you in trouble… Let's practice belly breathing… do the right kind of breathing to calm you down." Students then practice minimizing their anger in different hypothetical scenarios. Lesson 16, Managing Worry, builds on these ideas by teaching "positive self talk;" when students feel worried, they might say things to themselves like "It will be okay… I can do my best… It's okay if I work at my ow pace" In Lesson 15, "Self Talk for Calming Down," the teacher explains, "What we say to ourselves can change the way we feel. If we say positive, or good, thigs to ourselves, we're likely to feel better."

Finally, a subset of excerpts coded under this category are there to show what can go wrong if a positive approach is not used during the school day. Most of these excerpts come from the section of Responsive School Discipline entitled "Positive Responses to Misbehavior" or from a separate chapter, "Proactive Supports for Students with Challenging Behaviors: Ten Practices that Can Help." These cautionary tales primarily describe students with IEPs or who have experienced trauma in their home life. For instance, the text tells of the hypothetical Brian, "a first grader… with behavior challenges... In kindergarten, Brian spit on, hit, bit and scratched other children and frequently had to be physically restrained… Brian's pediatrician has placed him on medication. He has a behavior plan and is rewarded when he can sustain nonaggressive, cooperative behavior for fifteen minutes" (p. 72). The narrative goes on to explain how Brian's teacher "is troubled by the lack of safety the other children in the class feel" around Brian, offering by way of explanation, "As for his home life, Brian moved into his grandmother's small apartment… his mother is incarcerated, and he has never known a father… his grandmother works in a local restaurant as a cook and is worried about losing her job if Brian has to be suspended" (p. 73). Medication, behavior plans, suspension and the feeling of upset over Brian's circumstances and behavior are all held up as counterexamples to the approach the text then advocates, admitting that "there are no quick fixes for working with children such as… Brian" (p. 73). However, the chapter goes on to suggest that teachers "remember children's need for safety, challenge, and joy," emphasizing that "feeling joy at school is especially important because their lives are so often filled with turmoil. In helping these children better regulate their behavior, we're helping them gain a sense of joy in their lives" (p. 75). With students "like Brian," teachers should give extra positive feedback, provide extra adult support during

transition time, give explicit instruction in social skills, and work on de-escalation techniques. Positive time-outs, the book reminds, can also make a difference.

Conclusion

The codes described in this chapter will be discussed in more detail during Chapter 7 of the dissertation, juxtaposed with data from other sources. This chapter has provided a detailed critical discourse analysis of materials from two different SEL programs as well as from the Massachusetts state guidelines for implementation of SEL in schools. The major categories that emerged in this analysis were family involvement, photographs of children, the role of the teacher as re-enforcer and knower of SEL practices, though in need of continuous professional development, theories of child development and democracy, the importance of rules, control, safety and calm, and the necessity of a positive school environment.

Chapter Five: Results from Classroom Observations

I conducted a series of observations in two different classrooms over the course of a one-year period. This chapter offers a description of each of the classrooms and the teachers as well as the most salient themes that emerged during these observations.

Jeanette's Class

Jeanette has been teaching kindergarten for thirteen years. She teaches in a public school in a New England city. The city has the second highest per pupil expenditure for the state in its public schools, though Jeanette's school is consistently rated one of the two lowest performing elementary schools in the district as measured by standardized test scores and is generally considered undesirable in the kindergarten assignment process. This year's class has 20 students from racially and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds. Eighteen of their families consented to participate in the study, and all of those children also assented. Though I did not obtain racial and socioeconomic statistics for the class, they approximately mirror those of the school, in

which 39% of the students qualify for free and reduced lunches and approximately 25% speak a language other than English at home. The school is about 40% white, 25% African American, 14% Latino, 12% Asian, and 8% multiracial based on family self-identification.

Jeanette uses the Responsive Classroom program with a high level of fidelity. She conducts morning meeting every day according to the program's architecture and uses RC to guide the language she speaks with her students, the way she structures academic instruction, and her approach to behavior management and conflict resolution. I observed in Jeanette's classroom during ten different morning meeting periods, arriving as the children transitioned to the rug and leaving when they moved on to their first academic activity of the day.

Notably, because of construction in the city, Jeanette's entire school moved from their usual building to a swing space in February of my observation year. The implications of this move were significant for Jeanette as well as her students, and this is reflected in my field notes. The first classroom I observed in was a small, brightly lit room at the end of the long kindergarten hallway. The room was divided into three sections. Morning meeting took place on the rug in the front of the classroom, with an easel that contained a morning message each day. The back of the classroom had tables where the students worked and played, and a wide section to the side of the classroom contained well-stocked bookshelves, science materials, a tub of guppies and tadpoles, and art supplies. Finally, a back corner of the classroom contained the "Friendship Table," where students went when they had to work out an overt conflict. The classroom walls were decorated primarily with children's artwork and writing. Jeanette and her assistant teacher, Teresa, worked to make the swing space classroom almost identical to the original space. The new classroom was larger and less well-lit, with more space for children to maneuver but a slightly less homey feel.

Jeanette and Teresa have been working together for six years. They relate to each other amicably, and Jeanette talks through her plans and questions with Teresa each day. The children seem to consider both women their teachers, but Teresa never leads a morning meeting or a lesson. She passes out snack, guides students through conflict resolution, hangs work on bulletin boards, cleans up some materials, leads small groups in math and literacy activities, and sometimes joins the class in their circle during morning meeting.

In both of Jeanette's classrooms, the guidelines for student behavior were prominently displayed. These guidelines read, "Respect yourself. Respect others. Respect our classroom and materials." Each student has signed his or her name or initial somewhere on the poster with the guidelines.

The routine in Jeanette's classroom is the same every morning. Students arrive and sign in, indicating whether they have home lunch or need school lunch. Many students sign in with only the first letter of their name. They put their things away, say goodbye to parents, and go to read the morning message. The message always greets the students, "Dear K1 Kids," tells them what special subject they have that day, and asks them a question such as, "How did you get to school today?" Teresa helps kids use a pointer to read the message and write their answers to the question. Then, students play at tables with predetermined sets of materials until the morning announcements come on the loudspeaker.

The announcements are usually unintelligible even to an adult listener, but they always end with the words, "If you choose to do so and as you are able, please stand to join us for the Pledge of Allegiance." Jeanette consistently turns off the lights to indicate that students should hold still and remain silent. She often closes her eyes during the Pledge itself. Then, she

instructs the students to clean up and come to the rug for meeting. Usually, she leads them in a song as they transition to a circle on the rug.

Each morning meeting begins with a greeting. The day's line leader selects a foreign language from a set of premade notecards that have pictures of children in other countries and the countries' flags, as well as a gesture. Students go around the circle, greeting each other in the selected language and doing the chosen gesture. Then, the class plays a game and often sings a song or does an activity together. Finally, they read and review the morning message. In total, morning meeting usually lasts about 40 minutes.

The students in Jeanette's class were accustomed to having outside adults in their classroom, doing research or professional development. They rarely paid much attention to me unless instructed directly to do so. Two of the students knew my daughter from extracurricular activities, and they occasionally approached to ask me about her or confirm that I was, indeed, her mom, the same person they had seen at gymnastics class.

Samantha's Class

Samantha is a first-grade teacher new to the district where I observed her, but she has been teaching first and second grade for seven years. She teaches in a K-8 public school in a small New England town. Because of persistently low test scores as well as allegations of corruption, Samantha's district was put into receivership two years ago and is under strict state mandates in terms of curriculum and instructional time. The "turn-around plan" includes a mandated SEL block, which the school devotes to rigid implementation of Second Step.

Samantha's class has 22 first graders in it. All of the students in the class qualify for free or reduced lunch. The school and district are majority Hispanic, and Samantha estimated that at least half of the students in her class came from families of undocumented immigrants. I only

received consent and assent from five students in this class. Because of the obvious limitations this posed, I focused my observations primarily on the behaviors and language of those students, Samantha's own language, and general impressions of the classroom and its functioning. (The protocols are discussed in more detail in chapter 3 of this dissertation.)

My observation in Samantha's classroom took place in the afternoons, during the Second Step block each week for ten weeks. Students were coming in from special subjects during this time. Samantha's class was created in October, because the other two first grade classes were filled beyond capacity. The schools in Samantha's district have such a high level of transience that enrollment is unpredictable; Samantha started the school year in one placement and then was moved to this school when her original class was under-enrolled. However, the school did not have enough art and music spots to accommodate the new first grade class, so her students were still divided for specials, and sometimes for lunch and recess as well. When they came back to their room for specials, they had an afternoon snack and then converged on the rug for their lesson.

Samantha's school was visibly impacted by poverty. In my time there, I noticed broken furniture, mold on classroom walls and students of all ages roaming the halls alone. Samantha frequently mentioned the 'services' her students qualified for but could not receive because the school was understaffed. Samantha shared her classroom with a special education teacher who was there about half the time, with no partition, often working with small groups of different students in one half of the classroom while Samantha's class tried to ignore them.

The walls in Samantha's classroom contained many signs, about half of which were commercially made and half of which were teacher made. There was one large sign directing students of the rules for meeting: "Respect others. Respect our school. Try your best! Have

fun!" A separate sign read, "Listen. Look. Sit Chriss Cross (sic) In your own space. Raise your hand." One easel was placed to separate a corner of the classroom known as the Calm-down Corner. A sign here read, "One person. Five minutes. Use a strategy. Keep it clean."

During my first observation in Samantha's classroom, a student walked up to me and immediately squirted juice all over my computer from a small container with a straw. Students frequently asked what I was doing there, leaned over my computer to remark on how quickly I was typing, tried to touch me or my computer, and, on seven separate occasions, asked "What ARE you?"

Samantha's classroom was often in a state of chaos. The students were talking, moving, humming, drumming and banging on furniture almost all of the time. Usually, there were at least four different voices going at once, and students rarely stopped talking or humming long enough for Samantha to say one direction. Samantha often yelled to make her voice heard, sat silently glaring at the students, or sent them away from the rug. One student frequently wandered around the classroom knocking things off tables and grabbing things out of cubbies. Several of the children in the class often climbed on furniture or crawled around on all fours, sometimes licking the floor. The overall chaotic and unruly sense of the classroom necessitated creativity in conducting observations. Though I recorded each of my observation sessions, they were nearly impossible to transcribe because of the constant ambient noise in the classroom. This also contributed to my attempts to record Samantha's own language, general impressions and key students, rather than an overarching and coherent classroom narrative.

Notes and Limitations

This chapter presents some of the themes from the classroom observations. I begin by showing a table naming major themes and the frequency with which they emerged, based on

three rounds of coding of observation notes and research memos. The table, however, is limited, primarily by the fact that so much is happening in any given classroom at any one time, and in fact so much is behind even every verbal utterance of a child or teacher, that simple categorization is ultimately elusive. Therefore, the table is only a general starting point, which will help the reader understand some of the most salient emergent categories. The table, and the coding it represents, also explains my selection of observational anecdotes.

I then offer vignettes from observations, each of which explicates some of the most frequent themes. I attempt to keep these vignettes descriptive. Inevitably, of course, my interpretive lens is present. Conceptual analysis is, however, reserved for a future chapter. It is important to note that no classroom vignette will ever capture only one theme; each of the anecdotes offered here will also help construct a general sense of life in Jeanette and Samantha's classrooms during SEL blocks. Further, these observations took place only during whole-group and occasionally small-group instruction and do not reflect the explicit or implicit social and emotional work either teacher does with their students in one-on-one situations or outside of the direct scope of the approach they are following.

Jeanette and Samantha's classrooms are, as indicated in the prefatory matter, very different from each other, though also with some notable similarities. As an observer, it was difficult for me to avoid drawing comparisons, not only in terms of the vast differences in resources and facilities but also in terms of the teachers' styles and approaches to their students. However, in coding the observation notes, it became evident that many of the same themes were present in the two classrooms, even when their expression was mediated by circumstantial differences. A by-product of working with only two classrooms is the inevitable lapse into comparison/contrast; I ask that the reader try with me to see this as an asset rather than a

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limitation. In other words, the differences between these classrooms raise important questions about the universal as well as class- and race-mediated ways SEL can influence classroom life, and staying with, rather than skirting, the desire to compare and contrast helps deepen this portion of the research.

A final caveat: I began my observations in Jeanette's classroom first, and my note-taking, transcribing, and memo-writing felt straightforward. I knew I could never adequately capture the fullness of the classroom experience, but there was a sense of a coherent narrative arc that the teachers and students were generally involved in each morning. When I began observations in Samantha's class, these assumptions were disrupted. There, I felt as though I was constantly struggling to see and hear even one small piece of what was happening around me. The constant cacophony (children's words, different noises they made with their mouths and bodies, objects falling, the teacher's rapid-fire yelling and instructions) contributed to a sense of impossibility and sometimes even futility in note-taking and transcription. Moreover, children and the teacher moved their bodies so much and so quickly, and the overall affective tenor seemed to fluctuate so intensely and rapidly, that I often felt as though I could not keep up. In some sense, this is a real difference between the lived experiences of each of the classrooms; however, the palpable and audible chaos in Samantha's classroom also helped me understand that the coherence in Jeanette's was partially deceptive. For each of the vignettes I offer, then, though perhaps particularly within Samantha's class, it should be always remembered and understood that:

- there is a lot of noise and sometimes language happening, beyond that which is possible to document in writing
- only some of the class is engaged in the general narrative

- there are probably children with bodies in a wide variety of positions around the classroom.

In other words, for everything that is documented here, there is much that is undocumented. This is true of all observational research, but it is only by keeping that in mind that the reader can start to have a sense of what it feels like in these classrooms during an SEL block.

Findings

After one round of coding classroom observation notes and research memos, I came up with 18 different categories. Second and then third rounds of coding focused on answering my research questions as well as finding commonalities among different themes. This helped me consolidate my findings into six major categories. This table represents the frequency with which something in each of these categories occurred over the course of my observations.

Table 1: Consolidated Coding Categories

Category	Frequency
Teacher regulation of strong student emotion or conflict	239
Teacher articulation of student knowledge and thought	180
Teacher adjustment of student body position (orally and physically)	119
Guidelines, safety and social norms	109
Student displays of knowledge and expertise	92
Race, culture, and gender	36

Teacher Regulation of Strong Student Emotion or Conflict

This category includes all classroom episodes in which a teacher used language to rein in student emotion, encourage positive and calm affect over negative and unruly affect, resolve conflicts

efficiently, or put words to students' feelings. Often, both teachers translated student behaviors

or language into other words, explicitly instructed them to use particular words or experience

particular feelings, and pushed them to resolve interpersonal conflicts quickly so that they could

get on with the business of school.

Teacher Articulation of Student Knowledge and Thought
Both teachers in my observations frequently commented on what experts their students were and

how much they knew about so many different things. Items coded into this category often

involved the teacher describing students as expert readers, writers, thinkers, and mathematicians;

they also included teachers telling students what they were thinking and learning at a given

moment.

Teacher Adjustment of Student Body Position
Again and again over the course of my observations, the teachers would tell students how to

position their bodies, where to move in the classroom, or what not to do with their bodies. Both

teachers also often touched the students in order to reposition their arms and legs, and sometimes

heads. My first round of coding also included a category for students repositioning or drawing

attention to their own bodies. However, this seemed to occur on such a constant and ubiquitous

basis that it became quite impossible to document. I focused instead on direct teacher discussion

of the body, efforts to control how students held, positioned, and related to their bodies, and

explicit lessons in how the body ought to reflect emotion.

Guidelines, Safety, and Social Norms
This category has to do with how often the teachers explicitly referenced classroom guidelines

and rules as well as the importance of keeping one's self and others physically safe. The

teachers referenced guidelines and rules most frequently as a way of teaching socially normative

behavior.

Student Displays of Knowledge and Expertise

Though these events happened relatively rarely, each classroom included some moments of

students sharing what they seemed to consider their personal knowledge or expertise, and the

teachers' reactions to these displays varied. Items coded in this category also included students

attempts to share things about their families and home life with their teacher and classmates.

Race, Culture, and Gender

Finally, this category is included because it struck me as notable how rarely race, culture and

gender were explicitly mentioned in either classroom. In fact, all of the relatively few items in

this category come from Jeanette's classroom. While race, culture, and gender came up rarely on

an explicit level, their influences, as well as that of socioeconomics, seemed ineffably present in

both classrooms, which will be discussed more in my final chapters. Here, it is simply

interesting to look at some of what goes on when these concepts do surface directly.

Presentation of Vignettes

My initial plan was a tidy one: I would complete the coding of my observations, and then I

would present a brief vignette to represent each of the emergent categories, both as a way of

explicating and of proving the presence of the category I had discerned. However, life in

kindergarten and first grade defies such tidy plans. Not only does no scenario I can describe

from either classroom fit neatly into one of the aforementioned categories; in fact, it is rare that

even one student or teacher comment or action can be so neatly circumscribed. Instead of seeing

these vignettes as definitional or evidentiary in any way, then, I ask my reader to hold the

aforementioned categories in mind while trying to envision the classroom scenes I present. The

scenes were selected for the dual purposes of conveying the life of each classroom during SEL

blocks and representing the most frequently emergent themes as detailed above. Rather than

organizing these vignettes categorically, I present them chronologically. In each classroom, the

first vignette is told with the most detail, as a way of providing some sense of the general routines, structures, and milieu of the classroom. I discuss these vignettes interpretively in a Chapter 7.

Vignettes from Jeanette's Classroom
The New Building- February 2017

The lights come back on after the announcements and Jeanette gestures to the back wall of the classroom, where she and Teresa have newly hung student self portraits. "Everyone," she says, "Look at that back wall with your self portraits. Teresa and I worked after school to put them up. They are stunning. You're so beautiful, class, you're just so beautiful. We'll have to admire them during the day and show your parents, when they come in. But now it's time to clean up." Several of the children continue talking and playing, but many also stop to look at the portraits before beginning to put toys and art materials away. Jeanette and Teresa circulate, asking idle kindergartners, "What's one job you could do?" or commenting "you two are really working together over there!"

Benji approaches Jeanette and tugs at her sleeve. He tells her that he wants to share two things at meeting. Jeanette asks, "which one is more important right now?"

"Both," says Benji, "I think… both."

Jeanette kneels down, looks him in the eye, and puts a hand on his shoulder, "But I'm going to ask you to choose just one for right now. So think about which one." Meanwhile, other kids have finished the clean-up and are milling around the room. Jeanette stands and walks away from Benji, blinking the classroom lights, "It looks great in here. Which guideline are we following when we're cleaning up?" Several students shout out answers and Jeanette agrees,

"That's right, we are taking care of things. Now, we have been learning a song about gardening. You know this song, class. You know a lot about gardening. Let's sing our song."

Benji puts both hands up and starts jumping. "Is this an emergency, Benji, or can it wait?"

"It can wait," Benjj concedes.

The students move toward the rug as they sing about planting and sowing seeds. About half of them are singing, but everyone moves to a spot on the rug. When they get to the rug, they form a circle. I notice that Charlotte immediately puts her head in her hands and starts rocking back and forth. Phoebe opens and shuts her mouth repeatedly but does not sing, and stares directly at me. Devesh and Prabir are trying to sit as closely to each other as possible and gesture repeatedly at others to move over to make space. When Jeanette looks at them sternly, they join in the song.

Once the children have finished singing, Jeanette points to a large chart where she has the song lyrics written alongside little drawings representing garden images. She asks, "Why do you think writers sometimes put pictures? Class, you are all readers. Everyone here is either reading words, or pictures, or both." She pauses, "Before we ring the bell, Benji has an announcement. Something happened to him yesterday that he wants you to know about."

"Actually," says Benji, "it was at night time. I runned into a tree." He points to a gash on his cheek, turning to show the whole class. Several children gasp and cry, "Wow!"

"Say a little more. Tell us in words," Jeanette coaxes.

"Well," says Benji, "I had something in my backpack and I wanted to show it to my friend and I landed into a tree."

"So would you say you were hurrying?" Jeanette asks, "You were doing a lot of things, and by accident you ran into a tree? And what happened to your face?"

The class is quiet, many kids staring, rapt, at Benji's wound. Charlotte remains bent over but peeks up from that position, shading her eyes with her hand as she stares.

Benji looks at Jeanette blankly and gestures toward the gash. She uses her hands to indicate he should speak and he says, "I scratched it."

Jeanette asks, "So how can we take care of you today, Benji?"

"Don't touch my face," Benji promptly replies.

Many of the kids seem to have stopped listening; several are poking at each other or moving their legs in and out, presumably finding comfortable sitting positions.

"So we should be really careful around your face," Jeanette nods, "We always are, right class?"

"Well, just this side," Benji interjects. Jeanette takes him by his shoulders and coaxes him to a spot in the circle, regaining the class' attention in the process.

Now Jeanette turns to the class, holding up the small bell they ring each day to begin our meeting. "Why do we ring our bell each day?" she asks.

"To get ready for the day," several voices chorus.

"It calms us down," Jeanette explains, "we get ready for our day." She rings the bell. "Today, Hazel is the line leader, but it looks like she's not here, so here's what we'll do. We'll go to the next person."

"Hazel's sick!" Melissa exclaims, climbing up onto her knees. Two other children nod.

Jeanette ignores Melissa and pulls out a list of names, telling Oscar he will be the line leader. "So Oscar, you're going to take the bell. Take it from me, and let's write your name down…" Suddenly, there is a beep on the intercom and the classroom phone rings. Teresa moves to answer it while Jeanette looks momentarily flustered and Devesh points to James crying out, "Stop!" and "He said 'I don't care about you?'"

"Where can you go to work that out?" Jeanette asks, turning her attention to the boys.

"The Friendship Table," Devesh answers. Both boys get up and Teresa hurries to join them in the corner. Many other students crane their necks to watch the two who have left the rug. Charlotte peeks up again from her hunched position to see what is going on.

Meanwhile, Jeanette has laid out several photo cards along the edge of the rug. Oscar chooses "Hallo," for the greeting holding up a picture of a girl grinning under a German flag. After a brief discussion about which countries this word might be spoken in, the children begin greeting each other. "Hallo, Melissa!" "Hallo, Oscar." Devesh and James return from the corner and Jeanette asks them to greet each other, which they do very quietly. When the greeting ends, Charlotte sits up tall. She puts her hands up and speaks immediately, "They don't really say Hallo in Germany. I'm going to Germany this summer… They say, like, if it's afternoon, they say Guten Tag or at night…"

Jeanettee looks down at the photo card she is holding up. The blond girl on the card is wearing a dirndl dress. The top of the card says "GERMANY" and the bottom reads, "HALLO (SCOTLAND)." Jeanette says to Charlotte, "You are headed to Germany, Charlotte. You might want to run a little group at choice time about learning a little bit of German."

"Well," says Charlotte, "I'm forgetting a lot of things." Several kids have their legs in the middle of the circle now, kicking gently. Charlotte returns her head to her lap.

Jeanette turns, "Prabir, could you greet Tyler and shake his hand, and Bianca? Devesh and Benji, could you greet each other?" All of the children comply, then Jeanette continues, "All right, everyone, stand up."

Zach calls out, "I'm going to Canada this summer."

"Tell us more later," Jeanette instructs, as most of the kids stand.

Zach continues, "I'm going on a boat… for six weeks."

Jeanette looks at the class, "We're going to start a game called Jump, Joe." Zach stomps his feet on the ground a few times. Jeanette takes Devesh by the shoulders and moves him to the middle of the circle. The children have apparently played the game before, but Jeanette reviews the instructions. The outer circle is to move around in a ring while they sing a song, and at the end, the person in the middle chooses someone to join him. Devesh chooses Prabir. After the group sings the song again, both people in the middle choose someone to join them. Each boy chooses a different boy, and the game continues. While the children move around, several books fall down from a shelf. Maddie leaves the circle and begins cleaning them up. No one else seems to notice.

Jeanette gestures for the students to pause, "Here's a question for you, class? What is happening to the number of people outside of the circle?" Charlotte picks up the chime and starts ringing it. Melissa continues dancing. All of the girls, and James, the one black boy in the class, are not in the outer circle, while all of the other boys are inside the ring.

Maddie tentatively answers her teacher, "It's getting smaller? The number is getting smaller."

"That's right!" Jeanette exclaims, "You know so much about numbers! And so what's happening to the number on the inside?"

"It's getting bigger," Oscar says, while sticking one finger up each nostril.

"There's like eight people," Prabir offers.

"Shall we count, class? Let's count," Jeanette suggests. "Let's count by ones." The class does. "Now let's count by twos."

Zach raises his hand. "Is this an emergency?" Jeanette asks.

Zach says, "Could we count by fours?"

"Hmm," Jeanette responds, "that's unusual. We don't usually do that. We could. How would that sound?" There is silence and Jeanette continues, "There are a number of different ways to count, and we still get that same total. You know a lot of ways to count, class. You are mathematicians. That's what mathematicians do, they try. They try different things."

After a brief pause, during which the class is silent, Jeanette asks the students to sit back down and turn to the morning message. Several students start bickering over particular spots on the rug. Teresa moves to distribute snack, and Jeanette instructs, "Class, think about what you will say if you don't want something and remember what to say if you do want something. What's the expected thing?"

"Yes please," several children pipe up. As Teresa moves around the classroom with pear halves and small cups of cereal, she physically adjusts students' bodies so that they are sitting in a

circle, facing Jeanette at the easel. Jeanette reads the morning message, which ends with the question, "What do you like about our new building?"

She turns to the class. "We have been here for thirteen days. Thirteen days is not a long time, class, it's a pretty short time. And before we move on with our day I want to ask you, how are we doing? How are you feeling? What are some things that you're liking? What are some things that you're still getting used to?"

Charlotte begins the conversation, "The hallways are bigger here."

"Do you like that?" Jeanette asks.

Charlotte continues, "I also like that we got stuff from the dumpsters when we moved. I got three things."

Jeanette inquires, "But how are you feeling now about this school? Thumbs up?" Charlotte puts a thumb up, then looks away.

Prabir speaks next, "We're doing very great but I kind of like the other school. Because they're not breaking it, they're adding it to make it better." Many kids nod and a few stand up and jump, maybe in agreement.

Jeanette amends, "Well, they're going to build it in a way that's better for us. Are you happy about that?"

Prabir considers, "But the happiest thing is that I can have more fun in the basketball court. Because we can play basketball."

"The happiest thing…" Jeanette repeats, but Prabir looks away, as though he has lost interest.

Tyler calls out, "I have a happiest thing, I'm happy, cause, I don't know…" He pauses when Benji flings a piece of cereal at him, earning a stern look from Jeanette. "I don't know if you know this but there was this red slippery thing, this wet, red slippery thing, and it was, like, it was really slippery, it was a door, so, I'm happy it's not here."

Jeanette looks at him. "But is there something you like about this school?"

"No," Tyler answers.

"I like my house," Zach offers, "I like to be at my home."

Jeanette faces him, "But what's something about the school that you like? What do you like about it?"

Zach thinks for a moment, "The Smartboard." He points at the large white board on one of the walls of the new classroom.

"Is there something you're missing from the old school, Zach?" Jeanette wonders.

Zach replies, "The snow fort." Many other kids breath in loudly and shout, "yeah!"

Jeanette turns to Devesh, who has one finger along an outlet in the wall. "Devesh! That's unsafe. Class, we do not touch electricity." She clears her throat, "Well class, we, the kindergarten teachers, we just had a meeting with Principal Thompson. And he said, we can make this school even better. So that's really good."

"I like it," announces Bianca, "I like that we have a Smartboard and we brought all of our old things."

"So that makes you feel good," Jeanette answers.

"But I miss the lights at our old school." Bianca states.

Jeanette wonders, "What do you mean by the lights?"

Bianca explains, "Our old classroom, to the classroom, there was lights." Jeanette looks confused and several students start waving hands in the air. Jeanette glances at the clock. "Well, class, if you want to share more, you can come to me during choice." She signals that meeting is over and begins giving instructions for a math work period.

Have You Seen My Sheep, February 2017
The students have gathered on the rug in their usual morning circle. Oscar lies down on his belly instead of sitting, and Jeanette takes him by the hips and moves him into a sitting position, right next to her. She turns to face her class. "What comes next in our morning?" Jeanette asks.

"We ring the bell!" Melissa calls, "We ring it three times to get ready for our day!"

Charlotte is the line leader today and chooses 'Shalom' as the greeting. She wants the kids to greet each other by touching elbows. Before the greeting begins, though, several students start saying "Shalom" to each other in silly sounding voices. Tyler sticks out his tongue, calling others' attention to how he can almost reach his nose with it. Jeanette holds her fingers in a peace sign in the air. "I'm waiting," she says. "Now our whole group is ready." She asks the children, "Where is your elbow? Everyone, show me your elbow."

Several children look down at their arms, turning their wrists back and forth. Prabir puts his elbow toward the middle of the circle and begins swinging it up and down. Jeanette approaches him and straightens his arm. The children greet each other, and they greet me, too, by pointing their elbows in my direction when Jeanette asks them to do so.

Jeanette introduces the day's game. It is called "Have you seen my sheep?" Jeanette will use three descriptors to name a child, and the rest of the class will have to guess who she is describing. "And at the end," Jeanette reminds him, "the sheep gets to say something crazy about where they were all that time, like… at the MOVIES or on an airplane." Several children laugh loudly, clutching at their bellies exaggeratedly.

As Jeanette talks, a loud crying sound emanates from the room next door. No one seems to notice. Jeanette begins the game as the class listens in silence, "He is the little brother. He takes the bus. He likes art…" The students guess that she is describing Zach. "I was sick out!" He says, jumping up in excitement. "Oh, you were out sick?" Jeanette asks. Zach nods, a proud smile on his face.

Jeanette continues the game, "She speaks Nepali. She has a brother named Aadi, and she loves to draw."

"It's Melissa!" the kids call out, pointing to her. Melissa stands up. "I was in Nepal," she says confidently, though many classmates laugh. "And I was buying some candy." The laughter grows raucous. Jeanette makes a stern expression and holds the peace sign, asking, "Who can help me pass the message?" One at a time, kids hold peace signs in the air; after a moment, the laughter settles and most of the kids turn to Melissa.

Melissa repeats herself, louder this time, "I was going shopping in Nepal, and I buyed some candy."

"And you've really been there," says Jeanette, looking Melissa right in the eye. "You've been to Nepal, so you KNOW. You know what it's like."

