RESTORATIVE JUSTICE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS IN THE CLASSROOM

by © Tina Saleh A Thesis submitted

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Abstract

In this research, I examine teachers' experiences with implementing Restorative Justice Education (RJE) in schools in Newfoundland. I investigate their experiences with navigating social class and social production in the classroom, and their perceptions around the change in culture that RJE is producing in schools. Further, I look how teachers think Restorative Justice Education is contributing to reconciliation efforts in the Canadian context. I also look at how teachers think RJE is creating equitable and inclusive classroom environments, and how their responses reveal a social movement occurring in education. I examined these research questions through eighteen qualitative interviews and discuss patterns and themes that emerged inductively in the responses. My research also reveals the potential of and opportunities that lie ahead for RJE to contribute to positive social change, and to provide more in-depth, collaborative and consultative education on Indigenous history in Canada.

Keywords: *Teachers, Relationships, Restorative Justice Education, Reconciliation, Social Class, Social Reproduction*

General Summary

In this research, I examine teachers' experiences with implementing Restorative Justice Education (RJE) in schools in Newfoundland. I investigate their experiences with diversity in their classrooms, and their perceptions around how RJE is producing cultural change in schools. I also look at teachers' thoughts around success in their implementation, and indicate instances of a social movement in education. Further, I look at how teachers think RJE is contributing to reconciliation efforts in Canada. I also look at how teachers believe RJE is creating equitable and inclusive classroom environments across social classes. I examined these research questions through eighteen qualitative interviews and discuss patterns and themes that emerged in the responses. My research also reveals, in the teachers' view, the potential of and opportunities that lie ahead for RJE to contribute to positive social change, and to provide collaborative education on Indigenous history in Canada.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to all those who, due to their beliefs, are legally deprived of access to post-secondary education, particularly the Bahá´í youth in Iran. Their

constructive resilience and unrestrained kindness shown to others in face of persecution, has inspired me to strive to greater heights of education for the purpose of community development and service to humanity.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

A society in which individuals feel that they are interconnected and are contributing to its progress begins with solid relationships within its schools (Boyes-Watson and Pranis 2015). Public schools are a community commitment to a society in which each individual has the opportunity to learn and flourish (Boyes-Watson and Pranis 2015). The Restorative Justice view towards public education is that education must cater to students of all social classes and diverse backgrounds (Boyes-Watson and Pranis 2015, p. 4). Its promoters strive to create equitable, safe and inclusive learning environments. Among the questions I ask in that regard are, "What are the RJE educators' perceptions of such classes and backgrounds? How do they envision an inclusive and safe classroom?"

Before Restorative Justice (RJ) was incorporated in education, justice officials and community members originally used it as a correctional services strategy in judicial settings to improve responses to crime and address harm (Evans and Vaandering, 2016). RJ was introduced to Western contemporary judicial contexts in the 1970s in Elmira, Ontario and in Mennonite communities in Pennsylvania who aimed to honour social connections and relationships when addressing community concerns. RJ has now been used in Canadian correctional services for over thirty years (Tomporowski, 2011). One of the reasons for its governmental support in Canada was the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General (Standing Committee) 1988 report in which it advised that the federal government "support the expansion and evaluation throughout Canada of victim-offender reconciliation programs at all stages of the criminal justice process" (House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General

(Standing Committee), 1988). The Correctional Service of Canada has played a major role in the advancement of RJ into education in Canada (Tomporowski et al, 2011). Various formal and informal RJ networks have now been established throughout Canada at the municipal, regional and provincial levels, such as the Restorative Justice Network of Ottawa, the Alberta Restorative Justice Association, and the Restorative Justice in Education Consortium, a research centre for educators in Newfoundland. RJ has also developed in the post-secondary educational field, as numerous universities across Canada provide courses on its implementation in various domains (Tomporowski et al, 2011). Its growth reflects the importance of studying its impact on the functioning of institutions in Canadian society. Moving from a means for resolving conflict in judicial contexts to sustaining relationships between all individuals in a classroom, RJE was introduced to grade schools in the 1990s through regular classroom discussions in circles.

RJE is a broad term because it encompasses numerous terminologies and approaches (Evans and Vaandering, 2016). It has been implemented in "restorative practices, restorative discipline, restorative approaches, restorative measures, and restorative justice practices" (Evans and Vaandering, 2016, p. 7). The RJE framework synthesizes those various forms of implementation into a vision of education that fosters individual and collective well-being in maintaining supportive relationships with others (Evans and Vaandering, 2016). Aiming to improve school safety and learning environments by repairing relationships, RJE encourages teaching styles that nurture student-teacher relationships and foster student inclusion in the classroom, hence the use of "restorative" in the title (Vaandering, 2013). The "restorative" in RJE is associated with nurturing every individual's human worth (ibid).

Since 2012, educators in Newfoundland and Labrador have been incorporating RJE in schools across the province. Although the statistic on the current number of teachers in Newfoundland implementing the approach is not yet available, it is inferable, from the diversity of schools across the province in which the participants are teaching, that RJE is growing significantly (Anderson and Sheppard, 2016). In fact, the Final Report of the Panel on the Status of Public Education in Newfoundland and Labrador (2015-2016) claims that RJE has had "positive impact" on schools, and that the province is "leading the country in understanding how it is far more than another approach but rather a change in mindset" (Anderson and Sheppard, 2016). The report also includes among its action recommendations that the Department of Education in NL embrace the principles of RJ (Anderson and Sheppard, 2016).

Throughout NL, the propelling force of RJE varies across the schools. In some schools, teachers are implementing it out of their own individual initiative, while in others, its implementation is encouraged by the administration. I chose teachers in Newfoundland using Restorative Justice Education as the focus of my research in order to examine their motives behind undertaking the approach, the driving force behind their strong belief in it, and how they advocate for RJE as a social movement in the province. Through in-depth interviews, I explore how teachers came to implement RJE in their teaching, and the challenges and successes they experience with its implementation. Bearing in mind that the social environment in a classroom controls students' behaviour, and conditions their behaviour with the majority (Mason 2017, p. 47), I inquire into teachers' perceptions as to how they think they are fostering the equitable classroom environment that RJE strives for. I examine how far they take the social class and ethnic

background of their students into consideration, and how they connect that to their vision of an equitable and inclusive classroom.

With respect to teachers' avid belief in RJE, a major theme in my analysis is the teachers' conceptualization of RJE as a movement that is growing in schools. With the support of social movement literature, I identify elements of how teachers conceptualize RJE as a movement for which they are advocates, and for which they express religious fervour. As RJE directly serves children and youth, and is impacting schools across NL, my finding on the seemingly religious belief motivating teachers' implementation of it is to be considered. In light of the findings, I argue that RJE is a quasi-religious movement.

Given that RJE originates from Indigenous traditions, I also examine in this thesis whether teachers working with RJE reveal in their responses an awareness of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's Calls to Action[1]. The TRC asks teachers to move away from colonial approaches to education, which transmit information in a way that reinforces oppressive power structures. Rather, the TRC calls for a type of education that is transformational and propels positive social change. It encourages a step forward towards consulting Indigenous ways of knowing that were not previously reflected in educational curricula. It ensures collaboration with Indigenous communities when delivering educational approaches that originate in Indigenous traditions. It also creates opportunities for education to contribute to reconciliation. The RJE Handbook and Implementation Guide, a reference guide for educators working with RJE in Newfoundland, honours the TRC's recommendations with respect to Education

[1] I refer to the specific Calls to Action that are relevant to my research in the Literature Review chapter of the thesis.

for Reconciliation, as it "provides a significant means for working on this continually and in so doing, will engage meaningfully and practically in implementing the recommendations listed in Articles 62, 63, and 64" (Vaandering and Voelker, 2018). The guide also acknowledges that the "Circle dialogue," one of the main practices in RJE,[2] is "grounded in ancient and contemporary indigenous ways of being and knowing" (Vaandering and Voelker, 2018). The Circle dialogue is inspired by Talking Circles in sacred Indigenous practices (Alberta Education, 2005). Its practice in RJE provides "common ground for inviting insightful dialogue with elders and leaders from indigenous communities involved in the school" (Vaandering and Voelker, 2018). In light of its Indigenous origins and connections to the TRC, I explore how the participants in my research think RJE can contribute to reconciliation efforts in Canada.

My analysis focusses on themes such as teachers' challenges and successes with implementing RJE, how RJE can be conceptualized as a social movement in education, how its growth contributes to cultural change in schools, how teachers conceptualize the notion of power, and how they think its practices are transforming power dynamics in schools. My findings demonstrate how the teachers respond to cultural and class diversity, deal with social disparities in the classroom, and work according to their definitions of agency. Analysis of their responses around social class diversity in the classroom also reveal the common theme of teachers using RJE to cultivate the moral habitus of students, that is, the habitus that governs the students' sense of morality.

[2] I will further describe the Circle in a subsequent chapter

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The relationship between the classroom and cultural production, social advocacy, social movement theory, and religious education inspire the questions that frame my research. Three overall questions encompass the missing pieces in the literature to which my findings respond. First, "How do teachers use RJE to reproduce a social class in their classrooms?" Second, "How does their passion for RJE make them strong advocates for it?" And third, "What are the elements that make RJE a social movement in education?" These three questions are, of course, intertwined.

First, school has become the source of reproduction of social classes (Nash 1990). Pierre Bourdieu (1974) challenged the school as an instrument of social reform and equality. Thus, if a school culture is predominantly middle class, and the teachers privilege middle class student tendencies of responding well to their teaching style, students of working-class families would consider themselves as outliers and culturally alienated in such settings (Nash 1990). Moreover, the social elements of the classroom and the authority dynamic of teacher-student relationships also form part of the school processes that influence what Annette Lareau (1987) calls "social reproduction." While there is existent data on how teacher-student relationships contribute to social reproduction, researchers have less often considered the type or strata of social class that RJE teachers are culturally reproducing in their classrooms.

RJE claims to provide just, equitable and inclusive learning environments, and values the "contributions of *all* students," (Vaandering and Voelker 2018). RJ practitioners believe they use an "intercultural vision" to build an "interdependent society" (Bickmore, 2013). They strive to use equity and interdependence to inform community work, policy,

education, and other programs. These two principles are indeed the standard by which they measure the efficacy of their practice (Bickmore, 2013). As an outsider, I am neither a teacher nor do I practice RJE. I, therefore, consider it crucial to study, from a sociological lens, the teachers' own perceptions of seeing beyond the social class of their students. I endeavoured to learn whether RJE teachers are, in fact, creating equitable classrooms or if, by upholding their students to a particular moral standard, they are culturally reproducing ideal behaviours associated with RJE. In other words, if RJE claims to create equitable classroom environments, how are the teachers' perceptions of their students' social class impacting this? Is RJE, in the teachers' view, doing what it is supposed to be doing? I inquire into the ways teachers participate in cultural transmission through an approach which they believe so strongly works to mitigate social class.

Schools serve as a platform for projecting the type of society that a community would like to realize (Dewey 1916). Educational institutions provide students with a "social spirit" (Mason 2017, p. 41) that nurture an habitus among them. The "social spirit" is a variety of habitually cultivated attitudes such as "directness, open-mindedness, single-mindedness, and responsibility" that must be fostered in educational environments (2017, p. 47). The habitus, then, serves as a set of both formal and informal rules and customs of a society that through practice over time attribute pattern and meaning (Bourdieu 1974). Considering the concept of habitus, I ask, what is the meaning behind these conflict resolution practices that the teachers are culturally producing in their classrooms? How do the teachers share their perceptions of that meaning? The missing piece here, then, is how teachers' perception of RJE connects to habitus and cultural reproduction.

As part of conflict resolution, Restorative Justice educators teach students certain questions to ask one another, such as “What has been the hardest thing for you?” and “What do you need to move forward?” These questions are part of what RJE proponents call “restorative language” (Hopkins 2011). RJE proponents claim that those questions invite dialogue when challenges arise and help restore relationships that may be harmed in conflict (Vaandering and Voelker 2018). I explore the possibility that teachers participate in cultural transmission particularly in teaching their students such habits and language practices associated with Restorative Justice Education.

Teaching students “restorative language” and orienting them towards relationship-building goals produces social behavioural patterns. The meaning that human beings make of their social interactions is emergent, fundamentally creative and open-ended (Mead 1912). An individual develops social habits in an unconscious manner through immersion in environments such as an educational one (Dewey et al, 2017). Students then continuously change their social habits as they adapt them to their classroom (Dewey et al, 2017). Moreover, a change in student interactions reflects change in the cultural dynamics of the classroom (Mason 2017). The way in which teachers tend to the respective needs of students across social classes may reproduce those social classes.

A running theme in RJE literature is that equitable learning environments are a significant part of RJE culture. RJE practitioners claim that RJE disrupts power dynamics in the classroom, and enhances student learning through inclusion (Anfara et al, 2013; Vaandering and Voelker, 2018;Wadhwa, 2015). The missing piece I identified in the literature, then, is the connection between teacher’s experiences in an RJE classroom and their perceptions towards the diversity of social class in their classroom. I endeavoured to

learn about the teachers' perceptions of their students' social class to see how much they take that into consideration. That knowledge enables us to see the extent to which teachers think they are fulfilling the RJE mandate I identified in the literature: creating equitable and inclusive classrooms.

The concepts of "social spirit" and "habitus" also inform the idea that reform in education systems, i.e. reform in fields of socialization, leads to social change. In that regard, the role of education is for teachers to provide opportunities for students to cultivate a set of rules and customs that have meaning (Mason 2017, p. 46), such as the aforementioned language practices of RJE. The social environment in a classroom has the capacity to influence the disposition of individuals and serve as a form of social control over their behaviour, as they become conditioned to align their behaviour with the majority (Mason 2017, p. 47). Given that teachers play a role in cultivating those habits, I examined how, specifically, teachers working with RJE are participating in that process in their classrooms.

My findings indicated that social movement theory also relates to my study of RJE. A movement that is innovative in nature is one that seeks to change existing norms and values. A social movement can be leaderless (Castells, 2015), provides moral perspective and voice to those who are engaged in it (Jasper 1997), and produces a collective identity among its participants (Anyon 2005). Social movements have historically been a response to various forms of social domination, and the outcome of changes in values (Castells, 2015). They tend to produce transformation in the institutions of society, which implement new norms and values with which to organize social life (Castells, 2015). Social movements also form around issues of social concern and work

towards a desired outcome (Jansen and Du Plessis, 2016). Since movements are the root of social change, they also are the root of the constitution of a society (Castells, 2015). Thus, the question as to whether the changes occurring in educational institutions that shape the children and youth of our society constitutes a social movement is a fundamental one. It is rather early to conceive a systematic, scholarly definition of RJE as a concrete movement. As such, my purpose is to provide a hypothesis, in light of both the social movement literature, and the perspectives of the teachers I interviewed, associating the teachers' sense of advocacy, and the changes taking place in schools across Newfoundland, with a movement. In other words, I argue that RJE has become a leaderless movement in Newfoundland and Labrador and that educators who apply RJE consider themselves activists in this movement.

As a movement, RJE faces temporal and spatial constraints. The literature helps us to consider the role of the institutions in the movement and how institutions allocate the time available to the teachers. With respect to time specifically, "Some are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and movement, others don't; some are more on the receiving end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it" (Massey, (1993). The literature thus discusses the question of to whom time and space belongs, and my research extends that question, by asking, "To whom does the time and space in the classroom belong?" This helps us to see the role of the school board, as an institution engaged in power relations, in governing how time is allocated. Furthermore, if we consider RJE a movement, we can ask, how do the teachers articulate their relationship with the institutions when it comes to time? How do they describe the role of institutions in the movement?

Not only do teachers contend with structure, power, and their agency within that framework, but students also face this challenge. RJE educators work to intervene at the point of structure and agency in the socialization of their students. Anthony Giddens (1984) defines structure as a set of norms, which are the outcome of agentic action. The relationship between social structure and agency extends to a wide range of sociological phenomena, including social relations and interactions in the classroom (Mische, 2011). My focus on teachers' attitudes towards interactions with their students in an RJE classroom connects structure with agency. The definition of agency most relevant to my findings is that of Sen (1993): "Acting freely and being able to choose" wherein "choosing is seen as a part of living" and "'doing x' is distinguished from 'choosing to do x and doing it.'" This definition relates to my findings around how teachers socialize students into practicing RJE approaches and their emphasis on student agency while rewarding behaviour that fits within existing class structures. Embedded within the literature are ideas regarding individual agency vis-à-vis power structures. However, the way in which individual agency and power structures relate to the student-teacher relationship in the classroom, more specifically, opportunities for students to exercise agency, or how teachers encourage them to do so, are not rendered explicit in such literature. My research, therefore, is, in part, an attempt to explore how teachers are producing specific cultural behaviours by practicing RJE. In that process, teachers still think they are encouraging students to exercise agency in the extent to which they participate.

The type of agency that informs my analysis is also inspired by the Lockean theory of human capability which reduces agency to the ability to control the

circumstances in which one lives (Littlejohn and Foss, 2009). I hypothesize RJE as a social movement. I then use Lockean theory to ask, who are the participating members in the movement? Moreover, the theory helps us understand teachers' perceptions of the agentic nature of RJE. I will argue that, although they are producing middle class behaviours in the classroom, the teachers believe that students have agency over whether they participate in restorative practices, and are, therefore, learning to have agency in larger contexts.

Although the contribution of the discipline of education is beyond the scope of my literature review, the conceptualization of scholars such as Paolo Freire (1970), with respect to power and agency, is relevant to my research. I particularly draw on his work, which argues that empowering a student is difficult to achieve without critical consciousness of the structures and processes that form social institutions or practices (Freire, 1970; Jennings, et al. 2006). For this reason, I ask, "what are teacher perceptions of the role of social institutions in mobilizing RJE and empowering students?" Where themes such as the empowerment of students is underdeveloped in sociological literature, the contributions of education literature have been helpful. Sociological literature tends to refer to "agency" while "empowerment" is more common in education literature and is more frequently used in the teachers' context. I therefore use the two terms interchangeably.

As a major part of my research explores how teachers working with RJE view it as contributing to reconciliation, and the TRC is central to this, I refer to the definition it provides for "reconciliation." While the report's approach to reconciliation involves government action, it is also about "forgiveness, about healing...about truth. And those

things are all things of the heart and of relationship" (TRC, 2015a, p. 20). Further, the report's working definition of reconciliation is "establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country" (TRC, 2015a, p. 3). Fostering this relationship implicates all Canadians, which indeed includes those working in education (Siemens, 2017).

Among the TRC's Calls to Action in the Education for Reconciliation section are "iii) Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect and iv) Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above" (TRC, 2015), it is necessary to question the potential of current education to be transformative, to heal and restore relationships. The literature indicates that empathy is only one of the ingredients required for initiating social change (Czyzewski, 2011). I am referring to the type of empathy being taught in Western multiculturalism, which "bridges the divide" between various cultures (Boler, 1997). Using that definition, I will discuss teachers' perceptions of empathy as a major part of RJE, and how their responses about the role of RJE in reconciliation indicate that they firmly believe in its ability to resolve all social conflicts.

