Dialogues of Dominance:
Narrative, Occupational Folklore, & the Bullying of Public-School Teachers

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on how childlore, narrative, and occupational folklore serve as the basis for how we view and respect teachers. Folklore is argued as both a cause of and a solution to the bullying of public-school teachers in Newfoundland, Canada. This thesis analyzes the language surrounding bullying, the close relationship between bullying and folklore (especially in regard to Folklore and Education, Occupational Folklore, and narrative study); instances that depict how this plays out in the lives of teachers, and finally, the methods that have historically been used to curb this in the past and how these ideas can be adapted and revitalized in the sphere of modern education.

A note on capitalization: When referencing specific sub-disciplines, such as Folklore and Education or Childlore, I have capitalized the words in order to differentiate from references to general genres and examples, which are given as lower case.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This collection-based thesis analyzes the stories of bullying gathered from twenty-nine K-12 public-school teachers across Newfoundland and Labrador. The following meme, along with the first case study, the "Febreze Incident," will help illustrate patterns of abuse and conflicts of power as portrayed by these teachers. I analyze their stories from folklore and education standpoints, including applied folklore, occupational folklore, and narrative empowerment. This study addresses the lack of public perspective and discussion of occupational bullying in the lives of teachers. It also contextualizes the everyday lives of public-school teachers in their relationships with students, peers, administrators, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (NLTA).

Figure 1, Martin, *Amused*, 2009.

1.1   Preface: The 'Febreze Incident'

Many of the central themes highlighted in this thesis emerged from informal conversations with teachers, instructors, and professors before fieldwork began. Still, it was the "Febreze Incident" that ultimately acted as the catalyst that led me to the topic of folklore's relationship

with the abuse of teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador. On February 6, 2012, the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) published an article by an unnamed author entitled, "Fishy smelling student sprayed down by teacher." The report alleged that on February 2, 2012, an elementary school teacher in Twillingate, NL, sprayed Febreze (a popular commercial odor eliminator) on one of their students. The article reported the narrative as told by the child's mother, Ms. Patti Rideout, who had filed the official complaint but was not present to witness the incident firsthand. This was a second-hand narrative, framed through the lens of a protective mother. The report failed to cite any corroborating sources, except for a general statement put out by an NLTA spokesperson: "a complaint has been received from a parent and that the matter is under investigation" (2012).

The way the CBC corroborated the story, balancing the NLTA's statement against Ms. Rideout's more detailed (though second-hand) account, shaped the public response. The article featured quotes from the interview with Rideout that directly demonstrated her feelings about the incident, including two significant interpretations of events: 1) the teacher either bullied or was complicit in her child's bullying; 2) the teacher should therefore lose her job. Nothing in the article was directly untrue, but the title and text were structured so as to encourage readers to accept the teacher as guilty of a malicious act (see Appendix 1A). In less than two days, the news media turned this story into an international event that condemned the teacher's actions. After the initial posting, the story spread through local talk shows and various online media. Over the next few days, the story went international, including discussion on the widely viewed *The Talk* in the United States (*The Talk* 2012; *Daily Mail Reporter* 2012; see appendix 1B for a complete timeline of the media releases for this story).

Only one media source, CBC Radio's "Radio Noon – Crosstalk" (CBC Crosstalk 2012),

called the known facts into question; other subsequent stories failed to question the integrity of

the initial CBC article. For example, the article in *The Daily Mail Reporter* on February 9

entitled, "Teacher suspended after spraying down 'fishy-smelling' boy, 10, with air freshener,"

regurgitated much of the original article, adding only that the teacher had been suspended with

pay, school officials had apologized for the actions of the teacher, and that the apology was not

enough for the irate mother.

To say that this type of reporting is fundamentally problematic is an understatement. It can

be particularly devastating for teachers who are forbidden to publicly respond, defend, or

contextualize such incidents. In the case of the Febreze Incident, the CBC article created an

immediate and predictable public backlash toward the teacher because conjecture was reported

as fact.[1]

Demands from the public for more information were met with silence, thus allowing the

victimization of the teacher—bullying by media—to continue (see Appendices 1C and 1D for

examples of online comments and demands for information). A poll attached to the initial article

did show the public's concern for the lack of reported facts (47% of respondents wanted to hear

the teacher's side of the event).[2] However, this must be contrasted to the significant number of

readers that immediately accepted the conjecture as fact (37% wanted the teacher disciplined).

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[1] Most of the published 'facts' in the Febreze incident were based in conjecture. The information detailed in the initial article was derived directly from a conversation that a mother had with her child about what happened. Confirmation of these facts was not included in the article. This left readers to assume that these facts were confirmed by the NLTA spokesperson, when the unnamed reporter followed up with them to get the statement that an incident involving a parental complaint was, "under investigation" (and we do have to assume this because the article does not state it).

[2] The poll and the comments have since been removed from the article. The poll was a standard online poll; it was not designed for scientific collection, rather, it seemed to be aimed at gauging the perspective of their readers and stimulating conversation in the comment board about the article.

Three oddities suggested that the CBC set out to encourage outrage and perhaps implicitly support anti-teacher bullying: 1) the accompanying survey asked the public to express opinions based on conjecture; 2) the story was not well enough researched to include a byline (it was published anonymously); and 3) the CBC included the child's name and photo obtained from Facebook, an ethically questionable decision that helped personalize the alleged victim (White 2012). They failed to acknowledge why teachers cannot, or will not, defend themselves in public. In order to work in the public school system in Canada, teachers are normally required to join school boards and unions/associations such as the NLTA. As members of these organizations, they are required to agree to non-disclosure agreements that effectively silence them from publicly discussing or responding to incidents regarding students, their jobs, or their classroom—including false allegations, irresponsible reporting, comment boards, and social media. As will be demonstrated in this thesis, many Canadians do not understand these regulations. This ignorance leads to online attacks on teachers, their careers, and even the institution of education itself. As we see with the Febreze Incident, teachers in Canada find themselves being increasingly bullied, by peers, parents, administrators, news media, and students.