"I went shopping by myself there," Melissa explains.

Jeanette wonders, "How did you feel?" Many kids seem to have stopped listening by now; they are poking each other and a few are rolling on the floor.

"Not scared," comes Melissa's answer.

"So you weren't scared," the teacher ponders, "how did you feel?"

"I went shopping by myself," explains Melissa, still standing. "I was not scared. My uncle gave me money and I bought some lollipops for Aadi and me."

Jeanette adds, "You felt happy." She pauses, looking at her students. Most of the kids grow quiet again under her stare. "Class, you guys know each other very well. Let's play one more. His dad's a teacher. He plays ping pong. He has two big brothers…" Melissa backs up into the circle as Jeanette is talking. She trips over an edge of the carpet, catches herself, and sits down.

"That's me!" Tyler jumps from his seat, "MY dad's a teacher! And he's bald."

Jeanette blushes, "He doesn't have any hair."

"Well," Tyler corrects her as many kids put their hands on their heads, "he does. He does have a little hair…"

"You are his son," Jeanette explains, "and you can get really close to him so you can see that he has hair. But he is bald, yes he is. I've noticed that too… So, where were you Tyler?"

"I was sleeping on the Golden Gate Bridge!" he exclaims.

Many students start cackling loudly, and Jeanette circulates a peace sign again. "Tyler is talking about a famous bridge," she says.

"In California!" Tyler intones, "and I'm going to be there on the spring and it's really crazy."

"All right," says Jeanette, over the children's exclamations, "all right. Let's look at the morning message. Let's be readers today, class. Readers, and helpers. You are all readers, and you all help. Let's read." Three children join in with Jeanette as she reads the day's message.

Native Americans- March 2017
Today as the children are called to the rug, Jeanette asks them to work on a song they have been learning called "We All Fly Like Eagles." As they move toward the meeting area, Charlotte makes her arms flap, presumably like eagle wings, and hits Bianca several times. Bianca starts to cry and Teresa shepherds her to the corner, squatting down to see if she is okay. Charlotte continues flapping even in her meeting spot.

Jeanette begins the meeting, "Beautiful. What is that song about, class? We talked about this song a few different times. But each time we sing it I hear something different." Most of the class is sitting quietly now.

Phoebe raises her hand, "Native Americans."

The children have formed a circle around the perimeter of the rug. Jeanette asks, "And what does that mean? Who are Native, Native Americans? Who can add on to what Phoebe said? Who could add on to that?" Jeanette surveys the classroom and seems to notice that at least six of the children are bowed down toward the rug, as though sniffing it. Bianca rejoins the group, still sniffling. Jeanette clears her throat. "I'm waiting for everyone's eyes, to look right here. That's what's expected. That's what's going to tell me that you're listening." She pauses. More kids sit up and look at her. "So people who were here first, they were here long, long ago… were there cars and stores? How did Native Americans take care of themselves?"

Prabir raises his hand, "They hunt for fish and stuff."

"Turkey!" Bianca pipes up, looking cheered.

Jeanette grins at them and nods, "And here's what I've learned about Native Americans, class. When they would hunt for stuff, they would use all of the animal. They were meat eaters for sure. They would use the bones to make tools, and if they caught a turkey they would use the feathers. What would they do with an animal's coat?"

Oscar exclaims, "They would make a fur skin coat!"

"That's right," Jeanette nods, "to protect themselves from the cold winter." She pauses. "So knowing all of that, what do you think about the Native Americans? What do we know about them?"

Most of the kids are quiet, and it is difficult to tell what they are paying attention to. Tyler sways gently back and forth, nudging each of his neighbors repeatedly in the process.

Charlotte contributes, "If they took a small part of it, they would not need to kill it, because they could just get it, and that would be wasting?"

"So were they wasteful?" Jeanette asks. "Were they a wasteful people?"

"No," Charlotte replies, "I… there's a picture in a magazine at my grandma's house and… and it's an Indian at the grocery store."

"A Native American at the grocery store?" Jeanette corrects.

"And they used berries for face paint!" Charlotte exclaims.

Alison contributes, "Because maybe, if they might have a small animal, maybe that's because they need to eat it for food."

Jeanette looks thoughtfully at Alison. "So they would only hunt for things that they really needed. Is that what you are saying?"

Alison shakes her head, "But what I wanted to say is that for small animals, if they get the small animal, they're going to eat the whole thing."

"No," Tyler intones, "no. They couldn't eat all of the food. They can only eat animals."

"But is that the only thing on earth to eat?" asks Jeanette, a tone of genuine wonder in her voice.

Tyler explains, "They couldn't eat, like, to get food. It would be difficult, like they didn't have any stores."

Jessica probes Tyler, "Do you think that they could have planted seeds? If the climate, if the weather was just right for those things, they did. They weren't wasteful."

Maddie joins the conversation, "They could also make, like, a few batches of bread, like bread and… stuff."

Benji adds, "They used bear skin for like, for a rug, cause I know that once."

"Has someone told you that?" asks Jeanette, "How did you learn that, Benji?"

He answers, "I just know."

"So you're saying," Jeanette interprets, "If there was fur, they could even use it for a rug to keep warm, even like a blanket. A lot of us sleep in beds…" She looks around the classroom, "I wonder, would they use that as blankets too. So I agree with you, Charlotte, they weren't wasteful. They were respectful. They were a respectful people. They respected animals, they respected life, they really took care of the earth." She pauses. "You know a lot about Native

Americans, class, you really know a lot. Wow." After another, silent pause, she says, "Okay, let's have our bell now."

It is Tyler's turn to be line leader and he chooses "hallo" for the greeting, reminding the class, "It's German."

"And they also say that in Scotland," Prabir adds. The class proceeds with their meeting.

Girls On the Outside, March 2017
The children have already greeted each other, and Jeanette is leading them in the day's game. Once again, they are playing "Jump, Joe." Jeanette explains that they need their new student teacher, Sara, to learn the movements and the words. "She's such a good learner," Jeanette tells the class, most of whom are staring at Sara. Jeanette asks James to be the first one in the middle.

James chooses Oscar, and the two of them jump around in the middle together. The rest of the class circles them and sings, moving closer and closer to the middle. Many kids are touching each other's arms or gently stepping on one another's feet. "Let's all get to the edge of the rug," Jeanette instructs, "let's give them space. People like some space." Once each boy has chosen someone else, Jeanette asks, "We know that two plus two is four. If we count by ones, and if we count by twos, should we get the same answer? Two, four…" About half of the class joins her in counting and she exclaims, "Two different ways of counting, and we get the same answer!" Only boys are in the middle of the circle.

The game continues, and Jeanette instructs the class, "Let's check our feet, class, don't get too close." Once again, the children on the outside have all gravitated toward the middle, most of them touching some part of each other's bodies. Sara, the student teacher, notably hangs back, fiddling with an earring. Jeanette uses her arms to back a few kids away from the middle, and

she pauses their singing. "Now, four people plucked out four more people. Let's see… let's see if there are eight of them!" The class counts together, first by ones and then by twos. Jeanette looks at her group and says, "Here's something interesting! Look at the people at the outside of the circle. Do you notice something?"

Melissa responds immediately, "There's eight people too!"

Jeanette nods, "There are eight children. There are eight children on the inside and on the outside of the circle too. I don't think that's ever happened before."

"I was just counting the kids," Melissa tells her.

Hazel calls out from the perimeter, "Also all the boys are in the middle and all the girls are on the outside."

"That's never happened before," says Jeanette, looking at Sara, "Now, let's get to the numbers." She moves to a 100s chart hanging on the wall and points to the number eight. Some of the kids turn to face her, but most keep their positions in the circle. The boys clustered in the middle are all touching each other, and several are stomping on each other's feet repeatedly. Jeanette continues, "This is the number, I'm going to show you. I expect eyes to be up here now, how many people are on the inside and the outside of our circle."

"But you didn't count Sara!" Bianca calls, as a few of the boys back out of their cluster and look at the chart where their teacher stands.

"Ah-ha!" says Jeanette, "We didn't count Sara. Good looking out. Good looking out, everyone. So here's what I'd like for people in the middle to do. Please. We can pluck kids, we can pluck kids only. But first, let's jump."

The song continues, but Zach walks up to the 100s chart and points to the 16. Jeanette puts her hands on his shoulders to orient him toward the group. When they stop, though, Zach says, "There's sixteen!"

"Zach knows a lot about numbers," Jeanette tells the class, hands still on Zach's shoulders, "and you knew that eight, and eight more is sixteen. So how many children are here altogether?" Four of the children in the middle are now laying down on the rug and rolling around. Jeanette clears her throat. "Raise your hand…" She shakes her head, "Sara. Sara, would you like a turn? Would you like a turn before snack? Class, let's get our feet to the edge of the rug." The children do not move, and several of them are looking at Sara, seemingly curious whether their new student teacher will want a turn to dance in the middle. Three of the girls along the perimeter have their arms around each other and are spinning in their own circle.

"Okay," says Jeanette, "Okay. Check your feet. Because what I know is this." She pauses and takes a very slow breath, then counts down out loud, "5, 4, 3 2, 1, 0." The class has quieted, and Jeanette asks, "What do you think I'm thinking? Why do I want people to go to the edge of the rug? What am I thinking?"

Zach calls, "So people don't think you're inside!"

Jeanette affirms his response, "yeah, I don't want the outside to be mistaken for part of the inside."

Maddie adds, "And a person might get jumped on or stepped on."

"You've got it," Jeanette nods at Maddie, "We have to keep our bodies safe, class. What guideline are we following when we keep our bodies safe?" She takes another breath, glances

around, and decides to truncate the game. "Let's sit down for snack and morning message," she tells the class.

Black Socks, April 2017
On their way to the rug today, the students have sung a song about black socks. The lyrics are:

Black socks, they never get dirty, the longer you wear them, the stronger they get.

Sometimes, I think I should launder them, something keeps telling me, don't wash them yet!

Once they are seated, Jeanette asks them a few questions about the lyrics. "Who has black socks on today?" No one raises his hand. "What do you think it means when we sing this song? I feel like socks do get dirty… who could say something about that?" She pauses and points at Zach. "Look at Zach's black socks. Who is wearing white socks today? I wonder if you would see a stain more on one than on the other?"

"I have orange socks," James intones, taking one shoe off and pointing his foot up toward his teacher.

"Yes," Jeanette agrees, "It's a pretty shade of orange… who can help to answer the question?" James begins the slow process of putting his shoe back on.

Alison raises her hand and offers, "It's just that you can't see them. Because they're black. And dirt is brown."

"Raise your hand if you agree with Alison," Jeanette instructs, and four kids raise their hands. "Is it a little bit harder to see things on black socks?"

Zach interrupts, "But you can't see on white socks. Because if you spilled something like milk on it, you wouldn't be able to see." Alison turns to Zach and glares.

"And what does the song mean stronger?" Jeanette continues. "Can they lift things, those socks?"

Benji calls out, "Smellier! The smellier they get. It's a stronger smell."

Jeanette agrees, "Because our feet sweat. And that water, that water from our bodies goes into the socks and I bet they'd start to smell." She pauses, pointing at another lyric on her chart. "What about this word, launder? What does that mean?"

Melissa offers, "It means launder, like it means, like washing."

Jeanette leans down to Melissa and asks, "So do you do laundry at home? Does your family do laundry?"

Melissa thinks, then answers, "Well… it kind of looks like laundry."

"Raise your hand," Jeanette instructs, "if your family does laundry at home." Two kids raise their hands.

Melissa continues, "Well it kind of looks like a lauder but instead one is at the bottom and one is at the top."

"Oh," says Jeanette, "so you're saying something about the washing machine and…"

"…the dryer," interrupts Maddie.

Jeanette adds, "And sometimes they can sit on each other. Am I understanding you? I'm going to listen, if I put the word 'wash' in, does it make sense?" She pauses and seems to understand that she has lost many students' attention, because several kids are crawling around checking one another's sock color. "Everyone. Everyone put out your feet and let's just look at each other's socks." The class quiets, and all of the kids put their feet toward the middle of the circle. Many

roll up their pants legs and pull their socks up to make them prominent. Jeanette pauses while they examine their own and each other's ankles, then says, "all right, let's sit criss cross again. I'm waiting. I'm waiting for four more friends to get ready. Everybody is quietly listening now." Most kids leave their legs pointed out, but they do get quiet while rolling their socks and pants legs up and down. Jeanette rings the chime. "Tyler is the line leader, here you go," she passes the bell to Tyler.

After ringing the bell three times, he chooses 'Ciao' as the day's greeting. Jeanette asks, "Do you remember one of the languages?"

Zach quickly answers for Tyler, "Italy and Vietnamese."

"Yes," says Jeanette, "So. Italian and Vietnamese." She pulls out two different cards with children, presumably in Italy and Vietnam, and each word for hello written in bold letters under the country's flag. Tyler says he would like them to touch each other's backs as part of the greeting.

Prabir waves his hand in the air, and Jeanette asks, "Is this an emergency?" He shakes his head, and she instructs, "Then please wait until the end of the meeting." One of Prabir's socks is pulled up over his pants, all the way to his knee, and as he puts his hand down and sits back, he begins methodically folding it down, in tiny folds.

As the children greet each other, Jeanette comments, "I noticed Maddie tried her best to look at Devesh's eyes. It's tricky when you're touching backs." When they have finished, she asks, "Okay, shall we all put our backs into the circle?" Bianca waves her hands in the air and Jeanette says, "I see your hands, Bianca. Let's hear from Bianca."

Bianca stands. "Whenever I cough and I'm sitting down, right here hurts and right here hurts." She gestures at two different points on her torso.

"Did that start this morning, Bianca?" Jeanette wonders. Bianca nods. "Did you tell your parents?" She nods again. "Did they tell you anything particular?" Bianca shakes her head. Jeanette clears her throat, "Bianca, is there anything we can do for you?"

Bianca points to her chest. "Can you please all not touch me right here?"

Few other children seem to be paying attention, but Jeanette says to Bianca, "And Bianca if you need to cough, listen to your body. If your body needs to cough, you should go ahead and do that. I'll check in with you later."

Melissa walks through the middle of the circle to point at the photo cards. "When you showed the different 'ciao's', there's different," she says. "There's different at the second letter. And at the bottom it's the same but at the top it doesn't say 'ch.' " Jeanette guides Melissa with her hands back to her spot in the circle.

"The two 'ciao's' are spelled differently. They sound the same but they look different," Jeanette explains.

"That's called pronunciation," affirms Stevie solemnly, looking at his ankle and stretching the top of his sock as far out as he can get it.

Zach and Charlotte both have hands in the air, and Jeanette turns to them. "Is this an emergency, Zach and Charlotte?"

"It hurts right here on my head," Charlotte says, gesturing. Zach nods, somewhat inexplicably, and Jeanette asks Teresa to get each of the children an ice pack before starting the day's game with the class.

Writing is Joyful, April 2017
The class has just finished playing this day's game, and Jeanette holds her hand in the air making a peace sign to calm the class down as Sara and Teresa pass out their snack. "Three people have noticed my sign..." she says, "…seven people have noticed." Jeanette looks around, "I see that Charlotte left room in front of her so that Sara could give her a snack. And remember, snack is just a little portion of food, and lunch is a bigger portion." She looks around. "I noticed that James and Devesh said, 'we're not steady together,' and Zach moved between them." She looks at James and Devesh, "Which guideline are you following?"

"Take care of other people?" Devesh wonders, craning his neck to see the guideline poster on the classroom wall.

"All of the other people," Jeanette agrees. "If you're doing your best listening and learning, everybody else can do their best listening and learning. But. But you're also taking care of you!" Her voice grows jubilant as she gestures toward the guidelines. "Yourself, class! It's YOU!" She pauses, and once again surveys her class. "Everyone, kids look squished to me. Everyone really check if you left enough room. Kids look squished." She and Teresa walk around adjusting the students by physically moving their bodies so that there is space in between each of them.

The class reads the morning message chorally while Jeanette moves from word to word with a pointer. Today, the message explains that the children will be spending a lot of time on their writing workshop, where some students are working on personal stories and others on

informational texts. "Everyone's doing what's just right for them. But everybody's writing," Jeanette marvels. As she talks, many of the kids inch their bodies close in toward each other again. The message explains that some visiting teachers from another school will be coming during today's writing period. After the class finishes the message, Jeanette asks them which kind of writing they are working on.   Hazel points out, "Um, there are more people writing… there are more people writing informational texts."

"Like about foxes, or odorous house ants," Jeanette agrees, "put your thumb up if you agree." Most of the children put thumbs in the air.

Zach raises his hand, "Well, I think I'm deciding which one I'm going to do."

"Zach," says Jeanette, squatting down beside him, "Zach, can I see your eyes? I'm going to try to help you make your decision. But I know you'll choose the right thing for you." As Jeanette talks with Zach, most of the class seems focused on moving their bodies as close in as they can. Several touch knees, then glare at each other.

Zach explains, "One of the stories from my life, I was on a football field. I could see all the helmets. I wish I could draw. I want to draw the football field."

"You really love the story," Jeanette states. "I wonder." She looks at the class, then uses her hands to separate Alison's knees from Melissa's. "I wonder if loving the story you tell is a little bit of showing that's your best work."

"I'm still deciding," Zach tells her.

Jeanette turns to the class and asks them to raise their hand if they are writing informational texts. As she turns, many of them move backwards, making more space between their bodies

again. Lucinda yells out, "But James has his hand up and he's not writing an informational text. He's writing a story from his life!" She points accusingly at James.

"Let's let everyone answer for themselves," Jeanette advises. "I'll check in with him later." James bends over and begins rapidly shoveling Goldfish crackers into his mouth.

Jeanette turns back to the class and reminds them how special it is to have visitors during writer's workshop. "We want to make a time during writer's workshop that is just joyful, class." Melissa has moved next to Alison so that her knee is in Alison's lap, and Zach is leaning sideways to graze James' shoulder. Jeanette tells them, "Writing is fun for everyone. Learning is fun for everyone." She pauses, and the room grows completely silent. "Our class is joyful," Jeanette tells her students, "I want you to always love what you're doing. You should either love it, or you should like it." She pauses again before sending students off to line up for music.

Saying Goodbye, May 2017
Today, the morning message tells the students that they will be doing an unusual activity. A classmate, Elijah, suddenly moved to New Hampshire, and they did not have a chance to say goodbye. Today as their activity, the children will be talking about how to write a goodbye letter to him later in the day. "Do you remember," Jeanette says, "that over April vacation, his family decided to move to New Hampshire? Elijah likes it there! I saw his mom yesterday. And he likes it, he likes his new school. But he misses us, and we miss him. Raise your hand if that's true for you." All of the children raise their hands.

"His mom and I talked about Elijah and how he's doing…" Jeanette waits as she looks around the classroom. "I'll wait for two more kids to really listen, to really sit criss cross and listen, so you know what to expect." She clears her throat. "Class, it's so important to say goodbye and

good luck and to celebrate Elijah. We want to celebrate him. And one way we can do that is to make a card.”

Benji interrupts, “I said goodbye…”

Jeanette continues, “It feels good to the person we say goodbye to. And it feels good to us, too.”

Tyler calls out, “Remember Christopher and Thomas?” These are students who were in the class for only one week at the beginning of the year.

Jeanette points out, “We didn’t know them as well.”

“They didn’t even see this classroom,” Tyler agrees, waving his arm around.

“But we did still say goodbye to them,” Jeanette points out. “We did. And what might we say to Elijah? I’m going to use this special paper. Now Elijah has moved to New Hampshire. We love Elijah and we wish him well.”

Charlotte raises her hand, “Well,” she says, “We’re going away too. My dad was going away for a long time. He’s going to Germany. We didn’t have a final time to say goodbye.”

“Is this reminding you of that?” Jeanette asks.

“Yeah,” says Charlotte,” because we’re not going to be with him for more than ten weeks. It’s like a world record for us… A world record of being away from him. He’s learning about some more things in Germany… because he’s an artist. And he teaches college students how to draw things. Like he can draw professional race cars.”

“And this letter to Elijah…” Jeanette tries to interrupt.

Charlotte's voice grows louder, though other students are wiggling around all over the rug. "And he can make sculptures. We have more than ten at our house. But first we're going to Westport."

"Charlotte," Jeanette speaks gently, leaning forward and looking directly at her, "What might we say to Elijah?"

"I hope you come back," is her prompt response.

"Come back and visit?" Jeanette inquires.

"No," Charlotte is firm, "Come back and stay." Jeanette writes "We hope you come back and visit" on the chart.

Then she asks, "What's something else you could say to him?"

"You are one of my best friends," offers Bianca. Zach raises his hand and stretches, then hits Prabir in the eye. Jeanette gets up, takes Zach by the shoulders, and nudges his body away from Prabir's. She calls on Phoebe, who says, "I know how you feel because I didn't have any friends when I moved here from Princeton."

"How do you think he will feel," Jeanette asks Phoebe, "if we send him all these cards?"

"I had a goodbye party," Phoebe offers.

Jeanette asks, "How did that make you feel? Do you think he'll feel better if we send him these thoughts and good wishes? Is there something you want to tell him?"

Phoebe speaks gravely, "I had to move."

Jeanette turns to the class and asks, "Raise your hand if that's true for you…" she pauses, noting that no one else raised their hands. Phoebe leans back toward a bookshelf and begins fiddling with the book she has knocked out of place. She looks away from Jeanette. "He's having a nice time," Jeanette adds, "but he certainly misses us. He's safe, he's with his family… but he misses us."

Zach calls out, "I, uh… I um love you." Then he bumps Prabir hard on the back and Prabir turns and thumps him in return.

"Goodbye" recommends Hazel, "We didn't say that."

"We didn't get a chance to say that," Jeanette agrees, "so you can put that in your cards if you want to." Zach has moved into Prabir's lap now and is saying in a growly whisper, "I hope you have a great summer."

"You are my best friend," says Oscar.

"Did it feel like he was your best friend, Oscar?" Jeanette asks. "You were certainly very close." Oscar begins moving the elastic waistband of his pants in and out, looking away from his teacher.

"I like when you sit next to me," offers Benji.

Jeanette turns to the class, "Think about what you liked about Elijah. Was he a good friend? Do you want to say something like that? I'm thinking something about sitting next to you and being a good friend. Now, let's sit criss cross. Let's put our hands down and sit criss cross so I can see who is ready to go make a card."

Vignettes From Samantha's Classroom
Eagle Eyes, January 2017
Snack has just ended, and Samantha calls the students to the rug for their Second Step lesson.

Several students sit at the front of the rug and look up at her. Jesus and Jessenia stand in back of the rug. "Sit criss cross," Samantha calls, "in the spots I've given you." One child is walking along the edge of the classroom, knocking other people's things off of their hooks in the open closet. "Hang up all the things in the closet that you have taken off the hooks!" Samantha yells at her. Jesus remains standing, shoving one finger in his mouth.

Samantha walks over to intervene near the coats, calling "Everyone else should have their voices off!" She notices two children exchanging pieces of candy in one corner of the room. "If I see that again," she tells them, "it will not be given back to you."

Leaving the closet again, she tells the class that they will play a quick game. It is called Movement Maker. One child starts a movement, and others are supposed to join in. Then, someone has to guess who is starting each of the new movements. Samantha starts the game quickly, then leaves the group to try once more to stop the commotion surrounding the coats. As she walks off, she says, "I'm looking around to see who can be a good Movement Maker. You've got to face the middle. You've got to watch the Movement Maker."

Josue yells out, "Do I have to join the circle?"

Samantha leaves the circle altogether, approaching the group that has now clustered near the closet. The rest of the class seems to keep a version of the game going, and when Samantha returns, she says, "Wow, it looks like everybody has been following the Movement Maker still."

She selects Josue to be the next Movement Maker. "He's really been following along carefully. Look at Josue and do what Josue's doing. No noises! This is a silent game."

Jesus leans back and starts laughing raucously. "Jesus! Look what I'm doing carefully,"

Samantha says, "When the movement is small like this, you have to look very carefully."

The round draws to an end somewhat incoherently, commotion continuing near the jackets.

Samantha stands before the class. "I want to talk about how that game went," she says, "What

did you need to be successful at that game?"

"Be good!" Jessenia immediately calls.

"But what does being good mean?" wonders Samantha. There is silence.

Then Jessenia adds, "That somebody is doing it, what the Movement Maker's doing!"

Samantha shakes her head. "What do you need," she asks, "to copy them the right way?" She

begins walking around the room and patting students on the head, possibly to redirect their

attention. "I'll tell you," she says, "you need to have Eyes Watching." She points to the Second

Step poster indicating Eyes Watching, "I couldn't do it if my body was out of control," she

continues, "Body still is usually the rule." She pauses, "You have to have your body under

control. You could kick somebody's foot. Eyes Watching is a really important rule for

listening."

Samantha glances over toward the coat closet, sighing audibly. "I'd like everyone to stand up at

the rug. What I'm expecting is eyes up front, body still. I'm not that happy."

There is a pause, and then she says over the students' chatter, "How do you think people are

feeling if they are making a face like this?" She screws up her face and glares.

Josue calls out, "Sometimes if I'm like this, I'm worried…"

Samantha agrees, "That's called a grimace. It's a sparkle word. What are you looking at when you notice that? You are looking at my mouth, right? It's not a smile. It's just a frown."

Jesus is still chewing elaborately on his finger, and Jessenia leans over toward him, putting her hand on his shoulder. Samantha continues, "Josue was using Eyes Watching, a classic rule for listening."

"He was using Eagle Eyes!" Jessenia exclaims. She points toward the top of the wall, where three posters advertise "Reading Strategies," including "Eagle Eyes: Look at the picture. Ask yourself, 'what starts with the beginning letter?' "

"No," says Samantha, "that's our reading strategy. He was using Eyes Watching. Looking closely, paying attention." There is a pause. "Let's do another one," Samantha suggests. "Look at my face, and I want you to think how I'd be feeling now." Jessenia releases Jesus' shoulder, and he starts crawling around the floor making animal faces and noises. Meanwhile, the children near the closet have found several pairs of scissors. They are snipping in the air with the scissors. Another group, on the rug, is asking to go to the bathroom. "Does more than one person go to the bathroom at a time?" Samantha asks them.

Jessenia turns to Jesus, "Pull up your pants!"

"Jessenia," says Samantha, "I'm glad you're trying to help, but I want you to sit criss cross." She pauses. "Let's think. What do we do when our faces look angry?" She gestures toward a child making a face. "Your nose is wrinkled up! I think you're right. How does your body feel when you're angry?"

The noise level in the classroom is increasing. Jesus is still crawling around, and now he is snorting. Samantha looks out over her class and remains quiet for several minutes before looking at me. She says, "I think we're done for the day," and sends the children to color.

Phillip and the Cat, February 2017
"I'm expecting you to be sitting criss cross," says Samantha as she begins the day's lesson. "No side conversations." The children are all on the rug today, and Samantha holds up a photo card. It has a picture of a boy with his mouth open. "This is Jarel," she tells the class. "He is feeling excited. His dad came home with a new puppy. Clap twice if you think you would feel surprised if your…" Almost all of the children start clapping wildly. "Voices off!" Samantha yells. She looks out over the class. "How many of you would feel something else!"

"Happy!" several children shout.

"Lovable!" says Josue, "But…. And. And tell my parents that we need to get this stuff for if they get the puppy. And I can't go to school. I have to stay home with the puppy."

Several children start chattering at once. "A lot of people are interrupting," says Samantha, and that is not how we get what we want. Be a respectful listener… I would not let someone else talk over your comment."

Jesus starts loudly slapping his hands on his legs, and Samantha glares at him. "I would stay to my house," he says.

"Because you felt what way?" Samantha asks.

"Happy."

Samantha looks back at the class. "But how would your friend who's scared of dogs feel?"

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"I'm not scared of dogs! I'm not scared of dogs! Me neither!" Several children talk at once.

Samantha claps her hands several times, while also shaking her head at the three children clamoring to leave for the bathroom. "Only one person goes at once!" she yells.

Josue falls over onto his side and says, "One time a dog…. Bit me in the face."

"What happened?" Samantha asked. "Let's work on listening respectfully. How did that make you feel?"

"Sad," replies Josue, casually, "But it didn't even hurt."

"It would make me feel scared," offers Samantha.

"I'm not scared of dogs!" Josue tells her.

"His baby brother scratches him," Jesus offers, pointing at Josue. When no one answers, he starts banging on the legs of a desk.

"It's not a puppy…" Josue continues. "It's not a little dog. It's a big dog… and it's not any kind of dog. It's supposed to be in the snow. It's called… it's basically like a polar bear."

"Is this about feeling words?" Samantha asks. "Like scared? Because he's really big?"

"No," Josue answers, "I'm not scared. It's like a polar bear."

"Well we do have to move on," Samantha tells him, "but I'm glad you could think about a feeling word about something that was happening to you."

Philip pipes up, "Once my mommy bought me a kitten. And I started crying because I was happy."

Several kids start laughing. "Don't laugh!" Samantha exclaims.

"I was surprised!" says Phillip, "I have a cat named Phillip!"

Samantha laughs, and several children join in the laughter. Phillip leans over and puts his head all the way into his lap. Samantha looks at him, "Wait, so you **really** have a cat named Phillip?" She looks at the class, glaring. "I can understand that Phillip is a little upset because we were laughing at him. Sorry, Phillip. Sorry, sorry…" She pauses, "Is that okay?" His head is still in his lap. "Well, I was a little surprised… Well, okay, I'm going to keep going now." She tells the class, "I didn't know I was going to upset him so what I can do is apologize and move on."

Jesus punches a fist into the air and says, "But you laughed at him."

"But I need to move on," Samantha continues. I'm going to move on with his lesson. I want you to think of a time you felt the way Jarel was feeling in the picture."

"Who's Jarel?" several kids ask. Jesus turns toward the white board and begins licking the marker spots off of it. There is a lot of noise in the room, and Samantha seems frustrated. "Voices off! Jarel was excited! Now, I'm giving you your writing journals and I need you all to write a few sentences about one time when I felt surprised."

Jesus leaves the white board and begins walking around the room, rapping other students on their knees while swinging his other arm through the air. When he taps Jessenia, she turns toward me and grins. Samantha passes out journals.

A few students move toward their desks, presumably to write, but most stay at the rug. "I never got a pet," a few of them are saying.