If education will contribute to reconciliation, it must embrace new ways of teaching and learning (Siemens, 2017). It also needs to educate students on historical systems of injustice in Canada while strengthening current relationships (Siemens, 2017). Evidently, the literature provides context to the opportunities available for teachers to educate youth on our shared colonial history. However, the way in which the participants perceive reconciliation, and connect their almost religious faith in RJE to resolving major social issues in our society, are among the gaps to be filled in the literature. What I am implying by "religious faith" is when an individual firmly believes and commits to

something to the extent that it becomes holy and sacred for them (Geertz, 2005). I will show how the teachers' perceptions of RJE bear semblance to religious faith, and that consequently, they firmly believe it can support reconciliation.

Literature on RJE reports, often in an advocative manner, research on its success in education, and educates teachers on its pedagogical implementation. It tends to acknowledge the Indigenous origins of RJE practices, value the interconnection of individuals in a society, and connects Talking Circles to healing and strengthening relationships. A large amount of RJ literature reports how it has become a global phenomenon, and how criminal justice systems around the world are using restorative interventions (e.g. in prisons, parole, probation, etc.) (van Ness, 2016). However, while there have been scholarly critiques of RJ in general, a critical lens towards its use in education is still needed.

I am interested in how social class, morality, and social change are manifest in RJE teachers' perceptions of their classroom, a novel topic. The above literature will strengthen my critique throughout my analysis. I will then fill in the gaps by demonstrating how RJE impacts teachers' teaching, how they use RJE to reproduce a moral standard and social class in their classroom, how their passion for RJE make them strong advocates for it, and the elements that make it a social movement in education.

Chapter 3: Data and Methods

I conducted eighteen semi-structured, qualitative interviews of teacher-participants whom I recruited using an interview script on social media and on email. In this section of the thesis, I will demonstrate how I recruited participants, collected the data, and analyzed patterns and themes that emerged inductively.

The Sample Population

The teachers I interviewed work in public schools, the majority of which are in Newfoundland. Such schools are administered by the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District under the province's Department of Education. My research conforms to the requirements of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS 2). In order to protect the confidentiality of the participants, I use pseudonyms in lieu of the participants' names, and do not include in the responses the names of cities and institutions where the participants work. The selected participants are a mixture of elementary and high school teachers, who all work with RJE, some with more teaching experience than others. They vary in overall teaching experience, genders, and ethnic backgrounds. The participants were not asked to self-identify if Indigenous.

The Interview Guide

The semi-structured interviews contained predetermined but open-ended questions as well as probes to elicit further information. In the interviews, I asked teachers to share their reflections on what they have learned from their experiences as teachers and what implementing the practices of Restorative Justice Education in their classrooms means to them. I also asked them to speak about their perceptions around nurturing a sense of

inclusion, safety, and care for their students. Moreover, I asked the teachers about their perception of how RJE practices are connected to Indigeneity and the Calls to Action for education.

In the interviews, I posed open-ended questions and listened with the intention of learning from the participants. This enabled the participants to explain their circumstances with ease and facilitated their articulating experiences in their own words. Throughout the research process, I maintained the approach of a researcher who engages in an ongoing conversation with the participants. I consulted with key informants in the education field to ensure that I frame my questions in both sensitive and non-judgmental ways. I consulted members of the selected community (i.e. teachers) throughout the research process about any ethical concerns that they may have. Further, all interview questions focused on the participants' personal experiences and challenges with the teaching methods that they are implementing in their practice.

I interviewed participants in spaces where they felt most comfortable. Interviews were generally arranged over email and I left the decision on where to meet to the participant. Interviews took place in coffee shops, at Memorial University, in participants' homes or over various video calling platforms. The interviews were conducted in private, involving only myself and the participant.

I posed ten initial questions, I had seven probing questions prepared should certain topics of interest not come up naturally through the initial questions, as shown in the interview guide (see Appendices). The purpose of the guide was to enable participants to develop a chronological account of their experiences with using RJE in the classroom. Additional questions did naturally emerge during the interviews, depending on the

participants' responses. Before each interview, participants reviewed the consent form, which outlined the ethical procedures, risks and freedoms to participating in my research. They were, of course, also given the opportunity to pose questions about my research.

I interviewed the teachers concerning their own perspectives rather than those of the respective institutions with which they are associated. Since I intended to learn more about the lived experience of teachers working with RJE, I did not interview experts or administrators of RJE. Interviewing experts and administrators would not have revealed the everyday experiences of the teachers, because it was the teachers alone who could help me develop an understanding of their perspective towards educating with RJE. I did not ask the teachers about school policies or how they are instructed to teach. Rather, I asked them about their own perception of the impact of working with RJE.

In order to better understand how teachers contribute to social and cultural reproduction, I asked participants the following questions in my interviews: "How do you work with students who demonstrate a lack of keenness towards your teaching?" Further, students may be aware of their social class when it comes to their respective levels of access to learning opportunities in comparison to those of students belonging to other classes (Freire 1994). For this reason, I posed the following questions in the interviews: "How would you describe the following dynamics of your class?" "Class diversity" was one of those dynamics that I asked them to speak about. This way, the respondent had an opportunity to speak about the dynamics of social classes and social production in their classroom.

Recruitment

I was connected to teachers through individuals whom I met in classes conducted in the Department of Education at Memorial University. Individuals who are well situated within the teacher network in NL were also of significant assistance in connecting me to participants. Such individuals connected me to Safe and Inclusive Schools Itinerants in NL[3], who then put me in contact with potential interview participants. I also approached School Itinerants and individuals working at the RJE consortium about statistics on the number of teachers implementing RJE. As the Consortium is still gathering statistics, they are not currently available. Staff at the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (NLTA) also assisted me in posting my search for participants on Facebook and Twitter pages with which RJE teachers in the NLESD and NLTA are connected. From there, interested participants were able to contact me.

Coding and Transcribing

Interviews were, on average, about one hour in duration. During the interviews, I wrote detailed notes and audio-recorded participants' responses. I used the application Otter Voice Meeting Notes for recording the interviews. While recording, the application also transcribed each interview. After completing all the interviews, I reviewed the transcriptions for accuracy, then analyzed the responses by coding for patterns and emerging themes. The coding process consisted in identifying major themes across the interview responses (e.g. "Teacher Perceptions of Diversity" and "Teacher Views of the 'Humanity' of their Students"). I then developed one Word document for each theme, and inserted quotations from the interviews that served as examples of those themes. After

[3] District level Safe and Inclusive School Itinerants are individuals who support implementation of the province's Safe & Caring Schools Policy (Safe & Caring Schools Policy, 2013).

organizing the major themes and providing the supporting data, I then identified the subthemes within them. Subsequently, I included quotations in support of those subthemes. Each theme document then served as the backbone of the chapters of this thesis. I also wrote fieldnotes and memos after each interview. The memos supported my analysis of the latent and manifest themes within the participants' responses.

Note that I refer to the term "empowerment" in my analysis. The term is more common in education literature and is more frequently used in the teachers' context. Thus, I focus in my analysis on quotes from the interviews that include the word "empowerment," but coded it as an "agency" term, as the two have similar meanings.

Major themes emerged through analysis of teachers' perceptions on how RJE is operating, and not through my perceptions of RJE. Participants are operating with certain belief structures and certain definitions of their reality – what I consider sensitizing concepts. Blumer (1954) referred to sensitizing concepts as a framework for considering empirical instances. In contrast to definitive concepts, which provide a concrete definition of social reality, sensitizing concepts provide a lens through which to view social reality. Thus, a teacher's view towards, say, agency is a sensitizing concept, as their view differs from actual sociological phenomenon. The findings about the classroom dynamics, and about the teachers' relationships and interactions with their students are therefore based on teachers' perceptions communicated in their responses.

Chapter 4: How Teachers Frame their ‘Challenges’ with RJE

Almost every one of the teachers I interviewed had a substantial amount to share with respect to the challenges they encounter with implementing RJE, which fall into six subthemes: the limitations of physical space, managing RJE with time and the curriculum, student resistance to participating in RJE practices, students not taking restorative practices seriously, getting other staff “on board,” and a “paradigm shift” in thinking. Within each subtheme that I identified, I analyze how they respond to either how RJE can be likened to a movement in which teachers are its advocates, believe firmly in it, and produce a culture of middle-class behaviours associated with it.

Overall, the teachers had more to share about their successes with implementing RJE than their challenges. Even if they did indicate challenges they faced, they often connected them to a success story that emerged out of each challenge, thereby arguing that RJE ultimately leads to successful teaching pedagogy and classroom relationships. In spite of their challenges and barriers faced with implementing its approaches, with a sense of advocacy, each teacher articulated the strong conviction that through RJE, many issues in the classroom can be resolved. Their advocacy and conviction reveal the second major theme encompassing my research: the elements that make RJE a social movement whose advocates believe in it religiously.

The Limitations of Physical Space

A major theme that emerged in the research is teachers’ challenges navigating space and time limitations in the classroom. As RJE requires conducting discussions in

circle format[4], and the conventional classroom normally contains rows of desks, teachers face a spatial barrier to conducting one of RJE's main practices. The school and teacher may aspire to a degree of "independence," in their work, as Tom describes. However, the state remains embedded in social relations (Butler, 2012). Among the manifestations of state power are the amount of time and space available to the teachers. In light of the above, my research subsequently draws conclusions about state authority over a teacher's time and space in the classroom, which reveals some of the barriers to the practice of RJE. An examination of the politics of space and its outcomes requires us to consider the state's power over space (Butler 2012). Sylvie's example demonstrates the power and ownership of her classroom space. She faces challenges with the limitations of the space in which she is required to teach, her lack of control over it, and the precarious nature of her workplace. Her barriers thus represent how state power is implicated in her profession. If we consider the state as the product of institutional structures and the mediator for political and economic struggles (Butler 2012), we see how a teacher's challenges trace back to state power over space.

While a teacher's career may be permanent, their place of work may not be, which poses challenges as to the extent to which they can implement restorative practices. They are forced to work with the space they have, which is not always accommodating to such practices. Sylvie describes:

[4] The main learning format in an RJE classroom is in circles rather than in rows of desks (Graveline, 2003). Within the context of education, the circle may take on different names, but it generally involves sitting in a circle, using a centerpiece, and passing around an object called a "Talking Piece," which allows one person to speak at a time (Hopkins, 2011). All participants are responsible for what happens inside the Circle (Hopkins, 2011).

> Another challenge is that I'm a permanent teacher, but my permanent position is not full time. So, as a replacement teacher, I'm only at a school for one year, you know, maybe two years, if I'm lucky. It's kind of hard to really, you know, establish myself in that way. And to have the, I guess, authority, or whatever, to request those different desks or an alternate space, or whatever it is (Sylvie).

The current physical layout makes it impractical for teachers to implement practices such as the Circle discussions: "It's just not practical, given the physical space that I'm given, you know what I mean? So that's right now for me… the biggest challenge" (Sylvie). Physical space may also be considered a barrier for this teacher, who, like many of the other participants, is enthusiastic about Restorative practices but faces limitations. In spite of the desire to further engage in restorative practices, Sylvie faces spatial barriers and the precarity of her workplace: "I want to be implementing more restorative practices. But, you know, I had those challenges, physical space in the traditional classroom, and bounced around from one school to the next" (Sylvie). As she shared her final thoughts in the interview, Sylvie's sentiments demonstrated the lack of physical space as problematic in spite of her love for RJE. Her challenges were most evident when she paused to think, then her facial expressions indicated anger and frustration before she responded:

> Like, right now, I would be, I would love to be doing more of that in my classroom. And the biggest restriction to me right now, is class size. Some of my classes I have almost 40 kids. So I'm, you know, crammed in a classroom. And the other thing is, I've got just, you know, the limitations on the physical space (Sylvie).

Despite a strong faith in RJE and desire to implement its practices, the small class space in comparison to the high number of students also presents a major barrier. Beatrice, in particular, expressed that while her classroom space is large, she still wishes to open it more, so as to make it accommodating to conducting Circles: "…mine is fairly big, but, you know, it still takes a lot to move the desks out of the way and actually form a

physical circle" (Beatrice). While the teachers are in charge of their classrooms, there are power dynamics involved in the use and allocation of space. In other words, often those superior to teachers within the school bureaucracy have more power over the decisions about the space. Sylvie's and Beatrice's spatial barriers to fully implementing RJE in their classrooms therefore draw attention to the power and ownership of their classroom space – which, after all, may not necessarily be "theirs." We see, then, that in spite of their firm belief in RJE, and its similarities to a movement, teachers face spatial and power barriers to implementing it.

Managing Restorative Justice Education with Time and the Curriculum

Time and curriculum present challenges to teachers who wish to implement RJE practices. While making an effort to build relationships with students, as fundamental as they are to the RJE philosophy, teachers also face pressure to cover the curriculum goals in a short period of time. The way in which they frame their struggles with time and spatial barriers in the classroom reveals their relationships with the school board policies, whose mandate governs their use of time and space. Tom, for example, expressed that building relationships with students requires that he reframe his teaching approach, which ultimately, costs him class time:

> So, I think one of the biggest challenges in reframing what I do to put a focus on Restorative Justice and building relationships, is it that it takes time, like relationships take time to build. And if you're doing that in the classroom, then that can take time out of your class, so to speak. (Tom)

Sylvie expresses similar concerns, and adds that in spite of her enthusiasm and creativity, curriculum requirements make it very difficult to implement RJE, and stir up feelings of incompetence within her:

> It's so hard and like, sometimes I feel like I can't, you know, and…all I need to do is just be thinking outside the box and thinking more creatively. But I have so much more other stuff to think about…the curriculum. So, it is…hard sometimes. Like I'm enthusiastic about it but I find it's really hard (Sylvie).

Particularly, as the grade level rises, teachers in general face more pressure to get students through the curriculum, which causes them to overlook building relationships with students. Irene shares that such is the culture among teachers at the junior high and high school levels: "Especially I feel [in] junior high [and] high schools, there's this sense of, 'Well, we have a curriculum to teach,' you know, so it's more of teaching a curriculum than it is about teaching children, and [about] the relationships with children" (Irene). Unlike her co-workers, who see their job as strictly teaching a curriculum, Irene builds relationships with students as a way to facilitate their learning: "…so I see that side of things, but not everyone sees that… there's some educators [that] are very relational-based but then there are others that feel like 'if I teach the curriculum, then I'm doing my job.'" (Irene) Thus, in prioritizing relationships with her students in spite of curriculum obligations and pressures, Irene is fostering a new culture within her school – one that, like a movement, changes the norms and values within the school. Furthermore, in spite of the challenges that these teachers describe, they all articulate nearly religious belief in RJE's approaches. I argue that it is their wholehearted conviction that allows them to overcome their challenges.

Students Not Taking Restorative Practices Seriously

The resistance on the part of students to listen, participate, and take restorative practices seriously presents another challenge for teachers who are striving to implement them. As a major restorative practice conducted in classrooms is the Circle, which builds

relationships by encouraging discussion in a safe space, a major challenge arises when students do not participate. Many teachers identified non-participation as a common challenge, Jamie being one example: “I find it difficult when they’re not really getting involved in the conversation” (Jamie). She further describes her major challenge in teaching students to truly listen to one another: “A lot of the students I work with have a lot of difficulty awaiting their turn to speak, and listening to each other, actively listening. So that was a big challenge was learning how to listen to each other” (Jamie). Evidently, here is a process of cultivating a particular class standard in the classroom. When a teacher frames their challenge as students not practicing active listening, not taking RJE seriously, we see that they are rewarding a particular behaviour. Further, Sylvie’s response about her challenges also reveals her perception of ideal behaviour: one where students conform to the Circle. She states:

> I suppose another challenge I have is that unfamiliarness. And they're sometimes resistant to it [Restorative practices]. Last year, when I was doing some things in circle, You know, like, I had kids come in the classroom, and they see this circle and their desks are put away and chairs are in a circle, and they're automatically like defensive about it (Sylvie).

Elizabeth expressed that students not taking restorative practices seriously also presents a challenge in her practice. She indicates that conducting a Circle in a larger group of students requires the full participation and concentration of students:

> The biggest challenge is getting them to take it seriously. Like first off, that's the biggest. And at their age, I think that's part of it. I think, at the number I've got where I've got 26, it can be hard to do some of the Circle talks and things, because if you get two or three who are off task and don't want to be there, it can really derail the whole thing kind of quickly… so it's like there's a few personalities in there that can really derail the whole thing and that's been really challenging (Elizabeth).

Elizabeth's response therefore reveals the tension between teachers seeing the students' lack of participation, and the agency that they think the students have. On one hand, they think they encourage the students' agency, and on the other, they frame their lack of participation as problematic. Thus, like Sylvie, the way in which Elizabeth frames her challenge around students not taking the Circle seriously means that the Circle serves as that mechanism whereby teachers produce an ideal behaviour standard. Similar to Elizabeth, Sara further affirms that students' tendency to go off task makes the use of restorative practices difficult. She shares that she uses it particularly when students challenge her: "I've used it a little bit when there seems to be a breakdown in a sense of direction with the class and there are behavioural issues and just general foolishness" (Sara). She further describes the general personality of her students as inclined to waste time, and identifies their childish and immature behaviour as her challenge: "Generally speaking, you know, they just want to waste time, more so than attend to the task at hand" (Sara). Sara's response reveals how her students' behaviour does not align with the RJE standard she upholds them to.

As the classroom is a social space, it is likely that students conform to the social environment of their peers. In that connection, it is safe to theorize reasons for which the students "derail" the practice of RJE or are "foolish": their behaviour conforms to the conventional behavioural norms of their peers, they learn from one another to resist power dynamics, etc. Furthermore, that sense of conformity in the classroom is similar to the conformity found in religion. For example, if most of a person's friends are not religious, then religious considerations rarely inform his or her adoption of norms (Stark, 1984). Similarly, if most of the students in a class do not accept RJE wholeheartedly, its

practices will rarely inform the social norms they adopt. I wish to add to this argument that based on the responses discussed in this section, the reason for which teachers frame their challenges as such is that their students are not religiously conforming to the behaviour standard that teachers are socially producing: the standard that aligns with RJE practices.

Getting Other Staff 'On Board'

Many teachers face the challenge of getting other teachers on their staff to appreciate the value of RJE and to join them in implementing its practices. The teachers share that their colleagues often encounter obstacles to embracing RJE, such as time constraints. Their effort to get their colleagues "on board" therefore reveals the movement characteristics of RJE, such as the sense of collective identity among its participants (Anyon 2005). Zach, for example, considers RJE the new, innovative approach that teachers need to get on board with. However, his challenge is getting others to overcome the barriers to moving forward with RJE:

> When it comes to the crunch, then people have a tendency to slip back into their old ways of blame, judgment and treating people as objects or whatever. And so, the second challenge would be just moving the staff along (Zach).