This aspect of school culture (and occupational folklore) remains the least researched of all types of bullying occurring in schools across the country. A work-life balance survey conducted by the Canadian Teachers' Federation in 2014 showed that the bullying of teachers by students alone was a stressor in over 38% of respondents' lives. Over 10% indicated that this was a significant stressor in their lives. It is also important to remember that the student population represents only one source of bullying teachers must endure in their political and occupational lives. Findings in other educational research (locally and internationally) support these

observations, while also suggesting that false allegations/bullying against teachers is on the rise (Gallom 2012, Garner 2015a, 2015b).[3]

An article in *The Telegraph* in 2015, "Stress pushing teachers to leave profession," acknowledged that over half of the United Kingdom's 1800 schools have teachers on stress leave (Espinosa 2015c). The article states that 76% of current teachers responding to the English study were considering another occupation, and 68% were actively seeking work elsewhere. In Canada, the rate of teacher retention after five years is approximately 70%, while in many other developed countries, it is closer to 95%, and this, according to educational scholars Thierry Karsenti and Simon Collin, is indicative of a society that lacks respect for teachers (Karsenti & Collin 2013). Work-related stress is a hot topic in educational writings, and in most evaluations, bullying is an increasing factor in this stress.

Educational correspondent Javier Espinoza documents the stress created by failing to expel students who bully teachers (2015a) and examines the stress created by false allegations against teachers (2015b). Both articles highlight significant parallels between the education system in the United Kingdom and Canada. Bullying is on the rise in the profession. When the findings of these recent surveys are overlaid with those of Joseph and Jo Blase's seminal 2003 book, *Breaking the Silence: Overcoming the Problem of Principal Mistreatment of Teachers*, it becomes quite evident that teachers have become veritable lightning rods for bullying from all sides of their vocation.

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[3] Other Canadian studies involving teacher stress such as a British Columbian survey conducted in 2009 by Charlie Naylor and Margaret White, also suggested that our teachers were stressed because of the extra 10-20 hours of work that they were doing a week from home (a number reinforced in my fieldwork) and that this was contributing to the rate of burnout and stress leaves among teachers (Naylor and White 2010).

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1.2   The Collection and the Community

Although most of the stories that teachers had to tell me were personal, it quickly became apparent that there was a repertoire of stories and themes that unite the Newfoundland teaching community. Examining this communal repertoire goes a long way to illuminating first, the sense of community between teachers; second, some of the more subversive values held by this community; and third, the hidden and not-so-hidden concerns of this group. While the content of these narratives varies according to location, many of the critical themes remain fundamentally unchanged. They demonstrate endemic concerns, in particular feeling disrespected, being attacked in many public and online forums, and subsequently struggling with self-image and imposter syndrome. While my narratives are based in Newfoundland and Labrador, they closely parallel the patterns documented by Dana Goldstein in the United States (2015). She provides a detailed map of how respect for the profession has been increasingly denigrated. A reduction in respect makes school environments more susceptible to bullying. Respect and empathy are counterforces to bullying.

A majority of the collected narratives fall within what Robert McCarl termed, "canon of work technique" –informal knowledge that helps explain "how to get the job done" (1986, 72). More specifically, though, most of these stories speak to the idea of how to make a sustainable career in teaching for initiates. The generally accepted perception of the teaching degree was that it was useful in granting teachers the tools that they needed to "teach" but was less effective in teaching them how to deal with the bureaucracy and the politically charged nature of a teaching career (nineteen of the twenty-nine advised that this was the case). In retrospect, this collection's stories are the kinds of stories that should be told to new teachers before they first step into a school environment, but which are mostly absent from official teacher training curricula. The

vast informal wisdom that this repertoire of stories reveals touches on the vernacular (local, intimate, highly context-dependent) solutions that teachers have been using to avert the adverse outcomes represented in the stories. This idea is highly reflective of McCarl's 1988 article "Accident Narratives: Self Protection in the Workplace" (1988).

These solutions need to be further researched, analyzed, and disseminated. The hope is that this dissertation will highlight the need for a more generous sharing of these stories in more substantial forums than just the lunchrooms of schools across this province. These stories also highlight the need to reach a better understanding of the current public-teacher relationship. The public does not understand the impact of an ever-increasing list of obligations assigned to teachers (growing class sizes, an increased number of pathways for students in their classes, increased bureaucracy, testing, and reporting), and thus, fail to respect the workload, time constraints, and stress that permeate the occupation. The non-disclosure agreements created and put in place to protect teachers have led us to their current exploitation.

The community/teacher relationship breakdowns are mirrored closely in the folklore genres that surround them. Analyzing this folklore (such as jokes, songs, and anecdotes) grants researchers the opportunity to examine the worldviews in contemporary compositions contributing to or causing these problems. Documenting these embedded cultural texts located in child culture, occupational school culture (teachers and administration), and the school community (children, parents, teachers, and administration) provides us with a snapshot of the current cultural perception of teaching. The understanding gained through the examination of these texts illuminates what needs to be altered, removed, or created to communicate better messages about the occupational bullying of teachers. The stories of institutionalized abuse recounted in Chapter Six help illuminate the school board's limitations and flaws in the current

incarnations of school communities. As a result, these stories describe the depth of the systematic

disempowerment our public-school teachers are dealing with today.

In a school study that closely resembles an applied folklore approach, sociologist C.J.

Pascoe identified patterns of vernacular discourse (through personal experience narratives, jokes,

and texts from other oral genres) that contributed to institutionalized homophobia, misogyny, and

racism (2007). Through her ethnography, Pascoe highlighted how administrators and teachers

were complicit in various forms of bullying, thus taking the first step to addressing how

institutions must look inward to address conflict and inequality. Once armed with the malevolent

folklore elements, it becomes possible to demonstrate how these materials reinforce a

problematic atmosphere that creates difficulties for those isolated by them. With this knowledge,

strategies can be derived to remove the malicious folklore ailing a culture. However, these

traditions can often remain undetected without an outsider's perspective.

1.3   Narrative Empowerment

In addition to highlighting problematic themes, the examination of the narratives themselves is vital because individual and group identity is constructed and communicated by collections of texts, so we must understand what these narratives are saying about the groups included in this study (Abrams 2010; Behar 1996; Ellis 2004; Noyes 2003). Narratives communicate many ideas (covert and overt). This complexity is why we use them to communicate identity. Nothing short of a narrative system is complex enough to communicate all of the different worldviews that we possess simultaneously. Nor is anything else dynamic enough to incorporate the change in these views that the process of life inevitably brings. Thus, these narratives need to be studied. As Elaine Lawless notes, we must be able to shape our own narratives in order to maintain control of how we construct ourselves (Lawless 2001, 15).