"But can you remember a time you felt surprised?" Samantha asks.

"When I got a gift!" Jessenia offers.

Samantha explains, "So Jessenia would write, one time when I felt surprised I got a gift! She raised her hand and she said that. And after you write your sentences you can draw a picture to go with them."

Josue gets up and approaches the photo card, touching Jarel's face. "It looks like he's looking right at me," he says, "What you looking at me for?"

Jessenia leans toward a different girl and whispers, "Does your feet tastes like salt or like sugar?"

"You don't get a notebook if you're not sitting criss cross," Samantha warns. "A lot of you filled up your last journals with pictures over the lines. These lines are for writing."

Several kids look up to her. "I haven't never felt surprised," Phillip tells his teacher. She looks at him. "Oh my goodness," she says and pauses. Then, she announces to the class, "You're not getting out of your work this way."

What is Empathy?, February 2017
Today's lesson is meant to be about the concept of empathy. Samantha has students gathered on the rug, and she is making faces. "I want you to tell me," she instructs, "what about my face looks sad to you."

"You're frowning," some children offer.

"Yeah, I'm frowning," she say, "But what else?"

It becomes hard to hear because a group of children in the middle of the rug starts growling. Their growls get louder and louder, and Jesus joins in, simultaneously making farting noises with his armpit and bouncing up and down. "I'm hungry!" he says. The rest of the group joins in, "We're hungry. We're hungry we're hungry we're hungry," they chant.

"When you look at my face and say what I'm feeling," Samantha says loudly, "That's called empathy. That's called empathy! Say that!" A few children repeat the word, and Samantha continues, "You guys know a lot about what other people are feeling. And I also see you care for your friends when they are feeling sad and mad."

She waits for a moment, then holds up a picture card. "This is Julian." She describes a scenario in which Julian is watching other students in his class complete a math assignment that he is having trouble with. All of his friends are doing it, but he does not understand how. "What do you see Julian doing?" She asks.

Jesus responds, "Looking. He's not supposed to look."

"That's also called cheating," says Josue. The class grows extremely quiet. Jessenia takes her hair out of a ponytail and starts putting it back in. She undoes and redoes it several times.

"Why do you think he's doing that?" Samantha asks, glancing at the picture herself. "Why? No one **wants** to cheat…"

Josue offers, "So if they raise, say raise their hand… he wants to see it… so he knows what it is, so he can win…"

"This is not a game." Samantha is firm, "He's not going to win anything. But he might still want to see, right? What is the word for that feeling?"

The class is noisy again and several kids are waving their hands in the air. Rosalena calls "When I'm trying to do my birthday… sometimes I'm feeling really unpatient. And he's unpatient."

"Wonderful!" Samantha affirms, "He's impatient! He wants… he wants to get it right now!"

Josue makes a spitting noise with his mouth several times. "He's curious," he says.

"I love that you thought of that word, curious! Really good!" Samantha exclaims. "Impatient and curious are just the words for what Julian is feeling right now. And that's empathy! Some of the clues you guys had were the situation, right?"

Several students are wandering around the room now. Samantha looks at Jessenia, "Are there any clues in his face?"

"No," says Jessenia casually, continuing to style her hair.

"Can anyone else see clues?" Samantha asks. Rosalena gets up and sits in a chair, then drags another chair closer to her body and tries to sit in both of them at once. "You don't need two chairs, Rosalena!" Samantha yells, "Two chairs is not safe!" Many other children turn to see what she is doing.

Samantha points to the photo card again, but half of the class has moved to a different part of the classroom. "Right now," Samantha says, ignoring the kids who are wandering around or finding chairs, "you guys are paying attention to his situation, his body and his face." Someone falls from a chair in the back of the room and starts wailing. "Oh my goodness," Samantha moans, "Who's crying?"

Don't You Want to Go Home?, March 2017
Samantha is teaching another lesson about empathy. She is holding a picture up for the students to see. "The girl in this picture is feeling… I'm thinking of a word." The students are noisy and restless, few, if any, looking up at Samantha and her picture. There is a long pause.

Josue offers, "She's feeling sad. Cause I see her face." He frowns.

"Um… curious?" Rosalena tries, when Samantha does not respond to Josue.

"Why do you think curious?" Samantha wonders.

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"She took my word!" Rosalena answers loudly.

"Angry-ish. Angry-ish. Angry-ish." One student says it first, but soon several are chanting it at once.

"What's angry-ish?" Samantha asks them.

"She's feeling angry," Josue exclaims. "I see some angry parts on her face."

Jesus gets up and starts shouting loudly, in unintelligible syllables. "Please stop," Samantha says, looking at him. "We are working hard to get back to green. I would hate for us to end our day on yellow." She points back to the picture, explaining that the girl she is showing is trying really hard to jump rope but cannot master it. Jesus sits down and put his head in his hands.

"I would say, frustrated." Says Samantha. "I would say she is frustrated. What she is saying is, 'I can't do it!' "

"She's quitting!" Jessenia yells, "We talked about that…"

"Yeah," Samantha says, "But what about her face looks frustrated. Like I see that her eyebrows are together, and she's looking down. Make a frustrated face."

"No WAY," says Jessenia, touching her own eyebrows.

Several students raise their hands to try, and Samantha explains, "In a minute, I'm going to give you a partner, and you're going to show your partner what feeling face you will have. This is not a talking activity," she continues over the rising noise in the room. She quickly walks around, moving students toward each other in pairs.

"Yeah," says Jesus, "But I wanted to make a face and someone else should guess what I'm feeling like."

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Jesus' partner says he will not play. Several other students follow suit, and Samantha sends them all to sit at tables. Jesus begins growling and crawling around. "I don't want to do this!" he chants repeatedly. Samantha claps. Jessenia and her partner begin chatting excitedly while doing each other's hair. Jesus crawls to the partner who has refused to play and begins growling at him.

"Voices off!" yells Samantha! "Face your partners!" Though almost no one is still next to their partner, she begins reading a situation in which a student is unable to find a jacket. Jessenia begins giggling loudly and buries her head in her partner's lap. Her partner continues braiding strands of her hair.

From one corner, Josue explodes, "You're the WORST partner!" Samantha says, "That's not okay!" and Josue yells, "I don't want to calm down! I don't WANT to be in the calm down corner!"

Samantha returns to the situation cards. "A dog barks at you," she reads. Most of the students start laughing. "We're done!" says Jessenia, "We did the laughing face!"

Samantha looks to the rug, where two students appear to be asleep. Jessenia approaches her and taps her arm, "When is it time to go home?" she asks. She smiles, "Don't you want to go home too, Ms. Gaines?"

The Fire Truck, March 2017
Samantha is holding up another picture of Jarel. "Yesterday," she explains, "Jarel was at home, and he was sick. But at school, the firemen came and they talked about fire safety."

"What?" asks Jesus, "At SCHOOL?"

"Aw!" several children intone.

"I love the quiet, raised hands," Samantha says, "Wonderful. How do you think Jarel feels?"

Many children agree that Jarel would feel really sad. "Once I missed that in kindergarten," Josue offers, "It was something like that and I missed it."

"How did you feel?" asks Samantha.

He shrugs, "I didn't feel happy or sad."

Phillip says, "When I was in preK…"

"PreK?" several students repeat him, laughing, "What's preK?"

Phillip continues, "I missed the fire engines and I was home cause it was my sister."

"How did you feel about it?" Samantha asks.

"Sad," Phillip responds.

Samantha continues, "What I'm looking for is a different feeling word. I'll wait till we're all facing front and quiet. I'll wait. What I'm looking for is a different feeling word. Other people got something that you wanted."

"Jealous," says Josue.

"Jealous!" agrees Samantha, "When someone else gets something that you want, you feel jealous. You might feel a little angry, you might think it was a little unfair. Left out. And I'm going to give you a sparkle word for left out: disappointed. You might feel disappointed. Who remembers why Jarel is feeling that way?"

"He didn't go onto the fire engine," Phillip answers.

Samantha nods, "And he's thinking about it, and he's noticing some things happening in his body. His stomach is starting to hurt. He's starting to feel his shoulders droop… Sometimes your body gives you those clues to tell you about how you're feeling. You feel uncomfortable when you're having a mad or a sad feeling."

"I feel sad," Jessenia announces.

"No," says Samantha, "not the feeling word, I want to hear about how you're feeling in your body. What feels different when you're mad or sad?" Jessenia takes off her sweater, folds it tidily, unfolds it, and puts it back on.

"I feel like throwing things!" says Josue. "I feel stronger, and I can, I feel like I can punch the wall and it will break."

"But I can really do that," says Jesus, and begins making hooting noises.

Samantha glares at him, "This is what it looks like for you to clip down," she says, "This is how you end the day on red."

Jessenia takes her sweater off again. She ties it around her waist and pulls the bottom of her shirt over it. In a quiet voice, she says, "When I feel sad, my body feels different."

"When I start to get mad," Samantha says loudly, "my body feels really hot, especially in my face." Many students start laughing, and she asks, "WHAT?!" She pauses. "I start to feel really tight in my shoulders and my arms. We're talking about things we feel in our body."

"Once I was sick," Rosalena says, "and I was sad because it was my birthday and I was throwing up."

"Is there another word for that feeling?" Samantha asks.

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"That happened to me once too!" Phillip agrees.

Samantha turns to the picture and says, "I want you to tell Jarel how he could make himself feel better. Jesus, do you have an idea?"

"No," says Jesus, then points to another child, "That's mine! He took my eraser!"

"You need to be sitting criss cross," Samantha tells him, "If you're doing that, you can move back to green." She turns to Jarel, "Could he maybe ask the other kids to tell him what happened?"

Rosalena raises her hand, "Buying a present. Buy him something. If his mom could buy him something."

"Would that really be about this?" Samantha asks.

"I could," says Rosalena, "I have twenty dollars, but I lost one."

"Is this about what Jarel is feeling?" Samantha sounds impatient.

"It is because if I could buy him a REAL fire truck," Rosalena explains, "They could let him play in the toy, they could let him play with a toy fire truck."

Jesus is watching Rosalena closely. He punches his fist into the air. Samantha turns to him, "You're going to end the day on yellow," she says.

"I just want to go home, please," Jessenia calls out.

"So I thought that was a really good idea," Samantha says, "Rosalena noticed there are things other people could do. But how can he help HIMSELF? When you're feeling the way that he's

feeling…" Several students start whistling, "What can you do to help yourself when you are feeling like this?"

"Try not to get sad," says Jessenia, "just try to stay happy."

"But how do you do that?" Samantha asks, "Do I just say fine, I don't want to be sad anymore?"

Josue lifts up the ledge of the white board and says, "He probably can't afford to go to school again. He can ask his mom to stay home for a little bit more…"

"His mom can bring the fire fighter to his house," Phillip agrees.

"That's a creative idea…" Samantha says. She notices that four children are coming into the classroom at once, presumably from the bathroom. She turns to one of them, yelling, "Honey! When you all go to the bathroom, I don't expect you to come back together, honey!"

Jesus yells, "Honey?!" and the class dissolves into collective laughter.

They Cut That Open, March 2017
"Sometimes," Samantha is explaining to the class, "When you want to fix your feelings, you can try to fix your thinking, not what's happening." She asks the class to consider what they might do to make themselves feel better when they are sad.

Jessenia has done her hair into two long braids. She wraps them around her head, unwraps them, and begins undoing one braid. Elbowing a neighbor, she then starts showing how she will start the braiding again.

Samantha tells the class, "Think about it. How many of you have gone to one of the machines at the grocery store where you put in a quarter and you get a toy." Jessenia puts down her braids

and raises a hand. "How does that make you feel if you don't get what you want?" Samantha asks.

"Sad," says Jessenia.

"But did you still feel sad about it the next day?" Samantha asks.

Jessenia nods.

"Well maybe you did, maybe you didn't." Samantha continues, "How many of you play a sport?" Most of the children raise their hands, "Keep your hand up if you've ever missed a basket or missed a goal." Almost all of the children put their hands down. Samantha looks at them. "Well, that happened to me once. And I felt kind of embarrassed, like people were thinking bad things about me." She pauses. "I felt embarrassed for a while… but then a week later I definitely felt better." She pauses again, then continues, "So you can tell yourself, 'I'm going to feel better later on.' And I might remind you of that, too. You're going to feel better soon. That's the great thing about feelings, is they don't last forever, right? Right. Great. We're done."

The lesson is presumably over, but Phillip begins to talk. He says, "My stepdad went to Puerto Rico." He smiles, then says, "I was sad."

"Sad?" asks Samantha, "That's kind of confusing for me. Because you're smiling… so your face doesn't match."

"It was when I was four," Phillip explains.

"So it was a long time ago," Samantha answers, "Do you still feel sad about it now?"

Phillip shakes his head. "He's going to come back… maybe."

Jesus chimes in, "in twenty more days, my grandma is coming on Friday maybe."

"That's why feelings are sort of confusing," Samantha says. "You might feel more than one feeling at once."

"Yeah," Rosalena agrees, "my dad is still in the doctor appointment but he's got a staple in his neck already and I was sad and mad."

"We talked about this," says Samantha, "I talked to you about it a long time ago. I said, I would feel scared too. But it already happened, right? And your dad is okay, right? So you see, class, feelings don't last forever."

"What part of his neck?" Jesus asks, pointing one finger at Rosalena.

"Did they cut it open?" Josue asks, leaning in, "Oh my god, they cut that open!"

Jessenia walks up to Samantha, "When are we going home?"

The Furnace, March 2017
Samantha is teaching a lesson about calming yourself down when you are frustrated. She begins by telling a story, "Last weekend, my heat wasn't working and I was trying to fix my furnace so that I wouldn't be cold in my house any more… I tried and tried to figure it out but I couldn't, and I was feeling… Who knows what that's called?"

Jessenia leans forward, shouting, "Frustrated!"

Samantha replies, "I was super frustrated, and I was cold!"

The kids are leaning forward, rapt. Josue calls out, "You could use that thing, that… what's that called…" He looks around the classroom, flailing his hands vaguely toward an appliance in the corner.

"The space heater?" Samantha asks. "Right. I could. But I finally got someone to come out and help me and I didn't feel frustrated anymore."

Several children are lying down now, rolling back and forth along the rug, and Jesus starts banging with an eraser on the white board. Samantha clears her throat, "Think of a time when you felt frustrated. What did you do to help yourself stop feeling frustrated?"

At this point about one third of the class is engaged, including Phillip, who offers, "When my room was really cold…. I got a blanket." He pauses, looking at his pudgy knees, "I couldn't go to sleep, there was holes in my blanket."

Samantha is talking louder now, in order to be heard over the ambient noise of the classroom, "Okay. So you were cold. But did you feel frustrated?" Samantha stops and looks around the room. Jesus is hanging from the white board by his fingers. "Jesus! Jesus!" Samantha tries to rein him in. He looks at her and says, "I got a Smart TV for Christmas but…"

Samantha interrupts, "We'll go back to that in a little bit. What I'm asking for is something you did to make yourself not feel frustrated."

Josue speaks up from the back corner of the room where he is also pulling at the unraveling fringe of the carpet, "One time my mom said to clean my room. But after a couple seconds she let me play with my toys. I felt really upset when she said to clean my room…"

Samantha looks directly at Josue, "That's a different feeling."

"I was feeling really upset!" he interjects.

"What did you do to help yourself, Josue?" Samantha asks.

"My mom said I could play with my toys," he answers.

"Okay, so someone else helped you," Samantha says, "But did you still have to clean your room?"

"No," he answers, "it was time to go to bed."

Jesus starts grunting and rocking back and forth. Samantha looks at him. "You're on yellow," she says. He brings his hands to his mouth and begins softly beat boxing. "Stay quiet and still!" she yells.

Then she turns to the class, "I want to find other ways we can help ourselves calm down."

"My brother told me to clean my room" says Phillip, "and I was upset." Jesus' beat boxing grows louder, and he looks directly at me.

"Stop playing with your hair, please!" Samantha addresses several girls. "We're going to talk about someone who needs help calming down. This is a picture of Nikki trying to figure out how to subtract some numbers. The teacher comes around and says this isn't right. And she feels like it's too hard… and she's about to tear up her paper. What do you notice about how her face looks?"

"That girl get mad," says Phillip. Jesus' beatboxing becomes so loud that everything else in the classroom is inaudible. Samantha sends him to his table spot, and Phillip continues, "They get frustrated, she looks mad. Because she looks ugly."

Most of the children are watching Jesus walk slowly to a table, still beatboxing. "You don't have to pay attention to the fact that he is interrupting you," says Samantha. "Is she smiling? Is Nikki smiling? No! Her face is really tight. Her hands are in fists. For me, my body gets really tight. Do mad and frustrated look the same?"

Josue takes off his boots and throws one of them across the room, then begins pretending to throw the other.

"Okay," says Samantha, "so Nikki feels like doing something right now."

"Breaking her paper!" Rosalena yells, shaking her head. "But she might get in trouble."

"If she ripped up the paper, she might get in trouble," Samantha agrees.

"But she's still gonna have to do it," Rosalena says.

Samantha explains, "So what she's doing right now is hard for her, and she can't figure it out. Let's go back over what we already know. Does she feel comfortable right now?"

Several of the students have started beatboxing along with Jesus, who is continuing to grow louder from a table spot. Samantha sends two more children away from the rug. "What can she do? What could Nikki do to help herself calm down?" She points to a poster on the wall. "She could count to five! Do you see that strategy up there! Counting to five!"

"She could breathe," says Jessenia, pointing to a different poster.

"That's right, she could do some deep breaths," Samantha says, looking over the class. "When I raise my hands up I want you to breathe in." She lifts her hands, then says, "You've got a lot of practice at this. You've got a lot of great strategies."

A few kids seem to be holding their breath. Jesus continues beat boxing and starts shaking a box of pencils. "You know," says Samantha, "That you breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. I like to say, smell the roses, and blow out the candles. Jesus! Stop drumming!"

"I like to drum!" he yells.

Samantha says, "It's not about what you like to do right now, Jesus. This is about our listening strategies."

"I already know that!" says Jesus, "I already know how to breathe. I don't have to do that."

"So from now on," Samantha addresses the class, "when you go to the calm down corner, I want you to practice smell the roses, blow out the candle."

You Are a Reader, April 2017
It is my last day observing in Samantha's class. She is apologetic, because they are deviating from their usual routines. They have earned an ice cream party for good behavior. Samantha asks me to help pass out small cups of vanilla ice cream. The children sit calmly at their tables, eating their treats.

A few kids, including Josue, finish quickly and walk over to a corner. Josue asks me to watch him read. He chooses a book from under a table and starts reading to me. When he finishes, he grins up at me shyly.

At Jessenia's table, the kids are comparing notes on who has lost more teeth. They argue gently over whether or not there is a tooth fairy. Jessenia is sure that there is not, because she sleeps with her mother and she knows her mother gives her the presents. Rosalena says, "There is a tooth fairy because I get presents and my mom doesn't have any money." The kids at this table seem to be eating as slowly as possible.

Jesus is done with his ice cream quickly. He starts telling me about his younger brothers, three of them. He tells me they are all at his house right now. He wants to know if he can see my computer, and if I like to watch movies. He asks me how I learned to type so fast, and where I got my phone.

Phillip has chosen not to eat ice cream. He is sitting quietly at a table in the corner, rocking back and forth. Samantha walks over to him and asks why he does not want ice cream. "All the kids in the class can read," he tells her, "all but me."

"Hey!" she says, looking startled and putting a hand on her shoulder, "Hey, buddy, that's not true! You're a reader, buddy!" He looks at her. "We're all readers! When you go with Ms. Price to do your ABC work, that's reading too!"   She walks away from him, then comes back, bringing two of the small ice cream cups and placing them in front of him. Then she blinks the classroom lights and tells the class that instead of their lesson today, they will go outside for an extra recess. Most of the children cheer.

Chapter Five: Results From Teacher Interviews

I conducted two interviews with each of the participating teachers in this study. The purpose of

this chapter is to describe each teacher, summarize the information I learned from the interviews,

and explain the major themes that emerged from a synthesis of the interviews. The results will

be interpreted alongside the other results in the next chapter.

Jeanette
My meetings with Jeanette occurred in her classroom before the beginning of the school day.

Scheduling these meetings was difficult, because Jeanette had so many other meetings and

obligations and often expressed feeling overwhelmed and stressed by all she had to do. After our

interviews, I sent Jeanette some follow-up questions over e-mail, which we had agreed to.

In our first interview, I asked Jeanette to tell me a little about herself and how she came

to teaching. She explained that she had always loved young children, and as she grew up, she

started to enjoy things like babysitting and working as a camp counselor. To Jeanette, these

experiences seemed to lead naturally to a career teaching in early childhood. She majored in education as an undergraduate and pursued a master's degree while starting her first teaching job, at a preschool. After she finished her master's degree, she became certified to teach in public school and got the job teaching kindergarten at the school where she remains.

Jeanette spoke extensively about her love for her school. She commutes for over an hour each way to get to work, from a tiny suburb. In a casual conversation apart from the interview, she explained, "For where I live, I like the open space, the yard, I like to be in nature and peace and quiet… but for work I always knew I needed the diversity of the city." Jeanette also loves RC and was motivated to participate in my study primarily because she feels her teaching has been transformed by the program and she wanted a chance to show that off, discuss it and reflect on it together.

We talked about the changes she has observed in kindergarten and in public school overall during her time at her job, and Jeanette described the lessening of time for play, rest, and free choice. She explained that a few years ago, the district tried to mandate that choice time be removed from kindergarten classes, but that many teachers banded together and threatened to leave their jobs; the superintendent and principals relented. However, Jeanette did bemoan the fact that choice time is now only twenty minutes at the end of each day, following twenty minutes of rest time. Outdoor recess is only about fifteen minutes long, as is lunch. These limitations are Jeanette's least favorite things about her school, as she thinks they are unethical and make life harder for children, families and teachers. "I've always been lucky, though," she explained, "to have a very supportive principal, who takes my expertise in early childhood seriously and consults me about these big decisions."

Jeanette explained that a big part of why she loves kindergarten has to do with the opportunity to be the first time a child and a family interface with the system of school. "If I can get them to trust me," she explained, "if I show them that I respect their children and care about their family and their cultures, then I help set them up for a lifetime's worth of trust in school. I take that very seriously."

Over the course of the last five years, Jeanette has increasingly taken on a leadership role in her school and her district. She mentors newer teachers and hosts study groups of other teachers in the district focusing on different facets of instruction. Jeanette has participated in numerous research projects and almost always has at least one student teacher in her classroom. She frequently attends regional and national conferences. Within her school, other teachers consult with her, especially about behavior problems and struggles communicating with families.

During our interviews, I often had the sense that Jeanette was rushing and that she was somehow performing for me. She talked openly about some vulnerabilities and concerns, but I never sensed that she was willing to fully share her thoughts and feelings about the questions I was asking. Many of Jeanette's answers seemed to come directly from RC literature, in fact, and she appeared determined to stay completely positive about RC, SEL, and most of her teaching experiences. Jeanette spoke to me in the same tone she used with her kindergartners, and I never really discerned whether that was just her way of talking, or whether she was performing a specific brand of patience, deliberate clarity, extreme positive affect and pretended openness with all of us.

Samantha

Samantha and I met in her classroom during her lunch period and while her students were at specials. We conducted follow-up conversation by email. Samantha also shared a lot of

thoughts with me each time I arrived in her classroom, while the kids were in specials; many of these conversations informed our more formal interviews.

Samantha explained that she had always loved kids and also wanted a job that would enable her to work for social justice; these combined passions led her to pursue teaching. She participated in an Americorps program after college, and part of it was spent teaching in New Orleans. After this, she returned to graduate school to pursue a master's degree.

Up until this year, Samantha had been teaching first and second grade in a charter school, where she also used Second Step. Then, when Samantha became pregnant last year, she decided she wanted a job closer to her home, and she applied in the district where I eventually observed her. She started her new job at the beginning of the school year, when her baby was six weeks old. Just over a month into that job, Samantha was told that they were closing her class because it was under-enrolled; because she was the most junior teacher in the district, she would be moved to a different position. Meanwhile, her first grade class was created out of over-enrolled first grades at the school where I observed her. She began her new job in October.

As Samantha described the year, she repeatedly used the words "nightmare," "terrible," "ridiculous." She spoke openly about the stressors involved in raising an infant with two parents who were working full-time. Samantha also felt consistently overwhelmed by her class and was motivated to participate in my study because she wanted help with SEL issues. She spoke of wanting "an extra set of hands" and "an extra set of eyes" in the classroom. She also described feeling lonely and isolated, and relieved to have another adult to talk with. Samantha is not out as gay to her students or administrators, though she is out to a few trusted colleagues.

Samantha explained that at her previous school, there were many more supports available. Her classes were smaller and her kids generally came from families with more resources. She spoke of feeling shocked not only by her students' behavior but by what she saw as their lack of exposure to literacy and culture. Samantha spoke disdainfully of the administration of her new school, and she also seemed disdainful of and impatient with my own ostensible lack of understanding with regard to why conditions in the school seemed quite so poor. Samantha told me that she had few interactions with her students' parents and in many cases knew almost nothing about their family situations. She described most of the families as being "scared of schools, scared of coming into school," and she noted that the kids whose families gave me consent were the same kids whose parents always returned her attempts at communication.

Overall, Samantha felt positive about Second Step and about SEL, though she was not as effusive as Jeanette in her praise of or buy-in to the program. She did mention frequently that she wished she could be more creative in her implementation of the program; Samantha believed that if she deviated from the program's script, she might get in trouble with a school administrator.

In our conversations, I often felt like Samantha was impatient with me; she seemed to want me to understand something very dire about her job and overall position, and my reactions often seemed to irritate her. I never really understood if this was the real case or just something in my perception and our relational dynamic. Samantha and I do run into each other frequently in the community, and it always stands out how much more relaxed she seems from how I ever saw her in the school setting.

Interview Results
It is probably already clear that the two teachers in this study had very different affects,

experiences and perspectives from one another. As I transcribed and coded the interviews and

reflected on my own impressions of them, these differences struck me repeatedly and I struggled

to find a unified message or set of themes from the interviews. It was only by coding my

transcriptions in small units- line by line- that I was able to discern that many of the same themes

really did emerge in interviews with both teachers.

The pervasive categories I uncovered via this coding were:

- specific stories about their introductions to and experiences with SEL and the specific

  programs they were using (RC and Second Step), including positive experiences as well

  as frustration

- reflective thoughts on this year's students

- normative views on what constitutes appropriate or desirable behaviors as well as

  appropriate rules and guidelines

- ideas about what children are and need

- the significance of guidance, support and professional development.

As with the classroom observations, many of the conversations I had during these interviews

could be coded under multiple categories; in general, though, these were much more linear and

language-based data sources. Because the boundaries were somewhat easier to define, I am

organizing these results according to the categories listed above.

Stories About SEL
Both teachers spoke extensively about their introductions to SEL as well as their overall

impressions of SEL programs, communicating some sense of ownership or at least partial

expertise in the programs they were using. Jeanette was particularly effusive in speaking about her start with RC. The following excerpts come from her answers to my question, "How did you come to use Responsive Classroom in your practice?"

I was introduced to Responsive Classroom … about 15 years ago. I was working with an amazing teacher named Sharon Stanton. She had already had extensive training in RC and was explaining lots of the basic principles and techniques (along with other things) during our mentoring sessions. I must say that during the time I was with Sharon, I was in awe of the purposeful language she used with children and the depth of the relationships she had with individual children and his/her family. Again and again, I witnessed the positive interactions and overall social-emotional growth that occurred as a result. I was struck by the fact that she never shouted at children and always seemed to be able to generate the appropriate language during every interaction! I had worked with her during the first year attempting to try some of the components of Morning Meeting and practicing the positive language and discipline, etc. She had given me some RC books to peruse. It was that summer when I signed up for RC 1 - the basic introduction to the approach. It was a one week intensive offering… The following summer, I took the RC2 week-long institute. For a few years, I practiced and fumbled with many of the strategies and language with fidelity. I have adjusted some of the techniques and such in order to meet my needs as well as the needs of my class.

Jeanette went further in describing exactly which children she sees as most in need of a program like RC.

RC practices provide direction regarding consistent language, consequences, expectations and more. All children benefit from these practices but particularly for children whose home lives are erratic or troublesome. Most human beings are comforted by a predictable environment

where one understands what's expected, what to do if a conflict arises, if a mistake has been

made, etc. After guidelines are set in the classroom and all agree to do his/her best to abide by

them, I often feel a sense of relief from children. Children's minds are open to learn instead of

being super vigilant of their peers. They learn to trust that adults around them will help, support

and gently hold others responsible for their actions.

Samantha also described her introduction to Second Step, though in her case, the curriculum

was one of a few different SEL programs she had gotten to know over the course of her years in

practice.

I had experience using as a prosocial curriculum from last school. This is my 5th year using

step, but it's only my 3rd year with an updated kit. To be honest, I'm using it because the school

has chosen it, there's no other specific reason for this program instead of any other one.

I think that Second Step is a great basic primer for prosocial skills for learning. I like it because

it focuses on familiar situations that are age appropriate, and the units are really focused, and

they sort of follow a meaningful progression. The units move from skills for learning, then they

move into recognizing emotion and finally problem solving at the end where you take all those

skills… to decide on a fair way to solve a problem.

Each of the teachers also shared some stories about their general positive feelings about SEL

programming as well as frustration with the programs. Jeanette was overall much more positive

about SEL and spoke only implicitly about a few frustrations. Describing what she sees as the

purpose and meaning of SEL in her own practice, she reflected on what she saw as a deficit in

her teacher education, one that was ameliorated through RC:

(When I was getting my master's in education), I had never been in a class or PD that emphasized the importance of the social curriculum. In fact, one of the tenets of RC is that the social curriculum is just as important as the academic curriculum. As a young teacher, I had mainly learned the curriculum I had to teach and how to deliver it. I learned very little about behavior management, creating partnerships with children and families or how to support a child's social emotional growth. The "feel" of the sessions, readings and pedagogy in general was in line with my philosophy regarding both teaching and learning… Through our teaching I hope children also learn that having little troubles with people are typical and things can be worked out.

Samantha expressed many more frustrations with SEL and with Second Step. When I asked her whether she has ever spoken with colleagues or administrators about her experiences teaching SEL, she responded:

I haven't really. To be honest I think that (the) admin(istration) expects too much from what Second Step can do for kids and teachers.