Zach therefore reveals that while in more standardized practices, teachers treat students as "objects," the RJE approach would do the opposite. His sense of advocacy for the innovative nature of RJE reveals yet another aspect of this 'movement': seeking to change existing norms and values. Similarly, Sonia's perception of her challenges with RJE also reveals how it is changing existing norms and values. She specifically describes her effort to get her administration to move away from the conventional punitive approaches to handling student behaviour: "If the admin aren't on board on some level,

it's really hard for teachers. Yeah, because, you know, you're saying one thing, but then everyone around you is doing something else" (Sonia). As with any instance of social change, there is resistance from all or some members of a society (Zanden, 1959). Sonia's response shows how collective effort is required for a school to move towards RJE so that they can then produce that culture among their students.

Another challenge for teachers is when other teachers do not take restorative practices seriously. Evidently, such resistive behaviour from colleagues and students is expected when existing norms and values are being changed, as we see in movements. Irene's observations serve as an example: "…that's definitely something that has been a little bit of a hurdle, like, getting people to take that seriously" (Irene). Further, as indicated above, while Sylvie describes that students' defensiveness is a result of their unfamiliarity with Restorative practices as her challenge, Irene describes that her co-workers' misjudgement of RJE is due to their unfamiliarity with it:

> A lot of times people come in and they feel apprehensive because it's not the normal way that they're used to doing things in school systems. And I guess for me like, those are some of the biggest kind of hurdles that we kind of face when it comes to building restorative spaces and restorative communities…is that there's prejudgment about what it actually is. (Irene)

Irene's response is therefore yet another indicator of how RJE operates like a movement.

When Irene discusses "building restorative communities," we also see a process of teachers producing a collective identity (Anyon, 2005) among RJE participants in schools. Irene also mentions that issues in her classroom are "handled in a restorative way," which reveals how, similar to social movements, RJE is implementing new norms and values with which to organize social life (Castells, 2015). Handling something "in a restorative way" is that new norm. If new norms organize social life in a movement, it is

very applicable to Irene's perceptions of her workplace, as she describes it as an organization:

> We don't really right now have coherence across our education system when it comes to restorative practices. Not everybody in every school, not every educator, not every politician, you know, not every organization. You know, within education, but also not every school like, not everybody has the knowledge and the understanding of restorative practices (Irene).

Irene's response also reveals that the movement has yet to grow across schools in the province.

An analysis of Tara's perception of her challenges reveals how, like social movements, RJE is agentic in nature. Similar to Irene's experience, Tara shares that some teachers amongst her staff fail to understand specifically the agentic nature of RJE – that student participation in its practices is voluntary. She describes:

> It's challenging when there's other teachers involved in your circle, who don't really quite get the whole big picture of the Circle of Restorative practices. And they're more into forcing them [the students] to use it because they want them to use it (Tara).

Tara therefore articulates that while some of her colleagues think they should force their students to use Restorative practices, it actually undermines its agentic nature.

With respect to the cultural production of RJE in schools, Tom's response identifies the need for the institutionalization process in his school, which instills a particular norm and set of conventions within a society (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). He recognizes that such conventions and norms are to be established within a regulative and normative environment among the teachers. Those teachers then participate in the process of habitualization (Berger and Luckmann, 1966) by repeating Restorative practices to the

extent that they can become practiced in the future by students. He affirms this when he states that the proper implementation of RJE "starts with the adults."

Zach's response about his challenges also indicates how teachers participate in a process of habitualizing a culture that they then reproduce among their students. He describes how the catalyst to healthy relationships in schools is healthy relationships among teachers:

> It has to focus more on your relationships with the adults that you work with. How do you interact with them? Are you being, are you honoring them, or are you measuring them? Are you being respectful and are you being relational to your colleagues? Because if you're not, it's very difficult to be relational with people.

Zach's response therefore reveals the cultural production happening with the colleagues in his school. That is, a culture of "being relational." Similarly, Tom indicates the need for a sense of commitment from staff to restorative practices, in order to be able to then transmit the culture to students:

> I guess the other challenge is I've heard Restorative Justice being discussed amongst my staff. And I'm aware that it has to start with the adults. Restorative Justice - for it to be properly implemented and for any relationship to be properly taught and demonstrated to students - is that it has to start with the adults. And the adult interactions on my staff are not always that healthy. Like, how can we expect the students to do what the adults are not? (Tom)

While the above examples are manifesting the teacher's challenges with RJE, what is latent in the responses is how RJE is functioning as a movement that is producing a culture in which teachers uphold their students to RJE's behavioural standards.

A "Paradigm Shift" in Thinking

Teachers shared challenges around their efforts to move from an individualistic culture to a "relational culture" or "restorative culture," both in the classroom and in the school overall. Among the challenges they encounter in the process are time constraints,

change of vision/perspective, as well as tendencies to move back to their old teaching habits. A "relational" culture values relationships and collaboration between individuals and considers all individuals within a given setting as interconnected. Zach describes that in order to transition to a relational culture, a "paradigm shift" in teachers' thinking is required, which changes their perspectives as to how they consider their work: "So, that paradigm shift happens for people's thinking, you know, it's not just about what you do in the school as about what you think about what you're doing" (Zach).

Zach then goes on to describe the conventional nature behind the "relational culture" that exists among teachers who are implementing RJE practices. He identifies building relationships with other individuals as a common value, which he believes that "anybody" would agree to:

> And then it was also having people understand exactly what kind of a shift we're talking about, like, if you say to anybody that… "Oh you know, I really value a relational culture," I mean, who is going to disagree with that, right? Like most people say, "Oh yeah, like relationships are important to me too." Right? But moving away from a more individualistic mindset to a more collaborative, relational mindset is a big shift (Zach).

The fact that Zach describes that many would agree on valuing relationships indicates that RJE teachers accept a relational culture as a conventional norm. Further, as he mentions that transitioning to a "relational mindset" is a "big shift," one can see a change in culture taking place within his school. Zach's illustration of the change in norms and culture not only reveals the establishment of a pattern of social relationships, as is the case in social movements (Zanden, 1959), but also how teachers culturally reproduce a particular standard of mindset and behaviour among their students.

Similar to other participants, Zach also shares that he considers the time commitment required to have Circle discussions as a challenge:

> Obviously, you want professionals to be independent, to a degree in their learning. But sometimes, especially with something that's such a paradigm shift, you also want to have a space created to have those discussions as a group. And, so, creating those spaces on a consistent basis was challenging just because of the time commitment (Zach).

Zach's struggle with creating that space and time for further implementation of restorative practices is yet another example of how, in their view, the state still has a level of control in the growth of the movement.

Conclusion

Teachers' efforts to recreate the conventional classroom to suit RJE practices represent one form of re-appropriating the classroom space. If we consider the state as the mediator of public institutions and structures (Butler 2012), we can see that it largely informs policies in schools. It therefore determines how space in a classroom is allocated, according to resources and spatial boundaries. What is being done with that space conforms to the state's educational objectives, which reveals that the state can control the growth of RJE as a movement.

Building relationships with students is fundamental to RJE, and time enables relationships to crystalize. Part of teachers' challenges with time is the pressure to cover curriculum objectives in a short period. Another common challenge for these teachers is getting other staff in the school to embrace it and build a "restorative community" in their schools, which reveals teachers' efforts build a common identity among those practicing RJE – another feature of social movements. Some participants find that their colleagues fail to understand the agentic nature of RJE – that student participation in its practices is

voluntary. Agency is also another feature of social movements, as participants get in involved out of their own volition. Many teachers also identified the need to habitualize restorative practices among teachers first, before they can teach them to their students, which reveals how they culturally produce behavioural standards in their classrooms. The participant responses in this chapter therefore reveal how social and cultural production, RJE as a social movement, and the religious fervour of its advocates are all interconnected themes in the data.

Chapter 5: “That’s Where I See the Success”: Teachers’ Perceptions of Success with RJE

I asked each teacher I interviewed about instances where they experienced success with implementing RJE. This allowed me to understand their perceptions of the success of the approach, and what inspires their fervour for RJE. The teachers all shared a common conceptualization of how RJE makes their work in the classroom successful. Their responses subsequently fell into the following subthemes: the successes outnumber the failures; further integration of students in classroom discussions; better academic performance; and change in power dynamics in the school. As I explore the themes around teachers’ perceptions of their successes with RJE, I will conceptualize its growth in schools as the emergence of a social movement in education. I will liken the teachers’ participation in restorative approaches to religious practice, and finally, will indicate how the teachers embrace RJ values with strong conviction, which enables them to reproduce that culture among their students.

In a common language of advocacy, teachers respond as though RJE practices are the cause of their successful relationships. For example, Maggie strongly speaks to the efficacy of the Circle, or what she calls the “Curriculum Circle”: “In a curriculum Circle, everybody shares, and everybody listens to what's being shared. So, you know, I use that a lot because it's really good” (Maggie). Teachers also foster production of a “Relationships First” culture, which prioritizes healthy relationships between individuals. The teachers do this by encouraging conversation between students, and the Circle serves a mechanism for doing so. The examples in this chapter of where teachers see the success in their implementation of RJE not only indicate processes of transmitting particular

habits, but also serve to fill in the gap in sociological research on how RJE is creating social production in classrooms.

The Successes Outnumber the Failures

Teachers have multiple definitions of where they see success when it comes to implementing RJE practices. Sonia defines it as sense of satisfaction about her work: “On a personal level, there's times when, you know, I have felt better about what I'm doing, which is one version of success” (Sonia). However, one common finding that threads the interviews together is that the teachers are relating their success back to the development of profound relationships in the classroom. Lily, for example, sees the success in her students forming positive relationships with one another through conversation: “You know, any conversation where I feel like, some understanding of someone's experiences has been developed by the other people who are supposed to be supporting them... I feel like...I feel like it's successful” (Lily). Further, she frames success around the extent to which she sees the engagement and comfort of her students in conversation: “When people are engaged and people are comfortable, it's all been very successful” (Lily). As teachers are workers within a school, all such quoted examples are instances where workers associate their work with providing benefits to other people (Grant, 2007) – benefits to students.

In spite of their challenges, teachers maintain strong relationships with their students – which is where teachers commonly view the success. As Joanna describes, “They all are... success stories [sighs]. Jeez, I mean, I've had so many” (Joanna). Joanna’s response is typical of how the teachers are framing their successes and challenges in the same way because even if teachers point out challenges or describe instances where

students challenged their approaches, they often connect those examples to a success story, as though it was an outcome of that challenge. For this reason, Lily considers each one of her conversations with students as positive: “I can't think of one that wasn't successful” (Lily). Furthermore, Sonia shares that it is due to the high success with implementing RJE that she continues to implement its practices: “I guess if there were more failures than success, I wouldn't still be doing it” (Sonia). Thus, for teachers, successes and challenges come hand in hand when it comes to working with RJE.

When asked about their successes with implementing RJE, teachers tend to respond quickly, but take longer to think of a response about their challenges. They tend to describe success as something they experience every day, and for that reason, indicated that the amount of success stories that they had were countless. For example, Tara immediately responded with laughter when asked about her success in the classroom: “I have lots of success stories” (Tara). Similarly, Joanna stated immediately, “Oh, my goodness, I got lots of success stories” (Joanna), and Lily shared with excitement, “My goodness, like specific stories, honestly, every single day” (Lily). Her positive emotions come directly through her response about her successes, as she answers in an energetic tone, “I’m feeling choked up because you asked me about this” (Lily). Thus, contrary to the apprehensive feeling I had about asking teachers about their challenges, her response ignited a positive feeling, which repeated itself with each interview, as I witnessed every teacher smile when asked about their successes.

Further Integration of Students in Classroom Discussions

Teachers also frame their success with RJE around instances of students who formerly were not comfortable speaking in class coming to participate more. Usually the

teachers connect this victory to the "Circle," that through repetition of conducting classroom discussions in the Circle, the students open up to their teachers over time. Joanna's recount of where she sees the success in her implementation of RJE indicates a shift in culture within the school. For her, one indicator of the change in culture is parents expressing that through participation in Circles, the children are better interacting with their peers:

> By the four years into it, it was like they were saying how welcoming the school was now and how open it was and how, you know, the children are coming home, they're talking about, you know, where they're sitting in the Circle and they're making talking pieces, and they're sharing their things. (Joanna)

Thus, such a change in the student interactions is what reflects the change in the cultural dynamics of the classroom. Furthermore, the meaning that human beings make of their social interactions is emergent, fundamentally creative and open-ended (Mead 1912). Within this context, culture is considered "shared understandings people use to understand their work" (Becker, 1982). Evidently, the success that Joanna associates with the student interactions is but one example of teachers associating meaning with implementing RJE in their work. Thus, the meaning that they associate with success is when a change in culture happens among their students.

Teachers also describe that success as students improving their relationships with one another. Similar to Joanna, Tara relates that success with forming relationships back to participating in the Circle discussions:

> Like there was children who are very, you know, wouldn't speak in class, ever speak in class, who are always speaking in class and… their confidence grew in all other areas as well. And, you know, that was something noted by like the music teacher and the gym teacher and other teachers that they had in previous years, that they've changed. They're, you know, they're doing so much more

> wonderful then. And I believe it was because of the relationships that they were developing with their classmates, and in that small group. (Tara)

Orienting students towards relationship-building builds trust. Students also learn to take turns and listen, thereby serving as a means of normalizing particular behavioural patterns in the classroom.

The teacher is a social actor in the elementary or high school classroom who plays a major role in the social environment of instruction (Hanselman 2018). As social actors, teachers are susceptible to social stereotypes. The perspectives, unconscious biases and behaviour that they bring to the classroom impact the experiences of students, as "practices and environment shape learning opportunities" (Hanselman 2018). Moreover, it is precisely those learning opportunities that reinforce the culture that the teacher is producing across social classes in the classroom. For the teachers I interviewed, students who have behavioural issues benefit greatly from the Circle practice, perhaps even more than their further advantaged peers. Tanya affirms that she has experienced instances of success in that regard: "In dealing with some behavioural issues and conflicts within the classroom, I've had some positive outcomes" (Tanya). Similarly, Donna finds that the Circle enables students with behavioural issues to overcome their anxiety and participate more fully in the discussions:

> I had a very high struggling student with high anxiety. And at the beginning of the year, he would do anything to get out of a circle, because he couldn't, it was just anxiety. And so, at the back of the room, he would pace back and forth. And it took him till March, till he would join the circle and actually talk. But little by little, every day, he'd be a little closer and a little closer and a little closer. So, my advice is don't give up on those kids. (Donna)

Evidently, Donna attributes her success with RJE practices to the student overcoming their behavioural issues, and she argues that the Circle was the main catalyst for it. We

see here not only how teachers define ideal behaviour, but also another example of teachers socializing students into compliance with RJE behaviours, such as participating in the Circle. Moreover, we see the significance of the teacher's faith in RJE. Donna's ability to persist with the student may have been due to her strong faith in the practice.

When describing instances of her success with RJE practices, Tanya's response also supports that of Joanna, as she describes that students in her class have become so accustomed to the Circle that they love it: "I've had students say that they really love Circles." She then further describes:

> I had a substitute last week who said that the students came in and asked if there's going to be Circle because they love Circle and, and I think the reason that they were asking is that the chairs had been put back behind the desks and they were put out because of that. (Tanya)

Similarly, Lily also describes how her students have become so habituated to the Circle that they begin to seek it out: "They're, like, 'Miss, you know, when are we meeting in Circle? Like, we have some stuff to talk about'" (Lily). Thus, Lily's response reveals how students' admiration for the Circle enables them to adopt it as part of their classroom practices. The habitus serves as a set of both formal and informal rules and customs of a society that through practice over time attribute pattern and meaning (Bourdieu 1974). Further, Joanna's indication of her students embracing and becoming accustomed to the Circle is also an example of how restorative practices have become part of the habits created in classrooms.

Sara defines the meaning of the Circle to her students, when she explains the "philosophy" of RJE practices to them: "We go through, you know, RJ practices and the philosophy behind it and we'll talk a little bit about Circles and what they can expect to

see" (Sara). Moreover, some teachers expressed the pleasure in seeing their students practice the habitus in relationships with their peers. Maggie discusses how over a week, she is able to reproduce among her students the restorative practices that she learnt, such as building relationships, which she encourages through team-building activities: "I believe, in a week of team-building, before you know it, it just transfers over into your kids working well in groups together and it's worth the time to take those five days" (Maggie). Similar to Tanya, Maggie also defines the success as the students implementing Restorative practices on their own, as a mode of conflict resolution: "They had a conflict on the playground at recess time and they came in and before their teacher got back to their classroom, they were sitting in circles and solving their problems. Now, there's some success for you." Thus, as the teachers articulate, the Circle becomes a regular part of the classroom practices, to which the teachers attribute meaning because therein the teachers see the success of RJE – a process taking shape through forming relationships. By gradually teaching students to become part of the Circle, or as Donna describes, to "little by little, every day" get "closer and a little closer," to participating in the discussions, the teachers transmit the habitus onto their students.

Teachers are also relating their success to their students' improvement in their academic life, which they connect back to the impact of the Circle. They support their argument by describing how the parents notice a change in their students' behaviour and attitude towards their schooling:

> Their parents personally contacted me and said, I don't know what's happening, but my kid wants to go to school, they want to get up. They've never wanted to go to school they've never wanted to get up and go to school right away in the morning they, you know, it's difficult to get them up out of bed. They want to be

> in school, they don't want to miss the Circle - whatever you're doing, keep doing it. So, they never want to miss Circle. (Tara)

With respect to the teachers' description of the change in culture in the schools, such instances are examples of production of behavioural norms associated with RJE.

The cultural practices in the classroom form part of the school processes that influence social reproduction (Lareau 1987). Thus, in classrooms where RJE is being implemented, it is evident from the teachers' responses that a process of cultivation of particular elements of cultural capital is taking place. Based on the teachers' responses, such a process occurs in the Circle discussions, and, as Joanna describes, making Talking pieces and sharing with one another.