Folklorists often approach narratives differently than others because they are used to reading for a variety of subtexts. Some subtexts focus on communicating worldviews recorded in the story's content, while others lay in what the story communicates about the composer. Holbek writes: "the impression we [as storytellers] are left with is that texts are in fact mirrors in which we see our own faces rather than anything else" (1987, 402). A series of stories about one person together reveal what Ruth Behar termed a "life story"; they reveal the narrative process of identity in a person's life. We all construct and reshape our narratives of identity every day (Berger, 2004). Composing our narratives is often regarded as an empowering notion, and when this is taken away, something fundamental is lost. The removal of this ability impacts the process of identity creation and maintenance in a profound way.

Lawless continues, "Without the ability to construct a narrative…individuals, and even whole groups, are stripped of the ability to create and develop a narrative construction of a life, even one that might include…the possibilities for a new and [better] future (2001, 18)."

1.4   Bullied Teachers and Social Complicity

The Febreze story exemplified a situation in which a person's ability to control their narrative had been wrenched away from them in a way that, to me, raised a red flag. It forced me to question this activity because such an event could have happened to almost any teacher working today. How had it been left to the media to control this narrative? How had it simultaneously been left up to them to silence all other perspectives? The journalists framed it as a teacher bullying a student, and this framing left no room for alternative interpretations. Where was the teacher in all of this?

Moreover, where was the NLTA? How have we transitioned to a place where the news media has become another tool in a bully's toolkit? Another troubling aspect of this event was that the resultant forums that arose around it pointed to a society deeply divided about education delivery in the province. The more I read in the forums, the more convinced I became that there were severe problems with society's perceptions of teachers, and the more convinced I became that these problems stemmed from the process of normalization that bullying gains from its relationship with folklore. Not only were people free to lambast this teacher with inappropriate comments, but these comments were seen, even by some who disagreed with them, as valid. The more that I read, the more curious I became.

Many of the stressors outlined in the previously mentioned 2014 CTF study revolve around teacher autonomy and the control of their curriculum, class size, and class composition. In

addition to this, a 2014 pan-Canadian study conducted by the Canadian Association of Principals in conjunction with The Alberta Teachers' Association entitled, "The Future of Principalship in Canada: A National Research Study," stated that we are still continuing to lump new expectations on teachers. The report states,

> Study respondents suggested that schools are increasingly expected to meet all of the needs of children and youth. Parents have unrealistic expectations that schools should solve all family issues and, in fact, do many of the things parents formerly did like teaching manners and respect […] Increasingly, school is becoming a social agency that must parent students, and parent parents (2014, 35).

These problems point to a power differential in the system that does not favor our teachers. Bullying thrives in situations where these kinds of drastic differentials in power exist, so it should be unsurprising that it exists in the institutionalized portions of our school system. This problem, and those highlighted by the Febreze Incident, make up the major themes of this dissertation, namely: the profound disconnect between teachers and society; the public's ignorance about the occupation of teaching; the entitlement of many parents and students; the communal silencing of teachers; and finally, how these problems have led to the current tacit acceptance of the bullying of our teachers.

In the late summer of 2012, I began asking teacher friends about public situations (like the Febreze Incident), and they opened up my eyes to the pitfalls of being a public-school teacher today. These teachers told stories that helped reveal their world. They described it as a world where they are always immersed in a highly charged political atmosphere, overworked, and subjected to unfair work practices, and where the public has chipped away their authority. They also perceive the public as having little respect for them. Through these initial interviews, it became apparent that these teachers felt that there was a significant and worsening problem with their chosen occupation. This dissertation attempts to explain this problem and how folklore

contributes to it. It also outlines the potential that folklore has to help address and alleviate some

of the inequities under which teachers find themselves working.

1.5   Chapter Outline

Chapter One: introduces the focus of this dissertation through a brief overview of the Febreze Incident and disturbing trends in research surrounding teachers in Canada.

Chapter Two: explains the methodology behind this study and how it has changed throughout the work. It also works to explain the reasoning for anonymity and how this anonymity has empowered teachers to explain the issues that face them in their everyday lives, as it frees them from the regular repercussions of voicing their opinions out loud. Lastly, it discusses the varying cultures in play in and around teachers while they work, namely: child culture, occupational culture, and the culture of the school community. In the end, it argues that vernacular resistance needs to be used to both strengthen ties between teachers and the rest of the school community, and to weaken and upset the rigid hierarchy that has developed over the years.

Chapter Three: discusses the link between folklore, violence, and bullying. Through the use of a consultant's story about the alienation of a fellow teacher, this chapter analyzes the problems underlying the current perception of bullying and how folklore conflicts with and informs bullying definitions. This chapter concludes that folklore plays a prominent role in the execution and interpretation of bullying.

Chapter Four: analyzes three areas of folkloristic study that impact this dissertation: Folklore and Education, Folklore and Activism, and Occupational Folklore. From Folklore and Education, this dissertation examines three different uses of folklore: group integration, the decentralization of power, and the enforcement of equity between the marginalized teachers and their oppressors. Through Folklore and Activism, this dissertation delves into notions of how folklore can be engineered to affect positive change, how folklore supports many unintended

messages about bullying, and this dissertation will work to suggest ideas for implementation under the umbrella of the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy*. Finally, under the heading of Occupational Folklore, this chapter examines folklore in the workplace, how it is used to create and inform opinion, and lastly, how institutional barriers are negotiated through folklore.

 Chapter Five: argues that bullying narratives have long histories in folklore by illustrating bullying instances within the texts of folk narratives. The chapter then uses these folktales to compare to the modern bullying experience narrative, to explain how folklore has guided and informed our perceptions of what a bully is. This perception is almost always at odds with modern definitions of bullying because it conveys the notion that bullies are necessary for the healthy development of a person's life. This chapter uses modern bullying narratives from the collection and subdivides them into three categories: informative/empathetic tales, sympathetic/outrage tales, and esteem tales of heroes and survivors. This division allows for discussion of how older informal perceptions inherited from folktales and other oral narrative sources are still impacting our perceptions of bullying today.

 Chapter Six: depicts both the non-institutional and institutional bullying at work within the schoolhouse, and how folklore plays into these dramas. In the case of non-institutional bullying, folklore must work as the bully's primary weapon for gaining social power, whether through confrontation using folk materials such as proverbs, or through the process of traditionalizing the abuse to separate and lower the social status of the victim. With institutional bullying, we will focus on the traditionalization of abuse and how it is directed downward in the occupational social hierarchy. This chapter discusses the plight of teachers by demonstrating how difficult it is for teachers to defend themselves while abiding by the rules that dictate the terms of their public engagement.