Samantha rolled her eyes after making this comment, throwing her hands up in the air; I asked her to elaborate.

There isn't consistent, thought-out support for students who have severely anti-social behavior. The administration says they will help me make a plan, but they never do. Expectations are never clarified, and I honestly only talked to my principal, before she quit, about Second Step once. Now that she quit I'm not really even sure who is in charge. She seemed to think that it would make a big difference in how my room functioned if I could just get a complete kit. She bent over backwards making the budget work out and made a big deal of getting me all the materials. It hasn't made much difference…

When Jeanette described frustrations with RC, she took a different approach, describing elements

of the program she modified to meet what she saw as the needs of her students, or her own

needs. For instance, she spoke of getting parents and families involved in the rule creation

process for her class:

To my knowledge, the addition of parents is not suggested in the (RC) book I just love the

exercise…

Samantha, by contrast, expressed consistent anxiety and even fear about modifying the Second

Step program. While it was difficult to put her finger on the precise source of her anxiety, she

mentioned that at her former school, teachers were consistently told of the importance of using

the program "with fidelity" and that if they did not use the program properly, they could not

expect to see results.

Reflective Thoughts on This Year's Students
This category deals with things each teacher said that indicate their thoughts about the current

class in which I was observing them, including their responses to questions about specific items

from my observations. Though neither teacher chose to read my observation results, they both

appeared to remember the anecdotes I raised during the interviews, and they each had quite a bit

to say about what made their current classes either typical or unique.

Jeanette explained that this year's class was a typical kindergarten group in many ways, but

perhaps more academically advanced than the past several classes she had taught. She noted that

she found herself more able to incorporate literacy and math expectations into her morning

meeting than usual, but that she had to keep in mind that just because she had several students

who entered kindergarten reading independently, this did not mean that the whole class was

suddenly supposed to develop this capacity.

In her reflections on this class, Jeanette also spoke of the impact of moving buildings midyear.

It is a really big deal for kindergartners and their families, and we tried to make the transition as smooth as possible, but naturally there were bumps. Some of the kids live a lot further away from school now than they used to, and that makes morning complicated. We want them all to know that it matters to us how they get here, if they get here safely… Teresa and I stayed many weekends packing up the old classroom and getting this one ready, but we were so fortunate to have many family helpers. Really, the families, the communities have all been wonderful about all this… But I noticed some changes in the kids after they moved, it was hard on some of them in particular.

Jeanette spent a lot of time thinking about the kids in her class who she saw as most in need of her support.

Some of the kids, some of these kindergarteners, they might not have any books in their homes at all, so we send them home with a few books whenever we can. And the weekend backpack program, that makes sure they all have plenty to eat on weekends, so they're not hungry. But making sure that the children and families feel safe is an important part of my job, and when I see a kid who comes in in the morning sad, or sulking, or kicking his foot, I wonder, 'did he have a good breakfast?'

Jeanette also noted that she had three students in this class who were repeating kindergarten, and they were in her classroom for the second year.

Their parents decided… we decided together that they would really benefit from another year in K1, I've done this before but never with three kids in the same class. So at the beginning, and sometimes, they say "hey, we did this last year!" but this is really special, because they get to be

experts. So I get to see, the same students who maybe weren't quite following along last year, they are front and center now, they are my leaders. And they know that, too. They know the routines so well, and they feel a sense of pride.

Samantha also had quite a bit to say about how this class seemed new and different to her. In fact, she began commenting on the unique interaction of Second Step with this class before I had a chance to ask her directly.

Second Step is different with these kids, because these kids are dealing with a lot more. They have home lives where there's a little bit less structure, less stability. A lot more of them are moving… don't come from two parent families… they have parents who are incarcerated, parents who they're not allowed to see. And the feelings, I guess that the feelings that are associated with those experiences are a lot bigger.

So it's a little basic, it's set up to help kids who are used to being listened to, to a world that feels safe and fair and comfortable.

Sometimes, Samantha's commentary on this particular class had a less empathic edge to it, too.

They goof off all the time, they seem disengaged… A part of this is the time of day. They're exhausted at the end. I think that they also try hard to think of things to say that they think would make sense, that aren't necessarily related to their emotional experiences.

I asked Samantha to offer an example, and she shared the following story:

I was doing a phonics lesson and I said, 'how could I change the word cup to cop?' and a kid raised his hand to say that he called the cops when his dad was hurting his mom, and that

prompted several other students to share situations in which police were called to protect them

or someone in their family.

I think these are the best kind of opportunities to offer them words for their feelings other than

'sad' and 'happy.' They tend to forget to say if they felt afraid, but I know that they have

experienced a lot of scary situations.

(When that happened), in the moment, I just let the kids keep raising their hands and sharing

stories. They were better than usual at listening to each other but only for a while. I would let

them talk and ask how they felt about it, then move on to the next person. There was no point in

trying to go back to what I was planning.

But then they started talking over each other, and when that starts, I have to stop it all… I said

they could write about what they just shared if they wanted to, or write about something else.

That seemed to work. It seemed to be, if not exactly what they needed, close enough. I don't

think they've had enough consistent exposure to the Second Step methods for coping for me to

refer back at this point. It seemed like for some of them, what they really wanted was to just say

it and have people listen. Maybe that isn't right, I don't know.

Samantha further noted that this class seemed to have an extremely low capacity for tolerating

frustrations.

They need immediate assistance with disagreements to avoid escalation. They're always crying

for seemingly bizarre reasons, like how a teacher is dressed or if someone looks at them in a

mean way. I have multiple kids who scream at me and refuse to go every time we have to go to

music class. Small things are immediately taken personally. In the past, I've encouraged kids to

assertively and respectfully tell someone when something they did hurt their feelings through a

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process called 'bugs and wishes.' I tried teaching and going back to this with this group a few times but it hasn't caught on.

Finally, Samantha reflected on what empathy seems to mean in the context of this group:

Empathy is easy. The kids always want to help someone who is feeling sad. They will come up to me and ask to fix their problem. It's usually 'so and so said something about her' or 'she misses her mom.'

I honestly push back because I think they need to be able to work harder to fix their own problems. They tend… this group tends to not really think through solutions. So if a kid says 'my finger is bleeding,' I might ask them to tell me how they want them to help rather than just getting them a Bandaid or whatever.

It's exhausting, because even at this point in the year, I still do this with them all day. Whatever it is about the way I'm teaching them, it has left them with very little independence at this point in the year. Some of my kids who struggle most with self-regulation come up with the best strategies for self-calming and try the hardest to help others who are struggling. I think because they know what it is to struggle. A few came really far and have started to backslide now, which is really discouraging.

Most of these kids have a really hard time accepting responsibility for their actions and they always see the other person as being at fault.

Sometimes I honestly feel like the academic teaching that I try to do is a waste because their ability to focus is so heavily impaired by what they're dealing with. So I'm not very far… I've just now barely started the math program, and some of them really don't know their letters yet…

I mean some of them are reading already but I really just don't have time. It's the end of first grade and some of these kids still don't know their letters!

Their ability to focus in the moment and retain what they've learned, their ability to deal with disappointment and frustration is very low. Just how often so many of them move, or switch schools, I would love if we had more time and guidance about how to do it right. They need so much more than an hour a week, on self-regulation skills alone, let alone social skills. .

Normative Views on Behavior
Neither teacher set out to tell me their own prescriptions for normative behavior in the classroom, but as they talked about their experiences with SEL and with these groups of students, each of them ended up sharing some of their views on what constitutes appropriate or desirable behavior in the classroom. Items in this category also include the teachers' reflections on the rules or guidelines they established and maintained in their classroom.

Jeanette spoke at length about the rule-creation process she has used over the years. I asked about the poster of guidelines she maintained at the front of each classroom, which I noticed her explicitly referencing frequently over the course of my observations.

The creation of class rules or guidelines is a lengthy process that takes about 2 weeks in K from beginning to end. I follow the process that is outlined by RC outlined in the book entitled The First Six Weeks of School. *We more or less follow the same process every year, with each new group of kindergarteners. When they come to kindergarten, you have to remember, some of them have never been in a school or anything like this before, they don't really know what's happening, and some have been going to preschool for three years or they've seen their older siblings go to school for years and years. So the process, this process, it kind of brings them all together.*

It (the rule-creation process) stems from a question that we pose to the children early on: What are your Hopes and Dreams this year in Kindergarten? We read stories, teachers share theirs and we talk lots about what hopes are realistic. They usually laugh a lot. Like obviously, we can't all take a field trip to the moon, right? So that's not a good hope and dream.

After sharing all hopes and dreams publicly with their peers, the class then hears their parent's/caregiver's hopes and dreams. It is literally one of the best times of the year. It is not only powerful lot hear what the greater community wants for all of us but the LOVE that is clearly conveyed through each drawing/writing piece is just amazing. Every child and every family chooses one Hope and Dream to write, or we help them write it one a piece of paper and they draw a little picture that goes with it.

Each year, I display all of the Hopes and Dreams sheets so the classroom and school communities can see. After this, we pose the following question to the group: "Now that we know everyone's hopes and dreams this year, how do we need to be or behave, what do we need to do, in order to make all of these hopes and dreams come true?" Because that is our job in kindergarten all together, our job is to make our hopes and dreams come true.

Over the course of three to five whole group meetings, children respond by saying what to do and what not to do. They usually say things like we should listen to teachers, we should not hit, we should put things away, we shouldn't bother each other. Some of them start to bring in rules they know from their houses, too. Teresa and I scribe ideas on large butcher block paper and them cut up the paper into individual ideas. I usually take the next 3 whole group meetings or so to then have kids sort them into 3 categories.

RC strongly believes that if there are more than 5 overarching classroom rules, then that's too much, particularly for younger learners, for children to remember and adhere to . I completely agree with this. As I guide and facilitate the sorting process, I find that all of the kids' ideas can be grouped into one of three categories… some cross over and reach two groups or more.

Each year, somehow, our classroom guidelines seem to be the following: 1. Take care of yourself, 2. Take care of other people and animals, and 3. Take care of things inside and outside the school. We always make a huge poster with our guidelines, that's the one you saw. Then we agree to follow them as best we can. The kids put their thumbs up to agree and they sign the poster somewhere, and we vote on where in the room to post them.

The children are always invested in every part of this slow and methodical process and the payoff is huge. Because each is so invested, he or she is likely to do what we agreed upon. During the next several weeks, Teresa and I will name things/actions we see that are in line with these agreements. Actually I guess we pretty much keep doing this all year long because it's so important for the kids to see us appreciating their hard work, appreciating what each one of them is doing to make our community stronger. We will ask the children to do the same.

It's quite powerful as kids feel proud of themselves and their ability to follow through with what they believe in. Throughout the year, Teresa and I will revisit the guidelines--particularly after every vacation -- and when the group seems to need it, this is at my discretion. Since the guidelines are a living document, it can be changed/tweaked as the needs of the learners change. It is rare, but it can happen.

I am proud to say I have facilitated this rule creation process with 15 groups of learners.

Wow!

Jeanette also spoke at length about the way conflict resolution gets handled in RC and how this dovetails with her own beliefs about what is true and what she hopes her students will learn about conflict.

RC puts forth several ideas regarding conflict resolution. The one that resonated with me was called "Apology of Action". It is important for children to be able to verbalize their feelings, like saying what bothers them or saying sorry and so on, as well as demonstrate something to the person who feels like an injustice has been done to them. RC strongly suggests a problem-solving tool but does not require each teacher adopt the same tool or plan.

In my classroom, we have a permanent station called "The Friendship Table". During the first several weeks of school, Teresa and I role-play dozens of different scenarios and provide kids with scripted language and guidelines regarding the use of the Friendship Table. We will ask children to role-play with us and ask the audience to comment on what they saw, felt and thought. For a while, teachers accompany kids to work out a trouble just to witness and support if we feel it is needed.

While at the Friendship Table, children say a scripted piece until they are comfortable using language they generate: "I don't like it when you".... "I'm sorry, what can I do to help you feel better"? The child who called another to the table chooses an icon on a chart that is posted next to the table.

This year, our icons were the following: give a hug, get ice, fix something that is broken, draw me a picture, sit with me at lunch, high-5, and play with me at recess or choice. With this conflict resolution tool, children are practicing to

assert themselves, solving problems in a calm way with words, making amends appropriately, acknowledging feelings, leaving the table feeling good about their relationships and more.

Samantha was not as verbose in talking about the rules and guidelines in her classroom. She said,

They are the pretty basic ones, the basic classroom rules about being respectful, eyes watching and so on. I need the kids to get better focus, to tune out distractions, learn to pay attention. That's what the rules are there for, but I don't have that much support or consequences to use when they don't follow them.

I do think the Second Step rules are good ones for a starting point, though. They use simple language, Eyes Watching, Ears listening, this teaches kids they are in charge of their own bodies, and no one else can control whether or not they are doing the right thing. I like having a short, easy rule I can refer them to when they need a quick reminder.

Samantha communicated some definitive views about appropriate affect and behavior.

Strong feelings are those that make it impossible for you to focus on anything else - anger, fear, excitement. I tend to freeze up when faced with a big feeling. I have to work through that quickly because there is no wait time given for my response to a situation. I can't think about the right thing to do and I have to respond immediately.

I usually try to identify the most urgent problem I see the group having and I try to address that. It's hard too, sometimes there are a lot of problems at once, and the whole thing falls apart. I wish I could think more quickly, move more quickly, it's hard to keep up with what is happening in time to stop things before they get out of control.

To be honest, I'm having a bit of a struggle waiting to go to problem solving (in the Second Step

curriculum). What you want to do is run right there… but it builds, they need certain skills first

before I can get them there. It's like right now what we're doing, we're frontloading skills

before they're having problems with others, giving them tools to recognize and deal with the

feelings and the behaviors that are problems.

The idea of using SEL curriculum is to give you opportunities to talk about important things that

are happening in their lives…but to be really honest those things come up a lot more naturally at

any time throughout the school day. No curriculum is a replacement for just genuine

relationship building, and if you're not building authentic relationships…

Ideas About Children
Each teacher also spoke about children in general. These comments were not about the specific

class in which I observed, but, rather, about what a child is and what children generally need.

Samantha was interested in talking about children's natural interest in hearing stories from their

teacher's life.

There is a name for them, they're called "small stories." Some are made up, but most of them,

like the one I used yesterday, are true. I usually use them to serve as an ideal example to guide

student responses. Yesterday talking about "Jealousy," some kids were sharing things that didn't

actually sound like jealousy, like there being a food that they had to eat that other kids liked, so I

offered a more classic example to help them identify the emotion more accurately. Similar to how

these stories are used in an academic context to activate prior knowledge.

Jeanette's sense of what she knows and understands to be true about children came through most

clearly when she discussed her decision making processes in addressing particular behaviors

during morning meeting.

In every realm children are on a continuum. Different kids are working on different things, and it's my job to know what each learner is working on. It is also my job to nudge them out of their comfort zones so their skills can develop. So if someone sees that I am not addressing something, it's deliberate. Either I know I have "taxed" that learner too much already and/or they are not ready to demonstrate the skill or fulfill the complete expectation. This kind of differentiated thinking is alive in all of RC pedagogy.

Jeanette also spoke about her use of consistent routines and particularly of music and songs to ease transitions that might otherwise be tough.

We take our time to play long games, participate in greeting, new & announcements, etc. in order to hopefully meet 3 basic humans needs: a sense of significance, belonging and fun. If I can accomplish these 3 things at Morning Meeting (the emotional anchor of our school day) I can begin to build a climate of trust and openness so children will take risks in all areas of learning (academically and socially). Teachers facilitate all of the components however, part way into the school year, it is the children who decide what greeting to do, what game to play (choices made by the line leader before a meeting begins). What I love about RC is that many of the practices encourage child-directed activities/goals. I agree that students should have a huge voice, power, in their classrooms. This ability grows as children show readiness in making such decisions, about their own learning and classroom life in general.

I gather the children with a song because music transcends just about everything--language ability, age, etc. It is also something I love to do as music was a huge part of my home and school cultures. Doing anything together, including singing a song, reminds us of our shared strength and good collaboration. The use of song is sometimes recommended by RC as a

transitional tool, etc. but I find music to be quite powerful so I embed it throughout the

day. Many children like for me to sing the directions to them just because it's fun!

Jeanette also described her idea of the importance of a teacher remaining calm and avoiding very

emotionally fraught reactions or situations.

I admire my mentor teacher, for never shouting at children. In my mind, she always seemed to

have just the right words for every situation. RC equips teachers with neutral scripted language

that has the intention to teach,

support and clarify. Early on, I used the language with fidelity. When my confidence grew (as a

result of years of teaching, practice and reflection), I began to depart a bit from some of the

language and made it more "my own". I continued however, to be hyper aware of my body

language and tone of voice when managing discussion. In particularly difficult situations with

children, RC practice encourages teachers to be aware of any behavior that could be

misconstrued as inappropriate or punitive. In K1, if Teresa or I feel as though a situation is

becoming emotionally charged on our end (we cannot control another's behavior but we can

control our own) we relieve the other person of her role in that moment. I believe we should

approach children with compassion, respect and understanding every time. This is not to mean I

cannot be firm and hold high expectations for each child. All of these things work together to

help the relationship.

Finally, she commented on what she sees as the significance of positive reinforcement for her

students.

I publicly acknowledge children for their efforts and expertise especially if they welcome that

sort of feedback. I do my best to highlight a group of children (or the whole group) rather than

individuals in a large group setting for the obvious

reasons (i.e., some learners feel uncomfortable with the attention, some may get jealous, etc). I acknowledge efforts and other important things during private social conferences (this is an RC practice). This goal of this practice is to help

children to develop skills around self-reflection. Reaching this goal can often take the whole year. Overall though, learners need to hear this positive feedback so they can continue to take risks. It's pretty powerful to hear about what your strengths are from the adult's point of view. It's even more powerful when one can identify them for him/herself and celebrate with others.

I want children to feel safe, valued and loved. They must feel known. If I take the time to really know and understand (or try my best to) our group each year, I am able to help both children and their families grow in their sense of community and connectedness. I must play with kids, listen to them, encourage them to wonder, question, make mistakes, respond to scenarios, etc. RC provides lots of tools and training about how to do this work. Each year, Teresa and I are the model for what we want to see happening in the classroom. We are acutely aware that children are watching us at every turn, from interacting informally with their caregivers to dealing with very difficult situations.

The Significance of Guidance

Finally, both teachers referenced the importance of guidance, support and professional development as they undertake to implement SEL curriculum. In Jeanette's case, these mentions came mostly in her reference to the many different RC trainings she has attended.

Samantha's references to guidance had more to do with a desire for more help and support in implementing Second Step or thinking about social and emotional learning more broadly.

At my last school the school psychologist occasionally came in to do lessons and it was a great way to get the kids to straighten up and listen better, to switch gears and realize that they were going to talk about feelings and friendships. I would love to have more counseling resources to help with some of the disciplinary emergencies that I have on my hands.

I asked Samantha to be specific in explaining what she meant by disciplinary emergencies.

Last week I was trying to line the kids up to go out for recess. I said multiple times that it needed to be quiet for us to go out, and that if we couldn't get quiet, we wouldn't go. Over 50% of the class continued to talk and move in and out of the line, play with pencils, and so on. After ten minutes I'm so exhausted, I'm so frustrated. I don't know the right thing to do and everything I know about these kids just isn't helping me in the moment, it isn't helping them, either.

I said "if we aren't quiet in three minutes we will sit down and do work. They didn't get quiet. I told them to sit down. Two kids in particular – they were both talking, let's just call them A and B. They started screaming about how awful I was and how unfair it was. I calmly sat down and explained to the other kids that I had said we wouldn't go if we weren't quiet and we weren't, and I hoped it would go better next time. I wasn't feeling calm but I know I better act that way.

By this time, I asked A to go calm down in the green chair and he's starting to quiet down. Kid B is pushing tables around the room, breaking pencils, screaming at the kids not to look at him. I tell him to sit in his chair and stop screaming, he screams back at me not to talk to him, I call for help. I start giving the other kids a spelling test. B is punching the printer and saying "worst teacher ever" over and over. Support staff arrives and takes him to the hallway for 5 minutes and says "we don't have a place to put him. He said he'd do better if he could stay here." Support staff leaves, B continues to hit the printer and starts sobbing and saying "I want to go home, I want to go home." I call again for help and get no answer.

I need a plan for B. He already has a counselor and she has been taking him for months. Neither his mom nor I knew that she has been seeing him already. But knowing that he already gets counseling makes me even more discouraged. Because I had hoped that I could get counseling set up and that might help him get better. I ended up running into the counselor sort of by chance in the hallway and mentioned that he was really struggling, very inflexible and explosive. When I call for help I need the support person to take them out for an actual break. I need adequate coverage to explain what's happening.

Initially, I saw the purpose of teacher interviews as giving teachers the chance to express their own opinions about SEL and its impact on children and teaching. Ultimately, the interviews helped me develop a more complex perspective on each of the teachers in the study and their ways of justifying and understanding their practice. A major conclusion from the interviews had to do with the importance of each teacher's individual belief system and values in terms of how she understood the role of SEL in the classroom. The interviews also helped me think about the extent to which the teacher I saw in each observational setting was in fact a performative self, who felt pressured to adhere to particular expectations. The teachers were relaxed and reflective in the interviews, showing little evidence of the scripted, repressive language I witnessed in many of the observations.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

This chapter returns to the three research questions articulated in the introduction and discusses

each of them in relation to the results. I will restate each research question and respectively

examine the implications of the Critical Discourse Analysis, classroom observations and teacher

interviews for each question, ending each segment of the discussion with a synthesis of results

from the three data sources. To theorize the results, I draw again on psychoanalysis and affect

theory. The chapter closes with some general observations about the three research questions

together.

Child, Teacher and Relationship
Research Question 1 wonders:

How does SEL discourse and implementation situate and influence the child, the teacher, and

their relationship to one another?

Critical Discourse Analysis
The critical discourse analysis suggests that SEL position children as wild and in need of control, but with potential for regulation and happiness as a result. SEL discourse further suggests that children follow a generally predictable developmental trajectory.

Children as Wild

The significance of rules, safety and control throughout the SEL materials I analyzed suggests the assumption that without such rules and strong regulations, children will devolve into an unmanageable and feral state. RC proposes the importance of rules in every environment that children pass through over the course of the school day. The RC materials show twin beliefs that kids need rules to prevent dissolution, and that kids who are externally regulated via rules, thus overcoming their wildness, will have a more desirable and positive experience of school.

Second Step also starts with the assumption that children are dysregulated, disrespectful and unruly. Many of the lessons in the first grade Second Step bundle explicitly teach how to regulate behavior, and the clear, explicit statements of rules for engagement, which go so far as to tell children precisely how to position their bodies and faces, assume that the natural starting point lacks civility.

The vision of the child as feral is not a new one under SEL. Psychoanalysts and cultural theorists have long probed this formulation of the child as somewhat bestial, posing an imminent threat to society. This vision of the child requires an education oriented toward staving off the worst. The feral child represents everything that is base or frightening about human nature. Kidd (2005) shows how prominent this rendition of childhood is in literature and popular culture. He describes the image of the feral child as one who "live(s) apart from mainstream human culture… fostered by wild animals… living outside of civilization… living in confinement within its borders" (p. 3). The feral child is criminal, masturbatory, aggressive, stupid, savage,

and without regard for the other. The feral child requires management and careful control, or else he can wreak havoc on the adult world as well as his own future.

Stage theories relating to the feral child depict development in terms of movement in and out of especially dangerous times until they have either been succumbed to or, preferably, surpassed altogether. In general, these theories tend to see infancy as a more innocent time but followed by a savage period around toddlerhood and early childhood (eg. Rousseau 1762/1979; S. Freud, 1905/1975). The toddler and young child is highly sexual and must have his or her aggression carefully controlled by adults around him. There is then a latent or very industrial stage in middle childhood, when the feral tendencies are kept somewhat at bay (Knight, 2014). Even in this period of relative innocence, children of color are often seen as risky and dangerous, and children who for whatever reason seem to deviate from sexual or gender norms also require stricter control and oversight. Kidd (2005) describes, "The feral tale guarantees the legibility of childhood itself, implying a usual path of development and deviation from such" which is highly racialized and arguably also economic in its cultural construction (p. 5). Adolescence again becomes a danger zone, rife with the potential for wrongdoing, criminality and deviance.

The Critical Discourse Analysis offered in this dissertation shows how SEL emerges in part from the feral narrative. In this sense, Social and Emotional Learning is a euphemism for behavior management, oriented toward resolving very old problems about what to do when children do not act the way adults might hope. Psychoanalysis might describe this vision of childhood on the part of adults as an expression of anxiety. In this formulation, anxiety arises out of worries about disintegration, dissolution and, ultimately, death (eg. Shafer, 2016). In the name of teaching children about emotion, SEL discourse unconsciously establishes a frightening

vision of the dysregulation that would exist without the firm behavior management systems it in fact prescribes.

At the same time, SEL discourse does not represent childhood as a hopeless state. The tremendous number of references to the positive school environment, combined with the emphasis on safety and control, show a belief that children have potential for regulation and happiness. The fulfillment of this potential is expressed as a salient objective of SEL. The polarization of the bad, dysregulated child and the good, positive and calm child, is reminiscent of the basic formulation of the Kleinian paranoid-schizoid position. In this position, good is being fed and physically soothed; bad is being denied food and experiencing physical discomfort. Out of these bodily experiences develops a psychic state characterized by "splitting, idealization, and projective identification" (Steiner 1987: page 69). SEL discourse repeatedly established an idealized school and classroom environment: *The Joyful Classroom*, where students are working with a happy buzz, achieving academically, and successfully managing any obstacles they encounter in the form of difficult feelings or knowledge. This idealized version is also the one depicted in the SEL photographs of children I analyzed. An SEL-governed classroom produces multiracial, smiling, collaborative children, who keep their bodies calm and still and listen to their teacher's instruction.

Children as Future Adults
The Critical Discourse Analysis also shows that SEL both relies on and perpetuates a vision of children as future adults. They are individuals undergoing a series of regular developmental stages with predetermined attributes, capacities and endpoints. To some extent, SEL discourse relies on popularized versions of neuroscience to make this developmental argument. By referencing children's undeveloped brains, which require training and can be molded, SEL shows that children are physiologically lesser than adults. This understanding is used to

rationalize the tremendous reliance on teacher direction and management of children in each of the programs I analyzed.

It is not surprising that SEL tangles with a vision of childhood as a series of developmental stages. In fact, perhaps the version of childhood most frequently called upon in education is that in which the child is primarily the future adult. In this conception, children are important because of their reproductive and economic potential. The child as future adult is in the educational context tabula rasa and must be educated with an eye toward recapitulating extant economic structures. Moss (2015) describes this vision in terms of an overarching narrative of neoliberalism in which "The citizen fades away to be replaced by the consumer; democratic politics gives way to the rule of experts, technicians and managers" (p. 67). The child is important as potential consumer and as someone whose education will prepare her for successful economic participation.

If children are future adults, beings who must be primed to take their place in the society that will be handed to them, there must be a linear theory that describes the steps they should follow to get from where they are to where they ought to wind up. Developmental psychologists can work within the iteration of childhood as potential space by using adult cognitive structures as a sort of pinnacle representation from which they can move gradually backward to establish sets of stages such as those articulated by Piaget and Vygotsky. Piaget (1926/1970) thus defines the child cognitively as someone moving gradually through stages from the pre-operational to the formal. The stages defined in the RC *Child Development Pamphlets* mimic the Piagetian cognitive framework.

SEL discourse is helpful in its reminder that emotional development is an important facet of the overall picture of human existence. Yet the child's actual emotional experience is subsumed

in this discourse by a vision of what they are capable of because of their age and stage. In none of these frameworks is development understood as an entirely natural or organic process; the role of education is neither to alter the stages nor to watch them unfurl, but to ensure that the individual moves through them appropriately and with alacrity.

Critics of stage theory have frequently noted its rootedness in cultural norms that privilege Western traditions, whiteness, and upper middle class norms (Lesko, 2004). The idea of child as future adult has been critiqued as framing adulthood in terms of success within a particular cultural, racial, and socioeconomic framework. In this critique, the very idea of understanding human worth in terms of future potential is fraught because either the articulated or implicit eventual desirable attainment is not simply adulthood but adult white male heterosexuality. Leuzinger-Bohleber et. al. (2010) show that ways children get constructed as containing pathology or developing somehow inappropriately, leading for instance to excessive diagnosis, are heavily rooted in culturally biased norms that define how development ought to look. By scripting developmental stages, SEL discourse raises questions about what to be done with, for or about the actual child whose trajectory does not match the predetermined framework.

Another perspective that calls stage theory into question is a version of psychoanalytic perspectives on development that takes a dynamic systems theory approach (Mayes, 2001). In general, psychoanalytic approaches to development do recapitulate stage theory, though with less of an emphasis than most disciplines on cognitive development and a privileged emphasis on psychosexual development. The dynamic systems approach to psychoanalysis of a child, however, emphasizes the idea that childhood is a complex and recursive process. In this sense, then, childhood is not something that ends and it cannot be defined or viewed in chronological terms at all. Childhood is a state of personality that is incorporated into every person and every

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community, organization and system; the stages experienced in childhood are repeated incessantly throughout the life span and neither can nor should be escaped or fully outgrown. This is also seen in the Kleinian affect positions, which are recursive and exist concurrently in all people (eg. Shafer, 1994). Mayes (2001) writes, "Instead of signaling impending dysfunction, being far from equilibrium is a precondition for emerging order and structure… and the emerging order itself is also never quite stable- disorder is always possible and even necessary for continued self organization" (p. 157).

The child who is the future adult does exist in psychoanalysis, but only if there is also an adult who is the former and current child. This approach to development necessitates an understanding of time that is essentially circular, such that any individual can be multiple entities at once and our present selves always embody our past selves and future possibilities. Britzman (2009) references "uneven development," gesturing toward the difficulty unevenness poses for education, "People are not static entities waiting to be taught so that they can learn in an orderly fashion. They are difficult to know because they have their own minds" (p. 34). This dynamic view of development privileges interior and relational life over linear, economically oriented progress. Development as a dynamic system means that it is inappropriate to categorize people using static understandings of ideas like 'child' or 'adult.' This understanding calls into question the vision of children's development set forth by SEL discourse.