Shifts in Power Dynamics

People's mode of thinking determines the fate of the institutions on which societies are constituted (Castells, 2015). For this reason, all teachers were asked about their perspectives towards the successes and challenges of RJE in their classrooms. In Newfoundland, RJE transcends being an educational approach but is rather, I argue, transforming how its advocates are thinking about and working in education. As described in the 2016 Summary Report of the Panel on the Status of Public Education in Newfoundland and Labrador, in Newfoundland, RJE is more so a "change in mindset, a new paradigm" (Anderson and Sheppard, 2016). Through my interest in this "change in mindset," I analyzed across my interviews how the teachers conceptualize this change in culture in their institutions. This theme around the change in culture emerged particularly in the participants' responses about the successes and challenges that they face with implementing RJE. As indicated in her discussion of the teachers' challenges with

implementing restorative practices, Irene describes how the “leaders” at the top of her “organization” (i.e. school) do not take RJE seriously: “Another hurdle I guess for me too is, again, not everyone kind of at the top of our organizations - the leaders in our organization” (Irene). However, she goes on to indicate that there is some minor progress in terms of embracing restorative practices in her “organization,” which she frames as a success: “I think we're moving there: when it comes to leaders in the organization, taking our roles very seriously, but also taking, you know, restorative practices and the relationship building seriously” (Irene). The various ways in which Irene frames power dynamics within her work merits emphasis here. She describes the shift in power dynamics in terms of moving from having “power over” to having “power with” people in her organization as another success: “And the need to kind of have power with people versus power over people is something I think that I'm definitely seeing permeates our organization. I think it's definitely something that's grown, definitely growing, and continues to grow” (Irene). Irene’s reference to the change in power dynamics is but one example of teachers referring to this shift taking place in their schools. In the analysis below, I will provide further reference to such examples but before doing so, it is important to pose the question, “How do these teachers describe “power”?

If one considers the school as an organization, power is indeed one of the best terms to connect Foucault’s ideas to the study of organizations. The Foucauldian terms disciplinary power and power relations are particularly exemplified in Irene’s response about where she views the success with RJE. Irene associates ‘power’ with working as a collective: “There's a lot of power that comes with coming together and understanding that we can have power with people versus power over people and understanding that

we're stronger together, and that we know more together." Further, Joanna explains, "Power means just sitting down calmly, having that discussion" (Joanna). The way in which the teachers I interviewed conceptualize power, then, is one that is realized when people are together "in the manner of speech and action" (Arendt, 1958). As Joanna describes from her experience, "I always wanted to be at their level. I didn't want to be the, you know, the boss or the power over them" (Joanna). These teachers' acts "are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities" (Arendt, 1958). Sonia describes that the way in which she maintains relationships with her students is by "being aware…that the teacher as …the one who has all the power in the classroom and makes all the decisions, trying to find times when that's not the case" (Sonia). Having power *with* individuals, then, is a common value at the heart of RJE approaches, and, in the teachers' view, is shifting the power dynamics of schools. They think they are maintaining power *with,* without breaking down the hierarchy. They are using their power differently from the traditional privileges that their authoritative power allows. Relating power back to how teachers view success, we see that even though they frame power as having power *with* students, teachers still conceptualize success as when students participate in restorative practices. Thus, if the teachers' wish for student participation is being accomplished, teachers still exercise a level of power *over* their students. The extent to which the classroom is "equitable" and bridges the social class divides, I would argue, is therefore questionable.

Among the definitions of disciplinary power are its application over others through institutionalization and deliberate organization (Foucault, 1982). As Zach describes, "Just by the nature of walking into a building as an adult, just by being an adult

over a kid, you've got power" (Zach.) Power relations are embedded in the state and in institutions of society such as the school, and all institutional systems reflect power relations (Castells, 2015). Zach's perception of adult power dynamics in schools further supports the aforementioned idea: "Just by the nature of the system, how it's structured, you have, whether you want it or not, you are given power over the kids that are coming into your space" (Zach). Thus, the teachers' responses indicate that in spite of the existing traditional hierarchy in the classroom, they think they are implementing a different form of power. They are advocating for change in their school's culture, across social classes, and in existing norms and conventions around cultural behaviours.

Interestingly, Irene indicates certain traits of disciplinary power within her school, that is, the deliberate organization of people, as well as state control of the school through pedagogical systems. She also speaks of instances of the movement and reconceptualization of power within her context. The fact that she discusses the movement towards "power with people" rather than "power over" as permeating throughout her school is a strong example. The deliberate effort to effect change in power relationships occurs through reprogramming networks according to alternative interests and values (Castells, 2015), such as those essential to the RJ philosophy. Among the alternative values that RJE claims to serve are managing relationships with and among students rather than managing their behaviour. For example, Tom describes that he prioritizes fostering relationships among the students in his classroom: "It's for me trying to manage 'how do we balance teaching explicitly and implicitly about relationships? How do you offer those experiences where my students can interact with each other?'" (Tom). Actors of social change, the teachers implementing RJ practices in their

classrooms are able to exert influence by employing alternative mechanisms of power that correspond to their ideals, such as the “power-with” approach in RJE. Subsequently, such observations merit rethinking RJE as a movement for social change in schools. It also speaks to the fact that, though RJE promotes equitable classroom environments, teachers are still exercising a level of power over their students when they act according to the teachers’ ideals.

RJ as a ‘Movement’ in Education

Based on thematic analysis of the interview responses and on social movement theory, I identify an emerging movement taking place in the schools of the teachers I interviewed. The type of movement which I am describing is not one of protest or violence, neither is it planned over social networks or with formal leadership. Its key message is a rejection of traditional teaching approaches, particularly the punitive disciplinarian practices within classrooms. While RJE also resists the rising sense of individualism and estrangement among today’s children and youth, it still focusses on sharing one’s personal thoughts about themselves, their feelings and stories in the Circles. For example, Maggie shares in regard to the Circle: “It’s a great way to have every voice heard in your room with something that's important that they need to talk about” (Maggie). Also, the Circle can also foster a sense of self-fulfillment in the students. Carrie discusses how she uses the Circle in her class for that purpose: “We'll do something like, "What are you really good at?" We were doing a circle on self-esteem and self-image, and how, you know, not bragging but to really acknowledge yourself and who you are and what you're good at.” Thus, Maggie’s and Carrie’s responses reveal that the Circle can

still nurture a student's sense of individuality in the way that it encourages them to make their voice heard and to talk about themselves.

The movement in question also encourages teaching styles that nurture student-teacher relationships and foster student inclusion in the classroom. Successful social movements need the support of an organization - which is precisely where the role of the school, if considered an organization, comes in. Speaking of her success with implementing RJE, Irene's description of her school as an "organization" (Irene) attests to its role in the movement. As indicated earlier, she describes how her "organization" is "moving" and "growing" (Irene) towards better supporting RJE. As one teacher describes her assumption of the Indigenous origins of RJE (which will be further analyzed in a subsequent chapter), she specifically labels RJ as a movement: "One of the main people that I think started the movement is an Indigenous person" (Ava). Her response indicates that not only is the conceptualization of RJE as a movement part of my hypothesis, it is also part of this teacher's definition of it. Furthermore, social and educational scholar Jean Anyon (2005) suggests that in order for policies to establish educational justice, social movements are required. I argue that as it gains further support by policies around education, RJE serves precisely as that movement taking place within schools in Newfoundland. It is, in the teachers' view, seeking justice, dispelling social class hierarchies, and changing norms and values in schools.

In light of the above, I wish to delve further and make the particular argument that the movement in question is a reformist one. Such movements target a specific segment of a society and work towards what its activists believe to be necessary change (Jansen and Plessis, 2016). The teachers whom I interviewed expressed concern around conflict

among students in their classrooms, a breakdown in relationships between children and youth, or moral laxity among them. Their goals are to use RJE and implement its practices such as restorative dialogue to restore relationships, to resolve conflict, to establish equity among students, and to reinforce a sense of morality in them. Reformist movements can also work with an organization that works towards change within a particular population. Likewise, the teachers whom I interviewed collaborate with the Relationships First: Restorative Justice in Education Consortium in Newfoundland, a research centre for educators in the province.

The teachers whom I interviewed indicate in their responses the movement towards RJE practices within their school. Some teachers also operate with a sense of passion that at times resembles religious fervour. With that passion, they sense responsibility to contribute to the growth of the movement. Lily, for example, describes how her passion inspires her to spread the work of RJE: “If Restorative Justice is a passion of yours, it's a passion of mine, and I'm trying to disperse the seed” (Lily). Amy describes how she experienced the passion even before her training: “I can't really say that I've had in depth training that some people probably had, but I had the interest, the passion and the opportunity” (Amy). Lily also indicates how this movement is manifest in conversations with her students: “Every single conversation that I have with them, I feel like we're moving forward” (Lily). Similarly, Sylvie describes how for her, RJE is a belief system that spreads (with challenges): “It's not impossible. But it's hard to get a lot of people believing in it” (Sylvie). Maggie describes how compared to previous years, teachers are moving towards implementing RJE practices, such as the Circle: “Thinking like back to 15 years ago when I was teaching back then…there was no such thing as Circles or you

know, stuff like that. [It was,] “Sit in your seat, and let's get on with it” (Maggie). More specifically, some teachers describe how they see movement away from traditional, punitive measures of dealing with harm and conflict in their careers: “An individual who's done harm has a voice in how they help to repair that harm, you know, which kind of moves away from the punitive side of things” (Irene). Maggie also describes her view that social isolation in society creates the need for RJE:

> We isolate ourselves. I find these days that people are, you know, in their own little family here and then the next little family is here. Like we don't often come out of our house to meet our people in our world, you know? Sometimes just stick in our houses and you don't know what's going on, right. So, we need to build good relationships. We're going to need people these days. (Maggie)

While the manifest function of the above response reveals the teacher’s perception of success in using RJE, the latent function is to reveal how they produce a culture that rewards behaviours associated with RJE, and that they feel equalizes all social classes. We see it is the teachers’ firm belief in it that feeds their sense of responsibility to implement RJE as a way to implement new norms for resolving conflict, and to move away from punitive, disciplinarian practices in education. Elizabeth, in fact, describes the approach as “restorative justice as a change” that is necessary due to the change in today’s children, who are no longer acquiring the cultural capital to form relationships with their peers: “This whole idea of building relationships is not happening in the wild, it's not happening naturally anymore. And I think that's where the skills got lost” (Elizabeth). Elizabeth goes so far as to describe how RJE is precisely that needed change that is causing social transformation in education:

> I'm sure Restorative Justice is going to be required in the school system within two to three years. This is coming. And we're getting into it now, so by the time it's a requirement, we'll have our heads wrapped around it. And that's important in

> education. In education, it's important to do things, to try new things. I know a lot of people are resistant to change, but change is coming, and you can either move with it, or resist it but eventually it's, you know, eventually going to end up in the same place. And you can either fight the current the whole way there or just go with it and get there a lot quicker. But I think…this is how it's going. This is the direction that the world is going in and it's the direction that education is going. (Elizabeth)

For Elizabeth, the magnanimity and transformative nature of RJE is creating change within education and beyond that, the world.

A movement tends to emerge out of the agency of a group of people. The type of agency to which I am referring is inspired by the Lockean theory, which states that humans are capable of controlling the circumstances in which they live (Littlejohn and Foss, 2009). Thus, if we consider the example of the students, we see that they have a level of control over the extent to which they commit to RJE practices. As Lily describes, "In order for it to become an interest and a passion of theirs, we have to help them understand it, you know, so that they're able to, you know, voluntarily and openly commit to it themselves" (Lily). Furthermore, when it comes to movements, the notion of agency raises the question of who the participating members are. It is a matter of who and what is being recognized in the emerging changes of the movement. In response to this question, I argue that the movement consists of school teachers, principals, vice-principals and guidance counselors, who, out of their agency and faith in the positive outcomes of RJE, are striving to implement it at all levels of their schools to foster positive social change and equalize social classes in such environments. Thus, it is not RJE as an approach that has agency, but rather the teachers, or as I consider them, activists for RJE. Their students, then, also exercise a level of agency in terms of how much they embrace the

practices. The students' participation is often encouraged by the extent to which their teacher encourages it. As Carrie describes,

> We try to pinpoint, like we try to do a topic that... today maybe this is going to be something I know I'm going to get you to participate in. I know you love skateboarding so we're going to do something to get you to participate today - that kind of thing. And sometimes it just takes them to participate once to realize "Oh, it's okay. I can do this" (Carrie).

It is also important to ask how the movement in question is connected to culture, and how the desired changes, such as moving towards relationship-based cultures, are being realized in social institutions such as schools. For this reason, I explore how RJ, as a movement in education, interplays with culture, particularly as I frame "fostering relationships" as a culture later on in this chapter. Central to this exploration is also the way in which, according to the teachers, cultural changes are happening in their classrooms and in their schools. Similar to the agency which social actors exercise in movements, teachers get involved in RJE out of their own agency, often voluntarily. Lily affirms, "Engagement is voluntary, we cannot force anybody into wanting to navigate through their experiences this way" (Lily). Similarly, Zach describes students forming connections and relating to one another through the Circle as an organic process:

> What was happening was very authentic. It wasn't something that was being forced. It wasn't something that, you know, they were doing because their teacher said, "Now you have to respect everybody." Like, it was just something that was happening naturally from one human being to another. (Zach)

Moreover, Zach describes how RJE makes more profound impact when it emerges out of individual initiative: "Restorative Justice, when you implement it, it can't be just superficial. It can't be something that is on the surface…So it's got to start with the person themselves" (Zach). He then describes how, similar to other teachers, participation in the

Circle is voluntary and that students who initially are not comfortable with being part of the Circle come to join it over time: “When you're creating the norms of what this [participating in the Circle] is, we talked about the fact that, you know, it's invitational” (Zach). Zach’s response reveals his view of the agentic nature of engaging in RJE, that it occurs through individual initiative, and the ones who engage in it need to embrace it wholeheartedly, in order to “create norms” (Zach). However, we also see that the way in which these teachers define success is creating circumstances in which students choose to participate in line with the teachers’ goals.

While diverse in their styles and opinions - as agents normally are - these teachers work towards a common set of goals and values that resist dominant teaching practices, and ultimately instill social change in education. When asked about how they came to implement RJE in their classrooms, the teachers often responded that they heard about the training offered by their school or the course at Memorial University and participated out of their own initiative. Carrie shares, “I volunteered; I was really interested in learning more about it” (Carrie), and Jamie describes, “I started taking the Relationships First course, and…my self regulation and social thing with the class kind of evolved into the restorative model” (Jamie). Similar to Jamie, Maggie shares, “I took two weeks out of my summer…and from there…it flowed into me using it in my classroom” (Maggie). Evidently, the teachers quickly integrated the practices into their classroom interactions organically, but also systematically.

Agents who participate in social movements also fit their convictions into their daily routines (Jasper, 1997). Tara’s routine is a great example: “For the past over 250 days teaching, I've done Circle, every single day. For the past two years. I can't imagine

starting my day any other way" (Tara). Her daily routine has also enabled her wholehearted embrace of the practice: "I had seen it in practice as well, and I started doing it and I couldn't stop" (Tara). Furthermore, every one of the teachers I interviewed indicated that conviction in the potential of RJE to create change within the culture of their schools and to make positive impact on their students through its relationship-building capacity. Donna shares, "I started seeing how all these fantastic practices were working in the community and the college…and I thought, 'Why wouldn't these work in my room, in my classroom?'" (Donna). Some teachers share how their classroom is moving towards a culture of community. Tara shares, "You know, you watch them become better listeners and become better speakers and more respectful towards each other in feeling that sense of community." Similarly, Zach connects his valuing the humanness of his students with fostering community: "But if you go to the core of it [what it means to be human], then it has to, it has to build a more cohesive community; It has to." Thus, the teachers' faith in the practices is transferred into their daily teaching pedagogies, molds their classroom interactions, and creates circumstances that resemble religious practice.

The work of social change is able to transform human life, and endow it with creativity, meaning, and a sense of morality (Ayres, 2013). For example, at the end of my interview with Zach, he encouraged me to ask teachers how RJE has transformed them inside as a person. Furthermore, Ayres (2013) associates the act of engaging in movements for the purpose of social change with religious practice. Teachers' involvement in RJE resembles the participation of social actors in movements, and movements, as I indicated, contain features of religious practice. For example, as I

conveyed earlier, Maggie's response, specifically the personal element where she describes implementing RJE practices "flowed into" her, alludes to a religious element of her experience.

In the following section, I will further demonstrate how teachers' advocacy for RJE, their fervour for it and adamant participation in its movement, stems from their religious belief in it.

Participation in RJE as 'Religious Practice'

The teachers' wholehearted conviction in the potency of restorative practices and the way in which it is guiding education has striking semblances to the faith that an individual may have towards a religion. The elements that one finds in religion such as culture, ritual, social life, and social order provided by institutions (Nepstad and Williams, 2007) are all implicated in the teachers' descriptions of RJE. The way in which the teachers describe their experiences with RJE also allude to an experience with the "divine" or "sacred" (Geertz, 2005). Sylvie equates the RJE approach to a religion: "I feel like, it's like a religion, almost like a new attitude, like acceptance" (Sylvie). She embraces it as a way of being and doing: "I want to do, and I believe in it, because I really do feel that Restorative practices, Restorative language… I believe that that is the future (Sylvie). Similar to Sylvie, when sharing how she came to use RJE in her classroom, Elizabeth concludes her statement with: "It is something I do believe in" (Elizabeth). Zach describes himself as someone who is "trying to not only use Restorative practices but *be* Restorative." Like Zach and Elizabeth, Lily has a firm belief in RJE, and she reveals how she embraces it wholeheartedly at all times:

> Purposefully, always, all the time, you know, it's not something you can turn on and off. It has to be something that you're living, you know, because they're absorbing everything like sponges. It's not just what you say, like, okay, it's Restorative Justice time. You know… it's always justice for all time. (Lily)

The teachers' responses therefore reveal that for them, RJE is where being and doing come hand in hand, similar to how religion is a lived experience.

Some teachers associate supernatural characteristics with their experience with RJE. For example, Lily describes the magic she feels in terms of forming bonds with students:

> I really truly find that it does not take very long for the magic to start to happen and for the comfort zones to start to develop. I really don't. I really believe it happens quickly. It's amazing. It's magic. (Lily)

Thus, what Lily shares about her experience with the 'magical' aspect of RJE mirrors the attributes of religion that Geertz (2005) defines, such as "the supernatural." I argue that it is that perception that makes teachers religious 'believers' in RJE, and moves them to participate wholeheartedly in the movement.

The structure of religion also relies on voluntary initiative (Clarke, 2009). As described earlier, the teachers I interviewed engage in RJE out of their own initiative, and three participants described how they participated in its training voluntarily. I also hypothesized the fact that RJE can serve as a means for teachers to socialize their students of lower social stratum into acquiring the cultural behaviours associated with the middle class. The above responses therefore build on Clarke's (2009) statement, and reveal how when teachers have religious belief in RJE, they participate wholeheartedly in the movement and produce that culture among their students.