The Conclusion: reviews the major points of each chapter and ties them together in a brief united discourse to suggest the next logical steps. The conclusion works to highlight how Applied Folklore, used correctly through continued ethnography and community outreach programs, can help reconnect teachers with their communities. Continued anonymous ethnography is key to this solution because there is so much that cannot be expressed to the public except through anonymous forums. This being said, through inventive uses of applied folklore such as the *Folklife and Education* models (Deafenbaugh 2017; Nagar 2015; Congdon 2006), or by expanding on the current *ArtsSmarts* implementations, parents can be brought back into their children's educational lives in a more meaningful way than simply helping with assigned homework. By incorporating parents' valuable informal knowledge into formal education in school, the underlying social messages in each can reinforce messages in the other, making the child's education more complete. These implementations also present forums through which parents and teachers can interact as peers in the students' education. This approach also helps create a comradery between members of the school community and, to use Dr. Deafenbaugh's words, these, "interrelationships between […] school and community […] enrich learning for all" (2015, 83).

Chapter Two: Methodology & Terminology

This thesis began as an ethnographic study of bullying as part of the occupational folklore of school teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador. The original conceptualization involved a study encompassing a single school. However, due to regulations protecting students' identities and how the school board and NLTA apply these regulations to limit teachers' free speech, this has made the formulation of a study based on a single school impossible. Out of necessity, the project became a broader study of folklore, citing bullying incidents and interviews from various locations in the province, built on the question/conclusion: How can we ask children not to bully when the adult culture that surrounds them seems to condone it?

Respecting that current policies and regulations exist to balance and protect the rights and needs of students, teachers, and our society, this chapter will address how individual policies and regulations have failed in intention, i.e., how the official/formal/regulated fails to meet informal/vernacular/experienced needs. These disjunctures are complicated by various forms of censorship and bureaucratic obfuscation, limiting the ability of individual teachers to speak or defend themselves publicly, while parents and the media openly criticize from afar. The fear of "breaking code" and the need to "protect students" means that both teachers and administrators have created particularly conservative approaches to communicating with the public. Exacerbating this is that the current system empowers fearful administrators by allowing them to freely impose restrictions that limit teachers' ability to discuss their occupational culture with researchers by forcing researchers to ask administrators for permission for this access. Likewise, teachers self-impose restrictions because of employability concerns, thus accepting the hegemonic nature of the system. The shift in methodology from an in-depth ethnography

featuring a single school to a province-wide, issue-based ethnography was therefore guided by the perceptions of censorship and bureaucracy encountered in the research's execution.

2.1   Censorship

Understanding the level of censorship under which teachers operate is essential to understanding them as a disenfranchised group. When this research began, I thought that I understood these limitations. I had read a lot about these restrictions in my preliminary research, but I discovered that the practical application of these restrictions extended well beyond my interpretation of them. I was continually surprised in the early collection phase by how much teachers would not say even under the veil of anonymity. For example, in an interview with Navy, we wandered off topic and began discussing the Twillingate incident (the "Febreze story" discussed in the introduction).[4] In Navy's version of the story, they detailed a very close account of the incident, an account missing from official sources. This account explained the incident from the perspective of the teacher and very closely mirrored other accounts, including Grandfallswoman's 2012 blog entry entitled, "Febreze Revisited," (Appendix 1C) based around a letter that the parents of the other children in the class allegedly sent to city hall.

In this account of the incident, the teacher was blameless, the victim was the bully, and the bullies were the victims. I asked the simple question, "Why do you think that the NLTA didn't advertise this?" (Interview with Navy, May 2, 2013). To my great surprise, Navy responded:

> Navy (32:21): Obviously, I don't know specifics, but I think there's probably something about making comments about cases concerning children that probably limits their ability to do that. We're really not allowed to say anything that might be used to identify a child in a story.
> Jeff (32:35): Even though he was already identified in [...] public?

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[4] For their security, all of the teachers involved have had their names replaced with androgynous names. See section 2.2 Naming Conventions for more information on this.

Navy (32:37): It doesn't matter […] I don't think so anyway. I wouldn't have commented on it. (Interview with Navy, May 2, 2013)

Even in a situation where the child's identity had already been made public, Navy would not have spoken publicly in defense of the teacher, in spite of knowing that the media's coverage was incorrect. Perhaps even more importantly, they did not expect the NLTA to do it either, because they are similarly restricted. This response is significant to note because the parent of the child—who went so far as to permit the news media to publicize the child's Facebook photo—was not only under no such obligation to conceal their child's identity from public ridicule, but there was no expectation of punishment for doing so. In a reversal of roles, the teacher would have faced sanctions or outright dismissal for such actions. This scenario raises the question: how have we managed to get to the point where we place more pressure on teachers than on parents to act in the child's best interest? Should parents be exempt from such expectations? Should the media be held accountable for contributing to such transgressions?

What is it that restricts teachers so much? What was Navy referring to in this short excerpt? There are two pieces of legislation that work in conjunction with each other to restrict teachers from voicing their opinions publicly. The first is what Navy was referring to directly, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Code of Ethics (NLTACE).[5] Subsection ii states:

> A teacher regards as confidential, and does not divulge, other than to appropriate persons, any information of a personal or domestic nature concerning either pupils or their homes (*Newfoundland and Labrador Teacher's Association Act* 1974, 33).

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[5] Teacher's Association Act (TAA) contains the NLTACE and in this document under the subsection entitled "Teacher-pupils," subsection ii extends protections outlined under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) in section 110 ("Publication, Records and information: Protection of Privacy of Young Persons") to all children under a teacher's care (not only to those that have committed crimes).

Given the stipulations under the subsections of section 110 & 111 of the Youth Criminal Justice

Act (YCJA), it certainly makes sense to have this included in the Teachers Association Act

(TAA) because there is no way of knowing when an accusation could become a formal charge,

and this prevents teachers from accidentally breaking the law in the interim.[6] However, this also

means that teachers and their defenders must forfeit a large portion of their freedom, that which

allows them to defend themselves in public.

  This limitation is not tacitly or casually imposed. Under the heading "Teacher-

professional organization," subsection vi of the NLTACE states:

> (vi) A teacher recognizes the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers'
> Association as the official voice of teachers on all matters of a professional
> nature (35).