Teachers Know Emotions
The Critical Discourse analysis shows that SEL positions teachers as experts on emotion. This is a complicated sentiment, however. It is not the case in SEL discourse that teachers' own expertise, based on personal experience or beliefs, ought necessarily to be communicated to children. Rather, SEL discourse established a framework wherein teachers require support,

scripting, and professional development, the endpoint of which is to be able to communicate norms and ideals to children with certainty. The teacher is meant to be the knowing subject, but her knowledge is meant to come from SEL programming and materials.

Expectations for teacher expertise are seen in Second Step recommendations that teachers model their steps for problem-solving, share pre-selected stories of emotional regulation from their own lives, and demonstrate expertise at calming down in times of stress. The premium Responsive Classroom places on teacher language also positions teachers as experts on emotion and emotional regulation. Each of the programs analyzed, however, offers costly and ongoing opportunities for teachers to learn about the precise kinds of emotional knowledge they are meant to communicate. Teacher language is carefully scripted, so that while teachers are meant to showcase expertise, expertise is uniform and depersonalized.

The vision of teacher as expert is ubiquitous throughout educational discourse and is theorized well via Lacan's "subject presumed to know", which Felman (1987) describes as a "mirage" with an "affective charge… to be constitutively irreducible… the usual pedagogical pose of mastery… the image of the self-sufficient, self-possessed proprietor of knowledge" (p. 84). A need for teachers to showcase mastery also arguably grows out of anxiety about what would happen if no one knew. This is aligned with the Bionian conception of the tremendous anxiety around O, the unknowable and perhaps dreadful truth. Instead of a Bionian framework in which O is skirted mutually by teacher and student, SEL steps in with a scripted evasion of O via an insistent articulation of expertise and emotional truth.

Psychoanalytic epistemologies suggest an alternate approach in which emotional awareness is not teachable but, rather, something co-constructed or maybe discovered. Farley (2014), for instance, references Andre Green in understanding affective education as mired in

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cultural and individual histories of depression. For Farley, the teacher is not an expert in

emotion who has something specific to impart to students. Rather, she might work through

emotion alongside students, relying on curriculum as a mediating object for considerations of

difficult feelings instead of a script on how to deal with them. Farley argues that the melancholic

teacher lacks for agency precisely because of mandates for specific types of expertise and that

the anxiety produced and represented by the requirement of certainty inhibits creativity. The

teacher anxious to prove expertise, in other words, will not allow the sort of rebellion or

exploration that psychoanalytic theories of knowledge rely on for understanding learning (in the

sense of psychic survival over time) and relational growth.

Teachers Should Stay Positive
A related but somewhat separate message offered from the Critical Discourse Analysis is the

idea that teachers ought to stay calm and positive in the classroom. These materials say

explicitly and implicitly that the role of the teacher is to model and project positivity and calm.

A teacher is figured as a model of idealized calm and positive behavior as well as affect. In RC,

teachers are told that if they feel they are losing grip on their overall sense of calm or

experiencing strong emotions and reactions in the classroom, this is a time to call on a buddy

teacher or find a way to remove themselves from the situation. In Second Step, teachers are

asked to model calming their own frustration and to share stories that demonstrate their overall

sense of self-regulation throughout life. SEL asks that teachers refrain from losing their cool

conveys a tremendous amount of trust in the teacher's ability to do this.

The overall valuation of calm and positive affect will be discussed in more detail in

relation to Research Question 2. Here, it is important primarily to note that part of the SEL

definition of a teacher is that the teacher is an embodiment of desirable affect. Liston (2000),

however, posits that there is a great deal of sadness in today's teaching world. Part of Liston's argument has to do with the way that love can get evacuated from teaching. Liston talks about the idea of despair as an unreasonable response, "a sense of doomed foreclosure, one that requires some sort of radical personal and/or contextual transformation" (90). He looks at teacher stories and finds a great deal of emptiness, as well as pain. "Schooling… teaches us not to feel. It creates partitioned and apportioned, not holistic and integrated selves" (94). Indeed, in the context of a robust literature analyzing teacher subjectivities and focusing on strong, deep and often negative emotions that teachers experience for a wide variety of reasons, it is puzzling that SEL discourse is as insistent on the teacher as a paragon of controlled and positive emotion.

Relationships Grow Out of Regulation
        Finally, the critical discourse analysis suggests that relationships between student and teachers grow out of a controlled environment and regulated behavior. The strong emphasis on safety in each of the documents analyzed shows that the establishment of a particular environment and atmosphere takes primacy, and relationships, rarely mentioned explicitly, are assumed to grow out of this. Essentially, the discourse suggests that the relationship between a student and teacher might be a pleasant side effect of the teacher modeling and instructing children in emotion, but it does not take primacy over safety and regulation. The idea here is to move students toward independence, not toward relationships and certainly not toward interdependence.

        This perspective on the nature of the relationship between child and teacher seems a logical outgrowth of a developmental model that remains anxious about regression and circularity. Moving children and teachers closer to one another, in a way that allowed them to

experience strong feelings mutually, might work against the desire that "the day ends on a positive note."

The relationship between teacher and student portrayed by SEL discourse is that of a well-controlled expert who mostly feels good, to an unregulated novice in simultaneous need of protection and control. As the lessons, procedures and norms of SEL sink in, the two might enjoy school together, but relational closeness is not referenced as a normative goal of such education.

Classroom Observations

The classroom observations suggest that children's emotional and social worlds are an important part of the school day. Observational data shows that in these SEL-managed classrooms, children experience strong feelings that teachers attempt to regulate, and that teachers have a complicated relationship to children's knowledge and lack of knowledge. Teachers in the observation are people who keep in control of themselves and their students and who are there to help children feel good. The relationship between students and teachers grows out of a sense of safety and calm and is alternately antagonistic and mutually gratifying.

Children Have Important Stories, Emotions, and Social Worlds

Observations in both classrooms revealed the tremendous role of children's personal stories, expressions of emotions, and social work during the time they spend in SEL blocks. During Jeanette's morning meetings, children repeatedly share tidbits from their family lives, their activities after school, and their internal experiences of events. The children in this class appear hungry for the opportunity to talk about the different feelings and experiences they have in the world, as when Melissa tells the story of shopping for candy in Nepal or when Benji clamors to show his classmates a wound. The morning meeting structure offered by RC does make some space for children to share these stories and bring their emotions and experiences

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into their school day and to make their time in school about something other than academics in the sense that they are traditionally construed.

One type of story and emotional landscape that came up repeatedly in Jeanette's classroom happened in the context of invocations of travel. Tyler spoke about his impending trip to California, Charlotte about her family's travels in Germany, Melissa about her time in Nepal Zach of his upcoming boat ride to Canada, and so on. I wondered if the repeated specter of distant places became a way for children to share that they knew something different from what was right in front of them in the moment and that they could tolerate otherness. "All right," Jeanette would often say in response to these displays of a sort of distant expertise or excitement.

Similarly, students in Samantha's classroom try hard to talk about and show their emotions. When Samantha asks for examples of a specific emotion, such as frustration or jealousy, children become engaged and very enthusiastic about sharing. This happens when Phillip talks about his kitten and when Rosalena describes waiting for her birthday to arrive. In Samantha's class, there is also a lot of sharing of emotion and experience through body movements, gestures, and noises. For instance, Josue makes spitting noises and beatboxes, Jessenia and her friends braid each other's hair, children yell at each other and make animal noises. These emotional outbursts are less sanctioned by Second Step than those mediated by language, but neither the curriculum nor Samantha prevents them from occurring repeatedly over the course of each observation.

The observational data position children in SEL-managed classrooms as people with important stories, experiences and knowledge, even specifically knowledge about emotion, when the discourse analysis really figures children as needing clear, intentional teaching in emotion from their more knowing teachers. This disconnection points simultaneously to a certain

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irrepressibility of the desire to be known, and to children's investigations of other's reactions to the stories and feelings that matter to them so tremendously. For instance, when Samantha shares the anecdote about Jarel getting a new puppy, she and the curriculum are orienting the students toward thinking about emotions like excitement and surprise. The children respond by growing unruly, perhaps out of envy or frustration. They show how important it is to prove an absence of fear: "I'm not scared of dogs! I'm not scared of dogs!... it didn't even hurt (when I got bit by a dog)."

All of this intensity builds in the classroom until there is a real moment of discord between Samantha and Phillip; Phillip's classmates protest what they seem to see as really hurtful behavior on their teacher's part, "But you laughed at him." The way children interact with emotion in this and other vignettes shows a sense on children's part of what emotion is and maybe even some agency in terms of how they handle their feelings; it might, however, be the case that their agency, while not the same as ignorance about what it means to regulate the self, misaligns with the behavioral expectations of the classroom.

It is possible to understand the ongoing story telling and emotional output of the children in these observations as an expression of creativity. In the psychoanalytic sense, creativity is not necessarily connected to a specific endpoint or product. In fact, Winnicott (1971) states that "…it is necessary…. to separate the idea of creation from works of art…" (p. 266). If we cannot allow this separation, he contends, we make it difficult for some people to exist as anything but false, uncreated selves. He further argues that creativity follows naturally from aggression. Only by destroying internalized hindrances that intrude on development can the individual create a self that can then participate in broader cultural experience (p. 89). Britzman (2009) expounds this view of creativity as it applies to education; to be creative is to "attempt to construct a new

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meaning from what could not be known at the time" (p. 124). Creativity is an ability to "work with the products of phantasy without the defense of reality, yet… not turn away from reality or phantasy" (p. 113).

Creativity is the capacity to stay, sometimes angrily, with the unknown and unknowable. This includes the self in its utmost solitude, and it precludes any expectation of tangible product or reward. When Jeanette's students fantasize about life outside of the classroom and country, when Samantha's students get angry and resist curricular and pedagogical dictates, they are exercising creativity, and these observations show that the child in the SEL-governed classroom is, perhaps in spite of programmatic interventions, a creative creature indeed.

Children Need Regulation; Teachers are Regulators
Like the discourse analysis, the observational data seems to suggest that teachers view children as dysregulated and attempt to regulate their strong feelings in specific, normative ways. The framework of SEL structures classrooms in such a way that children require intense external regulation in order to comply, and that compliance is associated with success within the framework. For example, in Jeanette's classroom, the children are frequently reminded of the central three guidelines of their class: take care of yourself, take care of others, take care of classroom materials. Ultimately, though, Jeanette and to some extent Teresa are the arbiters of what constitutes each of these kinds of care.

So, for instance, when children argue about spots on the rug where they want to sit, this is not seen as taking care of themselves. Instead, this behavior results in Teresa repositioning their bodies and Jeanette reminding them about "what's the expected thing." Each morning, Jeanette has her students begin the meeting by ringing the bell "to get ready for our day," but this phrase

seems more like a cover for "to get quiet and sit in our places;" kids might have felt plenty ready for their days when they were playing at tables or gulping cereal in the back of the room.

To understand how an SEL framework posits a child in Jeanette's class as in need of regulation, it helps to look closely at the "Black Socks" anecdote. At the beginning of this story, Jeanette has the class join her in a song about dirty socks. When Jeanette unpacks the lyrics with her students, they seem to grow excited; after all, they are talking about their feet, about bodies and sweat, topics they might not normally get to address in school. Each time students deviate from the script she seems to be hoping to follow, though, Jeanette reins them in. Over the course of three minutes, she uses the phrases, "raise your hand," twice, "who can help to answer the (original) question," "everyone, put out your feet," "let's sit criss cross," "I'm waiting for four more friends to get ready. Everybody is quietly listening now."

Repeatedly over the course of my observations, Jeanette gestures in her greetings, the songs she chooses, and the games she plays with children toward something that, like sweaty feet, really captures their excitement. The kids respond, titillated and interested, and Jeanette in turn regulates them back to stasis, stopping short of punishing them explicitly for the excitation. Klein and her followers might understand this kind of regulation as a way of warding off that which cannot be tolerated. Jeanette follows RC frameworks when she engages in this habit. The RC website (2014) cautions that teachers should be "concerned about greetings becoming silly," cautioning that "it helps to focus on engagement rather than entertainment or frivolity."

How is the teacher to understand, however, the line between children's often deeply embodied excitement and the ostensible problem of frivolity? What is it that educators seek to defend against when they ward off frivolity? When Alison glares at Zach, when James takes off his shoe, when kids crawl around the rug pulling up their pants leg, there is a group sense of

bodily excitement that the rigors of SEL require be tamped down in order that the day start with a "positive" but carefully controlled tone. Jeanette takes Benji's excitement call "Smellier! The smellier they get!" and turns it into "water from our bodies (that) goes into our socks;" in a way, her pedagogy even stops making rational sense as she suppresses the children's excitement and moves them toward a vocabulary lesson about the word "launder."

SEL's effacement of the body's complexities makes it nearly unthinkable for a teacher to wonder alongside students about body smells and what a person is hiding under their clothes. When SEL idealizes "self awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self management, (and) relationship management" (Zins, 2007, page 195), it defends heavily against the unregulated self who might act out of excitement, make irresponsibly decisions perhaps fueled by bodily impulses, and behavior that longs to escape management.

It is not the case that children should be allowed to move through their school day looking at and smelling each other's feet, interrupting one another and acting out every embodied or aggressive impulse. It is worth questioning why these prohibitions exist and what excitement about learning they might circumvent, but their existence is not the primary problem here. Movement toward the Kleinian depressive position sometimes involves accepting limits. In fact, the often maddening nature of limits is what causes people to feel the very disappointment in the other that allows us acceptance of each other as whole and complicated people. Further, in coping with limits, children can find ways to imagine, create and symbolize that allow for a richer experience of learning.

When SEL programming cautions against excessive excitement and renders the body a separate, taboo part of the self, it is superficially helping the teacher, tasked with containing the unconscious fantasy worlds of many children all at once. SEL is appealing in this way; it offers

a framework for developing regulation that can seem necessary when children come together in a potentially overstimulating group. Yet its disavowal of the body and all that is negative, complex or exciting within it causes SEL to work counter to its own stated aim of enhancing learning. This disavowal contributes to a figuration of the child, abetted by discursive constructions of feral tendencies, as someone who requires consistent regulation. Psychoanalysis helps explain that it is not by repressing or ignoring the body that learning becomes possible; instead, learning happens as the body and its vicissitudes get worked through in the individual and in relation to others (Britzman, 2009; Taubman, 2012). This does not necessarily mean talking explicitly about foot sweat, or what might ultimately be sexuality with children, but it means acknowledging the loss, anger and ambivalence that can come along with developing regulation. Perhaps outside of the strictures of SEL and the tremendous anxiety about what is "frivolous" and uncontained, Jeanette could talk with children openly about their wishes and disappointments in the moment. In the depressive position, anger, sometimes about limits, and its attendant guilt enable the individual to develop a reparative capacity. If children have to ward off the anger in the first place, such development and communication becomes foreclosed and they lose the opportunity to practice symbolizing their experience.

In Samantha's class, the very structure of Second Step, which requires children to sit together on the rug in an attentive stance for at least thirty minutes per session, contributes to the positioning of children as people in need of regulation. Samantha's students sometimes seem to try hard to understand exactly what kind of regulation is expected of them, and other times, they appear more interested in resisting all external regulation. The "Eagle Eyes" vignette is a helpful one here. As the children gather for their lesson, they face tremendous chaos in the classroom, and Samantha is putting out what she thinks of as disciplinary fires, unable to stay either

physically or psychically with any group of students for more than a few seconds. When she

turns to her class, she asks them to think about what makes for "good" behavior. Jessenia,

ostensibly hoping to please her teacher, talks about the need to "be good." Samantha moves to

the *Second Step* guidelines for how a person's body should look when they are listening,

focusing on "eyes watching." Jessenia, still trying to comply, invokes a reading strategy, "Eagle

Eyes," and Samantha tells her she is wrong. Eagle Eyes is for reading, Eyes Watching is for

behavior.

In truth, the "Eagle Eyes" reading strategy asks that emergent readers look closely at the

beginning letter of the word and make an inference by synthesizing this onset with an illustration

to help with decoding. This might not actually be too different from watching a person to figure

out what they are telling you to do as you listen. The rigidity of these rules stands out and might

contribute to making it harder for Samantha to use the same listening strategies with her students

that she claims to expect from them. Moreover, the expectations for regulation here are so

stringent that many children in Samantha's class inevitably appear dysregulated and wild. It is

worth asking how many adults actually listen to others with eyes watching, ears listening, voice

quiet, and body still. Ogden (2004) elaborates the Bionian idea of containment as something

quite different from this sort of demand for compliant listening; for Bion, containment comes

from "the processing… of thoughts derived from lived emotional experience" (p. 1349) and,

again, allows more capacity for creativity and dream-work. When Jessenia scrambles for "Eagle

Eyes," Second Step positions her as dysregulated, but it would also be possible to see her as

engaged in an attempt to contain herself within a chaotic and difficult environment. Similar

examples arise when students in Samantha's class are disciplined for braiding each other's hair,

playing with their shoes, or tapping on furniture; it is difficult to discern whether these behaviors

really require regulation or whether, in fact, they represent children's own, albeit noncompliant, attempts at soothing and survival.

Children Should Be Told They Know
In both classrooms, I observed many interactions around the theme of what children do and do not know. The complicated and sometimes contradictory messages around children's knowledge struck me. On the one hand, both teachers, though particularly Jeanette, frequently praised children for expertise in a variety of areas. Often, this kind of language was especially prevalent when the children were not masterful in a given realm. For instance, few of the students in either class could read independently, yet both teachers were insistent in telling them that they were "readers." When Phillip is sad that he cannot yet read when many classmates can, Samantha tries immediately to cheer him up by convincing him that practicing the letters of the alphabet *is* reading. She tries not to allow him to linger in the discomfort that appears to come with the experience of not knowing. Jeanette tells her class that they are all readers, because they can read words, pictures, or both. This phrasing is interesting because it is hard to imagine a kindergartner saying he could just read words, but not pictures, whereas the converse clearly happens frequently.

Why is it important for teachers to try to get kids to believe they can read when in fact they cannot, at least not in the traditional scholastic sense of reading? Jeanette also calls her students mathematicians, researchers, and musicians; she tells them how well they know each other and how good they are at learning. Samantha tells her class how much they know about how to calm down and help their friends when they feel sad. The discussion of Research Question 2 will discuss the cultural aspects of this phenomenon, but here I emphasize that there may be teacher anxiety regarding children's capacity to truck with ignorance. Phillip knows he cannot read, but this seems to generate real anxiety for Samantha. Jeanette works constantly to

circumvent her students' identifications of themselves as anything less than full professional experts in a wide variety of fields. Suggestions to engage in this sort of teaching come directly from *Teacher Language for Engaged Learning* as well as the ancillary materials in the Second Step suite.

At the same time that both teachers work to explicitly articulate children as experts, they also disavow children's expressions of knowledge repeatedly. When Phillip tells Samantha that he has never felt surprised, she accuses him of trying to get out of his writing work. When Josue and Jesus say that the boy in a picture is probably cheating because he wants a reward, she quickly tells them there is no reward. She repeatedly tells children they are using the wrong feeling words or that the knowledge they express is irrelevant to her line of questioning.

Jeanette, too, questions kids' knowledge frequently, mostly by restating their words in other ways that may actually change their meaning. Charlotte wants Elijah to come back to stay, but Jeanette tells her she wants him to come back for a visit. She tells Tyler that bald means having no hair when Tyler is trying to say his dad is bald even with a little hair, and she tells the class that their suggestion to count by fours is unusual. Subtle language changes, like Zach saying he was "sick out" and Jeanette translating to mean he was "out sick" also belong under this heading.

Basically, the relationship to children's knowledge in the SEL-managed classroom is a complicated one characterized by what Klein and her followers might describe as a split. On the one hand, children should believe they are experts and should not be left to tolerate the feeling of not knowing or now being eminently capable. On the other hand, though, the knowledge they do articulate is suspect, inaccurate, and sometimes in appropriate. Kleinian psychoanalysis characterizes splitting in terms of dividing people and concepts into good and bad objects: in

this case, the good idealized knowledge, like how to read or be a mathematician, and the bad, suspicious knowledge embedded in an ungrammatical turn of phrase or the expression of an unattainable hope.

For Klein and her followers, this kind of split has to do with projective identification. In projective identification, the subject- in this case, the teacher and the curriculum- fantasizes a breaking off of an undesired element of the self and attributes it to the other. This attribution then causes guilt and anxiety in the subject. The guilt stems from an unconscious sense that the subject is somehow damaging the object, and can result in strange acts of reparation. For instance, the teacher's unconscious awareness that she has displaced her anxieties about what she does not know or understand in the world onto the child might result in encouragement of the child's (false) expertise, at the same time that the child's attempts to articulate independent knowledge are quashed. The splitting that results from projective identification then leads to a further sense of disintegration or fragmentation of the ego, causing further anxiety and perpetuating a cycle.

Teachers Should Help Kids Feel Good

Finally, observational data reveals that in addition to telling kids about their expertise, teachers in these SEL-managed classrooms take on a responsibility for working to get all of the children to feel good most of the time. Sometimes, this happens through coercive language. For example, Jeanette tells her students that they should like or love everything they do in school. In fact, she goes so far as to tell them they do like or love it, that writing is joyful. She tells them that they all love their classmate, Elijah, who has moved away, and that they miss him the exact right amount, enough to write him a nice card but not so much that they would sink into despair. When Phoebe brings up the difficulties associated with moving, Jeanette is quick to focus her on making constructive use of this understanding to create a meaningful card for Elijah.

Samantha, too, tells her students what they are feeling and uses language to coach them away from negative emotions. Rosalena brings up a worry about her father having an operation, using the words "sad and mad," and Samantha reminds her that this experience is over and Rosalena should not feel scared any more. It is unclear whether Rosalena felt scared in the first place, so much as she felt angry and continues to carry that feeling. Samantha tells her students that feelings do not last forever and that when they feel bad, they should help themselves with the reminder that the feelings will go away.

In both classes, students respond to this well-intentioned emotional coercion through bodies and gestures, rather than words. The "writing is joyful" vignette shows children moving their bodies very close to one another repeatedly while Jeanette speaks, and Jeanette physically separates them from one another. James shovels food into his mouth and the class grows uncharacteristically silent. The children also move close to each other and touch one another's bodies repeatedly during the "saying goodbye" anecdote. It is possible that these physical movements represent a desire for closeness at a time that the teacher seems somewhat distant, or that the children are enacting a facet of Jeanette's own anxiety regarding intolerable feelings. In Samantha's class, Jesus crawls around the classroom, and Jessenia braids her friend's hair and muses about the taste of her feet when the teacher tells them their bad feelings go away.

In each of these cases, children are trying to symbolize something about what they are experiencing, using their bodies, gestures and behavior. The teachers rely more on language as a way to communicate what they wish were true: that bad feelings would pass and that an atmosphere of joy would prevail all of the time. The teachers behave as though it is their job to create comfortable feelings within the classroom, but they are faced with real challenges: children who do not really like to write, children who do not have blankets to cover their bodies

at night, children who insist that the old school building was better, children who are still angry about their father's surgery even though it happened a month ago. A disconnect arises out of the conflict between the teacher's sense of responsibility for good feelings and the children's symbolization of struggle.

Teacher Interviews
Interview data reveals a strong belief in children and their social worlds, the importance of good feelings, and a sense of children as inherently wild. Teachers are seen as in need of tremendous help and support, and the presence of teachers' own core values and belief systems is seen to come into contact with how SEL positions the role of the teacher.

Children Have Potential
Both teachers expressed a strong belief that children's social and emotional worlds are very important, that teacher education and academic pressures undervalue the significance of children's social and emotional lives, and that children have vast potential that SEL can help unlock. Jeanette spoke about the fact that her teacher education paid insufficient attention to the part of a child's life that is not strictly academic. For Jeanette, Responsive Classroom offers a solution to this problem in that it prioritizes the social and emotional world of the child. Jeanette also spoke about her desire for good relationships with her students, relationships that were not based on strict discipline but rather on mutual understanding. For her, this means singing rather than yelling, highlighting children's expertise, and making time and space in the daily routines to hear about kids' lives.

Samantha referenced the possibility that the academic instruction she does is moot in the face of the tremendous social and emotional stresses many of her students face in their lives, and she described SEL as a starting point in terms of helping kids learn strategies and skills for dealing with these stresses. Like Jeanette, Samantha says that kids' emotional well-being takes

precedence over pure academic instruction. Both teachers establish a sort of polarization between academic and social learning, and both feel that the social piece is significant. They express appreciation for SEL's ostensible foregrounding of the emotional lives of children.

Neither teacher explicitly defined what she meant in speaking of the child's emotional world, but both referenced similar phenomena. Their definitions of children's emotional lives seem to include stories that happened outside of school, kids' ways of processing conflicts, and the unarticulated motivation catalyzing children's behaviors. Both Jeanette and Samantha see children and their stories as important and filled with potential, and SEL programming becomes something of an instrument enabling the fulfillment of this potential.

Certainly both teachers' understanding of "the whole child" echoes much of what both formal academic discourse around SEL claims and what the SEL programs themselves advertise. Yet for these teachers, there is something almost urgent about the emotional world of the child. When Samantha tells the story of the phonics lesson where kids turned "cup" to "cop," she gets at this urgency and argues that *Second Step* does not offer kids what they need in these moments. She claims that this is because they do not have enough experience yet with the coping strategies and skills the program teaches, but what she offers in place is empathic listening and the chance for kids to tell stories to each other. This represents an approach to children's emotions that aligns with the Bionian container/contained relationship, wherein process and relationality are emphasized over getting at a singular truth or reaching a predetermined endpoint (Brown and Levine, 2015). It is notable that in Samantha's most affectively charged depictions of her students' emotional lives, she deviates from SEL but expresses doubts about doing so.

When Jeanette talks about foregrounding children's emotional lives, she makes two simultaneous moves. First, she talks about the deficits in her teacher education. Second, she

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emphasizes her deep admiration for and even emulation of an early mentor teacher. Here, Jeanette constructs a split between the inadequate preparation she received and the idealized mentor she found: "In my mind, she always seemed to have just the right words for every situation…" The bad teacher education she references makes no room for children's emotional lives and for them to form close relationships with their teacher, who will likely yell at them and ignore their needs. The good mentor becomes codified via *Responsive Classroom*, and Jeanette loves the program in part for the emotional distance she sees it as bridging between herself and her students.

Children Should Feel Good

Both teachers expressed a sense that children ought to feel calm and good most of the time. These sentiments were generally aligned with what occurred in the classroom observations. For Jeanette, it is important that children feel "safe, valued, and loved." She emphasizes that the rule-creation process offered by RC contributes to good feelings in children, and helps them be less vigilant and more comfortable in the classroom. She is explicit in that these feelings of comfort, which have to do with safety and the sense of being known, are desirable in the classroom. Feeling good, for Jeanette, aligns with the RC goals of helping kids maintain a sense of significance, belonging, and fun. It also means not being "taxed" beyond a particular capacity, and the job of the teacher is to know this capacity and not push far beyond it. When a situation is becoming too emotionally charged, for Jeanette, that means it is time to take a break or get spelled by Teresa. Positive feelings, for Jeanette, are there to foster learning and the capacity to take risks.

Samantha talks about the normative nature of good feeling when she speaks about problem-solving. She describes her orientation in terms of helping kids establish the skills they will need to solve problems. Samantha expresses impatience to get to the problem-solving part

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of the Second Step curriculum; she worries about her students' dependence on her for conflict resolution and wants them to continue steady forward progression toward independent problem solving. Samantha repeatedly expresses distress about the number of emergencies and the prevalence of bad feelings in her classroom. She worries over the ways the classroom is "out of control." When I asked about strong feelings, Samantha explained that they make her "freeze up," which, to her, is untenable. She constructs a vision of the acquisition of specific skills and strategies that will linearly lead children to good feelings and, respectively, calm, managed behavior.

Children are Wild

Both teachers also referenced the inherently wild nature of children and the possibilities of SEL for taming this wildness in a desirable way. Samantha speaks of her students as wild in part because of the difficulties of their lives outside of school. She compares them to previous classes and speaks of their lives in terms of deficits: they have fewer resources than other children, they have confusing family constellations, they have witnessed many scary things. As a result, they are dysregulated in a way that Samantha finds exhausting and frustrating, and many aspects of the curriculum are inaccessible to them. The progression of *Second Step* seems to contribute to Samantha's frustrations with her students' wild and uncontrollable tendencies, since it highlights their lack of response to instruction. This also comes through when Samantha complains about her administration's high expectations from the implementation of an SEL block. Her students are problematic for her to the extent that they defy performance of any curriculum. At the same time, she wonders if "more than an hour a week" of teaching explicit skills might be the answer to the tremendous dysregulation she sees herself as facing.

Samantha vacillates palpably between expressions of empathy for the experiences that lead to wild behavior among her students, and anger at their incapacities. The more empathic

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moments in her interview come when she talks about work outside of the confines of curriculum, such as when she describes casual conversations. The frustrations come out in relation to expectations, her own lack of a support network, and also when she thinks about regressive tendencies and behaviors that really get under her skin. She describes pushing back, feeling exhausted, and sometimes just surrendering to the "nightmare" of the school year.

Jeanette has a generally more positive outlook on her class and gets at a sense of mastery, but she, too, considers children's nature as essentially unruly. For Jeanette, this is part of why the rule creation process is so important. Jeanette describes the creation of rules as sort of a leveling of the playing field when children come to kindergarten from very different backgrounds. Part of this process is teaching kids not to get too wild or out of bounds; for instance, the desire to go to the moon is quickly evacuated from the classroom in the name of regulation. It seems clear, from the fact that the rules turn out the same every year, that Jeanette is pretty heavy-handed in this process, but it matters to her to feel as though the children themselves are constructing the rules. This discrepancy and the careful management of "hopes and dreams" may convey anxiety about the wild nature of the child; what would happen, after all, in a classroom where kids constructed rules based around the dream of going to the moon?

Teachers Need Support
Interview data also suggests a definition of the teacher as a person in need of support. Jeanette believes she has received, and continues to receive, the supports she needs. These supports come in the form of her relationship with her mentor teacher, the extensive professional development she has received, the confidence of her principal, the devotion of the families in her classroom, and the synchronicity of her relationship with Teresa.