From the sociology of religion perspective, a key component to the study of practices that are "religious" in nature is analyzing the institutions that facilitate those

practices and the moral conduct that they encourage in their followers (Edgell, 2012). Religion offers forms of practice that socialize children in a way that shapes their moral habitus (MacGregor 2008, Winchester 2008). As I indicated earlier in this chapter, a teacher who works with RJE teaches its practices to children and youth. In doing so, the teacher formally transmits its habitus onto the students. I further add to this argument that this habitus is moral in nature. What I am conveying here as "moral" is associated with qualities such as honesty, work ethic, personal integrity, solidarity, and consideration for others (Lamont et al, 1996). I argue that when teachers transmit the moral habitus in the classroom, it is most likely directed to students of lower socio-economic backgrounds. This is because socializing those students into the RJE moral habitus enables them to overcome the consequences of their low position on the social hierarchy (Bourdieu, 1984). It is for this reason that I argue that teachers are using RJE to produce a standard of morality, and feel success when students conform to it. The moral habitus is especially exemplified in the sense that certain norms around moral conduct are reinforced and rendered meaningful through the classroom Circle. As Maggie describes from her classroom Circle,

> In circle we have our card with the rules on it right. That one is up front, "listen respectfully." And that means we don't laugh at people when they say something, right. So, we just foster that, you know, there's constant reminders, every day (Maggie).

Beatrice establishes particular accepted norms in her classroom: "We set ground rules: this is acceptable, this isn't" (Beatrice). Similarly, Zach describes, "We talked about the fact that, you know, in order to participate, we need to respect other people, other people's thoughts and opinions in circle. And we try not to be judgmental" (Zach). Moral conduct

is also habituated in the classroom conversations. As Sonia describes, “We have conversations every day about, you know, try not to, you know, place value or judgment on other people's answers, or their abilities or, etcetera” (Sonia). Morality is therefore being emphasized here in light of the religious elements of RJE, and because, similar to religion, RJE morally socializes children. Considering the influence of religion on education, as the school is state supported, we can consider the public schools in Newfoundland as institutions of “purely secular moral education” (Durkheim, 1925).

The teachers I interviewed showed concern towards the future of their students, their sense of apathy and dwindling morality. Concerned about their students’ moral laxity, the teachers problematize it within their social context - the classroom. Thus, for them, RJE is a way to respond to such issues. If we compare the teachers’ responses to such issues to how religious education “equips, inspires and challenges” people of faith to “respond to pressing issues in their social context” (Ayres 2013), we see similarities in the way in which people of faith and those involved with RJE respond to the “pressing issues” within their “social context.” Tanya even points out the act of “practicing” RJE, and suggests it cultivates a sense of empathy in students: “Practicing Restorative Justice would allow us to realize how empathy is so important” (Tanya). Similarly, Lily describes how as role models, teachers set the standard for RJE practices and that, through its practice, they render the abstract real: “We're the role models so they [the students] begin to function, and to meet the expectation that you set. But you gotta be practicing it too in order for it to be real” (Lily). Similar to leaders in religious practice, the teachers serve as role-models, leading their students to practice something they believe firmly in. As such,

teachers working with RJE can be likened to people of faith, given the former's belief in its positive outcomes and in its practices.

Reflecting on teachers responding to and problematizing conflicts within their school motivates me to explore deeper the question of whether for teachers, RJE represents a form of social activism. If so, how does participation in such social activism inspire them to deepen their career identity as teachers and consider themselves as activists? Certainly, some teachers associate their role in RJE as promoting social justice. Sylvie's response is one example:

> For the last number of years, the Social Justice Club is something that I have always wanted to do. So, I'm in on that this year, so I'm hoping for like good things to do in that group. So that's like an extracurricular thing outside of the school community. And that's the only thing outside the classroom that fits within the sort of Restorative Justice realm. (Sylvie).

Thus, Sylvie positions her involvement in the Social Justice Club as outside of her school, yet within the "RJ realm." Moreover, the teachers see their work in extracurricular activities as the space where they form deeper bonds with their students. Amy describes:

> There's a lot of teachers in that school who value relationships with students and connection and are heavily involved in extracurricular activities, and those spaces where you can more deeply connect, so it happens a lot in the school that I'm in. (Amy)

For Amy, the extracurricular activities are spaces for making profound connections. However, I argue that this activism begins with the teacher's fervent belief in RJE. As Lily describes,

> I sort of began to follow [it] myself, that was something that struck a chord with my own views. And it just seemed to be the first thing that put into a formalized concept what it was I was feeling was working well as I was working with other people. (Lily)

Like that of the other teachers, Lily's response reveals the elements that make RJE a social movement whose advocates believe in it fervently, and practice it almost religiously.

Fostering Relationships as a Culture

If we consider religion as an "organized field of activity" (Penny 2012), we can see its cultural dynamics. RJE fosters certain norms – at its core being the "relational" culture, that is, prioritizing relationships and seeing all human beings as relational with another. Tara describes her idea of teaching as such: "For me, teaching is all about relationships" (Tara). Zach describes this culture as a core component of a safe school: "Building a relational culture is paramount to having a safe school" (Zach). Irene describes how a relational culture is emerging amongst the staff in her school, as they share their learning about restorative practices with one another:

> It's definitely helped create a culture of like a really strong relational culture within our group. But when I share in a day with the staff that I work with, I also feel I walk away feeling much closer to them and to the school and connected to the school. And sometimes that's just after one day, like maybe five to six hours together. Like I feel close to this team at that school but I also really feel that they're closer. And a lot of times, like the feedback is always very positive after like a day of learning about restorative practices. (Irene)

Irene's use of the term "culture" further reveals the impact of RJE, which is changing the culture within schools, not only at the level of the classroom but also amongst the staff. Zach's response also attests to the impact of RJE on school cultures. For him, in his school, RJE "is now, I think, part of the school climate, certainly part of the school's culture, how they do things." Further on in the interview, he describes that as elementary students spend more time with one teacher in a day rather than with several, students have more of an opportunity to develop relationships with those teachers, and as such,

elementary schools are typically more adaptable to the “relational culture.” He states, “just by the nature of how a primary elementary school is structured... it's more, conducive, I believe, to having a relational culture” (Zach). Thus, certain structures must already be in place in order for a school to be open to adopting the “relational” culture. Another part of Zach’s response also merits attention. He describes the influence of diversity on fostering a “relational” environment within a classroom Circle: “In all cases I have seen where there was diversity within a circle, no matter what kind of diversity we're speaking of, it has improved the relational culture of the environment” (Zach). Similarly, Maggie’s response also supports diversity in the classroom when it comes to forming relationships:

> How are student relationships in class impacted by diversity? Well, I think that it's impacted very positively because they get to learn about other cultures. They learn a language that they wouldn't know, traditions, they learned so much from them [from Syrian students in the class].

Thus, the above responses reveal teacher perceptions of the “relational” culture in either the RJE classroom or the school overall. While one teacher describes it as a culture that inspires the interactions of the teachers and her connection to the school, another describes how the “relational” culture influences the operation of the school. Yet another describes how diversity in the classroom strengthens the “relational” culture. However, all teachers’ responses quoted here attest to the existence of a “relational” culture.

If we delve further into how culture interplays into the classroom, we can draw connections between culture and performativity. By referring to culture as shared understandings people use to understand their work (Becker, 1982), I will link culture to performance. Performance constitutes any practice that involves creating new values and

ideas (Juris, 2014). When social activists culturally perform in social movements, they produce alternative meanings and values (Juris, 2014). However, such performance is not associated with mass direct action, street march or protest. Rather, social activists use performance in order to communicate with the whole or part of a society and to convey resistance to dominant practices. In the case of RJE teachers, they are performing restorative practices within the school, resisting conventional teaching practices, and in doing so, believe they are producing new values and ideas across a diversity of social classes – values associated with building relationships. If we consider the teachers as social activists within the education system, we can examine the role of performance in creating different emotions and meanings among activists. Social activism begins with identifying a social problem and inquiring further into it in order to find a solution, then taking action towards resolving it. Such is what professionals such as physicians and psychiatrists do (Cox, 1993), and I would argue, is what RJE teachers are doing. As generators and disseminators of knowledge, teachers also play an essential role in the life of society. Influential members of a society, teachers can more adequately identify areas of concern in schools, particularly in their work as educators of children and youth. Through RJE, they are taking action to respond to their concerns and implement Restorative practices in order to achieve a desired outcome, such as better relationships among students. Given their position, the work of RJE teachers falls in line with activism. For this reason, I identify them as activists.

Conclusion

The examples in this chapter, where teachers see the success in their implementation of RJE, not only indicate processes of transmitting habitus, but also

instances of a social movement occurring in education and a relational culture forming in classrooms. Teachers are defining success as the students' implementing Restorative practices on their own, particularly as a mode of conflict resolution. More specifically, the students' admiration for the Circle has enabled them to adopt it as part of their habitus of classroom practices. One common finding that weaves the interviews together is that the teachers are relating their success back to the development of profound relationships in the classroom. As I articulated, relationship-building is part of the culture that RJE teachers are forming in their classrooms. I also discussed how teachers orienting students towards relationship-building can be considered a means of social production of behavioural patterns. The teachers also presented the Circle as a major example of a practice which they are culturally transmitting onto their students. For them, producing these behavioural patterns across the social classes of their students creates more inclusive learning environments and minimizes social class hierarchies.

Framing teachers as actors of social change in schools allows us to see that these teachers believe RJE serves as a catalyst for social change in schools. Teachers also describe a change in culture occurring in their schools. Their responses reveal that they use Restorative practices to provide their students with conflict resolution skills and to habitualize middle class behavioural norms.

Having power *with* rather than power *over* individuals is a common value among RJE teachers, which they believe is shifting the power dynamics of schools. However, their association of students participating in Restorative practices with accomplishment also reveals a degree of power *over* the students. It is also evident from their responses that teachers sense a level of responsibility to implement RJE as a way to respond to

social isolation, or to move away from punitive, disciplinarian practices in education. The teachers' faith in the practices is also being transferred into their daily teaching pedagogies and molds their classroom interactions. Their responses reveal that RJE has either resonated with their beliefs or given them a whole new belief system to live by. It is this belief that makes them part of a community whose approaches resemble religious practice. Morality was also a central concept in the chapter due to my references to the religious elements of RJE, and because, similar to religion, RJE morally socializes children.

Chapter 6: Teachers Experiences with the TRC, Diversity, and Fostering Safe and Inclusive Environments

Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), Justice Murray Sinclair's statement, made in his keynote at St. Francis Xavier University (STFX) on 8 November 2016, inspires this segment of my research. He stated, "education holds the key to reconciliation. It is where our country will heal itself" (STFX, 2017). Truth and Reconciliation Commissions focus on Restorative Justice principles such as responding to harm and restoring relationships impacted by violence (Androff, 2012). One of the operating themes in Canada's TRC centers around healing. Similarly, Indigenous scholar F.R. Graveline (2003) describes how an Aboriginal participant in her study of Talking Circles as pedagogy establishes a link "between healing and reciprocity in revitalizing Self-In-Relation to family and community." When speaking about the motivation behind his participation in Talking Circles, he states, "I've got to keep healing" (p. 149). Given that the discourse and literature on RJE commonly refers to healing and reconciling relationships, a major component of my research examines RJE teachers' understanding of reconciliation.

In this chapter, I examine the question of how RJE is promoting inclusive and supportive classroom environments. Specifically, I analyze how the teachers describe diversity among their students. It is for this reason that I investigated the connection between RJE and diversity in the classroom. I also examine teachers' awareness of the TRC, and their views on how restorative practices are facilitating reconciliation. I then analyze the responses of participants who suggested incorporating Indigenous history in

teacher training curriculum, along with another common theme that emerged in their responses: fostering safe classroom environments.

Teachers' Perceptions of Diversity

This section examines teachers' perceptions of the dynamics of social classes in their classroom. Overall, the findings indicate the way in which the participants define "diversity." I also analyze how they describe the ethnic, gender and socio-economic dynamics of their classrooms, as well as their perception of how RJE affects whether or not they perceive those dynamics.

Typically, of the teachers I interviewed, the ones who taught high school were more easily able to identify diversity among their students. A common finding in the teachers' responses was that elementary students are more interactive across diversity than middle school and high school students, who tend to group together according to race or social class. For example, Donna's response attests to the above, which leads her to question in her response what happens to a student as they encounter those years between age 9 and 19:

> These are kids self-selecting where to sit at lunch. You will not see that at an elementary school. At an elementary school, they play with everybody, and they do not care if you are rich or poor. They don't care what your skin colour is. They just care if you're nice and if you're friends. And it's just amazing to me what happens between the time you're nine and the time you're 19. I don't know. I don't have the answer for that. But it's something that I see being in schools every day (Donna).

In light of Donna's response, a question for further research is, "How do those changes occurring during that age range manifest in students' behaviour such that teachers can more easily recognize socio-economic diversity among them in comparison to elementary students?"

Another emerging theme is that the closer the school to central St. John's, the more easily the teachers discuss diversity. For example, Carrie describes hers as "one of the most ethnically diverse schools in NL" (Carrie). Jamie describes her school in a similar way: "I think the kids, they all had a pretty good understanding and pretty good appreciation for the different backgrounds people came from. Because it was a very diverse school" (Jamie). Moreover, Tanya describes her school as an ESL school, that there is a diversity of backgrounds, and that many children were from refugee families. However, the further outside of urban areas the school is, the more lack of ethnic diversity the teachers identify among their students. Sylvie's description of the different schools where she taught attests to my observation:

> Last year, I taught at a school…which I guess is considered a more rural school. So, there wasn't much diversity there, you know? You know, kids had very similar backgrounds, came from very similar families, right. So, you know, there wasn't a lot of diversity. But now this year, where I'm at…There's much more cultures represented and languages and ethnicities. And that is great. I love that. So currently, in my classes, I do have typically more diversity than I would in a rural school.

While some classes consist of minority students, they tend to be majority White across schools in Newfoundland. For example, when I asked Sonia, who teaches outside of St. John's, how student relationships in her class are impacted by diversity, she responded: "Diversity or the lack thereof?" (Sonia). She then describes how the location of her school impacts that lack of diversity: "They seem a little bit clueless about, you know, things outside of that little bubble of [the name of the city]…There's definitely not a lot of exposure to, you know, other ideas or other cultures or... yeah, it's, it's pretty homogenous…" (Sonia). Joanna, who also teaches outside of St. John's, describes her

school in a similar way: “So within our school, it was like, there was no diversity” (Joanna).

The teachers also varied in the way in which they interpreted the meaning of “diversity.” Their perceptions of diversity transcend the options I gave them (i.e. diversity of gender, of socio-economic status, of race and ethnicity). For Jamie, diversity also encompasses personality, cognitive abilities, and skills: “Diversity is more ways than just... like coming from different countries and stuff - that's *part* of diversity” (Jamie). When describing diversity in her class, Jamie goes on to include students with various disabilities: “There was a student also, that had cerebral palsy and very non-verbal skills” (Jamie). Similarly, Zach associates diversity with the various learning needs of the students and not so much with ethnic, social class, and gender dynamics. He describes the layout of one of his classes in the following way: “This room, by the way, had a very high concentration of students who required more targeted and more intensive interventions to support their learning not only in literacy, numeracy but in social and emotional learning as well” (Zach). Tara also describes diversity in terms of different academic abilities. When I asked her how she thinks relationships in her class are impacted by diversity, she immediately asked, “Diversity in what regard?”. Although I clarified that diversity could indeed encompass academics, social class, or gender, Tara describes her classroom as follows: “I have like different groups of kids.” She then elaborates, “Children with, you know, focusing issues and ADHD are on the spectrum and different learning disabilities.” In that same response, she says, “and then I've had kids who are very independent and they, you know, they need very little support in their learning” (Tara). Tara’s response

therefore reveals that she relates “diversity” to the diverse learning and academic abilities among students in her class.

When discussing diversity, some teachers also go into the French Immersion/English divide and connect it to social class and/or race. For example, by the tone of her voice, Ava seemed to associate with confidence her French Immersion students with being White and described French Immersion classes as consisting predominantly of White, upper-middle class students, and English language classes consisting of students from a lower socio-economic status. Similarly, Zach also connects affluent homes to French Immersion students and less affluent homes to the English stream:

> Overwhelmingly, the majority of students who were coming from... I don't like to use the term "upper class" but, like, people who are coming from, from homes where generally speaking, the families probably would have had parents who are more educated (like I'm just thinking about the social determinants, right), would have been in French immersion. And the students that were coming from the more working class, poor environments would have been in the English stream (Zach).

Maggie also connects the English/French divide to socio-economic diversity and describes how it affects relationships across the social strata:

> No one feels left out because they're not as well off as anybody else, you know? Yeah. And I think our parents of the children who are more affluent really do encourage them to be good to the to the kids who aren't as fortunate as what they are. So, you know, we probably have a very Restorative bunch of parents also for the most part, you know? I really think we do because lots of times they look after our English children just as much as they look after their own, you know? Some of those parents will send in money for kids to go skating or, you know, for other kids who can't afford it. It's beautiful (Maggie).

Evidently, working with RJE influences not only how Maggie perceives the behaviour of her students, but also that of the parents, as she terms them “Restorative” parents. When I

asked Sonia to describe the social class dynamics of her class, she also connected the social class divide to a French-Immersion class:

> I feel like the schools somewhere in the middle, they do an interesting thing, where, you know, you've got your French immersion class, which generally tends to skim off, people consider, you know, the best students or the most motivated parents, etc. (Sonia).

Further, I noted that when I asked Carrie about the social and cultural backgrounds of students who "demonstrate negative withdrawal" towards her teaching, she responded that it's kids who "tend to get their own way at home. And they tend to have everything smoothed out for them. And they don't have to do anything that makes them feel uncomfortable" (Carrie). Carrie goes on to share that in her view, the behaviour of those students is connected to their family's educational status and home environment rather than their ethnic or cultural background:

> The children who come from homes where, you know, education is valued, and there's consequences, and respect is required - I've never had any kind of issue with those children. But there's no, you know, different cultures, or, you know, no races or any kind of differences that way (Carrie).

Similarly, when discussing social class, Jamie also emphasizes that behaviour is what distinguishes students from one another rather than social class:

> It's not really a "class" system as much as like, how kids behave puts them in a class. So not their backgrounds as much as how they act in the classroom. So, there wasn't a big judgment for "this kid's poor," or "this kid's this" and stuff as much as their behaviour (Jamie).

Thus, when responding to the social class dynamics of their classrooms, teachers are connecting social class to either the students' decision to commit to the French Immersion program, the behaviour of the students and of the parents, as well as the parents' educational level. Evidently, social class is an element that they perceive.