  This ominous statement created to direct questions away from individual teachers and to

the union cuts both ways. On the one hand, it removes the *impetus* for teachers to defend

themselves from accusations because the NLTA is the public mouthpiece of teachers. On the

other hand, it removes a teacher's *ability* to defend themselves in public because these

restrictions prevent them from speaking publicly under the threat of sanctions. Since all members

of the NLTA are under the same restrictions as teachers, it means that no public defense of

accused teachers is functionally plausible.

  This combination of legal and formalized guidelines has created a situation where many

teachers will opt to say nothing when attacked because they feel that nothing good can come

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[6] 110 (1) "Subject to this section, no person shall publish the name of a young person, or any other information related to a young person, if it would identify the young person as a young person dealt with under this Act" (*Youth and Criminal Justice Act,* 106).
111 (1) "Subject to this section, no person shall publish the name of a child or young person, or any other information related to a child or a young person, if it would identify the child or young person as having been a victim of, or as having appeared as a witness in connection with, an offence committed or alleged to have been committed by a young person" (*Youth and Criminal Justice Act,* 107).

from voicing their own opinions (even when the public narrative is inaccurate or misleading). Additionally, because of the ambiguity of the wording, many teachers will not comment on internal affairs in dealing with the NLTA, the school board, Department of Education, or even events at their given schools—including events that do not concern children—because they are honestly not sure if that would place them in breach of their Code of Ethics.

Most of the interviewed teachers, like Navy, offered surprising conservatism in their answers. Navy had a way about their communication that simply implied, "This is how it is right now. We cannot change it, so this is how we deal with it." When it came to censorship, Navy seemed to feel that it was merely part of the job. Censorship was just something that teachers had to deal with because it was the law not to present the public with anything that could cause harm, including character harm, to a child.

The media, however, are under no such "do no harm" limitation. The current trend of infotainment encourages reporters to "act now and apologize later, if necessary."[7] The YCJA does not apply when there is no criminal act. Thus, it offers no protection to the identities of children who have not committed criminal offenses or been the victim of such an offense. So logically, when the media presents a case like that of the Febreze Incident, where the article openly displays a child's identity, the reader should immediately be aware that no criminal offense has occurred. In the media's defense, when dealing with accusations against teachers, they can only cover the accuser's perspective along with the NLTA's response, which is typically limited to "the accusation is under investigation." This response allows for an

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[7] Williams & Delli Carpini (2000), in their article "Unchained reaction: The collapse of media gatekeeping and the Clinton–Lewinsky scandal", wrote "that alterations in the media environment have eroded the always uneasy distinction between news and entertainment" (62). This notion has been taken up in more contemporary works with the notion of "Trial by Media" (see Greer & McLaughlin 2011, 2007) and have parallels in writings about "Outrage journalism" (see Protess et al, 1991).

irresponsibly biased version of the story that can make the teacher(s) involved look "guilty" to the public.

These responses may seem to be self-imposed censorship by the NLTA membership that extends beyond the scope of the Youth Criminal Justice Act, and it is important to note that if charges were laid against the child after the NLTA or the teacher defended the actions of the teacher, these actions could be regarded as a breach of either section 110 or section 111 of the YCJA. Between section 111, which includes victims and information that can be used to identify victims of said crimes, and section 110, which includes the accused and information that can be used to identify the accused in said crimes, it makes any kind of public defense untenable; any comment could potentially break the law. Merely acknowledging that the act took place, if that information can identify a child already named in public discourse, could be perceived as a breach. Thus, the NLTA almost always puts out a blanket statement that the allegations are "under investigation" because to say anything else would be to acknowledge that the act took place.

By erasing teachers' voices from public discourse, we deny teachers the opportunity to defend themselves or recover respect within the communities where they work and reside. Censorship's impact does not stop at the public defense of teachers; it is also detrimental to the public's engagement about needed improvements in education. The fact that the NLTA acts as the voice of teachers means that beneficial changes that occur get associated with the organization rather than its membership. This situation creates and enforces social distance between teachers and the public, further removing teachers from the public eye and creating the perception that NLTA changes are reactionary top-down/disciplinary, rather than bottom-up/cooperative/self-driven. This censoring system and reporting system means that teachers get

publicly portrayed as unprofessional, unable to determine best practice among themselves, and need greater hierarchical control.

2.2   Naming Conventions

The amount of censorship surrounding teachers made the consultants' anonymity a paramount concern at the outset of the project. A naming convention was therefore required. Alphabetizing interviewees' names in order of contact was the first system used, but this made the work hard to read. To address this problem, gender-neutral names, based upon these designations, were created; 'A' became 'Aiden,' 'B' became 'Bean,' and 'C' became 'Cam,' etc.

2.3   The Bureaucracy
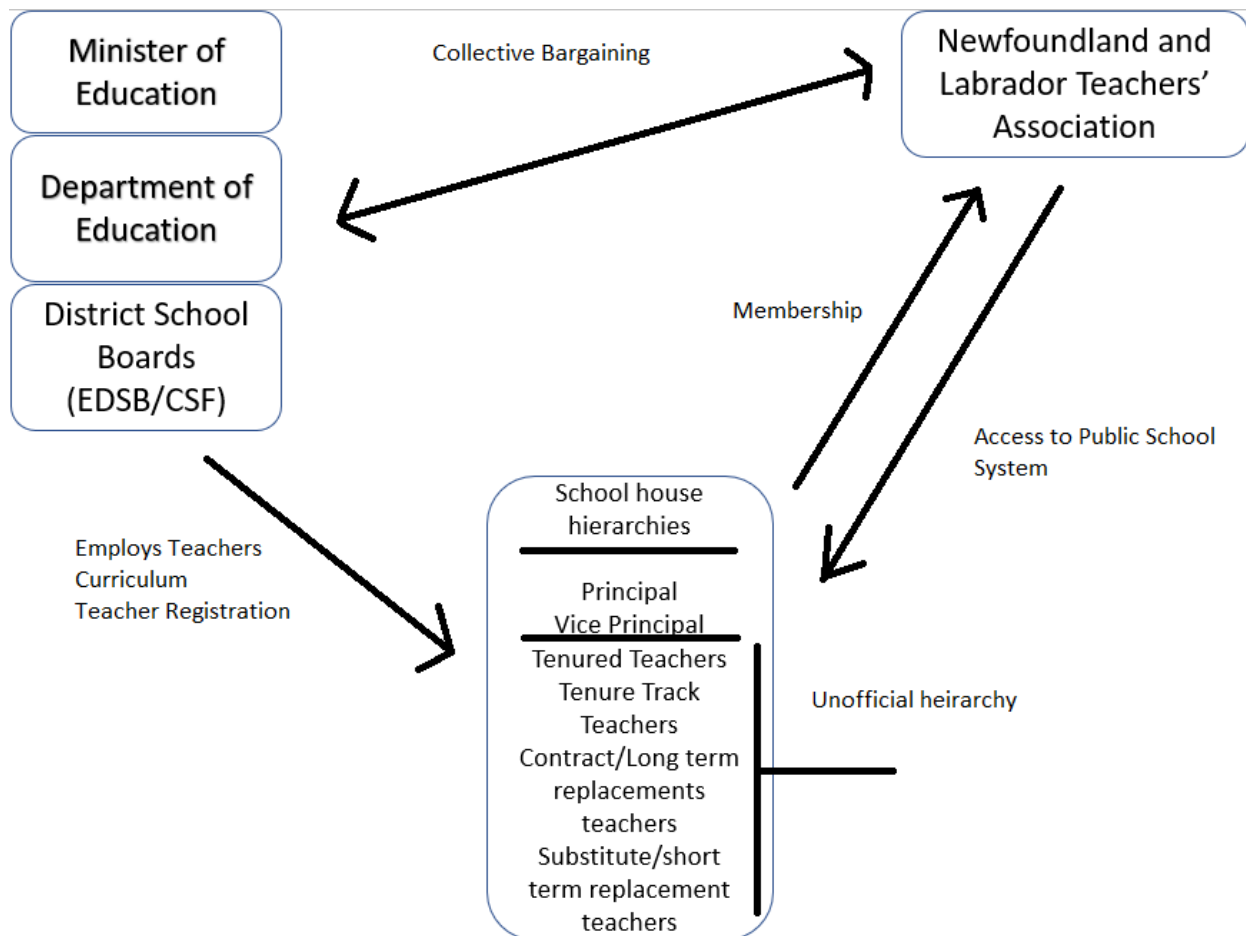
Figure 2: Demonstrates how the lines of power work and how interconnected the different parts are.