Samantha, on the other hand, expresses a deficit of support. She struggles to balance her home life and school life, she has few opportunities to talk with colleagues, and her attempts to secure ancillary services for her students go unmet. She wonders whether if only a school psychologist would help her implement *Second Step*, it might be more effective. Over time, I wondered if what I sensed as Samantha's irritation with my questioning stemmed from a desire to get support I was unable to provide; after all, she was motivated to participate in this study by the sense of being surrounded by emergencies she did not know how to handle.

Certainly, both teachers' expression of the importance of support is aligned with SEL discourse on the need for professional development, the notion that some situations are well beyond a teacher's capacity, and the increasing view that perhaps it is school psychologists and counselors, rather than teachers, who should be implementing SEL. At the same time, the projection of certain anxieties regarding children and teaching onto this somewhat amorphous vision of "support" becomes a defense. Perhaps Jeanette touts the idealized support she receives from all quarters in part as a way of masking uncertainty or anxiety about practice. Choice time has been shortened in kindergarten, kids have little time for recess, "children are watching us at every turn," so there has to be a defensive structure in place to reify the general 'okayness' of the things she and Teresa do. Samantha speaks about support from almost the opposite understanding, but still with a defensive sensibility: if only the psychologist would come, if only she had more time in her schedule for SEL, if only someone would help her make a plan for her student 'B,' then everything would be okay.

Teachers Have Belief Systems

Finally, the interview data revealed the existence of core belief systems on the part of each teacher. Both Jeanette and Samantha have underlying values, beliefs and philosophies that come into contact with SEL in very different ways.

Jeanette's articulated value system is very much in line with that of Responsive Classroom, and this makes the program easier for her to buy into and implement. She articulates the belief that children ought to feel safe, that teacher language can make a big difference in buoying children's confidence and behavior, and that rules and guidelines contribute to a well-functioning, desirably positive classroom atmosphere. The sheer joy Jeanette expresses when she describes the RC rule creation process speaks to the synchronicity between her own values and those of RC. When I explore Research Question 2, I will think about the cultural etiology of these values; here, though, it is important to note that the teacher is someone with beliefs and values of her own and these will inevitably come into contact with any programming.

Samantha's belief system is less aligned with *Second Step,* though not completely misaligned. Like the curriculum, Samantha believes in the importance of skills and strategies as a way of managing emotions, and she believes that strong feelings ought to be managed. Also like *Second Step*, Samantha thinks that calm and positivity should prevail in the classroom. At the same time, she expresses grave doubts about the potential for a circumscribed program to help her students in the face of the social difficulties that are part of their lives. Again and again, she returns to these circumstances in her interview: incarcerated parents, physical abuse, lack of material resources- and she wonders whether maybe *Second Step* relies on a worldview and relationship to circumstance that is unavailable to her students.

Concluding Thoughts

Some characteristics held all three data sources together in terms of how they situated children, teachers, and the child/teacher relationship. A sense that children ought to feel good and they are whole and complicated people whose social and emotional worlds have great import ties all three data sources together. Material from all three sources also indicated anxiety on the part of teachers and other adults about the feral aspect of children and the extent to which children's wildness ought to be warded off, at least in the school setting. The emerging picture of childhood is one attenuated with anxiety: children are complex and important, but their feelings and behaviors should be carefully watched and controlled, and it is normative for them to mostly feel calm and good during their school days. The job of the teacher is to help inculcate and maintain calm, good feelings, while simultaneously conveying to kids that their thoughts and emotions matter.

Some contradictions also emerged between different data sets. Notable was the extent to which the SEL discourse made claims for the positive affect present in SEL-managed classrooms, contrasted with the rife conflict, anger and aggression throughout classroom observations. It was also striking that during the classroom observations, both teachers conveyed less of an empathic stance toward their students than the one they consciously described in their interviews. This speaks in part to the pressured nature of each teacher's work and the sense they have of needing to conform to specific cultural and administrative expectations. It also may speak to the enormous disconnect between the child as she exists in the classroom, and the child as figured by SEL discourse.

SEL and Culture
Research question two asks: *What aspects of culture does SEL represent and reinforce?*

Critical Discourse Analysis

The SEL materials I analyzed revealed several different ways that broader cultural forces have shaped SEL's rise and popularity. They also suggest some of the possible ways SEL might influence culture. The significance of rules and regulation, the primacy of safety, the assumptions about cultural deficits, and the emphasis on good feelings in and about school all came up in the materials and support an understanding of the relationship between SEL and culture.

The Significance of Rules and Regulation

Nearly all of the materials analyzed focused heavily on incorporating rules and regulations into the school and classroom. I contend that this emphasis on rules reflects an interest in inculcating compliance that stems from a combination of cultural perspectives on school and childhood, and the reach of neoliberalism. It is worth questioning, in fact, what rules really have to do with social and emotional learning. SEL materials tend to emphasize the idea that rules and adherence to them make kids feel safe in school, unify classroom and school communities, and help make it possible for teachers to do more explicit SEL instruction.

Scholars who write about neoliberalism have described the significance of rules and compliance in a neoliberal regime. Moss (2014) describes the way that neoliberalism positions all human life in terms of contracts, in part as a way of perpetuating the sense that humanity is inextricably tied with capitalist economics. Taubman (2009) also emphasizes the extent to which a neoliberal reach into education relies on a sense of crisis. He explains, for instance, that the emphasis on accountability under neoliberalism's audit culture in education, both implicitly and explicitly paints a picture of a preexisting educational world in total disarray, not to mention a world in which "U.S. students are losing the academic race to their peers in other countries…. They don't work hard enough, attend schools that don't push them, aren't as competitive as those

'other' kids from around the globe, and need to buckle down… Not only are teachers and students failing to catch up with those in other countries but parents are blind to the crisis" (p. 101).

Part of neoliberalism's impact, then, is to situate the classroom as a place where accountability must be established, routines must be drummed in, and teachers must prepare children to do important catch-up work so that they can become efficient economic participants. SEL discourse claims to work against this narrative, for instance by prioritizing children's feelings in school alongside, if not above, their capacities for academic achievement. At the same time, the materials I analyzed draw repeatedly on a crisis narrative, in which children increasingly come from homes where their emotional development is not attended to, where they are plugged into screens all of the time instead of socializing, and where emotional IQ's are definitively slipping because of violence and isolation.

It is largely because of this crisis, SEL materials explain, that the emphasis on rules is so important. After all, if children are coming to school from homes and neighborhoods where they do not have consistent behavioral standards, school must focus first on providing structure. In RC, rules are there to make school a more pleasant place and to help children enjoy their time in school. In Second Step, rules are there to strengthen children's brains and enable them to achieve success. Neither curriculum really explains a connection between rules and social or emotional learning, but both work with the assumption that rules are generally good for students and that children ought to be made constantly to follow a predetermined set of rules over the course of their school day. This assumption clearly comes from cultural emphases on compliance as well as the hegemony of the contract and anxieties about social and educational disarray. Castagno (2014) further points to the fact that a particular way of educating children to

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be individualistically 'kind' and 'respectful' amounts to "education in whiteness", wherein cultural norms associated with a monolithic white middle class are implicitly assumed to be morally superior to any other way of being.

Is it actually the case that an emphasis on rules benefits social and emotional learning or survival in a given context? This is a complicated question, the very posing of which may stir a series of assumptions about human nature and, particularly, childhood. What would it feel like to exist as a child or teacher in a classroom with few or no rules? Whose emotions are more and less protected by rules, and what would become of social and emotional life without this kind of protection?

Certainly, in psychoanalysis, rules are not seen as central to emotional life. Winnicott is perhaps the canonical analyst to address this concept most directly in the context of child development. He writes of explicit rules as sort of incidental, when the rules that a particular child responds to are more likely to be those unspoken ones that are communicated in the relational context of early infancy. Further, even these rules are made to be broken for Winnicott. Compliance is associated with false self development, whereas in the absence of compliance, the true self can develop, mainly via fantasy and creativity. The strictures of rules in SEL discourse does not actually circumvent this aspect of development, but the assumption that children will mostly take rules seriously or learn from them does. The problem here is not really for the child, but for the adult who is distanced from the child as a result of believing so strongly in the rules.

Klein might understand the cultural need for rules in terms of anxieties. Rules have mostly to do with a desire to control the other, and this desire stems in fact from a projected desire to control the aspects of the self that are most frightening and undesirable. Relying on this

interpretation, we can see that the cultural and economic forces contributing to SEL's heavy emphasis on rules are self-perpetuating; rules, in the context of the paranoid-schizoid position, can lead to increased anxiety about what would happen if they were not followed or if fewer of them existed. Perhaps this anxiety has to do with the projection of the unruly aspects of the (adult) self, but it gets recruited in the name of children's emotional development.

The Primacy of Safety

Safety is another concept that SEL focuses on heavily. It is related to the primacy of rules in that some SEL documents state or imply that the purpose of rules is to maintain safety. The SEL materials I analyzed discussed safety in its physical as well as its emotional dimensions. Safety is part of the Committee for Children's mission statement, and Responsive Classroom considers the emotional safety of children one of its primary goals. A "safe learning environment" is one of the key justifications for the MA state guidelines on SEL.

What, really, is safety? What does it mean to have a concern for the emotional safety of children, and what assumptions are behind this priority? A search on Google Scholar, Academic Search Premier, and EBSCO Host indicates that the concept of emotional safety became referenced ubiquitously beginning in the early 1990s, around the same time that emotional intelligence started to gain traction. Emotional safety seems to refer to the idea that a person has a right to not have their emotions damaged in a particular context. Damaging emotions seem to include sadness, insecurity about the self, grief and even anger. Contemporary educational literature suggests that emotional safety is crucial for learning and that the emotional safety of children in the classroom ought to be a teacher's priority.

SEL literature's emphasis on emotional safety is both informed by and informative of broader cultural anxieties around difficult emotions as well as a legislative culture that promotes

intense anxiety. For example, emotional safety includes an environment in which teasing and bullying are minimized and in which negative feelings toward the other are not expressed. The need for an emotionally safe environment arises out of the sense that children ought to be constantly and consistently protected from difficult feelings, and this iteration of the child is, as shown earlier, culturally driven. Further, the way that SEL invokes the concept of safety is culturally monolithic. The same things (mostly rules, games, choices, and pleasantries) are assumed to "make" all children feel safe, regardless of their temperaments or backgrounds. What children should feel safe from is a usually unspoken but occasionally referenced other: the dangerous child who calls names, cannot calm down, does not comply with the social norms of the school.

It is difficult to argue against safety or even to claim that it is an entirely cultural norm. Safety in its most basic sense is necessary for survival. However, there is a threshold beyond which the need for safety might be questioned, and its definition could also be controversial. The idea that safety is a prerequisite for learning is not entirely supported by psychoanalytic perspectives, nor is it even promoted by more exclusively cognitive theories of learning. After all, disequilibrium and discomfort, even for Piaget, are necessary for the acquisition and assimilation of new concepts. More recently, Walton and Davidson (2017) have compellingly illustrated how a lack of safety and the presence of social conflicts that children must navigate without significant adult intervention promotes social as well as linguistic learning.

Beyond the focus on learning per se, the rigid demand for safety and the way it is defined by SEL has roots in cultural anxieties that are emotionally problematic. Safety in SEL implies a lack of engagement with difficult emotions and the avoidance of the knottiest situations in the classroom, in the name of a veneer of security and surveillance. What if, however, this actually

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leads to an increase in distance between people? How can children be close to each other and to the adults who share their classroom space if their primary concern is watching out for damaging each other's feelings? Further, what happens when a child is told that particular classroom norms and behavior will make everyone "feel safe?" SEL materials repeat this idea so often as to create a coercive sentiment: you *will* feel safe, you *do* feel safe. Safety thus becomes a matter of individual behavior and rejiggering one's own internal understanding of security. SEL ultimately implicitly defines safety as the feeling that arises out of an environment saturated with compliance.

Cultural obsessions with safety in childhood can be seen everywhere from seatbelt legislation to anti-bullying dogma. Keeping children safe is an economically productive endeavor; we need more car seats, more surveillance, and more pre-packaged curricula to ensure that the unsafe other does not somehow sneak in. There is the potential for an alternate vision of emotional safety as allowing for a close relationship and a set of attachments in which bad feelings, behaviors and fantasies might be explored rather than punished. Here, however, I want to leave the focus on the possibility that safety is not in fact a norm that exists outside of culture and should be accepted without questioning. The extent to which SEL discourse emphasizes safety represents one of the ways that it is informed by and perpetuates other cultural narratives of childhood and education.

Assumptions About Cultural Deficits
SEL discourse also makes numerous assumptions about the cultures that students participate in at home and, in many cases, the deficits in these cultures. One purpose of school and particularly of SEL, in this narrative, is to correct for these deficits and bring all students to a level playing

field in which one social and emotional vision is the right one, the one that will ensure future success.

The Responsive Classroom materials rely in part on the idea that children come to school with fewer kids than they used to and that some homes, such as those with single parents, those where children are living in poverty, and those where family members are incarcerated, cannot adequately equip children with emotional intelligence and social skills. Second Step similarly relies on the assumption that SEL should respond to a cultural crisis in which many children are emotionally illiterate. The reasons for emotional illiteracy vary, ranging from increased access to technology to crime-ridden homes and neighborhoods. Again and again, we see the assumption that particularly children who grow up facing poverty are in emotional deficit. SEL materials perpetuate the belief that poverty causes lower emotional intelligence, and that schools should work to fight this problem.

The idea that poverty is a deficit that schools ought to correct is certainly not a new one, and it carries quite a bit of cultural, historical and economic weight. After all, the history of the public school in the United States is intertwined with the idea that immigrants and poor people are impoverished not only economically but also in terms of character (eg. Kliebard, 2004). Taubman (2009) points out the extent to which corporate infiltration into American public schools relies on this deficit picture. Constant reminders that our schools are in crisis have proliferated since the mid-1980s, and countless industries have benefitted economically from their proposed remedies to these presumably educational crises.

SEL's reliance on this cultural narrative of crisis and deficit is thus perhaps unsurprising, but it is interesting to note some of the different tropes it draws on to make its case. Vision of academic crisis are generally connected with anxiety about U.S. capacities for competition in the

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global economy. The alleged emotional crisis makes a more circuitous economic argument. First of all, emotions are seen repeatedly and increasingly as tied to academic success, and we see this in the current SEL literature and discourse that argues that students' achievement will increase if they are exposed to SEL instruction. Also, though, the ability to get along with others unquestionably, the capacity for consistent compliance, and the ability to self-regulate are implicitly tied to future economic success in a workplace where compliance and a specific type of collaboration are important. The image of a crisis in emotional illiteracy draws on economic anxieties by implying that today's children are ill-equipped to achieve these goals. SEL discourse has to portray a vision of a problem in order to portray itself as the solution, and the problem is framed as a frightening deficit in how children are raised today. Some childrearing habits are more frightening than others, to be sure, but the cultural deficits in emotional literacy are also carefully situated as widespread enough to make SEL appealing and, indeed, necessary in a variety of circumstances.

In addition to the economic perspective on the deficit portrait, Kleinian theory is helpful in considering why this narrative might be so compelling within education. Shafer (1994) elucidates the concept of projective identification by showing how that which causes anxiety within the self, in particular some sort of sense of gap or deficit, becomes split off and projected into the other within the paranoid-schizoid position. Situating the other as problematic is frequently, for Kleinians, a response to that which is intolerable in the self. It is not the case that this is necessarily pathological, immature or unexpected. However, it can serve as a reminder that deficit portraits are rarely objective, and when they become cultural tropes, they require particularly careful scrutiny.

What if we are not really facing a crisis of emotional illiteracy in our schools or among our children? What if, as many have argued in relation to the alleged academic crisis facing American schools, the things we are naming as emotional deficits are not educational phenomena at all but instead very reasonable responses to unreasonable conditions? Or what if even that is an overstatement, and children are for the most part simply "going-on being" (Winnicott, 1965, p. 303)? In that case it is perhaps adults who lose out by subscribing to the cultural messages of deficits in childhood that SEL draws on and works to reinforce. At the least, it is important to note the cultural, political and economic nature of these narratives, rather than accept them quid pro quo as objective truths.

Good Feelings in School and Good Feelings About School

Finally, SEL discourse works with the assumption that children should feel good in school and should feel good about school. What this means for bad and difficult feelings will be discussed in relation to Research Question 3. Here, though, I want to show that the normative assumption that these kinds of good feelings are possible and desirable is rooted in a cultural prescription for positive affect as well as anxiety about negativity.

Many of the efficacy studies about different SEL programs include metrics assessing the impact of SEL on children's feelings about school. In general, these studies find that an effective SEL program is correlated and sometimes causally linked with a desire to go to school and a sense of school as a good place to be. SEL materials rely on these findings, arguing that both teachers and students will be happier in school and will feel better about going to school if they use an SEL program. Responsive Classroom focuses tirelessly on the idea that the classroom ought to be a joyful place and that kids should feel good about the things they are learning and the ways they are learning them. The constant incorporation of highly structured games is part

of this assumption, as is the focus on academic choice and the insistence that teachers use only positive language. Second Step also relies on the idea that children should feel good in and about school. By explicitly teaching children to regulate themselves, Second Step attempts to teach away from the bad feelings that an absence of self-regulation would imply. Feeling better, feeling calm, and feeling less worried are all important parts of the Second Step lesson suites.

Why should kids feel so good all the time, though? Why should they feel good about going to school, and why should they not worry? Part of the answer to these questions comes from affect theorists, who show repeatedly that the hegemony of good feelings is a cultural phenomenon. Ahmed (2010) understands the prescription for happiness as a tremendous cultural push orienting people and their feelings toward compliance and acceptance of status quo, and away from protest or even disgruntlement. She considers the need for a feminist critique of happiness, "To revitalize the critique of happiness is to be willing to be proximate to unhappiness… feminist consciousness involves consciousness of unhappiness that might even increase our unhappiness, or at least create this impression. Happiness can work to cover over unhappiness, in part by covering over its causes, such that to refuse to take cover can allow unhappiness to emerge. This process of consciousness raising involves not simply becoming conscious of unhappiness but also achieving (with others) better ways of understanding unhappiness. We can recognize that unhappiness is structured, and that what happens to us might be connected in some way to what happens to others" (p. 87). For Ahmed, mandated happiness is a cultural and political phenomenon that serves as a distancing force, a cover that can intentionally circumvent engagement with others and with ourselves.

Berlant (2011) echoes this critique of hegemonic positivity when she writes of cruel optimism, or the desire for that which is actually an obstacle to flourishing. She describes cruel

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optimism as "an incitement to inhabit and to track the affective attachment to what we call 'the

good life,' which is for so many a bad life that wears out the subjects who nonetheless, and at the

same time, find their conditions of possibility within it" (p. 27). Here, Berlant suggests a need to

understand and question the cultural attachment to good feelings and the demands this

attachment places on individual and collective subjects. She goes so far as to suggest the

exhausting, damaging nature of the mandate to feel good, in spite of the tremendous challenges

that come with its relinquishment.

Just as safety in childhood is a difficult precept to critique, so too is the idea of feeling

good about school. So entrenched is the cultural attachment to good feelings that it is truly

difficult to imagine an American school or curriculum articulating the premise that many

children will not like school, may never like school, and may feel pretty consistently bad during

their times at school. Indeed, there are potential dangers to this converse as well, since it could

quickly slip into a sense that some children (for it will never be all) are lost causes and there is no

point in helping them find joy in learning. Yet the affective prescriptions of SEL are so extreme,

and the demands for good feelings so consistent, as to be potentially oppressive to children as

well as their teachers. At the least, it is important to understand these demands for what they are:

culturally informed phenomena with political implications, rather than objectively desirable

emotional truths.

Classroom Observations
The role of culture as well as the perpetuation of culture were seen in my observations in

Jeanette and Samantha's classroom. Here, I will discuss the absence of explicit mention of race

and gender, the frequent explicit instruction in sociocultural norms, the culturally mandated

disavowal of the body in the early childhood classroom and, again, the emphasis on positive affect as themes that emerged out of the classroom observations.

(Not) Discussing Race, (Not) Discussing Gender

One of the interesting ways culture came up in the classroom observations was by not coming up. Except for the extensive discussion about Native Americans, which I discuss more below, there was little mention in either classroom of students' cultural identities, assumptions, similarities or differences. Though kids in both classes talked about the ways they were like and unlike each other, they seemed to participate for the most part in a cultural taboo against explicitly mentioning race and gender. Though the idea that children do not notice race has been broadly debunked (eg. Winkler, 2009; Tatum, 2007; Delpit, 2012), a sense that race should remain undiscussed and even unmentioned in the classroom context seems to prevail.

In Jeanette's class, some of the times that it struck me as odd not to mention race included during the songs the children sang fairly frequently. One of their regular songs, for example, was "Jump down, turn around, pick a bale of cotton." The song has been critiqued for its original racist lyrics (which the children did not learn) and the ways it is reminiscent of slavery, so it seemed discordant to see a group of racially diverse kindergartners singing it as they settled in for morning meeting, without any mention of its roots, meaning, or implications. Similarly, each time Jeanette held up one of her cards with "hello" in a different language, I wondered what the children were making of the images: a Vietnamese boy in a conical hat, a ruddy-cheeked white German girl with pigtails and a dirndl. Though the children spent a great deal of time selecting the language for their daily greeting, they never really discussed the images they were looking at or the impressions they were garnering. It was also the case that the languages the children selected when I was there were always those from European countries

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except on days that Prabir or Devesh, both of Bangladeshi heritage, made the choice; this, too, remained unmentioned.

The children's avoidance of explicit mention of race and other difference in Jeanette's class came through also in the games they played. For instance, when they played "Have You Seen My Sheep," a game that involved mentioning specific things they noticed about each other, Jeanette focused their attention on where people's ancestors came from, but never on skin color or other attributes that might draw children's notice about ways they were different from each other. It was difficult to ascertain whether children were honestly more aware of each other's ancestry than more perhaps ostensibly superficial difference, or whether they were gradually learning that some things are and are not all right to speak of aloud.

The story about Native Americans stands out as a time when culture (and perhaps race and ethnicity, though this is unclear) is discussed explicitly. It is such an important story because it demonstrates the ways children are trying to understand what this phenomenon of culture is all about: they are presented with a song, and Jeanette clearly wants them to speak admiringly of what it is (or was) to be a Native American. Yet Native Americans are portrayed over the course of the story as an historical phenomenon that the kids are meant to consider anthropologically. "They were meat eaters for sure," says Jeanette, almost as though she is discussing the tyrannosaurus. As with the song that evokes slavery, there is an intense avoidance of difficult themes or questions that might come up when discussing Native Americans, such as genocide and war. Yet Native Americans are portrayed as a monolithic, sort of hallowed sect who exist to teach us about virtues such as not being wasteful and appreciating natural wonders.

Samantha's class is so much less culturally and racially diverse than Jeanette's, and the children in that class never explicitly mentioned race or culture. The only time even nationality

came up explicitly in that class was when Philip evoked his stepdad, who left long ago for Puerto Rico and did not come back. Philip says he is sad about his stepdad's absence, and Samantha remarks that this is confusing because Philip is smiling when he talks about it. The absence of discussion of race and culture in this classroom stood out to me primarily because the school itself was so clearly and detrimentally affected by structural and institutionalized racism, alongside poverty, yet neither Second Step nor Samantha's implementation of the program made room for the children to notice this. This came up repeatedly in my research memos, where I wondered whether this group of children would ever question, for instance, why they were in a building with moldy walls or why they had to share a single classroom with another teacher. I also wondered whether the children noticed that most of the time, their teacher and I were both the only two adults and the only two white people in the room, yet this difference remained unmentioned. The dynamic of a white woman teaching a group of entirely children of color how to manage emotions is an undeniably complicated one, yet it remained unnamed over the course of my observations.

Just as race was rarely mentioned in my observations, so too was gender mostly unspoken. In Jeanette's class, this was particularly noticeable when the children played games. In the story "Girls on the Outside," all of the boys chose other boys to join them in the middle, leaving a class segregated by a binary iteration of gender. Yet when the children pointed this out to Jeanette, she skirted their observation, remarking only that such a thing had never happened before. In fact, it had happened before in a previous observation of mine, but no one mentioned it at all that time. When the children played games where they had to describe each other, they frequently relied on descriptors that were, in the context of the class as well as in a cultural context, associated with gender, such as "the person is wearing earrings," "these people have

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short hair," "these people have Spiderman shirts," "these people have their hair in a ponytail." All of the children seemed to have internalized that they were not really supposed to segregate by gender, but they still kind of wanted to, so they found ways to get around it by relying on traditional and stereotypical gender markers.

Gender also did not come up in Samantha's class explicitly, though the children segregated themselves by gender any time they were allowed to choose their own seating arrangement. Girls and boys did seem to get targeted by Samantha for different kinds of behavior; girls were told to stop touching each other, braiding each other's hair, and lying down on the floor, whereas boys were targeted for banging on tables, yelling, barking and hitting. Though the behavioral dynamic in the classroom pretty much adhered to a rigid, stereotyped binary gender framework, this was never mentioned explicitly by Samantha or the students.

Again, race and gender are interesting in the context of these observations mostly for how little they came up, so that while there are probably myriad dynamics in each classroom that are driven in part by race and gender, children do not really have the opportunity to think and talk together about them. The lessons about these aspects of social and emotional life and identity are thus rendered unspoken, a clear outgrowth of and contributor to cultural mandates against excess explicit naming of complex differences.

Instruction in Social Norms

Another thing that came up in observations in both classrooms was the instruction in social and behavioral norms. Jeanette and Samantha spoke to their students explicitly and extensively about how people do and ought to behave, and the children in both classes seemed to look to their teachers for guidance and advice about all different kinds of normative behaviors.

In Jeanette's class, some of the instruction in social norms came in the form of teaching her students the difference between lunch and snack (one is when we eat a lot of food, and one is when we eat just a little food), talking about the importance of laundry and hygiene, and teaching them that it is appropriate to send a person a card to express certain kinds of feelings. Morning meeting becomes a time to teach kids a particular way to have a conversation: they are expected to respond to their teacher's questions, to listen to each other's comments, to talk one at a time and to limit how much they speak. Children are chastised for trying to answer for another person, and they are praised for making eye contact when speaking to someone else. They are not supposed to sit too close to each other, but they are supposed to sit close to the group overall. These lessons are communicated constantly by Jeanette, and much of the time that children spend in their RC-dictated morning meeting block has to do with learning social norms that are presented as universally expected but are, in fact, largely dictates of the culture of school.

Sometimes, the children in Jeanette's class seem to subtly resist her instructions in socialization, as when they glare at each other while she is not looking, refuse to make eye contact during a greeting, ask for a lot of food at snack, or sit with their bodies overlapping. An interesting example of deviation from Jeanette's normative expectations comes during the story "Have You Seen My Sheep," when Melissa talks about going shopping all by herself in Nepal. Jeanette is working, as she often does, to emphasize Melissa's expertise, "You've been to Nepal. So you KNOW." She seems to be looking for some sort of cultural pride from Melissa, and for Melissa, it feels most important to emphasize that she was not scared of going shopping alone for lollipops. Melissa seems to understand that everyone- her teacher as well as her classmates- will assume that she was scared in such a situation. Whether or not she actually was, she subverts Jeanette's reverential reference to her Nepali expertise by making it clear that what she actually

wants to talk about is the experience of not being afraid. Jeanette responds, "you were happy," which is not really what Melissa said but does concede to making the conversation about emotion instead of a lesson in how we pay attention to someone telling a story about another country. Meanwhile, though, the confusing back and forth has gone on so long that most of the other children are disengaged. When Jeanette is giving a lesson on a social norm, she expects the whole class to listen, but they often tune out when other kids are trying to communicate something. In this way, another social norm that gets communicated is the idea that adult input and pedagogy takes precedence over that which comes from children.

In Samantha's class, instruction in social norms takes a slightly different tone. It happens more in the context of constant reinforcement of rules as well as explicit vocabulary instruction. The rules for behavior are the social norms of the classroom, and the children resist them very frequently. Samantha reinstates and repeats them again and again over the course of my observations, and this is one of the ways that she tries to teach her students the "right" way to be in the world. "Let's work on listening respectfully," she tells them, "We do have to move on… Two chairs is not safe!" She also tells them how she believes people are motivated, "No one **wants** to cheat…" Samantha also dedicates a lot of her Second Step time to teaching children what particular words mean and getting them to affix particular vocabulary to certain of their emotional experiences, "When someone else gets something that you want, you feel jealous… I'm going to give you a sparkle word for left out: disappointed." In this way, the teaching of vocabulary becomes intertwined with the teaching of social norms; children learn words by learning that particular situations will lead them to feel in certain ways that can be labeled with these words.

As in Jeanette's class, there is some resistance to Samantha's teaching of social norms, and interestingly, not being scared comes up here as well. When Samantha pairs her students off to make faces portraying particular emotions, she tells them to think about the expression someone would make if they were scared of dogs and encountered a dog. Expressing fear is a normative reaction, Samantha is teaching, but the students respond, "I'm not scared of dogs!" For them in this moment, it seems more important to affirm their courage than to respond to their teacher's instruction. *It is okay to be scared of dogs, and this is how we express our fears* comes into contact with *it is not okay to be scared of dogs and we will go to great lengths to prove that we do not have this fear.*

In general, observations in both classes reveal a great deal of SEL time devoted to teachers telling students how one ought to behave and sometimes even feel in particular settings, and the kids respond to this kind of instruction with a mixture of compliance and resistance. The extent to which the label of social and emotional learning is attached to time devoted to instruction in social norms, however, reflects another way that SEL is a cultural and historical phenomenon, not unlike various other historical iterations of character education.

Disavowal of the Body
The way the body is handled in the classroom observations also contributes to an understanding of SEL as an outgrowth of culture. Education, like many aspects of social and cultural life, places bodies in close proximity to one another. Bodies are covered up, decentralized, undiscussed.

That school is a place where the body is alternately disavowed or approached with the greatest of anxiety is not a new observation (eg. Silin, 1996; Taubman, 2012; Tobin, 2007). The ways the body gets addressed as well as effaced in Jeanette and Samantha's classroom, however,

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help understand the way that SEL is impacted by and impacts cultural relationships to children's bodies.