Perhaps the reason for which some of the teachers' descriptions of diversity in general deviated from the options I provided them is that they may not take aspects such as ethnicity, social class and gender into consideration on a usual basis. While Tara's response is an indication that she perceives diversity differently from the options provided in the interview guide, other teachers more directly articulate that they do not take diversity as much into consideration. For example, when I asked Sonia how relationships in her class are impacted by diversity, she immediately responded, "It's funny. I haven't thought about that in that way" (Sonia). Similarly, when I asked Zach to describe the ethnic dynamics of his classroom, he responded: "I never really, I haven't really thought about it through that lens to be quite honest with you" (Zach). In spite of the fact that he explains that his school "has always been… a very diverse and inclusive school," he says, "I've never really thought of it. You know, I have to think about that a bit" (Zach). Interestingly, the responses here reveal that while the mandate of their work produces middle class behaviours and an RJE culture in the classroom, it is not something that the teachers think that they are conscious of. I argue, however, that if the teachers can explain diversity, no matter how they define it, it is something they can perceive in their students.

In terms of the way in which teachers describe that diversity impacts the relationships between their students, they particularly explain how it interplays in the way students group together. If a classroom is not racially or culturally homogenous, students of the same background still typically group together. Sylvie describes:

> If I can think about the bigger schools where I taught that have more diversity, it seems like unfortunately, there's not a lot of intermingling. Like you have the international kids, they may have, like, a few, you know, kids on Student Council and, who like hang out with them. It seems like the international students are like, you know, they hang out with other international students, ESL kids who might be

> like immigrants, refugees, or you know, newcomers to Canada, again, they tend to stick to their familiar classmates, you know? (Sylvie).

Jamie also had a similar experience as Sylvie in the larger, more diverse schools where she taught:

> The odd time they would mix up, but there was still a bit of almost a… Like I said, when you travel away, for example, if you're living in a different country and you find someone else from Canada or someone else who speaks English, you tend to kind of mesh a bond with them. And so, in some ways, that's what it was. It was like, if someone else spoke Arabic, they joined. But for the most part, they got along very well, and they appreciated the differences and stuff like that (Jamie).

Another noteworthy aspect of Jamie's response is her comment on the benefits of mixing students from the French Immersion stream with those in the English: "As frustrating as it was, sometimes that exposure was very powerful for them, I think, and would've been probably better than the experience they would have had if they were the same group all the way up through" (Jamie). Similar to Jamie, Lily also experiences frustration in dealing with different elements of diversity, but she also finds hope in the fact that it is being prioritized:

> So while I still see that diversity at times, causes frustration, and causes tension... it's being prioritized by our schools, and that it's not something that's being ignored anymore; it's actually becoming the priority, which is reassuring. It doesn't go ignored (Lily).

When asked about times where she sensed tension among students of different backgrounds, Maggie shares that she overlooks those differences:

> Sometimes I do find that. I try not to pay much attention to it like I try not to bring it to the forefront, very much because sometimes the more attention you give something… you know... it gets bigger and bigger, right. It's like practicing your misery. If you get up every day and recall all the problems you got in your life, you're gonna remember them really well because you remember them every day. So, I try not to give it much attention (Maggie).

Maggie therefore problematizes the tension across the students' various backgrounds and tries to avoid it all around. Meanwhile, she advocates for the Circle as the solution to the tension:

> However, you know, when you do get tension... you do have to deal with it. That would be a Circle, just sit in Circle and get everybody's opinion and find out, you know, what's going on. And, you know, have conversations around them (Maggie).

When I asked how Tanya how student relationships are impacted by diversity, she shared that it is positive, that students are accepting of it, and tend to help one another:

> I think that when students from different ethnic backgrounds are willing to talk about their ethnic backgrounds, it becomes a really informative situation for most of the kids. I find that for the most part, the kids are very accepting…

While it seems that in Tanya's junior high context, the impact is positive, she did not seem to share a great deal on the topic.

A few teachers spoke about gender and various personalities in their schools when I asked how they think diversity impacts relationships in the classroom. For example, Jamie speaks about how diversity of personalities, learning abilities and needs impacts how the school arranges class lists:

> When they try to coordinate classrooms, the two English classes, they really try and balance the personalities. Someone said, they know what kind of, you know, the stronger personalities are trying to split them up, and the higher needs and trying to split them up. So, there was balance in each classroom, for the amount of kids that would need academic support and behaviour support." (Jamie)

Sylvie brought up how gender impacts the dynamics of her classroom. She even shared on her own whether across genders, students respond to RJE differently:

> Gender dynamics definitely play a role in the classroom. Definitely. Yeah, for sure. It's good to have a balance. I'm not really sure, like, the Restorative Justice realm like, I haven't noticed, like a difference in attitudes towards like, restorative

> justice, you know, between boys and girls, they all sort of seem to participate the same (Sylvie).

Overall, the teachers' responses indicate that while students of the same background naturally converge, the teachers still tend to promote diversity in an RJE classroom. Very few responded as to the direct relationship between RJE and their ability to perceive those dynamics of the class. However, the teachers were able to perceive diversity, in its various forms, in their classrooms, even if they claimed not to take it into consideration.

Teachers' Awareness of the TRC

I asked my participants, "Are you familiar with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action around education?" If the participant responded yes, I asked, "How do you view the role of RJE as contributing to reconciliation? That way, the respondent had an opportunity to speak about their experiences with RJE and reconciliation, but only if they are familiar with the TRC's Calls to Action. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was established as a response to the Indian Residential School legacy (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada [TRC], 2015). It is a testament to the historical injustices that Indigenous Peoples experienced, as well as a commitment to working mutually towards a better future and to cultivating relationships grounded in respect (TRC, 2015). By asking teachers about their awareness of the TRC, I was able to address one of my main research questions: "What are teacher's challenges and experiences with implementing Restorative Justice Education?"

When I asked the participants about their awareness of the TRC, five responded "yes," four responded "no," and eight responded that they were only slightly familiar with it. Of the participants who answered "yes," four were elementary school teachers and one

was a high school teacher. Of the participants who answered “no,” all of them taught at the elementary school level. Of the participants who responded, “a little bit,” only three of the eight were high school teachers. Generally, “a little bit” encompasses responses such as, the participant has only heard of the TRC, or that the participant is only familiar with certain aspects of the Calls to Action. For example, a typical response of that nature was, “I know some of it. I'm not like in tune to all of it” (Joanna) or “I don't recall it, but I feel I've definitely read, I've definitely seen or read or heard about it before” or “I wouldn't say that I'm familiar of all of like each recommendation or whatever but yes, I obviously have heard of that before” (Zach). Overall, if the participant was not familiar with the TRC, they taught at the elementary level. Some, but not all, acknowledged RJE’s origins in Indigenous traditions. Of those who did, they all upheld respect for its history and acknowledged the cultural origins of the practice, and what that means for them as a settler. Amy describes that she’s not very familiar or confident in her knowledge of the TRC but that she would like to learn more: “Because I'm not as far along as I'd like to be, I almost would prefer some professional development on… just education on it in general” (Amy). She suggests that there should be more learning opportunities for teachers: “If you want, you know, teachers to be able to help with that, you also need to help us to become more familiar” (Amy). Further on in her response, Amy suggests, in a bit more detail, how that familiarization can happen: “I think the key is to ideally educate about the history, or at least acknowledge the things as they come up in the media” (Amy). Amy’s suggestions seem to be addressed to those who are developing teacher training materials in NL. Her response reveals her desire to learn more about Indigenous communities in order to be able to contribute to reconciliation. She also provides detailed

suggestions of ways in which RJE can integrate education on the colonial history of Indigenous communities and support individuals who continue to be affected by the consequences:

> I think the education piece needs to be there of "Hey guys, like this is what the Sixties Scoop was. This is what residential schools are. This is why a lot of the communities that we know of in Newfoundland and Labrador have issues with alcohol abuse, why suicide rates are high, why there's towns in Labrador calling for... saying that there's a suicide crisis in their area. Like here's why this is the case, and so, now that you know of it, what part do we play or what part can we play to help anybody who's connected to these communities?" And so, how do you do that? Teacher Education, or you have somebody who comes in, I mean, ideally, it'd be a person from an Indigenous group that will share that story, right? That's ideal (Amy).

Amy's response is quite significant to this analysis, as her perspective as a settler educator who sees the need for Indigenous Peoples' perspectives in pedagogy is noteworthy. While Amy speaks to incorporating education on the history of Indigenous Peoples in schools and in teacher training, Sonia suggests educating students on the cultural history of RJE and some of the practices with which they're working:

> Using Talking Circles without having some other, you know, deeper culture of relating to each other and understanding how that works, like... you really risk having it fall flat, like really causing some serious harm. And that's why it's so important that teachers have, you know, some actual formal training in RJ (Sonia).

My interview with Sonia was the first in which I saw a teacher draw the link between RJE and the responsibility to be aware of the cultural history of RJE practices. Elizabeth also speaks about responsibility, but frames it in terms of each person being accountable to contributing to reconciliation:

> The idea of Restorative Justice just as a social concept is important because it's like, you get a lot of people saying, "Well, why should I have to make up for things that I didn't do?" It's like, well, you know, like the world is broken and we need to fix it (Elizabeth).

Elizabeth therefore positions reconciliation as something that concerns everyone. She connects it to her larger view of the world's current problems.

While the participants acknowledged the cultural and historical context of RJE, they also indicated the need to learn more about its Indigenous origins. A teacher like Tanya, who works in a high school, expresses the wish to become more acquainted with the TRC's Calls to Action for education but that time constraints are a barrier for her:

> I'm somewhat familiar, but extremely interested in it. I guess it's because of time limitations that I haven't been able to delve into it more. I really want to delve into it more. I have quite a lot of respect for the Indigenous People and I feel that they've been wronged. And I feel that the description that's been used about them, you know, in terms of "social genocide" is accurate, and I see that as Canadians, we have to work really hard to try to find ways to reconcile with them (Tanya).

In spite of her time constraints to learn more, she speaks to an evident need for reconciliation. Carrie, who teaches elementary, feels that the process of reconciliation is taking place, as she sees efforts to heal the "harm" that has been done. She associates reconciliation with healing: "I'm not overly familiar but, I believe that the Indigenous Aboriginal peoples now have a voice. We're listening to what happened to them in the residential schools, acknowledging their pain and their harm and, you know, trying to heal" (Carrie). Like Carrie, many of the teachers I interviewed commonly used the term "harm" in their responses, often referring to harm that has been done to a relationship. Similarly, in its Mandate, the TRC also uses the term "harm" when describing the truth and reconciliation process as an affirmation that Indigenous Peoples experienced "injustices and harms," and that there's a necessity for "continued healing" (TRC, 2015). Hopkins (2011), in her guide to implementing Restorative Justice approaches, describes that the harm can be "psychological or emotional as well as physical or material." Using

the restorative approach, teachers avoid that harm by encouraging empathy and consideration for others when speaking, acting or making decisions (Hopkins, 2011). Hopkins's (2011) definition of harm gives context to the way in which teachers describe how elements of RJE can mend the historical "harm" that has been done.

Tom describes how he finds that elements of RJE facilitate reconciliation by encouraging individuals to see through another person's perspective: "I think Restorative Justice has a fantastic, pivotal, actually, role in that, to facilitate. Because...reconciliation involves understanding, and perspective taking. So, I think that's huge" (Tom). Furthermore, the following response from Irene illustrates how teachers use empathy in their implementation of RJE practices: "Coming from a space of empathy - and Circles help to build empathy for others - and that's a really powerful thing for me" (Irene). Tanya describes below how empathy in RJE enables reconciliation:

> I feel that we have a lot of work to do with the Indigenous People to reconcile with them. And I feel that the piece about Restorative Justice that allows us to become more empathetic would give us… practicing Restorative Justice would allow us to realize how empathy is so important in understanding what has happened to them throughout the years and what they're still going through, so that we can bridge that gap between the Indigenous and the White people who have colonialized the whole situation…(Tanya)

Similarly, Amy speaks to how RJE can facilitate the healing process but that a deeper understanding of the depth of required healing is also needed:

> I think like when there's a hurt or mending to be made, Restorative Justice can be really effective but at the same time, there's got to be a certain degree of acknowledgement and understanding of the depth and the degree of hurt that Indigenous folks as a population have experienced (Amy).

Sylvie also discusses how RJE allows individuals to practice empathy as they become more educated on the circumstances of Indigenous communities. She speaks about how it also enables her to encourage her students to see through another person's perspective:

> And we talked about residential school system, and just how that, you know, the domino effect and how that caused a lot of emotional problems, mental health, and substance abuse in communities, and how families for the next generation and the next generation and how that, you know, there's a trickle-down effect. And just trying to get your students to see things from another perspective. And enforcing in them that you are in a position of privilege and your experience is…a very narrow experience. You have to try and think of what, you know, brought that person to where they were. So…currently, with Restorative Justice, I think it's important to encourage people to see things from another perspective, and to have empathy and try and realize that their position in society is not the only perspective (Sylvie).

Although the teachers commonly used the term "harm" when speaking about reconciliation, acknowledging that harm has been done to the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples, only the responses of a few indicated reflections on how they think that harm was caused, and what it looked like. Sylvie and Amy were among those few.

As we ponder the teachers' responses about reconciliation, it is also important to consider between whom the teachers think the reconciliation is happening or needs to happen. As indicated above, for Tanya, reconciliation needs to happen between Indigenous Peoples and those who "colonized." Interestingly, similar to Zach, who uses the term "us," Carrie uses "we" in opposition to "them" when talking about Indigenous Peoples, which raises the question of who exactly is doing the "listening," "acknowledging *their* pain," and "trying to heal." Furthermore, it is possible to consider, from the perspective of the teachers I interviewed, to whom they think the Calls to Action apply.

Usually, the teachers I interviewed associate the Calls to Action with historical affairs pertaining to the Indigenous communities in Canada. When responding about his awareness of the TRC, Tom describes how he views his role in responding to its Calls to Action, particularly as a settler Canadian:

> I totally realize that I have a role to play in, in digitizing and facilitating the indigenization of [pauses] Canada. But I also realize my role and privilege as an ally in that it's not to say, "It's somebody else's job to do." It's, it's not my story to tell, but I want to help my students. And... I will help my students and my parents, and their families tell their story. But I guess what I can do is help acknowledge my story…I guess, my heritage story as a settler, and what does that mean.

Interestingly, Tom associates his role in responding to the TRC's Calls to Action with Indigenizing Canada, but he also suggests that Indigenization begins with contemplating the implications of his heritage as a settler. Moreover, of those teachers who were only familiar with the TRC to a certain extent, many had a great deal to share in terms of their view about the role of RJE in contributing to reconciliation. Their responses raise the question of whether for those teachers, RJE represents a way of reacquainting themselves with the history of Indigenous Peoples, and perhaps, rekindling relationships with such communities.

Across the responses, we see yet another example of how the teachers are using RJE to morally educate their students. In doing so, they are producing a culture of behaviours associated with RJE. Regardless of their knowledge of the TRC or Indigenous history, they do advocate for RJE as a solution to current social issues.

How Teachers Define Reconciliation

Only some participants had thoughts to share about the link between RJE and the TRC's Calls to Action for education. They tend to describe that the empathy and

relational aspects of RJE open doors for reconciliation. It was interesting to see the concepts the teachers discussed when I asked them about reconciliation - this was indicative of what they associate reconciliation with. I asked each participant, “How do you view the role of RJE as contributing to reconciliation?” In Tara’s response to the question, she asked, “Reconciliation in what context? In school?” (Tara). Her question indicates that she immediately thought of schools when asked about reconciliation, rather than my intended meaning of reconciliation: a process that is occurring between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Elizabeth’s knowledge of the TRC is limited but she manages to draw a connection between reconciliation and RJE: “Well, I know that an important part of reconciliation is Restorative Justice, but I don't really know any more about it than that” (Elizabeth). She therefore indicates that part of her definition of RJ is reconciliation. Sonia’s experience working with RJE is brief overall, but her reflections on its connections to reconciliation were in depth. She also describes effort on her part to fulfill the role of RJE in contributing to reconciliation: “I'm trying to bring in another way of operating that's outside of, you know, kind of mainstream White culture that… is somewhat in keeping with the TRC” (Sonia). Sonia then goes on to acknowledge the connection between RJE and Indigeneity on her own. With a tone of voice that seemed to exude confidence, she stated, “That's initially, where some of the ideas in Restorative Justice come from: from First Nations communities” (Sonia). Her response reveals both an awareness of the TRC, an effort to respond to an extent to its Calls to Action, as well as knowledge of the Indigenous origins of certain RJE approaches. When I probed by asking Sonia how she knew about the TRC, I was impressed that she responded, “I don't know how you could not be familiar with it” (Sonia). She also shares how she made her

own effort to learn about the TRC'S Calls to Action for education and to integrate the Calls into her teaching:

> It definitely, unfortunately, was never from my school, now that I think of it. That was never something that was, you know, brought up in any PD or, you know, in any directive way from administration. It's something that, you know, I brought from elsewhere in my life into teaching (Sonia).

Responding on her view on the role of RJE as contributing to reconciliation, Sonia connects reconciliation with cultural awareness and colonization, which she frames as "taking over the place":

> Just that awareness of other cultures and trying to link that back to the fact that, you know, we may have taken over the place, but, you know, it doesn't mean that the way the colonizers do things is the right way necessarily (Sonia).

For Sonia, then, RJE represents an alternative to colonial practices. Sonia was the only teacher I interviewed who shared that she went out of her way to learn about integrating the Calls to Action into her teaching.

Zach frames reconciliation as "restoring relationships" with Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and he sees RJE as a mechanism for that. He shares:

> Restorative Justice's whole focus is on restoring relationships. And so...well maintaining, building, maintaining but also restoring relationships. And there's no doubt in our history that those relationships have been... there's been harm done. And they need to be... they need to be repaired. Those relationships need to be restored. And so, I mean, how fitting would it be that we use Restorative Justice as a vehicle by which to restore those relationships? (Zach)

From Zach's response, it is evident that he positions the impact of colonialism as "harm" that has been done to the aforementioned relationships. His response represents an example of associating reconciliation with restoring and repairing relationships, and demonstrates that he sees RJ as a way to do that. Similarly, Lily's response about to whom she thinks the harm has been done is not as explicit as that of Zach, but she does

associate reconciliation with repairing those relationships and addressing the harm. Referring to her students, she says, “We have to provide them with the understanding, or the opportunity to understand…what it is even that we're trying to restore” (Lily). She further relates repairing relationships to how she educates her students:

> We're not just trying to feed our young people information that they can, you know, spit back for a couple of months at us. We're trying to help them understand, you know, how our society is functioning and how we affect other people. So, it's not just enough just to, you know, tell a story about it. But, but in order for the deeper understanding to happen, I think, that opportunity to actually understand what the experiences of the people were who were impacted.

Thus, for Lily, RJE contributes to reconciliation in that it enables her students to understand who was impacted by the harm. Like Sylvie, she sees RJE as a mechanism to understand the experiences of those affected by the harm, and like Elizabeth, she connects reconciliation as a matter that should concern society in general. Their responses are yet another indicator of their firm belief in RJE, especially its element of empathy.