The work lives of teachers exist within an intersection of multiple layers of bureaucracy. Understanding the shifting power relations between the NLTA, school boards, and the Department of Education is difficult because of the continually changing nature of the government investment in education in this province. There are so many intersections of power between these bodies that only insiders fully understand how each intersection affects their group.[8] However, it is essential to the understanding of the plight of teachers for readers to attain

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[8] Sam Racine, in his 1999 article "Using corporate lore to create boundaries in the workplace," writes about the difference between informal and formal subcultures operating within corporate structure. More specifically, he

a rudimentary understanding of what these bodies are and how they function. For example, the complexity of this bureaucracy appears in the legislation surrounding steering committees such as the "general advisory committee," as outlined under the *Statutes of Newfoundland 1995 E-2.1: An Act Respecting Education*, which states:

> 13. (1) There shall be a general advisory committee, which shall consist of
>   (a) the minister;
>   (b) the deputy minister;
>   (c) one or more senior executive officers of the department;
>   (d) the heads of the appropriate divisions of the department as selected by the minister;
>   (e) the executive directors;
>   (f) 2 persons who shall be representative of the Newfoundland and Labrador School Trustees Association;
>   (g) 2 persons who shall be representative of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association referred to in the *Teachers' Association Act*;
>   (h) one person who shall be representative of the Faculty of Education of the Memorial University of Newfoundland;
>   (i) one person who shall be representative of the Newfoundland and Labrador Home and School Federation; and
>   (j) one person who shall be representative of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Superintendents. (Section 13, 1995)

As can be seen, by the constitution of this committee the stakeholders in education are quite varied and may give the impression that control over education development is quite diverse in the province. However, it is essential to note that such power ultimately extends from the Minister of Education themself, and through them the Department of Education. This setup is a significant complaint among teachers because it means that the Minister of Education can act almost unilaterally when making decisions, regardless of the committee's conclusions. However,

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explains how these internal subcultures can come into conflict with each other, and how folklore can be used to help identify these informal groups and curb this problem. Michael Owen Jones also discusses this idea in part when he examines how folklore points out areas of 'stress and strain' in organizations, by delimiting the boundaries of the informal groups contained within and between official groups (1991, 32-36). In addition, the insiders of the groups that I spoke to directed me back to the various governing legislation and refrained from speaking about how tripartite councils operated (except at the hypothetical level).

the three core organizations that shape this system are the NLTA, the English and French school

boards, and the Department of Education.

2.3.1   The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

The NLTA, created in 1890, spans 49 separate branches across the province and

frequently plays the role of a labor union, although it is a professional association

(Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, 2019). However, it is a legally empowered

group whose sole function is to tend to its members' needs, including both the teachers and

administrators of Newfoundland and Labrador schools. This group makes recommendations to

the school board based on academic studies, on a vast number of issues concerning teacher and

student health, occupational work strategies, scheduling, and all other issues that impact its

membership's work lives. Teachers can opt not to be a part of the group; however, non-members

cannot teach in the public school system.[9]

When asked about the NLTA, several interviewees referenced the association's role in

imposing limitations on teachers. Navy was also clear about the limitations of the NLTA's power

in other matters, suggesting that the Association's recommendations often fall on the deaf ears of

the Department of Education. Tanner carried this a little further than Navy, suggesting that their

superiors' recommendations from the NLTA always seem to be noted, but if the

recommendations are not politically attractive, they are scrapped or delayed by the other arms of

the bureaucracy. Tanner used the no-zero policy and the research on inclusion to validate their

points with this, stating that the no-zero policy was successfully implemented and maintained by

the DOE for several years despite very little support from teachers, administrators, or even

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[9] For more information about the NLTA as an organization see the publications list on nlta.nl.ca/publications. This
list gives a far more comprehensive idea about the types of services and studies that the organization is currently
involved with. It also lists all of the rules of membership and the constitution of the association.

parents.[10] Tanner also advised that despite the need for aids in the classrooms to deal with the

ballooning strain on teachers that "pathways" (semi-individualized curricula for students in the

same class)[11] are creating, the NL government has continued with a long-standing tradition of

cutting educational support while intimating that these cuts have little to no impact on the

education in this province (interview with Tanner, February 3, 2016). All of the teachers were

fiercely defensive about the NLTA; the only negative comment that any of the teachers made

was that the NLTA could be a little light on the public defense of its members. Most of the

teachers interviewed understood the limitations under which the NLTA operates regarding the

public dissemination of classroom-related information, so most felt that this was an unavoidable

fact of teacher life.