The students in Jeanette's class refer to their own bodies frequently using language. They like to let their teacher know about injuries, such as the wound on Benji's face, Bianca's pain when coughing, or Charlotte's headache. They also move their bodies a lot, rolling on the floor, jumping up, grabbing themselves, and touching each other. They describe other people's bodies, like Tyler's bald dad.

Jeanette's response to embodiment is usually to try to move away from it and toward the realm of language. For example, when Benji shows the scab on his face, she works to get him to talk about it in words, and even then, as briefly as possible. When kids are grabbing at their crotches and jumping up and down, her consistent question is, "Is this an emergency?" She and Teresa frequently move children's bodies with their own hands. Usually when they do this, it is to get children to sit up or to refrain from touching each other. Jeanette is palpably uncomfortable with Tyler's pronouncements about his father's baldness. She responds by moving the conversation to Tyler's expertise, "You're his son, and you really know that." She also takes the opportunity for a vocabulary lesson, making sure students understand the meaning of bald.

Some of my research memos from my observations in Jeanette's class note that the feeling in the class is frequently centered around the children pushing toward their bodies and Jeanette pulling them away from their bodies, usually toward language. I also noted, however, that the children who moved and talked about their bodies the most were the same ones who were most likely to draw my attention, and it is important to remember that each child had a different relationship to this theme.

A frequent response by Jeanette to children's expressions about their bodies is to ask them what the community can do to support them. This was how she usually responded when a child came to her with an injury of some sort. With both Benji and Bianca, the child appeared very confused by this question, responding that they would like others to refrain from touching them on their face and chest respectively. This was interesting because the children in the class rarely if ever touched those parts of each other's bodies. It seemed to me that Benji and Bianca might actually prefer to receive, rather than deflect, attention, but that they had some sense of not being touched as the request they were supposed to make.

Samantha's students often used their bodies in both disruptive and resistant ways. They moved around on the rug, touched themselves and each other, and made noises. Samantha referenced these behaviors almost exclusively to try to stop them. Like Jeanette and Teresa, she frequently touched students by the shoulders and moved them to different spots or lowered them into their seats. She also repeatedly asked students to stop moving, spitting, tapping, touching each other and making noises with their bodies. The students in Samantha's class would often lie down, which seemed to frustrate Samantha deeply; it annoyed her how tired and disengaged they would seem during her lessons.

At the same time, Samantha's use of the Second Step lessons involved frequent mentions of the body as a locus of emotion. She drew children's attention to the facial expressions of children in photographs and asked them to attend to her own face as well. She also asks them to think about how they feel "in your body" when they experience certain emotions. "What feels different when you're mad or sad?" she asks them, and offers that she gets hot, red in the face, and tense across the shoulders. In this way she seems to be making space for an embodied

experience. When Jesus responds to the question with a hooting sound, however, Samantha glares at him and tells him he will soon clip down.

Overall, kids in both classes seem to get and respond to mixed messages about their bodies. Their bodies are an emotional center that must be attended to, but there are some kinds of physical responses to emotion that are more acceptable than others. Their bodies are important and deserve respect, but their teacher can and will move and mold them pretty much any time. Their bodies will inevitably stir with feeling, but it is preferable to express these feelings using language. They can use their bodies to have fun, but if they start having too much fun, their teacher will grow anxious and angry. They are allowed to notice one another's bodies, but really only certain attributes and only in order to provide space and respect.

Emphasis on Positive Affect

Finally, the classroom observations echoed the curricular materials in emphasizing positive affect, and, as explained above, this is in part a cultural mandate. The implications of this phenomenon will be discussed further in response to RQ 3; here, I simply show that each teacher participates in the cultural privilege granted positive affect. In Samantha's class, the hegemony of the positive can be seen clearly in the story "They Cut That Open." Samantha begins her lesson with the idea that sometimes we need to fix our feelings, and she explains that she will teach the class to fix their feelings by fixing their thinking. This strategy, which seems loosely inspired by a cognitive/behavioral approach to psychology, rests on the assumption that bad feelings should and can be fixed.

Bad feelings, Samantha goes on to explain, should only last for a certain amount of time. For instance, when she misses a shot in basketball, she might feel sad for a little while, but then the feeling goes away. Jessenia tells Samantha that when she did not get what she wished for at

the grocery store candy machine, she still felt sad the next day, and Samantha is dismissive, "Maybe you did, maybe you didn't." When you feel sad, Samantha tells her class, you can fix the problem by telling yourself you will feel better later on.

Two important things happen among the children while Samantha offers this advice. First of all, when she talks about missing a shot in basketball, they are all quick to disavow the experience. They stay with her on the basketball theme, but none of them admits to ever missing a shot. Some expression of pride is present here, not unlike the pride that makes children in both class so quick to disavow the feeling of fear. Instead of picking up on this, though, Samantha pushes on, seeming disdainful of their refusal to admit what to her feels like a minor failure but to them might feel quite substantial.

Further, though, when Samantha is done and ready to move on with her lesson, her students show quite clearly that they are not ready. She tells them that bad feelings go away, but they seem more interested in the first part of this clause, in the overall existence of bad feelings. Philip mentions his stepdad's departure, Jessenia talks about missing her grandmother, and Rosalena describes her father's operation. By the time she gets to the staple in his neck, even Jesus, who rarely shows explicit interest, is intrigued, and the class is drawn into a very different lesson from the one about self-regulation and thinking yourself out of bad feelings that Samantha had planned. Two things become clear here: first, that Samantha is trying to enact the message that positive affect is preferable over negative affect, and second, that her students are generally disinterested in this message but very intrigued by the possibility of talking about sad and gruesome things.

In Jeanette's classroom, the vignette "Writing is Joyful" is probably the most explicit example of hegemonic positivity. Here, Jeanette is startlingly direct with her students about not

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only how she expects them to act, but also how she expects them to feel. She tells them they should either like what they are learning, or they should love it. Writing should be joyful for them, she says. This is a circumstantially specific anecdote because Jeanette is contending with the fact that she will have a group of outside observers in her class, and it is certainly possible that she is responding to her sense of what the observers ought to experience. Indeed, even before her pronouncement about writing, Jeanette is very emphatic about positive feelings in her classroom during that morning's observation. She begins the meeting in a characteristic way, by asking students which guideline Devesh and Zach are following when they choose to move away from each other on the rug. Devesh says that they are taking care of other people, and Jeanette grows tremendously excited when she tells that class that they are also taking care of themselves.

In my research memo on the day of that observation, I commented on my memories about how stressful it can be as a teacher to be observed, and I wondered whether Jeanette felt anxiety even about my own observations, "How can I ever know if how she acts when I am there echoes how she acts when I am not?" That an external observation could potentially lead a teacher to coerce students into believing they actually feel a particular way certainly speaks to cultural prescriptions related to affect. Why should a teacher worry that every student feels joy throughout the school day? Why should every child have to love everything that they learn? "Without attending to the varieties of constraint and unconsciousness that condition ordinary activity," writes Ahmed (2004), "we persist in an attachment to a fantasy that in the truly lived life emotions are always heightened and expressed in modes of effective agency that ought justly to be and are ultimately consequential or performatively sovereign" (p. 99). Thus a kindergartner's emotions while writing a manifesto about odorous house ants become a sort of

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affective test, and the teacher is compelled to tell her students that they must love everything they do.

Teacher Interviews
My interviews with Jeanette and Samantha also helped me understand and reconsider the extent to which SEL is an outgrowth of culture. Particularly interesting here were the differences between the two teachers' perspectives on the programs they worked with, since these raised questions for me about each teacher's own cultural information and belief systems. Further, the information gleaned from teacher interviews sometimes contradicted with that from classroom observations or at least caused me to see the observations in a different light. Here, I will discuss the role of teachers' culturally informed belief systems, the assumptions teachers make about students' cultural backgrounds, the idea of rules as important as a way of reinforcing normative cultural behavior, and teachers' ideas about the limitations of SEL.

Teachers Have Culturally Informed Value Systems and Norms
One thing that came up in each of my interviews was the extent to which each teacher was working with a predetermined system of values, beliefs and norms. To some extent, these systems are idiosyncratic and personal, but they are also likely to be informed by the teachers' own cultural backgrounds, experiences and upbringings. Notably, Jeanette's belief system was very much in sync with that of RC, whereas Samantha's was less synchronous with that of Second Step. This impacted how each teacher implemented and reflected on the program she was working with.

Jeanette is overall very positive about her school, her principal, her students and her role as a teacher. She articulates her belief system explicitly when she describes the importance of getting students and families to trust her, so that she can set them up for a lifetime of trusting the institution of school. Implicit in this statement is the belief that school is a trustworthy

institution and that people who trust school are better off in life. Jeanette's willingness to participate in my study is also an extension of her normative system; she is proud of her work and wants others to learn from it. Jeanette believes that teachers should not yell at children, that teachers should love students, and that there should be an underlying positive feeling in the classroom at all time. Close relationships with students are one of the most important aspects of her job to her, at least consciously.

Jeanette's positivity about her role as a teacher extends to her relationship to RC. She experiences RC as a wonderful opportunity to expand her practice and help her become a better teacher who has more meaningful relationships with children and families. Her love and admiration for her mentor teacher are part of this, as are her beliefs about child development. Like RC, Jeanette believes that kindergartners require rules and that the rules should be simple, clear and few. Like RC, Jeanette thinks that children should learn how to solve conflicts and should feel good about the time they spend in school. In my interviews with Jeanette, I did not ask about her sense of the roots of her belief system, and it is hard to know how much of this she would ascribe to culture. It is important, though, that Jeanette's whole conscious interpretation of her experience with SEL is rooted in synchronicity of values.

Samantha is overall more skeptical of Second Step and of SEL, and she is less certain of its relevance and applicability. She is also less inclined to make broad pronouncements about an underlying belief system. Her interview is characterized by more self-doubt and many questions about whether or not she is making the right choices as a teacher. She believes that self regulation and social skills are important, and she talks extensively about the skills she thinks her students need. Yet her general belief about Second Step is that it is intended for students with more comfortable lives than her students have, and she does not agree it is the panacea her

administrator would have her believe. Even Samantha's motivation for participation in my study was very different from Jeanette's; she was worried about the number of behavioral emergencies she was facing in the classroom, and more than anything else, she wanted an extra set of hands in the classroom and thought it might be helpful to have me there.

Vick (2011), Bibby (2010), and Britzman (2004), among others, have written about how teacher subjectivity, which includes cultural information, plays out in relationships to students and in classroom practice. Psychoanalytically, this might be understood as a transference of teacher to curriculum; both Jeanette and Samantha relate to SEL in specific ways based on their own previous experiences which have in turn informed their normative stances. Their way of relating to SEL inevitably impacts the ways they implement and reflect on it. SEL discourse would understand this in terms of their level of fidelity and even their own social and emotional skill levels, but these interviews make it clear that teachers have diverse and culturally informed philosophies and subjectivities, and that very human inevitability becomes a part of the interplay between culture and SEL.

Teachers Make Assumptions About Students' Cultural Backgrounds
Another way that culture came up in each of these interviews had more to do with the different assumptions both teachers made about their students' cultural backgrounds. I use the word "assumption" not to imply that the teachers were necessarily inaccurate, but to show that these beliefs were not based in empirical evidence. Both teacher interviews led to a sense that the teachers are constantly, perhaps inevitably, making assumptions about students' home lives and cultural backgrounds, and that these assumptions guide how teachers consciously view themselves as making choices in the classroom.

Samantha's assumptions about her students came through when she discussed how infrequently she was in touch with students' families, how many of the children had chaotic home lives, and how many scary things these children had witnessed. While most of these statements were based on things Samantha really knew about this group of children, she leapt to a set of assumptions about what this meant. Most notably, for Samantha, coming from a chaotic home life means that her students need explicit skill instruction. She thinks that Second Step is partly unsuccessful for these students because it follows a flawed sequence, in which problem-solving skills are not presented first.

Samantha also assumes that because of her students' home lives, experiences, and behaviors, she is not really equipped to help them on her own. She laments the lack of external resources and supports she receives, wishing for help from almost anyone else. Taubman (2012) writes about how in many schools, "Emotional life has been shuttled off to the guidance counselor or social worker. We are so fearful of emotional disturbances that any sign… that a student might feel violent toward him or herself or others sends us running to the experts" (p. 156). Samantha is clearly informed by this sense that students would benefit more from work with a guidance counselor than from a different quality of time with her; she also feels completely constrained by administrative expectations of how she will spend her time and what she will accomplish. She believes that the needs of her students because of where they are coming from are inherently incompatible with her job description as it stands, and this makes her feel desperate.

Samantha's story about the words cup and cop is an illustration about the assumptions she makes about her students. This story is compelling, and Samantha uses it to show the limitations of Second Step and the difficulties her students face in learning self-regulation. At the same time, Samantha grows very frustrated by these same perceived obstacles, describing how irritated she

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gets by the ways she finds her students regressing, their excess of empathy and unwillingness to take on more responsibility, and the ways they generally make her job impossible. She sees that they face challenges, and she is intermittently very empathic with these challenges, but she is also angry by the ways these obstacles affect her own job and her daily life in school. Samantha sees the story of changing cup to cop as one about how much terror her students face, though it might also be seen as a story about their creativity, narrative capacity, awareness of other's feelings, and even skill in subverting a dull phonics lesson.

Jeanette's assumptions about her students' backgrounds are similar to Samantha's in many ways, though they are different because of the different student population she teaches. Like Samantha, Jeanette finds it problematic that many students come from homes where they have few books and not enough to eat. She sees the kindergarten classroom as a place to level the playing field, but she is clearly assuming that some kids are coming from a higher place and some are coming from a lower place. When certain students come to school feeling sad, for instance, Jeanette starts by wondering whether they had breakfast; with other students, she may follow a more complex train of thought about their emotional etiology.

The issue of teacher assumptions about children's cultural backgrounds and home lives is complex. On the one hand, it seems important for children to have teachers who are aware of the complexities of their lives, the injustices they face, and the different homes they might be coming from and leaving for at the end of the day. On the other hand, though, this kind of understanding comes with a sense that some home cultures are better than others and some children are better suited than others for the world of school. This sentiment echoes the perspective of the SEL literature, wherein SEL is responsible for solving the behavioral crises of children in poverty or those with incarcerated parents. It is hard to get away from a cultural

mandate that children ought to be raised a certain way and that the problems that result from not

following this script are the fault of the child and his or her family. Both Jeanette and Samantha

see themselves in the position as correcting for these problems, and SEL is a major instrument in

this process. That Jeanette really believes she can use SEL this way, while Samantha is more

skeptical, certainly matters, but an equally significant finding is that teachers can think of SEL as

a proposed solution to perceived deficits in students' home lives and cultures in the first place.

Concluding Thoughts
The ways that the three data sources I looked at helped me answer RQ 2 were some of the most

surprising outcomes of this dissertation work. Reading affect theory, psychoanalysis and

curriculum theory alongside my data helps me understand that the relationship between SEL and

culture is and intricate one. SEL grows out of culture; it follows cultural and economic mandates

for positive affect, controlled behavior, effacement of the body, and avoidance of particularly

knotty areas of identity. At the same time, SEL informs culture; it becomes a way to pass on

normative behavior and belief systems, to hide regulation behind the guise of emotion, and to

educate children away from some of their more unruly impulses and toward a more "civilized,"

or cultured, way of being.

What Becomes of Negative Feelings
Finally, Research Question 3 wonders:

How do SEL programs influence teachers and children when it comes to handling conflicts,

negative and otherwise unruly feelings, or difficult issues that come up as part of classroom life?

Critical Discourse Analysis
The SEL documents analyzed focus intensely and insistently on maintaining a positive

atmosphere and teaching children to manage and dispel difficult feelings and interpersonal

conflicts. Some of the specific ways this comes up in the discourse analysis are through the

emphasis on both teachers and children staying calm, the ways SEL implicitly and explicitly defines self-regulation, the mandated nature of joy in SEL, and allusions to welcome and empathy.

Staying Calm
Calm is an important concept in the SEL literature. Teachers are supposed to stay calm, and children are supposed to participate in a calm classroom environment. Though SEL literature does not explicitly define calm, it enumerates various examples.

Second Step teaches strategies for calming down difficult feelings. The Calm-Down song is a reminder of the calm-down strategies, which include breathing from your belly or counting to ten. The curriculum advises students that they should not try to resolve a conflict or address underlying problems unless they are calm, and it also advises teachers to be calm as often as possible when addressing the class. Responsive Classroom similarly emphasizes the importance of calm; the teacher must, for instance, stay calm when addressing children's misbehavior, and the atmosphere of a classroom should be calm as often as possible. In part by watching the teacher's modeling, students in RC will supposedly learn to stay calm when another student is bothering them and focus calmly on their classroom most of the time. In RC, calm is associated with quiet, order, and compliance. In fact, one of the main purposes of the ubiquity of rules is to maintain a calm atmosphere throughout the school.

To a certain extent, the heavy emphasis on calm in SEL literature is related to a need for control that can be understood socio-politically. Monahan and Torres (2010) describe the "cultures of control" that have wound their way into schools over the course of the last fifty years, explaining that "…many public schools are highly fortified spaces surrounded by fences, walls, and gates… standardized and compartmentalized rooms… teaching students values and

proper comportment through constraints" (p. 8). It is noteworthy that Monahan and Torres'
edited volume about control in public education focuses almost exclusively on high school
settings; SEL's emphasis on calm, read synonymously as control, helps extend some of their
arguments to earlier childhood education.

Calm is not really a necessary feature of a learning environment, though. If it were, few
people would ever learn within the context of the family, or nature, or most social environments.
In fact, some might argue that calm can run counter to creativity, learning and development. If
calm signifies order, Mayes (2001) writes compellingly about the application of dynamic
systems theory to developmental psychology, showing the ping pong many children do over the
course of their development between order and chaos. She writes, "Instead of signaling
impending dysfunction, being far from equilibrium is a precondition for emerging order and
structure… and the emerging order itself is also never quite stable disorder is always possible
and even necessary for continued self organization" (p. 157). Development and learning are not
necessarily intertwined with the stability suggested by calm, and some kinds of learning might
even be warded off or, more likely, overlooked by an adult-instituted regime insistent on calm
and order.

It is not only the insistence that children stay calm that helps understand SEL's treatment
of difficult feelings. Teachers are also instructed repeatedly to stay calm, to use quiet voices, to
deescalate feelings of anger, and to model controlled behavior and mediated reactions. This is a
heavy load for a teacher to carry, for what becomes of the times, often numerous over the course
of even one hour among children, when a teacher's own subjectivity is triggered, when a teacher
feels angry, or furious, or desperate, or pained? Though few would argue that teachers ought to
unleash such feelings and their affective expressions on students consistently or unchecked, it is

unreasonable to require the teacher to constantly maintain an unruffled demeanor. In fact, these mandates can involve imposition of difficult limits on the self or on the student, as Taubman (2006) describes Ursula doing in D.H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow,* "Ursula comes to realize that if she is to survive she must repress her desire to nurture the children and impose her will" (p. 25). Taubman argues that although it might come at a cost, the authoritative aspects of survival prevent teachers from "actually tak(ing) ourselves for teachers in some fixed sense, as opposed to provisionally," a mistake that "require(s) us to repress or deny other feelings… such as the desire to devour or merge with others or oneself… Cast beyond the pale, so to speak, these desires or urges continue to circulate" (p. 27).

In psychoanalytic theory, letting a student know that they have impacted a teacher's psyche can be an important way of helping the child understand that they are not omnipotent, that a teacher might get angry or sad but can still go on being. To "survive destruction," in Winnicottian terms, is to be a whole and complicated person, to show up, to allow for the coexistence even of contradictory and unruly feelings. Relationships that develop within the confines of the classroom are rarely calm ones, for neither learning nor mutual survival on a daily basis are calm processes. The insistence on calm is thus one way that SEL participates in the institutionalization of control and the demonization not only of particular behaviors but of their associated affects.

Regulating the Self and Others
Related to the idea of calm, though slightly different, is the concept of regulation. Regulation is referenced in SEL in two different ways. First of all, there is the regulation of the self. SEL generally explains that self regulation is the ability to deescalate strong feelings. Self-regulation is understood within SEL discourse as the highly desirable capacity to control one's

own emotions and expressions thereof. Importantly, self-regulation is also understood as a set of skills that can be learned. These skills are for the most part the same ones that keep a person calm, such as naming strong feelings with words, knowing when to count to ten, and controlling the body in such a way that lends to control of affect (eg., taking deep breaths). In Responsive Classroom, self regulation also has to do with making choices; the program places a high premium on individual choice, and children are basically expected to demonstrate an ability to make choices for themselves that will meet with their teacher's approval. This happens within the context of games and activities as well as more directed teaching and learning situations.

Regulation is also connected in SEL to the ability to regulate the other, though this happens more frequently between teacher and student than between students. Teachers are meant to have well-oiled strategies for regulating a student down, so that aberrant behaviors are quickly deescalated. In Second Step, this may amount to sending a student to the calm-down corner, directing him to use a particular strategy, or involving external help; in RC, it might involve relying on a buddy teacher, reminding students of guidelines, or removing the dysregulated student from the community. In describing the kinds of behavior that ought to be regulated by the teacher, SEL materials often imply that the dysregulated student faces some sort of deficit, as in the cautionary tale of Brian in *The Joyful Classroom.* Brian's teacher "is troubled by the lack of safety the other children in the class feel" around Brian, offering by way of explanation, "As for his home life, Brian moved into his grandmother's small apartment… his mother is incarcerated, and he has never known a father… his grandmother works in a local restaurant as a cook and is worried about losing her job if Brian has to be suspended" (p. 73). Repeatedly across SEL discourse, it is "these" children who require regulation, these fatherless, poor children with parents in jail and caregivers struggling to make ends meet.

Even if we work temporarily within the flawed assumption that children with incarcerated parents or without enough to eat act out more than other children in the classroom, it is worth examining SEL's response to this phenomenon. In SEL, the imperative is for the teacher to regulate this proverbial Brian's behavior so that he can meet normative standards and so that the other children in the classroom are not adversely affected by his presumptive rage. This is an articulation of some deeply held cultural assumptions of the ways emotion and mutual coexistence ought to work, "The nation (or school) must intervene to protect the second generation from the first, those who have failed to let go of their past attachments and who hence can only suffer and transmit their suffering, which easily get turned into terror and rage. The nation becomes the good family who can give the children the freedom to be happy in their own way" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 148). Regulation is in part a way of warding off emotional reactions to injustice, in other words. Yet Dutro (2008) argues, "If wounds are not welcome, children will correctly sense that what school wishes to hear is the banal, the safe, the bland, and they will leave what matters most muted beneath a sterile, clean bandage" (p. 18).

Psychoanalytic theory describes self-regulation really differently from most popular discourse using the concept. Tending to refer more to "affect regulation," thinkers such as Fonagy (2002) actual consider regulation as a biodynamic, homeostatic process that involves mentalizing the other. Regulation need not be understood in terms of order; it can instead be understood as part of intimacy and the Bionian conception of containment, in which the often difficult experiences of the other are not tamped down but rather reflected back. This sort of containment enables the subject to actually consider the Other, rather than engaging in "omnipotent projection," or evacuation of bad feeling, which ultimately circumvents thought. Affect regulation is mostly an interpersonal process; it is not an individual set of skills. Further,

it takes a long, gradual time to acquire and is never a fully learned process, since it varies depending on relational contexts and over the course of the life span.

From this vantage point, the emphasis SEL places on regulation looks like a combination of participation in surveillance and control culture in schools, and anxious instruction in displacing, evacuating projecting bad feelings. Anger, sadness, and even undue excitement must be carefully modulated, and it is not only the behaviors associated with these feelings but the feelings themselves that are subject to the rigors of regulation.

Mandated Joy

SEL discourse also deals with bad feelings by proclaiming the primacy of joy. This comes through most substantially in the Responsive Classroom program, where books and online materials insist repeatedly that learning and time in school ought to be joyful. RC's mission rests on the following statement, "we believe that a high-quality education for every child is built on the foundation of a safe and joyful learning community." *Second Step* does not mention joy as explicitly, but its ubiquitous photographs of smiling children, its inclusion of games and songs, and even the cuddly puppets that come with the lesson suite lend to a feeling of fun and levity that bears similarity to RC's appropriation of joy. Joy in SEL discourse has to do with fun, an absence of sadness, getting along consistently with others, and being pleased to be in school and do the things the teacher is telling you to do.

One of the most difficult aspects of mandated joy might be its impossibility. Even if it were desirable to be joyful all the time over the course of the school day- and that is a heady caveat- it is just a long time for anyone to sustain such an impassioned affective state. It is possible to see how the prioritization of joy in SEL discourse could thus lead to emotional coercion. The teacher is led to believe that she can and should ensure that her students feel

joyful throughout their time in school; what choice does she have, then, but to insist that they do? The classroom atmosphere is meant to be a joyful one, and this implies that collective affect can be very closely managed and maintained. Why, though, should a teacher worry that every student feels joy throughout the school day? Why should every child have to love everything that they learn? "Without attending to the varieties of constraint and unconsciousness that condition ordinary activity," writes Ahmed (2004), "we persist in an attachment to a fantasy that in the truly lived life emotions are always heightened and expressed in modes of effective agency that ought justly to be and are ultimately consequential or performatively sovereign" (p. 99). The joyful classroom is part of this fantasy, yet most children- most people- do not feel anything as heightened as joy most of the time. In fact, if we did, it would substantially change the conceptual definition of joy.

Tarc recommends a "turn to the work of Klein in search of a hospitable pedagogy of literacy that supports the inhibited child's efforts to symbolize a sense of her shaky insides to others" (p. 16); an iteration of learning that takes seriously the challenges of a move toward depressive functioning must acknowledge this very shakiness, rather than insist that it will be a joyful experience. Learning is sometimes quite difficult. Being in school can also be emotionally taxing, dull, sad, and infuriating, depending on the person and the situation.

Instead of joy, it might be interesting to apply the Lacanian (1960) concept of jouissance to the affective life of the classroom. Jouissance is not something that Lacan intended to have correlated to an emotion or an affect. It "begins with a tickle and ends with a blaze of petrol" (p. 72). Jouissance is excessive, over the top, and extreme. It spills over, it is at once embodied and transcendent of the body. Jouissance is what impels the thinking subject to commit transgressions and form obstacles to the fulfillment of their desires. Tobin (2008) gets at the

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distinction between joy and jouissance in the early childhood classroom, "Typically play in school is defined, planned, and monitored by teachers…(with the) intent of preparing the child for the later world of work. (This) pleasure is more conservative, conforming and accommodating than jouissance… jouisannce is an intense, heightened form of pleasure, involving a temporary loss of subjectivity" (p. 59). In Tobin's finding, moments of jouissance are intermittent yet ubiquitous in the classroom; importantly, though, they occur as moments of transgression, inter-child collaboration, camaraderie and, more often than not, displacement of the teacher.

The contrast of jouissance to joy helps develop an understanding that the joy and fun mandated by SEL are another way of instituting control over children and their feelings. There is little room for the child who feels insistently sad or angry in the joyful classroom, just as there is little space for the child who finds learning consistently uncomfortable and frustrating. Joy is something that, like a poster of rules, is displayed for others to see, but it is at best an unrealistic mandate in the context of human life.

Welcome and Empathy
Finally, SEL materials have a lot to say about how children should feel and act toward each other. Primarily, SEL materials place a heavy emphasis on the concepts of welcome and empathy. Welcome can be seen in requirements that teachers make students feel welcome in the classroom each day, that students act welcoming toward each other, and that the school at large should be a welcoming environment. The purpose of the RC morning meeting is, in fact, to "make" students feel welcome as they begin their school day, and both of the curricula analyzed also make it clear that teachers are responsible for making families feel welcome at school as

well- particularly families who might not inherently approach their relationship to school in this way.

The development of empathy is part of most programmatic SEL goals and is articulated by CASEL, which explains that SEL will help students "feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (2016). Like self regulation, empathy is often presented in SEL materials as a set of skills. Empathy means listening to others, identifying their feelings, and putting their feelings in words, in Second Step. In Responsive Classroom, empathy is associated with being able to resolve conflicts and repair what is fixed in difficult interpersonal situations. Both programs ask consistently that teachers show empathy toward all students at all times; this will help teachers remain calm amid difficult situations. Further, in SEL, the primary outcome of empathy seems to be that it will help other people feel better, presumably even feel joyful. Children should learn the skills involved in showing empathy so that they can help others feel good more of the time.

One of the difficulties with welcome as a normative educational construct is the way it institutionalizes a dynamic of host and outsider in the school. If the school is to welcome the child and the family in, then the school (and usually, by extension, the teacher) are the hosts, and the child and family are outsiders. Even though they are welcomed as outsiders, they must take up the language and normative system of the school in order to sustain their welcomed status. Welcome is also complex in that it overlooks difference and complexity; insisting that children act welcoming to each other cannot in fact ensure that they will feel this way. Allen (2004) has shown how in the history of racial politics as they play out in education, this sort of mandated acceptance of the other ultimately reifies mutual mistrust, forecloses conversation, and misses opportunities to consider the painful sacrifices of privilege and even self required for coexistence

amid difference. "Distrust," she writes, "can be overcome only when citizens manage to find methods of generating mutual benefit despite differences of position, experience, and perspective. The discovery of such methods is the central project of democracy."

The idea that welcome can be enforced is similar to the idea that empathy can be taught as a set of skills. Both of these approaches neglect the possibility that some people might not like each other very much, and in fact, might not be particularly interested in identifying each other's feelings. Demanding empathy is a unique approach; it is quite different from demanding particular behavior toward others, which is perhaps a more traditional, pre-SEL approach to conflict management in the classroom. Obviously this has its problems too, but insisting on empathy could conceivably inculcate shame and deception to a greater degree. Todd (2003), suggests that demands for empathy can in fact form obstacles to education's ethical projects, "how, in the face of the violence that is implicit in the pedagogical demand for learning to become, might we be open and responsible to the other?... The subject can only become an ego if it is forced to repress or sublimate certain wishes and drives in the service of sociality, yet it must also be open, or receptive, to what is outside itself in order for this to occur… it is not simply by repressing this coercion, by convincing ourselves that education is otherwise, that those of us committed to the project of education will arrive at ethical solutions that avoid this coercion. In fact, taking refuge in education's innocence denies the possibility of asking ourselves ethical questions, for it is precisely because violence is inherent to learning to become and because teachers and students are continually vulnerable to each other in the face of this violence that questions of nonviolence can even be raised" (31). I understand this to mean that saying we are teaching empathy does not absolve us from really attending to the challenges and

difficult feelings that come from encountering other people. In fact it is by trucking with these

extreme difficulties that we might learn from and with each other.