Teachers’ Perceptions of Educational Institutions’ Response to the TRC

Other teachers associate reconciliation with doing land acknowledgements in schools, especially when commencing a ceremony or a course. Ava responded in that regard, “Acknowledging the land, too. The land, the culture at the beginning, though” (Ava). Both Ava and Carrie recalled in their response that one of their professors at Memorial University (MUN) always begins an event or ceremony with the land acknowledgement. Carrie adds her recollection that land acknowledgements are a regular part of the formality at MUN: “People do that. The professors have done that” (Carrie). In her response regarding the contribution of RJE to reconciliation, Irene also speaks about land acknowledgements: “And when we go into a session, we always...do a land

acknowledgement, whether it's with students or with teachers. That's something that's really important to me too" (Irene). Thus, the teachers' answers reflect how they think educational institutions in Newfoundland are responding to the Calls to Action for education. Within schools in Newfoundland, land acknowledgements are a common practice, but Tara's response reveals that sometimes students may not know the reason why they do it or how it connects to reconciliation:

> At the school I'm presently teaching at, they certainly do recognize any day that is set aside to, you know, honor our Indigenous people and Indigenous land. But they don't know a lot about it. You know, they really don't… the kids I teach, you know, they don't, I don't know if they're aware, to be honest. (Tara)

Tara then explained that she recalls from conversations with her students that they are able to connect their knowledge of the Indigenous history to children's books they read in school. She shared that one example of such books is about a child who is able to learn an Indigenous language that his grandfather had lost through colonial practices. She shares that the book therefore promotes educational discourse on Indigenous Peoples within the elementary classroom: "It's a book that's available to, you know, to open that topic for conversation about the Indigenous People" (Tara).

In her projects where she collaborated with Indigenous communities, Irene shares how they commended her on doing the land acknowledgement: "And a lot of times, like people who are Indigenous there will say, you know, 'Wow, that's really cool that you did that'" (Irene). Her experience shows a sense of approval of land acknowledgements from the Indigenous populations with whom she works.

With respect to these teachers' responses about land acknowledgements and promoting educational discourse on Indigenous Peoples, we see an example of how a teacher

socializes a student into a particular practice. These teachers' responses seem to reflect the moral habitus to which I referred earlier. This habitus consists of practices associated with integrity, solidarity, and consideration for others (Lamont et al, 1996). However, if the student does not know why they participate in such practices, the amount of agency they have is questionable.

RJE and Indigeneity

Overall, the teachers' knowledge of the TRC varies but many were of them were able to draw connections between RJE and its Indigenous origins, all at various levels of depth. Some made those connections when asked about how they view the role of RJE in terms of reconciliation, and others discussed it more explicitly when asked how they understand the relationship between RJE and Indigeneity. While some teachers acknowledged the Indigenous origins of RJE on their own, the interview questions made others contemplate how components like the Circle connect to Indigenous traditions. When talking about the view in RJE that all human beings are worthy, Zach mentions, "We have to thank the Indigenous population for bringing it to us" (Zach). His response shows that he recalled the Indigenous origins of certain RJE principles on his own. He also articulates his view that the Indigenous population shared the notion of being worthy – a common concept in Restorative Justice approaches - with non-Indigenous communities. However, his response raises the question of who this "us" is.

Similar to Zach's response, Sara shares her view that a great deal can be learnt from Indigenous communities when it comes to reconciliation. When asked how she understands the relationship between RJ and Indigeneity, she immediately responded with, "That's kind of where it all started, eh?" She goes on to add that Indigenous

communities historically used approaches currently being implemented in RJE but that colonialism disrupted that historical process. Interestingly, without any mention of colonialism in my question, Sara integrated it in her response: “I think we can learn a lot from their practices 'cause it worked for a long long time...until, you know, colonialism did trash through it all” (Sara). Elizabeth integrated the Indigenous roots on her own when I asked how she views the role of RJE in reconciliation: “Some aspects of Restorative Justice come from Indigenous people, don't they?” (Elizabeth). Similarly, when discussing the role of RJE in contributing to reconciliation, Irene says, “I see such opportunity like, and I think it's important to acknowledge the Indigenous roots of Restorative practices.” Carrie, however, recalled the Indigenous origins of RJE approaches only when I asked how she sees the relationship between RJE and Indigeneity. She shares, “Well, the whole Talking Circle is borrowed from the Indigenous culture, right? And everyone's face to face, everyone has a voice, everyone's equally valued. It's for problem solving. I think it's totally based on that” (Carrie). Her response indicates the presumption that the Circle component of the RJE approach is one tool “borrowed” from Indigenous communities that can be considered part of the reconciliation process. Moreover, her use of the term “borrowed” raises the question of whether the Talking Circle is something to be returned to Indigenous communities. Similarly, Sara’s perception of the connection is similar to Carrie’s use of the term “borrowing.” However, she calls it “taking a page from their book.” She says,

> I think it was their practice, wasn't it? Like it was their community practice - that was their form of, like, you know, rebuilding a community for themselves and we sort of took a page from that book. And, you know, in the field of education and criminal justice systems and all that kind of thing (Sara).

Sara's response reveals that the "taken" pages from "that book" are not only being used in education alone but also in the criminal justice system. Perhaps for Sara, the idea of mentioning "using a page" signifies her view that part but not all approaches in RJE are inspired by Indigenous traditions. However, her use of the term "took" certainly goes a step beyond the term "borrowing." Contrary to Sara's and Carrie's responses, Ava shares her belief that an Indigenous person formed RJE, and as indicated in a previous chapter, she terms it a movement: "One of the guys, one of the main people that I think started the movement is an Indigenous person" (Ava). Her comment indicates her view that RJE was not necessarily "borrowed" from Indigenous communities but that it was an Indigenous person who initiated it.

When discussing the relationship between RJE and Indigeneity, Irene speaks of the powerful impact of deep listening, which she believes was learnt from Indigenous traditions:

> I guess even just like you know the history of a Talking Piece, and there are various kinds of Indigenous, I guess legends surrounding the Talking Piece…Basically the opportunity to kind of, I guess, to listen to the importance of listening and coming, you know, listening from the heart. And speaking from the heart. But also being open to listening from the heart, and just even in, you know, the body language and those types of things. Just how…those practices that have been passed down through various Indigenous groups is something again that…has such power that, you know, a courtroom with a judge and jury doesn't have (Irene).

Irene's response speaks to a power that she associates with working with the Talking Piece. Irene then goes on to describe her faith in using the Talking Piece in Circles, which she feels, leads to growth: "There's an opportunity I guess for so much growth when you come together in Circle and you share and you use a talking piece" (Irene). Similarly,

Zach describes the immense potential that he associates with the Circle for fostering reconciliation:

> If you had representation from, you know, Indigenous communities across Canada sitting with leadership from the federal government and sitting down and doing a Circle to have a conversation about this and to try to restore a relationship… like wow, I mean, that would be amazing (Zach).

Tanya also speaks to how she sees the power of the Circle in connection to reconciliation:

> I think that part of the reconciliation that needs to happen with using a Restorative Justice lens is that we need to, you know, give them some help…but we can't dictate like we have in the past. We have to sit in Circle and talk about how they feel and how parenting can be improved but not always dictate our ideas to them… (Tanya)

Tanya speaks about parenting in her response, as earlier in the interview, she discusses the generational impact of residential schools. She shares her understanding of the cultural loss in parenting practices that occurred when historically children from Indigenous families were removed from their homes.

The above analysis of the teachers' responses indicates limited knowledge on their part of the scope of the TRC. Only some, and not all, shared their understanding of the Indigenous origins of certain practices in RJE, and the importance of having that awareness. The limited number of teachers in this sample who can speak to the role of RJE in reconciliation, and the relationship between RJE and Indigeneity reveals their perceptions of the extent to which they prioritize the matters in their work. Across the responses, we see how minimally teachers speak to the TRC and Indigeneity in comparison to the rich data on the culture that RJE has produced in the classroom and its impact on student behaviour. Thus, their perceptions of the mandate of RJE indicate the middle-class behaviours it produces in the classroom. Their advocacy for it resembles

how social actors advocate in a movement, and firmly believe in it in a religious manner. In the following section, I will indicate how teachers envision a classroom where students feel safe, and how some described that the Circle facilitates discourse and integration of students from diverse backgrounds.

Fostering "Safe and Inclusive" Environments

As my research also examines how RJE is promoting inclusive and supportive classroom environments for students of diverse backgrounds, I asked teachers how they envision a safe classroom. In this section, I will report running themes across their responses to the question. Almost every teacher brought up, on their own, the importance of prioritizing safety. When I asked about the diversity of social classes, Carrie responded that school is a "safe place" for many students, supposedly referring to the students of lower socio-economic backgrounds (who wouldn't otherwise have safe homes or space spaces to spend their leisure time). Teachers typically perceive a classroom where students feel safe as an environment where they can share their thoughts and feelings in confidence, and where their individual needs are met. Almost every teacher described it as feeling comfortable to contribute to class discussions without judgement. Zach's response to my question reveals that his perception of safety was similar to those of many of the other teachers I interviewed. He describes how safety is essential to learning: "It's fundamentally important for teaching and learning to occur, right. And you cannot separate safety" (Zach). Maggie perceives it as "not only physically safe, but to feel emotionally safe" (Maggie). For Joanna, "Where they feel safe is a classroom where they don't mind sharing things that might make them seem vulnerable to others, like talking about when they don't know something" (Joanna). Irene also mentions vulnerability when

describing her vision of a safe classroom: “You have to create a safe space where it's okay for them to take risks to put themselves out there, be vulnerable. Because if they can't be that, then they can't learn” (Irene).

Jamie describes a classroom where students feel safe as one where they are comfortable to share ideas but also have guidelines/rules:

> At least be able to provide an environment where kids can articulate the things that make them worried or being able to articulate their thoughts and their ideas, and in that way, make them feel safe, I think is probably the goal. And it's the same thing in life, you can't predict if someone's going to respect a crosswalk when you walk across it. You can't control everything but at least the idea that there are rules, and there's some expectations that will keep us somewhat stable, that we can speak up if something happens that we don't agree with or don't feel good about (Jamie).

Similarly, for Irene, a classroom where students feel safe is “a space where everyone has to be willing to follow the guidelines that we've all agreed on…that's how we create a safe space for everyone” (Irene). Thus, for Jamie and Irene, a safe classroom is one where students follow established guidelines. For Sylvie and Tanya, such a classroom involves respect. Sylvie explains, “When they know each other, they respect each other. And they see that the teacher respects them, and they respect the teacher. That is really, you know, a safe place” (Sylvie). And Tanya shares,

> It's all about respect, because if they keep respect in their mind in terms of how they relate to each other, then they've basically created a safe environment for everybody. Because once somebody is disrespectful, it makes the other person feel uncomfortable, which causes them to feel unsafe anyway (Tanya).

The way in which these teachers connect a classroom where students feel safe with upholding guidelines and respect is also further indicator of their efforts to shape the moral habitus of their students. When teachers enforce respect and guidelines that enforce a particular moral conduct, they are regularly training students to live up to a moral

standard in the classroom. Donna's response about the Circle is also an ideal example: "And so you use those same values over and over and over again, once or twice a day, all year long. And after about six weeks, the kids will start trusting that Circle is safe" (Donna).

The teachers I interviewed tend to describe the Circle as a safe space in itself. Ava describes from her experience: "When I was teaching French immersion, it [the Circle] gives people like a safe place to speak." She goes on to say, "People... who normally don't open their mouths, they'll participate in Circles, so really shy, timid people, it's a safe place for them too to talk" (Ava). For Tom, the typical features of the Circle make it a safe space:

> The Circle is a really neat way to start those conversations. It's a safe place because students know that they can share without judgment. Because...it's not commenting. If you're not commenting, you're not adding your two cents afterwards. You're just listening (Tom).

Lily identifies features of the Circle when she discusses her perceptions of safety in the classroom:

> You're not identifying anyone you're not targeting, when you're giving everybody the opportunity to say, "this is how I'm affected." And it's just safer. You know, it's just safer, because everybody's hearing it. Everybody has the opportunity to share what they're experiencing (Lily).

Some teachers' responses also indicate how the Circle practice or "Circling" creates a sense of uniformity in the class whereby differences are glossed over. For example, Joanna describes,

> When I think now to the classes that we had, since then, where you got people that are, you know, they got, a mom, probably don't have a dad, probably got the dad, don't have a mom. But with Circling, I found that that just overcame that. Like, to me, I felt that was the way of helping all them celebrate each other or hear each other's voices, you know? (Joanna).

Ava finds that the Circle makes the classroom a safe space for her Syrian students in particular. Her responses serve as suggestions to teachers who are considering how to integrate students from such backgrounds: “I think that the Circle would make them feel very welcome, especially if you were doing something like “yes or no” answers or something as easy as like "What's your favorite color?” (Ava). Moreover, for a teacher such as Donna, the Circle creates a sense of uniformity in the class - it is where every student belongs.

> Being in Circle isn't just about sharing, being in Circle is, whoever has the Talking Piece, you have the ability to make them feel like they belong…like they're valued. So even though he wasn't sharing, we made him feel like he belonged. And that's what Circles do. It isn't just about the sharing. It's about the sense of belonging (Donna).

Donna’s response alludes to teachers reporting that the Circle enables them to overlook differences among their students. However, as indicated in the previous chapter, elements like the Talking Piece still enable students to reinforce their individualism by sharing their opinion and how, as Lily states, “they're affected by…what each other are sharing” (Lily). What is latent in their responses is again the culture that the teachers are producing in the classroom: a culture where students follow a set of guidelines that inform their morality.

Accommodating Diverse Abilities

Diversity is also manifest in the way in which teachers cater to the diverse needs of their students. The findings below serve as examples of teachers articulating the way in which they prioritize the students’ various needs and make them feel validated and worthy. I will also emphasize instances where teachers are finding that RJE facilitates that

process. Lily, like many other teachers I interviewed, describes seeing through the "Restorative lens" (Lily). The Restorative lens is a perspective through which individuals see one another as worthy and whole. For this reason, one who implements RJ practices strives to change their "lenses from those that measure to those that honour" (Vaandering and Voelker, 2018). In doing so, they ask themselves, "Am I measuring, am I honouring, what message am I sending?" (Vaandering and Voelker, 2018). The Restorative lens provides context to Lily's and other participants' responses.

With respect to honouring the needs of her students, Lily describes, "I find when we're looking through a Restorative lens, it's just a much more trustworthy relationship, it's a safe relationship where students are kind of working with you to meet their own needs" (Lily). She goes on to describe how catering the work of each student to their personal strengths and needs makes the classroom a safer space: "Not like one thing happening for all, but like really individualized. I think that's the only way to make it safe" (Lily). Sylvie describes how she caters to the various of needs of her students by posing the following questions: "What can I do for you that will, you know, help us enjoy this class more or make the work a little more interesting, or enjoyable or relatable, or…what do you need from me?" (Sylvie). Tom's perception of diversity in the classroom impacts how he thinks teachers are trying to respond to students' various needs. He speaks to how a student's background, previous circumstances, and hardships endured are all brought into the "English stream" classes:

> These teachers in the English stream that have these diverse classrooms have diverse needs. Because when you're dealing with somebody... And a student who's been living in refugee camp for three, four years, five years, 10 years, has never kind of interacted... isn't used to interacting with adults or students in this kind of a recommended way... has never actually felt safe, so they're always running

> around because they're not used to quiet or calm. Like, we have no idea what these children have been through. And it's a lot and we can never relate. So... in the English stream where we see very diverse needs... very diverse, ethnically diverse classes, financially diverse classes, classrooms... these are also the classrooms that have neuro-diverse needs.

Teachers in those classrooms are learning how to manage across the various needs. While they claim they do not take diversity far into consideration, they evidently do perceive the diverse needs.

Conclusion

Teachers who were only somewhat familiar with the TRC had a great deal to share about their views on RJE's role in reconciliation. Their responses create opportunity for further inquiry into whether RJE represents a way for teachers to reacquaint themselves with the history of Indigenous Peoples, and to rekindle relationships with such communities. When I asked teachers how they view RJE as a contribution to reconciliation, some said that RJE is a mechanism to understand the experiences of those affected by the harm, others said that they see it as a way to repair harm that has historically been done to relationships, and others articulated their view that reconciliation is a matter that should concern society in general.

In spite of their limited knowledge of the scope of the TRC, some teachers, but not all, acknowledged the Indigenous origins of certain practices in RJE, and the importance of having that awareness. Most seemed to have similar perceptions of reconciliation and were able to articulate it as a process that needs to take place between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. Moreover, they were able to connect elements of restorative approaches such as empathy and repairing harm to what they feel is required on their part as educators. A few even made valuable suggestions for how teacher training

in Newfoundland can include more insight on Indigenous history in Canada, so that the teachers can better educate their students on the topic.

With respect to teacher perceptions of diversity, the ones who taught high school were more easily able to identify diversity among their students. The teachers also varied in the way in which they interpreted the meaning of "diversity," as their perceptions of it transcend the options I gave them (i.e. diversity of gender, of socio-economic status, and of race and ethnicity). In my analysis of how teachers envision a classroom where students feel safe, I found that the way in which they connect safety with upholding classroom guidelines indicates their efforts to shape the moral habitus of their students.

Chapter 7: Agency and "Their Humanity"

The broader themes encompassing the presentation of findings in this chapter are how teachers discuss encouraging the agency of their students, as well as how they emphasize the "humanity" of their students. In that connection, if students exercise agency, they have a choice over the extent to which they commit to RJE practices – practices which I define as those norms associated with RJE. I will also use empowerment interchangeably with agency. By empowerment, I am implying a process that releases the potential of all people to take initiative over their own development and over the educational processes in which they engage (Leiker, 2011). Both empowerment and agency can be considered in the same light within the context of how teachers are framing their implementation of RJE.

Student Agency and Empowerment

If agency means that an individual is able to act "freely and be able to choose," that is the type of agency that teachers perceive they are giving their students. The Circle is one instance of teachers describing that process. While Circle practices reinforce the social production process in the classroom, teachers still believe that they give students the option to participate in Circles voluntarily. For example, Joanna describes,

> If we were going to go and set up a circle, and they didn't want to join us... well, they always had the option: "Well, if you don't want to join us, that's fine. You can sit outside and read a book. Or you can sit outside and listen in." I mean, that was always an option (Joanna).

While Lily does not directly communicate the relationship between RJE and how she thinks she encourages agency in her students, she does think she empowers them to establish the community that they want. Graveline (2003) claims that when it comes to

the RJE approach in classrooms, learning in Circle format holds the potential for students to become strong members of their communities. Lily describes that she fosters a sense of community by:

> Empowering them to explore what they want their community to be, and then how to…influence the community and make that happen, let them bring the understanding of what their community is to me. And me just reminding them that they are a community, they are a team. But them telling me what kind of team they are and what their goals are (Lily).