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[10] For more information on this see: Zwaagstra 2012, 2013, and 2014 for information about the no-zero policy, and Worthman 2016, Power 2015, and Sooley-Dyke 2014 for more information on inclusion.

[11] Pathways are a set of curricula to ensure that each student has their academic needs met within the school system. The 1998 publication by the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, *Pathways to Programming and Graduation: A Handbook for Teachers and Administrators*, has laid out the pathways as follows:

Pathway One: The provincially prescribed curriculum without support;
Pathway Two: The provincially prescribed curriculum with student specific strategies and supports
        (accommodations and adaptations);
Pathway Three: A modified or adapted curriculum, based on the student's individual needs;
Pathway Four: A mixture of core curriculum and individually designed curriculum to meet the student's
        individual needs; and
Pathway Five: A completely alternate curriculum to meet the challenging needs of the student.

See also Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education publication: *Focusing on Students: A Report of the ISSP & Pathways Commission*, 2007 publication on the proper implementation of ISSPs and Pathways.

2.3.2 School Boards

The school boards, now divided between English and French School Districts, represent teachers' employers in most situations, but employment in education extends from the province through the Department of Education (DOE), which means that at times the DOE represents their employer in a more general sense. Thus, it is accurate to say that the province and the District School Board employ a teacher. The move from five geographic school districts down to two linguistically defined ones (French and English) seems to mark the province's end game to consolidate and centralize power in one place, St. John's.[12] Each of these linguistically defined districts still maintains five geographic regions, which function more or less in the same way that the five old school districts used to function, except that there is now an English and French version of each body.

The full names for the existing districts in the province today are the Newfoundland and Labrador English School Board (NLESB) and the *Conseil Scolaire Francophone* (CSF). Both districts are a part of the Newfoundland School Board Association, which is the association that directs strategic planning for initiatives that concern them across Newfoundland and Labrador. Like the NLTA, the school board's authority derives from the legislation. In this case, the 2010 *Constitution of the Newfoundland and Labrador School Board Act* (NLSBA) and the *School Act* of 1997 are the two primary documents (although there is a myriad of other legal documents that also empower and limit said bodies).

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[12] The switch to the two-district system (English/French) occurred on September 1, 2013. According to the teachers that I spoke to it has had minimal impact on their lives. Most saw it as a political move to centralize power that allowed government to show that they were downsizing educational administrative jobs, while effectively just re-organizing the current system. It is hard to tell how many school board jobs were ultimately lost in this downsizing of administration, as numbers for school board managers, specialists, etc., were not available until the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan was released. The old Strategic Plans from 2012 for the old districts are no longer available. However, the Strategic Plans from 2013 and 2014-2017 seem to back what many of the teachers intimated, that the migration had little impact, at least on employment levels of teachers.

According to Dr. Keith Seel and Dr. Jim Gibbons, the school boards "are responsible for directing the activities of their school district in terms of organization, strategic planning, and operations, and accountability for finances and student learning" (Seel & Gibbons, 2011). The school board's power derives directly from the Minister of Education through the Lieutenant-Governor's powers outlined in the *Schools Act* of 1997, section 52.2:

> 52. (1) The province shall be divided into school districts as set by order of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, and the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may by order alter the boundaries or change the name of a school district.
>
> (2) Where there is a dispute as to the boundaries of a school district, the Minister shall determine those boundaries, and that determination shall be final. (1997 cS-12.2 s52)

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the school boards' actual power has waxed and waned over the years. This turbulence is due to inconsistencies in levels of support from parents and the government. The local variation in power closely mirrors the situation elsewhere in the country. School board amalgamations and loss of autonomy are now commonplace throughout the provinces. The trend toward centralization has meant that school boards become disconnected from the various school communities they represent (Sheppard et al. 2013, 13). For instance, the Newfoundland schools' re-districting to a language-based system was a significant change from the geographic system that existed at the start of this research. This re-districting means that geography is no longer ideologically tied to the districts, because they have become centralized. The school boards are currently still responsible for the schools' everyday organization in this province, such as dealing with student loads, commissioning, decommissioning, and schools' re-

districting.[13] These functions are, generally, laid out in three-year strategic plans, as per Section 50 of the *Schools Act,* which states:

> Provincial schools
>
> 50.   (1) The minister may establish and operate a provincial school.
>
>   (2) A provincial school may be operated by the department separately, or by, with or for another department of government, a board or an organization approved by the minister (<u>1997 cS-12.2 s50</u>).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the power legislated to provincial Departments of Education, the trend toward eliminating school boards has increased across the country. These cuts have had a significant impact on all members of school communities because the boards are additionally responsible for the practical organization of the support staff, administrators, and teachers, in addition to developing the practical application and dissemination of the Department of Education's mandate, which also includes student learning and associated programs. School boards are also a normal part of the ethical clearance process under which researchers work. Thus, any research focused on students, teachers, or administrators usually is passed through the boards themselves, although in the future, perhaps it will be possible to be granted special consideration for such projects directly from the Department of Education.[14]

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[13]This is still accomplished at the discretion of the Minister of Education, who, at any time, can step in and modify these arrangements.

[14] See sections 2.4 The Impact of these Limitations on this Study, and 2.6, Ethical Approval, for more information about the impact the current structure has on teacher-focused research projects.

2.3.3   The Department of Education (DOE)

Ultimately, all power for education radiates from the provincial government, specifically, the Minister of Education. A mandate from the provincial government, written by the Minister of Education, empowers the DOE. For example, the former Minister, Brian Warr, published the then-current government's mandate on the government's website for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development on January 9, 2019 (Ball 2019). This document briefly lays out the focus of the DOE over the term of the Premier. The development of this mandate/strategic plan involves various committees, including the school boards, the DOE, and the NLTA, to ensure its successful implementation.

Aside from setting the mandate and being a part of almost every committee involving educational reform and innovation in the province, the DOE is directly responsible for the certification of teachers, assisting school boards, supporting libraries, student assessment, research, childcare, family resource services, support for exceptionalities, and curriculum design and programming. In short, the DOE has almost inexhaustible power over all personnel employed in the school system. The DOE's control over employees can be traced back either directly (as through the power to certify individual teachers) or indirectly (as through the employment of administrators and support staff as required by the school boards). This control exists because the government has empowered them to act on their behalf.