Classroom Observations
The classroom observations lent a great deal of insight into what happens with conflict as well as

difficult and unruly feelings in SEL and its associated cultural constructs. One of the most

important overarching lessons I learned from classroom observations had to do with the ubiquity

of unruliness in the childhood classroom. In other words, while SEL discourse would suggest

that the SEL classroom is well-managed, regulated, and joyful most, if not all, of the time,

neither observation really bore out this fantasy. I wondered, as a result, whether the impact of

the associated mandates is really more oppressive to the teacher than to the child, in the sense

that certain aspects of childhood affect and behavior are irrepressible but the teacher is working

within a system determined to repress them. The resulting distance between teacher and child is

asynchronous and complex.

Here, I discuss four specific ways that difficult feelings and their management came up in the

classroom observations. These include effacement of the body, the role of apologies and other

kinds of reparation, empathy, and the idea that everyone within a classroom ought to be and in

fact is friends with everyone else.

Effacement of the Body
        The body is everywhere in my classroom observations. Children in both classrooms were

constantly rolling on the floor, reaching into their pants, braiding their own and each other's hair,

and picking at scabs. Five minutes rarely passed without someone proclaiming that they had to

go to the bathroom emergently, and children moved closer and closer to each other over the

course of many of the sessions, interlocking legs, hitting and kicking each other, resting their

heads on each other's shoulders. The children in both classes also talked about their bodies and

those of others occasionally, such as when Tyler described his father's baldness or Benji showcased the wound on his face.

The main way the teachers in the classroom observations interacted with children's bodies, however, was to reposition them. Occasionally, this happened via verbal instructions, such as those to "sit criss cross" or give other people some space. Much more frequently, Jeanette, Teresa and Samantha used their hands to move children's bodies. I documented 119 such occurrences over the course of my observations, but it is likely that this happened innumerable more times, since these incidents were often very quick and easy to miss. Usually, the teachers seemed barely cognizant of what they were doing, reaching down and grabbing children gently by the shoulders to move them away from peers without ever stopping what they were saying.

The body seemed to be something of a danger zone in these observations. Teachers appeared anxious to prevent students from touching each other and, often, from touching themselves as well. Children's bodies were held in careful check: their ankles were supposed to be crossed, their heads up, their hands usually in their laps. Even the need to use the bathroom was carefully managed; Jeanette consistently responded to bathroom requests with "Is this an emergency?" and Samantha spoke three separate times over the course of my observations about the importance of only one child going to the bathroom at a time.

In response to RQ2, I discussed some possible cultural interpretations and influences of the way the body is handled in an SEL-managed classroom. Here, I am interested in exploring what becomes of the feelings that may be associated with the body for children. For instance, what happens when a child is told to stop braiding a friend's hair, or when children are told that some parts of each other's bodies are all right to touch during a daily greeting, but other parts are more

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taboo? Neither teacher stops to wonder alongside her students what excitement, touch and physical experience are really about.

Apologies and Moving On
Apologies and the importance of moving on from a conflict also came up in both of the classrooms where I observed. In Jeanette's tightly controlled classroom, the need for apologies usually came up during and after the transition to morning meeting. For instance, this happened the day the students were discussing their new school building, when James and Devesh got into a conflict during clean-up time. As is her typical practice, Jeanette tells the boys to go to the Friendship Table to work out this trouble.

Each time I saw Jeanette send children to the Friendship Table, they went willingly. The table removes them from the rest of the class and relegates the conflict to the sidelines, thus enabling Jeanette to stick, for the most part, to whatever plan she has in mind for the morning. Teresa seems to accompany children to the Friendship Table about half the time. At the table, the child with the more intense complaint states his or her feelings, and the other child asks, "What can I do to make you feel better?" They agree on a reparative act, and then they rejoin the group. When James and Devesh went to the friendship table because James apparently said to Devesh, "I don't care about you," Devesh asked James to give him a high-five "to make (him) feel better." The boys rejoined the rest of the class quickly, and Jeanette paid no further heed to the conflict. However, they glared at each other throughout the rest of the meeting, and Devesh was careful not to select James as his partner during the game that followed.

This cycle of reparation is similar to that in the vignette from Lara's classroom at the opening of this dissertation. There is a superficial apology to be sure, and nothing substantial gets derailed from the classroom. At the same time, it is unclear what lessons children are

learning about conflict, alliance, or apology by following this algorithm. The message seems to be that there is no space for conflict in the classroom, and certainly there is no space for ongoing hard feelings between two students. Each conflict is positioned so as to involve a clear victim/perpetrator binary, and while the victim gets to dictate the terms of the reparation, their choices are somewhat limited and superficial. This treatment of conflict is crucial to retaining the basic rhythm of the morning meeting.

Samantha talks to her students directly about apologies when she apologizes to Phillip for laughing about the name of his cat. She tells them that sometimes all you can do in a conflict is apologize and hope that the other person moves on. Her students are terribly indignant at this possibility, though, and show no interest in moving on simply because she says she is sorry. In fact, they seem to want to linger in the space where she has erred, using it as a way to form camaraderie with one another in opposition to her authority. "But you laughed!" They seem so interested in her transgression and what might materialize from it that they forget entirely what she is talking about within the photograph scenario, "Who's Jarel?" Samantha is impatient about this; like Jeanette, she would rather "move on" than work within the space of the conflict.

For the most part, in both classrooms, the teachers seemed torn about interpersonal conflict. Neither showed surprise when the children got into arguments with each other, nor were they mostly punitive. The children, too, seemed unsurprised by the amount and frequency of conflict they encountered, either personally or as observers. Both Samantha and Jeanette gestured toward incorporating conflict into their SEL work with students, either by explicitly discussing the nature of apology or by constructing the Friendship Table in the first place. At the same time, the main feeling that arose from conflicts in each classroom was the sense that they should be resolved quickly, that they were in the way of the rest of the learning and of the

classroom functioning, and that everyone would be better off if people could just apologize, accept each other's apologies, and get on with things.

Empathy
Just as empathy played an important role in the way SEL discourse dealt with difficult and unruly feelings, so too did empathy come up frequently in classroom observations. Jeanette does not use the word "empathy" explicitly with her students. She does, however, frequently interpret the things they say and the stories they share as indications of their knowledge of and identification with each other. This comes up, for instance, in the game "Have You Seen My Sheep," when Jeanette congratulations her students on how well they know each other. Knowing each other well seems to mean knowing identifying facts about one another.

When her class is creating goodbye cards for Elijah, Jeanette also indicates a particular kind of expectation of empathy. She asks them a few times to think about how Elijah would feel and what he would want in this situation. Phoebe explains that she moved last year, and Charlotte describes the experience of saying goodbye to her father for a long time. Jeanette explicitly interprets each of their associations as a way of understanding what Elijah must be going through. It is not totally clear whether this is what Charlotte and Phoebe mean, though it certainly may be. It may also be that they are associating to, rather than empathizing with, Elijah. What is particularly interesting here is how important it seems to Jeanette to tell her students that Elijah is happy where he is, though he misses them. She is telling them to empathize with him on the one hand, and on the other hand, she is presenting a carefully curated version of his experience. The children respond with their actual feelings. "Come back and stay," not "come back and visit." "I know how you feel because I did not have any friends," not "I know you are having a nice time." In my observation memo after that session, I wrote,

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"Phoebe seemed to be re-experiencing what it was like to move, and how hard it was, and I feel like Jeanette had a really hard time with it. This is hard for me, too, it makes me think about how hard my (recent) move was on my kids, I'd really rather not think about it. Phoebe was kind of calling my bluff…"

Samantha, in accordance with Second Step, teaches explicit lessons about empathy. She teaches her first graders that empathy is identifying and naming what another person is feeling, mostly based on clues in their facial expressions or body language. What stood out to me most about empathy in my observations in Samantha's class was how frequently the children seemed to empathize with each other and even with Samantha, and yet how easy it was for this to escape Samantha's notice. I wondered in a memo, "Am I romanticizing this? I don't want to make it seem like her kids are amazingly gifted empaths or something, because I know there are problems with that vision, but again and again they seem to know what the others are feeling, feel with one another, support each other deeply, and try to invite their teacher into that support." For instance, Jessenia asks her teacher at the end of a particularly trying lesson, "Don't you want to go home?" The kids frequently lash onto chants of words that describe particular feelings, "hungry… angryish…" They are mutually mystified by scenarios like the idea of a fire truck coming to visit a preK, and they seem to find some solidarity in the intense distance between their own experiences of the world and those of the children in the Second Step scenarios.

One of the difficulties with empathy in both classrooms was the clash between the SEL-inscribed idea that empathy should lead to good feelings, and what seemed to actually happen for the children when empathy made them feel a bit worse. Empathy with her teacher makes Jessenia sad, and empathy with Josue makes Jesus furious, which causes him to get into trouble. Empathy with Elijah fills Phoebe and Charlotte with sorrow. There is a sense of disconnection

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between the idea of empathy as a key to positive relationships and interactions, and the way the children in these classrooms appear to experience empathy.

Everyone's a Friend

Related to empathy, though somewhat distinct in nature, were some of the ideas communicated pervasively in both classrooms about the nature of friendship. Both teachers used the word "friend" synonymously with "classmate" and sometimes "student." Jeanette tells her class, "I'm waiting for four more friends to get ready…" when she wants them to settle down and get quiet. In the same discussion about Elijah, she approaches the conversation as though he has had an equally close relationship with all of his classmates, and they will all feel approximately the same about his departure. Oscar latches on to this discussion of friendship in relation to Elijah, "You are my best friend," he says. Jeanette modifies Oscar's statement, "You were certainly very close." Then, she asks that the rest of the students also think of Elijah as a friend and write their cards about what made him a good friend.

Friendship is a complicated thing in childhood, to be sure. Walton and Davidson (2017) get at what Jeanette is doing in these observations when they describe the role of adults in their studies of conflict among and between children. They write, "While recognizing this negotiation (of what it means to be a friend) is part of the task of childhood, we were surprised to observe that adults' speech was exquisitely non-helpful… the adults routinely used the word 'friends' to describe all children present… this kind of obligatory acceptance and positive regard may be an important expectation for peer relationships in many cultural communities, but it is not what philosophers or researchers have meant by 'friendship,' and it does not appear to be what most of our children meant when they used the word" (p. 52).

Samantha also uses the term 'friend' pretty broadly, describing the ways she sees her students caring for each other, "You take care of your friends," as well as using the word to help them make sense of feelings and scenarios, "How would your friend feel?... All his friends are doing it, but he does not understand how…" The children in her class do not use the word friend in the stories they occasionally share. They do talk about family members frequently. In Jeanette's class, Benji references an outside friend, and Phoebe talks about what it feels like not to have friends, but there are few other mentions of friendship from the child's perspective.

I wondered frequently during my observations in each class which children thought of each other as friends and what that meant to them. That sort of sociometric inquiry was outside the scope of this study, but I did see children treating each other differentially; this often came through in their embodied expressions, like who braided whose hair, who moved closer to someone else, or, conversely, who glared and stuck out their tongues at whom. The monolithic notion that all students in the classroom would consider each other friends seems efficient and even pleasant from an adult perspective. At the same time, children clearly experience differential feelings toward different people, and this is taught away from. The idea of a best friend, Jeanette seems to imply, is a feeling or fantasy, not a real, exceptionally close relationship, "Did it feel like he was your best friend, Oscar?" There is no room, then, for Oscar to revel in this closeness or its associated pain; he looks away from his teacher instead, and fiddles with the waistband of his pants.

In Samantha's class, I wondered about Samantha's consistent description of friendship instead of family as the primary normative close relationship. Each time she told a Second Step story, she described friendships: her own friendship with the person who came to fix the furnace or the people she plays basketball with, the hypothetical Julian's friends, the idea of the students'

friends who are afraid of dogs. The students turned this repeatedly to discussions of family

members: the faraway stepdad, the baby brother who scratches, the big brother who tells Phillip

to clean his room, the sister whose sickness (or possibly birth?) kept Phillip home, the

hypothetical mom who Rosalena suggests should buy Jarel a present. The children spilled forth

so frequently with these stories about their families and what they learned from paying attention

to family members' emotions, behaviors and limitations. For the most part, these stories and the

relationships they contained appeared to take precedence over friendship in the minds of the

students.

The Differences Between the Classes
Trying to answer this third research question really brings the differences between Jeanette and

Samantha's classes into sharp relief, and it would be disingenuous not to mention the challenges

and lessons embedded in this desire to portray the contrast. Mostly, I noticed that Samantha's

students were much more forthcoming and overt about their bad and excited feelings. They

showed substantially less self control or inhibition when it came to acting out than did Jeanette's

students. I wondered frequently whether negative and unruly affect came to the fore more in this

classroom because it was a less intensely controlled atmosphere or because the children have had

more profoundly negative experiences of the world; my conjecture is that each of these factors

played a role. It did strike me, though, that while the circumstances of Samantha's classroom

made it a more difficult place to teach, on balance, and certainly a more difficult place to

observe, Samantha's students had a bit more latitude than Jeanette's to experience and express a

wide range of emotions.

Teacher Interviews
Both teachers addressed bad and unruly feelings in their interviews; they talked about their own

emotional experiences as well as those of their students. Some of the key issues to arise in the

interviews were interpersonal conflicts, the importance of leaving home life at home, and a teacher's need for help and support in the face of challenges.

Interpersonal Conflicts

Both teachers talked about the bad and difficult feelings that come with interpersonal conflicts. Jeanette spoke of her desire that students experience school with as few conflicts as possible. In fact, one of her reasons for admiring her mentor teacher so greatly had to do with the fact that Shannon never yelled at students or showed her anger. It is a part of Jeanette's belief system that teachers should not really express strong negative feelings toward students or even in front of them, and this is one of the many aspects of her personal philosophy that aligns directly with the philosophy underlying Responsive Classroom and much of SEL. When Jeanette or Teresa find themselves in a situation fraught with strong emotion, they try to spell each other. Jeanette's way of enacting compassion toward children is trying to keep relationships positive as much of the time as possible.

Jeanette's way of describing her beliefs about interactions and relationships with children was certainly born out in the observations in her classroom, where I never saw her display anger or lose her patience overtly. She did grow ruffled on occasion, but that was pretty much the extent of her extreme emotion. The premium she places on "positive interactions" is also synchronous with SEL's focus on calm and regulation. There are many assumptions embedded in this belief system, such as the assumption that it is bad for a teacher to display extreme emotion. Mostly, though, it functions as one more way that Jeanette is comfortable teaching within RC because her personal beliefs align with those of the curriculum.

Jeanette also spoke of her desire that children interact positively with each other. She describes conflicts between kindergarteners as inevitable, and it does not really seem to bother

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her when her students fight with one another, but she wants to equip them with skills for overcoming these conflicts. Getting to the resolution is, for Jeanette, the most important thing, the thing that will help her students form the worldview she wants for them. The Friendship Table is a key part of the curriculum in this direction. She describes the Friendship Table as a "conflict resolution" tool, one that she hopes will help students solve problems calmly and with words, and feel good about their relationships. Jeanette does not address the possibility that children might not feel good about every relationship; the primacy of calm and positivity are important in her belief system.

Samantha talks about the numerous conflicts and struggles her students get into over the course of the day, as well as the difficult feelings she has toward and with her students. She describes her own frustration with them and her "push back" against some of their neediness. She also sees conflict resolution and problem solving as skills that she is itching to get to. In fact, one of her greatest concerns about Second Step is the fact that it puts interpersonal problem-solving and conflict resolution at the end of its curricular trajectory, "front-loading" self-regulation and empathy skills instead. Samantha very much wishes her students had more tools for resolving the arguments they get into constantly over the course of the day with each other as well as with her. She sees their conflicts as infantile and symptomatic of their lack of skills and their difficult home lives. Samantha also gestures toward her belief that SEL is not always relevant in helping with relational challenges, "no curriculum is a replacement for building authentic relationships…"

The concept of countertransference is an important one in the context of both teachers' ideas and feelings about conflicts in their classrooms, whether among students or between students and themselves. Recalling Winnicott's explication of the Kleinian countertransference,

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discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, we can see that there are many inevitably

conflicting feelings a teacher might feel toward her students; among these might be fury, envy

and hate. Jeanette disavows the possibility of such feelings, and Samantha gestures toward them

but with sadness and uncertainty. Both teachers accept it as normative that a teacher ought to

generally feel positive toward her students and help them learn to feel consistently positive

toward each other.

Leaving Home Life at Home

Jeanette and Samantha also each discussed the ways that home life interfaces with the life

of the classroom. They talked about this in terms of their students' home lives as well as their

own. Both teachers generally seemed to believe that things that happen outside of school belong

outside of school, and that it is their job to work on healing wounds from home life within the

relatively safe confines of the classroom. For instance, Jeanette describes making sure kids go

home with enough to eat and with books to read. She talks about working to get families to trust

her. She is determined to use her role as a kindergarten teacher to solve or at least address the

problems she sees her students as facing. At the same time, she does not mention discussing

these problems, giving students a chance to play or make art in ways that might allow them to

process their experience, or letting classmates know that they share a classroom with others

whose lives outside of school might look very different from their own.

Samantha, like Jeanette, is very alert to the fact that her students have complicated lives

outside of school and that there is a strong possibility that these experiences and their associated

feelings will encroach on classroom time and space. Once in a while, as in the cup/cop anecdote,

she follows her students in their desire to talk about these experiences, and she never feels quite

sure that she is doing the right thing when this happens. More often, she is sort of critical and

pedagogical about the outside experiences her students bring in. She says that she wants to

redirect them to name the actual feeling they are describing, and she is frustrated by how often

they seem to get off track by telling ostensibly unrelated stories from their experiences outside of

school.

Samantha also spoke openly about her own external experiences and the way they impact

her teaching and her relationships with students. The way her school year began was disruptive

and disrupted, and she continues to feel the impact of this strange beginning. Moreover,

Samantha spoke about what it was like to teach with a new baby, to juggle the demands of

parenthood and teaching for the first time, and to work in an environment with almost no

support. Although Samantha acknowledged these very difficult experiences and feelings, she

also believed that her job as a teacher was to pull the class together in spite of them and sort of

make the best of a difficult situation. She has high expectations for her own capacity to manage

and even ignore hard feelings, regulate her emotions, and stay in control in the midst of hardship.

A Need for Help and Support

Finally, both teachers spoke about the importance of help and support when it comes to

conflicts and difficult feelings. For Jeanette, this came up mostly as she described the

tremendous support she has already received: from her principal, from her mentor teacher, and

from the RC community at all of the workshops and seminars she has attended. Jeanette

acknowledges that help and support are part of what make teaching emotionally possible for her.

She recognizes that a support network is affiliated with how she handles conflicts and challenges

that arise in teaching; even her supportive dynamic with Teresa enables her to maintain the

classroom she envisions.

Samantha has received significantly less support, both over the course of her professional life and, certainly, in her current teaching environment. She articulates the fantasy that more support would make a tremendous difference and might, in fact, get rid of some of the more difficult aspects of her job. If only, for instance, there were a school psychologist who could come teach some of the lessons, or an administrator who would discipline or remove her most difficult students, some of the challenges associated with her classroom experience would dissipate.

Samantha's fantasy is probably true, and to some extent, Jeanette's experience with help and support confirms this. At the same time, there is a degree to which the fantasy prevents Samantha from seeing the tremendous social and emotional learning that happen in her classroom on a nearly constant basis. This may or may not matter for her students, but it certainly makes Samantha less forgiving with herself and more resentful of and defensive toward the outer world.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

I began this dissertation with an eye toward critiquing SEL. The empirical and theoretical work documented here does support some of my initial instincts regarding the philosophical problems with the underlying premises of SEL, but it also helps portray a more complicated picture. This chapter summarizes the major findings of this dissertation and articulates its implications for future practice and research.

Summary of Key Findings

This dissertation has helped show how SEL discourse and practice define the child, the teacher, and their relationships to each other. In SEL, there is tremendous anxiety about the child. The child is essentially a feral creature, filled with dangerous tendencies that must be carefully regulated and controlled. This definition was supported by both the discourse analysis, the classroom observations and the interviews. Children's innate behavior and affect is mistrusted, warded off, and both explicitly and implicitly taught away from in SEL.

SEL discourse and practice situate the teacher as a model of normative social behavior and emotional experience. The teacher is a paragon of much-valorized calm, and she is able to protect the child from their own feral nature. The teacher is in control of the class, herself, and the curriculum at all times and knows expertly how to handle difficult emotional situations.

The relationship between child and teacher in SEL is one of one-sided regulation. The child looks to the teacher to be calmed and regulated, and the teacher assists with these processes. The relationship is also one of provision of a particular environment; the teacher constructs a classroom environment that is joyful and safe, and the child participates willingly and positively in this environment. The relationship is one that can recuperate children from deficits that are likely to exist in the affective and behavioral nature of their life outside of school as well, and it facilitates the linear development of children toward normative adult identity and behavior.

Perhaps one of the most surprising findings for me as part of this dissertation had to do with my second research question, about the relationship between SEL and culture. Prior to beginning this research, I thought of SEL as a phenomenon in and of itself, and tended to demonize it for how it defined and worked with children and their emotions. Both my empirical research and my readings in psychoanalysis and affect theory helped me more complexly understand SEL as largely an outgrowth of culture.

SEL's hegemonic positivity, its effacement of the body of the child, and its heavy emphasis on calm, regulation and control are all extensions of cultural phenomena that grow in turn out of a combination of psychodynamic forces operating at a social level, and economic demands for future workplace and marketplace participation. This understanding actually facilitates a more forgiving stance toward SEL, but simultaneously necessitates further critical

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thought. SEL is one of many phenomena that extend complex and under-theorized cultural and economic forces into the childhood classroom; in doing so, it helps to perpetuate just these aspects of culture and economy. To question SEL is thus to question a variety of sociocultural norms, but doing this is an important way to make sense of the expectations and demands we place on children and their teachers.

Finally, this dissertation offers insight into what becomes of conflict, negative emotions, and unruly affect in the SEL-managed classroom. The findings here are complex, for to some extent, these kinds of feelings and behaviors among children and teachers actually circumnavigate the rigorous attempts at control that SEL sets out. On the other hand, there is little room in the ideal SEL classroom for extended conflict, anger, despair or excitement. These feelings and their complex and various associated behaviors do not go away, but nor do they become available as aspects of an emotional curriculum. Negative affect, negative emotions, and conflicts are essentially rendered shameful by SEL, contributing to the maintenance of a paranoid-schizoid mentality in which certain, probably inevitable aspects of internal experience must be warded off.

Implications for Practice

The theoretical foundation of this dissertation is in Kleinian psychoanalysis, and there are complex implications for teaching practice that grow out of this foundation. Since it is unrealistic to imagine an educational practice rooted in Kleinian analytic theory, I offer instead some feasible recommendations for teaching practice based on certain aspects of this theory as well as the empirical findings of my dissertation.

Foremost, teacher educators and policy makers who are interested in or mandated to work with SEL should carefully examine the way SEL defines the child and situates the role of the

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teacher. Jeanette and Samantha are clear examples of different ways teacher normative belief systems can interact with SEL, and it is important for individual teachers to work on and through their own assumptions about childhood and teachers before implementing an emotional curriculum. What does the teacher believe about the nature of childhood and the role of emotion in childhood? What does the teacher consider to be the relationship between emotion and behavior, and how does she define her own role adjacent to this relationship?

Second, teachers, teacher educators and schools should work on clearly articulating and working through the assumptions SEL makes about negative affect. To some extent this is work that will need to be done repeatedly and locally, for different circumstances and environments can lead to very different interpretive responses. Key questions, though, include:

-Why do we believe children get sad, angry, or excited?

-Is it important to regulate or calm these kinds of strong feelings? Why or why not?

-What might be lost for teachers or children in our environment and setting if we focus on regulating these feelings?

The empirical and theoretical work in this dissertation have supported my own belief that children and teachers need time and space to stay, work, and play within unruly affect, as part of learning, relating, and surviving psychically together. I think that any time a childhood teacher makes a pedagogical or management move toward regulating affect, this should be examined. Teachers' jobs should not be to question the validity of students' emotions.

On a very practical level, I would hope to see teachers and schools grow more honest about the fact that SEL is largely a behavior management tool. If SEL continues to exist, perhaps it should be renamed; it is not in fact about social and emotional learning but specifically

and more narrowly about learning regulation and calm. Within individual SEL programs, it would be helpful to remind children and teachers frequently that feelings and affects are always permissible, but that their extensions in the behavioral realm should be modified. Thus, we are not necessarily working to calm anger, for instance, but to modify our behavioral expressions of the anger we may well continue to feel for a very long time.

Finally, during my classroom observation periods and the time I spent analyzing my observational notes, I often found myself wondering what would happen if the SEL blocks were refigured as free play blocks in kindergarten and first-grade classrooms. This would require a release of the anxieties that underlie SEL programming, discourse and implementation. However, given that the dearth of time for play and choice in the early childhood classroom has been well-documented, I think that this would be an experiment well worth undertaking. There would probably be a lot more conflict, anger, sadness, and dysregulation in the classroom in this formulation, but I believe there would also be more social and emotional learning, for teachers as well as for children.

Implications for Future Research

To extend the project of this dissertation, it would be helpful to have more research into the social and emotional lives of childhood classrooms in different environments, both during mandated SEL blocks and over the course of the rest of the day. The question that comes up in critiquing SEL is, "What is social and emotional learning?" In other words, what is the social and emotional learning that happens all the time for children and teachers absent or in addition to a codified, reified program? How can we work with these kinds of learning to come up with a less paranoid, less economically oriented way of facilitating children's work in the emotional

realm? Is codified SEL necessary at all, if we remove some of the assumptions that undergird the research into its benefits?

There is a tremendous need for more qualitative research into how SEL works in different classrooms. The observational aspects of this study could be replicated in classrooms at different ages, using different programs, or with different demographics. Interviews with children and families regarding experiences with SEL and understandings of social and emotional learning would also be very helpful. It would also be beneficial to compare and contrast SEL discourse and practice in the United States with social and emotional learning in other parts of the world. Finally, it would be interesting to have qualitative research in classrooms where SEL is not used, but where there is more opportunity for free play or for working through emotional situations organically as they come up. This would likely have to occur in an independent school and would pose some practical limitations, but it could provide a useful set of data.

Limitations

The most significant limitation of this dissertation is that the empirical portion takes place in only two classrooms and with two teachers. The data from Samantha's classroom is also limited because of the small number of consent forms I received. The observations were time-limited and offered little opportunity for examination of longitudinal growth and change. Both classrooms were in Massachusetts, so the study is geographically limited. The observations occurred in whole-group settings for the most part and do not reflect the SEL work that is done one-on-one or with small groups of students. Finally and most importantly, the dissertation is limited by my own assumptions. Though I have tried to be open about them and question them

as I worked, my belief in the role and unattainability of the unconscious is abiding and leads me to insist that the work of any individual will be limited in ways she cannot necessarily see.

In spite of the limitations of this research, it offers an important starting point in providing a close examination of SEL theory, discourse and practice. It is my hope that this project will lead to future work oriented toward closely analyzing the assumptions we make about children's emotions and social worlds over the course of their education in schools.

Closing Thoughts

About six months into my work on this study, my daughter came home from a day at second grade to tell me she hated school. She hated it, she told me, because she had to go to a special lunch group "for (her) personality." Every Tuesday, she would not be allowed to eat lunch in the lunch room but instead would have to go to a special room with a special teacher and three other kids. They would play games and work on saying "more green words and less red words."

Red words and green words are associated with the Growth Mindset, Carol Dweck's foray into SEL. This framework suggests that children should learn positive thinking; instead of saying things like "This is too hard for me," they should say, "I can do anything I put my mind to." I was incensed, and emailed my daughter's teacher immediately to try to figure out what was going on.

To my chagrin, the teacher wrote back to explain that my daughter had indeed been put into an SEL lunch group, but she was actually put there as a role model. I saved the email, which commends me on my strong parenting and the amazing social and linguistic skills she has. "She uses green words without even thinking about it!" I was told. "She will make a great model

for her peers…" The teacher followed by saying that we could pull her out of the lunch group if it was a problem. (We did, at her request.)

I share this story as a way of showing that I am a product and producer of the same hegemonic positivity I critique in this dissertation, and that my family very much participates in and benefits from the behavioral "success" that SEL values most. This is a humbling and repetitive realization. I do not really like the people around me to be sad, angry or even over-excited, and maybe that is the crux of this work. I am sometimes uncomfortable with my own strong feelings, too, and particularly the negative ones.

One of the days that I was in Samantha's classroom, I sat with several of the kids who were eating their snacks before the Second Step lesson began. They were picking at each other, envious of each other's snacks, irritated when one kid took another kid's doughnut hole and arguing over whether the Tooth Fairy is real. The kids were surly, sour, and the usual chaos was unfolding around us. Samantha was yelling at a separate group of kids for coming in too rowdy from P.E., announcements were flickering off and on the loudspeaker, and one student was over near the cubbies, trying to demolish someone else's belongings. Jessenia stuck one finger deep into her mouth to try to count her teeth and figure out how much more the Tooth Fairy would owe her over time, and some of the other kids argued her out of the practice, "That's nasty!" "You're going to puke!" "Don't you know the Tooth Fairy is just your mom?!"

Jessenia's finger stayed in her mouth for a very long time, and all of the other things kept happening. She seemed to be rooting around, exploring. Samantha was trying to call the class to order, counting down for them to get up to the rug, and Jessenia slowly extracted the finger. She had lost track of her initial tooth-counting goal, and she grinned at me, "That *is* nasty in there!" She trotted up to the rug, leaving me for just a minute to think about that internal nastiness, just

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how much it has to offer, and what it would be to stay, in a classroom, in those real, dynamic

moments, the joyless ones, the ones that cannot be controlled.

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