Tom relates the empowerment of his students to self-discovery. Sharing a story of a student, he says, "I know that was a very proud moment for her. Because it's discovering self" (Tom). He also defines empowerment in terms of making students in his class stand out for their individual characteristics: "And it makes it about that student. So that becomes empowering" (Tom). Further, while some teachers have shared that they've been able to overlook differences across their students, Tom promotes those individual differences in his classroom as a way of empowering them. In that connection, he describes giving leadership roles to students:

> All of a sudden, that child now has a connection with me, has a connection with other students. I got him up in a leadership role to teach the other students where before he was just that quiet kid in the back…who already feels totally out of place, has no idea what's going on, and I gave him something very empowering (Tom).

Irene promotes the agency of her students by encouraging them to be themselves. She shares an instance of feedback she received from a student: "By the end of that Circle, that child came up to me and gave me a hug and said, 'You made me feel like it was okay to be me'" (Irene). Irene therefore demonstrates how she uses RJE to build trust with her students.

The following response from Tara is an instance of teachers claiming to encourage student agency by using literacy narratives. As referred to in a previous chapter, she describes the plot of a child's storybook in which a teacher encourages their student to learn the Cree language of her ancestors:

> This is basically that book, and the teacher teaches the little grandchild some...I think it was Cree language, and then the child goes back to the grandfather, and the grandfather is very happy to know that, you know, his children are being encouraged to use their language and, you know, to speak their language (Tara).

Tara's response indicates how through narrative, she thinks she is encouraging her students to exercise agency with respect to the languages they wish to learn or connecting to their ancestry. Jamie connects RJE practices like the Circle to how she thinks students can be empowered: "One thing that it really did teach, I guess, the Circles and stuff like that, is just a way for kids to feel empowered in how they speak and they're given voice" (Jamie). She goes on to describe how she encourages the agency of her students through her teaching:

> That was what I was trying to, like, teach them with video that you know, instead of just sitting around complaining or sitting around feeling like you can't do anything…you know, you don't need to be rude, but you can be empowered, like your suggestions could make a difference or, you know? And I guess that's the big thing. It's about what we teach them at school and the things that we teach them, giving them the tools so that they can actually take it and do things about it (Jamie).

Another instance of teachers perceiving agency in their students is when they promote their self-control. Joanna describes a scenario with her student in that regard: "He was starting to utilize and have self-control, which is what I was trying to work him to do" (Joanna). Similarly, Tom encourages self-control by making his students accountable for their actions: "It's just making them accountable… So, not just giving but showing by

example" (Tom). He goes on to say that it is the Circle, and the practices associated with it, that reinforces that accountability:

> There were rules in Circle that were very similar to rules in let's say, a teacher-directed session, where it's like, you know, you raise your hand. You raise your hand to speak, you're expected to you know, at least show that you're listening, eyes towards the teacher and you know, mouth closed, hands to yourself. But with passing around a rock or another totem, the students are accountable to each other.

Sara emphasizes agency when she describes her vision of a safe classroom: "Kids have a sense of agency. They ask questions openly. They express opinions openly and their heads are up. Not because they're listening, necessarily. But because they're engaged, and they're confident enough to hold their head up" (Sara). Sara's definition of agency aligns with the Lockean theory of agency, in that the student is expressing opinions out of their own volition. However, we must also consider that the student can exercise agency by not choosing to participate.

Making Students' Voices "Heard"

Many of the teachers I interviewed perceive agency in terms of letting their students' voices "be heard." What I am intending to convey by students "being heard," is the ability to voice their opinions and contribute freely to class discussions. However, I argue that agency can also encompass not choosing to make your voice heard, beyond what the below examples show. Elizabeth shares her vision of a safe classroom:

> I'd like a class where kids feel like they can talk, and they can contribute. And we're pretty good for that. I think that is one thing we're doing well. It's good to encourage conversations instead of shutting them down (Elizabeth).

And Tom shares:

> I think Restorative Justice in Education, by giving voice and by acknowledging people's worth, does give voice for others' stories. It's not a... dichotomous view of

> education of "Yes, and no, black and white." It's saying, "No, all these are true. My story is true, but so is yours" (Tom).

While some teachers find that RJE practices in general enable students to voice their opinions, others find that is through particular aspects of RJE that students may do so. In light of the Lockean theory and Sen's (1993) definition of agency, their responses reveal how they think they are giving their students agency. Thus, while the teachers share how they think the students are being empowered, the reality of agency and empowerment still transcend their interpretations.

It is also important to mention here that some teachers' responses reveal students becoming habituated with Restorative practices, thereby adopting it as part of their habitus of social behaviours in the classroom. It is precisely that habitus, which serves as a set of both formal and informal rules and customs of a society that through practice over time attribute pattern and meaning (Bourdieu 1974). Sylvie's description of "getting kids used to" the Talking Piece over time is also an example. She finds that it is the Talking Piece in particular that allows for a greater number of students to voice their thoughts:

> Using a Talking Piece, and having that sort of relation, getting kids used to that for sure, a hundred percent, allows kids to speak, who wouldn't normally in a traditional classroom. You know, it's great for discussion. It really is worth it. It takes more time, more time, but definitely, more voices are heard that way for sure. I like it for that reason (Sylvie).

For Sylvie, then, moving towards Restorative practices fosters aspects of agency, such as students freely voicing their concerns. In her view, cultivating student agency would not be possible in a conventional classroom. Other teachers, such as Irene, ensure that students express their thoughts, even when they are not keen on her approach to teaching: "Oftentimes, again, it's always acknowledging that they have voice and choice. And I

always, as an educator, have felt that that is so very important" (Irene). Across the responses, we see that while teachers are accustoming their students to a set of "rules and customs" associated with RJE, they still think that they are enabling them to exercise agency in terms of the extent to which they wish to participate, as well as the opinions and desires that they express. We see that they are socializing their students into a habitus that works according to the teachers' definition of agency.

Empowering a student is difficult to achieve without critical consciousness of the structures and processes that form social institutions or practices, and of the individuals' roles and actions within such institutions or practices (Freire, 1970) (Jennings, et al. 2006). Such knowledge helps us determine the structures that we wish to improve (Freire, 1970). For this reason, the teachers' view towards their students' social class and background is of emphasis here, as it is important to inquire into the extent to which a teacher in an RJE classroom takes social class and ethnicity into consideration. As the classroom is a space in which students can be institutionalized into acquiring certain behaviours, it is easy for the teacher to forget that they are first human beings. Irene's response supports that argument: "I think sometimes we think children are robots, you know, like that's the expectation is that children are robots and they'll come in and do exactly what we want" (Irene). Nonetheless, the teachers I interviewed expressed empowering their students based on their own perceptions of what empowerment is, rather than teaching them to be "critically conscious" of their surroundings (Freire, 1970). In the next section, I will indicate how those teachers claim they value the "humanity" of their students, that they choose to see the students' "worth" over their social class or background.

Teachers' Perceptions of 'Human Worth' Vs. Social Class

A common theme across the interviews seems to be teachers expressing efforts on their part to address their students' needs and make them feel validated and worthy. Tom does this when he discusses his approach to being an educator: "To me, just being a nice person, acknowledging that people are worthy, and people are interconnected" (Tom). When discussing diversity, Zach shares the common RJ view about human beings: "And so, when you hit the core of what it means to be human, right. That all people, all humans are, you know…we believe that everyone is worthy, right" (Zach). It is arguably that reinforcement of the students' human worth that forms the core of how teachers think they encourage student agency.

In terms of their students' humanity, teachers describe how RJE enables them to see the humanness of their students. For example, Irene shares: "Like oftentimes we'd see something down the street, but when a child's in the classroom, we can't see. You know, we don't see them as people, right? Like it's so important that, you know, we humanize, right" (Irene). The "humanity" of students also influences how the teachers conceptualize RJE. For example, when describing what restorative relationships means to her, Jamie describes that, to

> Look at each other as people and be able to resolve it as people, I think was probably the most important part. And I think that was part of the focus that ended like in our Circles was about, like, you know, the element of humanity that nobody is a bad person, that there's all the circumstances of being there and having patience with each other and understanding how you can come back from making a mistake (Jamie).

Sylvie describes how she not only sees her students foremost as human; she also articulates that view to them: "I just try to express to them that, you know, they're more

than just students to me, they're people" (Sylvie). Some teachers even indicate that they gloss over what differentiates students into social categories, whether visible or not. Zach's response in that respect is an outstanding example:

> No matter if we're talking... whether we're talking about gender, or ethnicity or socio-economic status or whatever it is, that we're... how we're identifying people and once again, I don't...I'm not really... I tend to look at somebody as a person. And so I struggle, moving into these, these classifications or labels (Zach).

Zach goes on to describe how our worthiness as human beings takes precedence over our other classifications: In an RJE classroom, individuals "know each other on a human level, and would be interacting with each other on a more human level, as opposed to…teacher-student" (Zach). However, in spite of the agency that the teachers claim to encourage in their students, we still see, in light of the data, teachers producing a culture in the classroom that favours the RJE behavioural standard. We also see, based on the teachers' responses about "humanness," that they perceive in RJE a moral standard to live by, the lens with which to consider others, and interact with them. As I showed in reference to Mead (1917), "humanness" frames the meanings that teachers make of their social interactions.

Considering Zach's above response, a question arises in my analysis for further research. In order to arrive at a fuller understanding of empowerment and agency, it is important to further explore how power interplays in the teacher-student relationship. If in an RJE classroom, the teacher and student see each other on a human level, what is the extent to which power relations exist between them? According to Graveline (2003), learning in Circle format reduces power gaps between teachers and students, and enables them to trust one another. How do those power relations impact the student's ability to

participate in the generation and acquisition of knowledge? Such questions will be further emphasized in the Future Directions section of this thesis.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I established that based on the definitions of agency in the literature, teachers believe that their students exercise agency, as they have a choice over the extent to which they commit to RJE practices. Moreover, although teachers think they give students the option to participate in Circles voluntarily, there is yet an ongoing social and cultural production process in an RJE classroom. I showed that the Circle practice plays a fundamental role in that process. Further, while some teachers share that they choose to overlook socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic differences across their students, overall, the teachers still produce a culture that rewards behaviours aligned with middle class interpretations of RJE. I also emphasized the concept of students' "humanity" in my analysis, as it informs the moral standard that the teachers live by and the lens through which they make meaning of their interactions.

Conclusions

This thesis has provided an overview of teachers' perceptions towards implementing RJE in their classrooms. My analysis reveals themes such as how teachers seem to be participating as advocates in a social movement in education, and how they think practices, such as the Circle, produce cultural change in schools. The teachers' responses also reveal their firm, almost religious belief in RJE, which enables them to teach students conflict resolution skills and behaviours that conform to RJE standards. Interestingly, in spite of the increasingly ethnically and economically diverse classrooms, teachers still use Restorative practices to foster cultural change and movement towards RJE. First, I positioned teachers as bureaucratic professionals working within the organization of the school. I show that their implementation of RJE has the potential to change existing norms and values, as is the case in social movements. A common finding that weaves the interviews together is that the teachers are relating their success back to the development of profound relationships in the classroom. This further reveals their view of the change in cultures happening in the classrooms and schools.

An analysis of teachers' perceptions of the tremendous richness in RJE's success illuminates how teachers find RJE practices are transforming power dynamics in schools, which also reveals how it is changing the culture. The examples in the data of where teachers see the success in their implementation not only indicate processes of transmitting habitus, but also instances of a social movement occurring in education, as well as a relational culture forming in classrooms.

The teachers' responses also reveal similarities to religious practice, as they describe how RJE resonated with their beliefs or instilled in them a new belief system.

They commonly describe how they embrace it wholeheartedly and operate with a sense of passion that, at times, resembles religious fervour. With that passion and faith in RJE's impact on students, teachers articulate a sense of responsibility to contribute to the growth of the movement. In that regard, I demonstrated that some teachers' perceptions of their "magical" experience with RJE mirror Geertz's (2005) definition of the attributes of religion. I therefore argued that their belief in RJE is akin to a belief in religion. An analysis of the teachers' responses on their challenges with RJE reveals a lack of coherence in how schools are embracing it across NL. Their reflections on their challenges with RJE also reveal that time and spatial limits are among their most common and major obstacles. Building relationships with students is fundamental to RJE, and without time, solid relationships cannot be established. Analysis of teacher perceptions of spatial and time limitations contributes to my finding that schools are state-sponsored institutions, and that their functioning conforms to the objectives of the overseeing governing body.

I also demonstrated that the teachers' perceptions of Restorative practices mirrors socializing students into a culture. In that process, students accept RJE wholeheartedly and collectively, and conform to the overall behavioural norms of their peers. Such practices then inform the social norms they adopt in the classroom. Moreover, some teachers' responses reveal that students are capable of expressing opinions out of their own volition. The teachers think the students have agency in the extent to which they embrace RJE. However, if agency means the ability to control the circumstances in which one lives (Littlejohn and Foss, 2009), then students also have the choice to not participate and not make their voices heard. Although teachers give students the option to participate

in Circles voluntarily, I argued that Circle practices are part of the social production process in an RJE classroom. Further, while some teachers share that they choose to overlook socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic differences across their students, others shared that they promote those individual differences in their classroom as a way of empowering their students, which reflects their perception of what empowerment is.

In my analysis of how teachers envision a classroom where students feel safe, I found that the way in which they connect that vision to upholding classroom guidelines is further indicator of their efforts to shape the moral habitus of their students. The teachers also varied in the way in which they interpreted the meaning of "diversity," as their perceptions of it transcend the options that I gave them (e.g. diversity of gender, of socio-economic status, of race and ethnicity). Several teachers extended their perception of diversity to the diverse strengths and needs of their students. The teachers also articulate the way in which RJE enables them to see their students first as human and to make them feel validated and worthy, in spite of those diverse needs and learning abilities.

Many, but not all, of the teachers I interviewed were familiar with the TRC and its Calls to Action with respect to Education for Reconciliation. Of the teachers who were only familiar with the TRC to a certain extent, many shared profound reflections on the role of RJE in contributing to reconciliation. Their responses articulate their firm belief that RJE is the solution to today's social issues. Also noteworthy are their valuable suggestions for how teacher training in Newfoundland can include more insight on Indigenous history in Canada, so that the teachers can better educate their students on the topic.

Future Directions

Endeavours all over Canada are adopting the Restorative Justice approach, and RJE is but one of its programs. Reflecting on the principles of Restorative Justice, further opportunities arise for research on its impact on educational efforts at reconciliation in Canada. Glimpses of it emerged in my data, but a study with a more in-depth focus on reconciliation would be worthwhile.

A question also emerged through analysis of teacher perceptions of socio-economic diversity. One teacher shared that a student's socio-economic status is more noticeable between the ages of nine and nineteen. I therefore recommend asking in future research: "How do the changes occurring during that age range correspond with teachers' ability to recognize socio-economic diversity in students?"

My analysis of power dynamics in an RJE classroom also provoked questions for further research. These questions emerged through reflection on Foucault's (1982) definitions and my consultation of Farid-Arbab's (2016) outline of power as an "attribute of individuals, factions, peoples, classes, and nations used to acquire, to surpass, to dominate, to resist, and to win" (Farid-Arbab, 2016). I therefore recommend further study on the type of power that teachers are reinforcing through their practice of RJE.

I also ask, are teachers using restorative practices like the Circle to move towards a process in which both the teacher and student are subjects rather than objects of a consultative, collective learning process? In that process, is the only element of power the knowledge that is shared between the teacher and student? In other words, are the students acquiring knowledge as the result of their own educational development or are they passive recipients of information? Many of the teachers I interviewed alluded to how implementing RJE has affected a change in power dynamics in their classrooms. As

power relations are embedded in the state and in institutions of society (Castells, 2015), it is important to investigate, as RJE becomes more widely embraced in classrooms, what that change in power dynamics means for teacher-student relationships.

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Appendices

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Interview Guide

1) How did you come to use Restorative Justice Education in your classroom?

2) What does the concept of restorative relationships in the classroom mean to you?

3) Can you describe any challenges you experience with implementing Restorative Justice Education?

4) Can you share any success stories with implementing Restorative Justice Education?

5) How would you describe the following dynamics of your class?
    a. Ethnicity

    b. Gender

    c. Class diversity

6) How are student relationships in your class impacted by diversity?

7) Are you familiar with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action around education?

    a. If the participant responds yes, ask them, "How do you view the role of RJE as contributing to reconciliation?

8) How do you work with students who demonstrate a lack of keenness towards your teaching?

9) How do you envision a classroom where students feel safe?

10) Is there anything that I haven't asked you up to this point but should have?

Probing questions

1) How did you become aware of Restorative Justice Education?

2) How do you nurture relationships with the various cultures among the students in your class?

3) Were there any times where you sensed class tensions across your students?

4) In regard to students who demonstrate negative withdrawal towards your teaching: How would you describe the social and cultural backgrounds of those students?

5) How do you maintain sustainable relationships with your students?

6) How do you like to foster a sense of community in your classroom?

7) How do you understand the relationship between Restorative Justice and Indigeneity?

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5S7
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ICEHR Number:	**20200490-AR**
Approval Period:	August 8, 2019 – August 31, 2020
Funding Source:	Not Funded
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. Lisa-Jo van den Scott Department of Sociology
Title of Project:	*Restorative Justice Education and Social Dynamics in the Classroom*

August 8, 2019

Ms. Tina Saleh
Department of Sociology
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Memorial University of Newfoundland

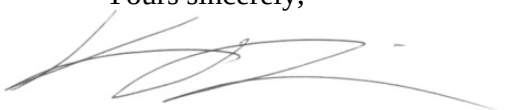
Dear Ms. Saleh:

Thank you for your correspondence of August 2, 2019 addressing the issues raised by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) concerning the above-named research project. ICEHR has re-examined the proposal with the clarification and revisions submitted, and is satisfied that the concerns raised by the Committee have been adequately addressed. In accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)*, the project has been granted *full ethics clearance* to August 31, 2020. ICEHR approval applies to the ethical acceptability of the research, as per Article 6.3 of the *TCPS2*. Researchers are responsible for adherence to any other relevant University policies and/or funded or non-funded agreements that may be associated with the project.

The *TCPS2* **requires** that you submit an Annual Update to ICEHR before August 31, 2020. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance and include a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer involves contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you are required to provide an annual update with a brief final summary and your file will be closed. If you need to make changes during the project which may raise ethical concerns, you must submit an Amendment Request with a description of these changes for the Committee's consideration prior to implementation. If funding is obtained subsequent to approval, you must submit a Funding and/or Partner Change Request to ICEHR before this clearance can be linked to your award.

All post-approval event forms noted above can be submitted from your Researcher Portal account by clicking the *Applications: Post-Review* link on your Portal homepage. We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,



Kelly Blidook, Ph.D.
Vice-Chair, Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research

KB/bc

cc: Supervisor – Dr. Lisa-Jo van den Scott, Department of Sociology