2.4   The Impact of these Limitations on this Study

Censorship, combined with the bureaucratic structure, work together to silence teachers. Teachers ultimately have three bosses: their administration, who are functionally their bosses but technically not; the school board, which is technically their employer; and the Department of Education, which is responsible for certifying them. On top of this, teachers are beholden to their professional association (the NLTA), which means that they exist in a world surrounded by power structures.

Teachers' occupational narratives (the stories told among teachers) often include aspects of legends. Legends, according to Jan Brunvand in his seminal work, *The Study of American Folklore*, "are [migratory] stories regarded by their tellers as true, despite being partly based on traditional motifs or concepts…are generally secular…[and] are often told to validate superstitions" (1998, 196-197). According to Linda Degh (1972), legends primarily serve the purpose of education. She writes:

> The reason for telling a legend is basically not to entertain but to educate people, to inform them about an important fact, to arm them against danger within their own cultural environment (73).

Thus, it should be unsurprising that when teachers discuss bullying stories, especially under the framework of questions surrounding what new teachers should know, their answers often come in the form of legends.

Legends accounted for most of the stories assembled in this collection, but some stories were also collected as personal experience narratives, memorates, or proto-memorates, and were rewritten by myself to distance the teller from the material. This collection includes stories about teachers who have accidentally insulted an administrator or have lived under the constant assault of an angry principal for a considerable amount of time. For these teachers, the fear of reprisal

was unmistakable. In Newfoundland, principals are protected by the same association that represents teachers in their claims of abuse. When teachers, especially new teachers, have problems with their co-workers, there is often nothing they can do. Filing complaints can be extremely detrimental to a teacher's career, especially if they are filing a complaint against someone further up the ladder because there is almost no policing of administrations, and what does exist, exists as a way of helping an administration improve.[15]

There is a substantial conflict of interest in qualitative studies that involve the bullying of teachers by administrators. First, there is gaining access to informants, which is very difficult within the current system, and the workarounds that exist detract from the study by denying the researchers the assistance of the school board. Second, there is a problem with protecting informants from backlash, which is extremely difficult given how interconnected schools and teachers are in this province. When qualitative research becomes anonymous, the loss of connection with the victims is the first casualty.

2.5   Early Conceptions of Methodology and the Changing Focus of the Project

At the time of the initial planning for this project, I had been reading Casey Pascoe's book, *Dude You're a Fag*, and her work greatly influenced how I first envisioned both the project and its methodology. The beauty of Pascoe's ethnographic approach was in its simplicity and the

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[15] This being said, it is possible for principals to be fired, transferred, or forced into retirement, but these recommendations are not the main focus of the body. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) aims to help change the culture of the administration to make things work for everyone. The removal of an administrator is seen as an absolute last step. In an interview with a clinical psychologist who has dealt with teachers through the EAP system, I was further made aware of some of the inadequacies in the teachers' EAP. I was directed to the NLTA website that states that for mental health issues, teachers are allotted a maximum of $2000 over their entire career. The psychologist mentioned that most other groups such as the Public Service Commission or Eastern Health have yearly allotments of sessions (8 and 6 respectively) to help staff deal with stress. They advised that the recommended hourly rate for psychologists according to the APNL (Association of Psychology of Newfoundland and Labrador) is $180, which means that the NLTA will only cover a teacher for 11 sessions of EAP over the course of the teacher's entire career.

quality of its execution. Her work revolved around performing a qualitative study of one school and interviewing as many people as possible. This highly concentrated fieldwork was a crucial factor in the overall success of the project, which captured a believable understanding of the various school cultures interacting inside the schoolhouse walls (by school cultures, I refer to the professional culture of the teachers and administration, the culture of students and teachers together, and the distinctly separate culture of the students).

Pascoe's approach was appealing for three primary reasons: first, it was easy to conceptualize, not only from the researcher's standpoint but also from the viewpoint of the reader. Its scope was simple, well-defined, and manageable. Second, her approach proved to be highly successful in revealing problems in the school community's underlying nature. Pascoe was able to use her ethnographic fieldwork to demonstrate problems using the school's unique cultural language. This ability made it not only possible for her to field solutions to these problems, but it gave her the cultural "street cred" to be heard by those she studied.

In choosing this paradigm, there were a few functional changes from the outset; since the focus of the study was on the impact of bullying on teachers, not students, it required a shifting of the lens to focus on teachers' professional lives. First, I had to decide not to pursue interviews with children in the school. This avenue of exploration was simply not possible given the study's nature, because interviewing children forces the researcher down normalized research pathways in schools, as it entails getting permission from administrators, which creates a fundamental conflict of interest. Thus, any involvement with students would have dramatically impaired the study's ability to research mistreated teachers.[16]

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[16] The student perspective of bullying that occurs between students and teachers has already gotten a lot of coverage in the field; the disenfranchisement of voice really happens on the teachers' side of events. For more information on this subject please refer to Coloroso 2011; Elliott 2003; Geffner et al. 2001; James 2008; Klein 1991; Monks et al. 2006; Nesbit 1999; Olweus 1993; Sullivan 2000; Vega et al. 2005. For more examples, and information about

There is a significant discrepancy in representation between students and teachers. First, the limitations and ambiguity surrounding the teachers' codes of ethics limit their ability to be included in many studies for fear of accidentally breaking the codes' ominously worded rules. Secondly, the first limitation creates a situation wherein the teacher's inclusion in such a study must be anonymous. This directly impacts the researcher's ability to divulge the most potent parts of the research, which then directly affects the power of the ethnography itself, making it a less attractive option for ethnographers; too much detail threatens the anonymity of the informants. Thirdly, researchers have, for the most part, not been overly reflective of the impact that adult interaction in schools has on the children, such as the impact of seeing a teacher bullied. Finally, teen suicide and concern for children's protection have always claimed precedence over the treatment of adults. Thus, all of these considerations significantly shape the scope of any work with teachers about non-pedagogical professional matters.

These considerations made the initial notion of performing a single-school ethnography untenable. Given how small the teacher community is in Newfoundland and Labrador and how easily identifiable its schools are, Pascoe's approach was simply impossible. The study's anonymous nature made even seemingly innocuous pieces of information, such as the grade level at which a teacher teaches, impossible to include. There are so few teachers at any given school teaching a given grade that it is easy to deduce who informants are with minimal effort; all of the teachers are generally listed by name and grade level taught on the school's website. Pursuing a multi-school study brought the work into a surprising conflict with standard operating procedures for conducting teacher-based research. Understanding that protecting each teacher's

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impact see: Atlas & Pepler 1998; Bauman 2006; Blase & Blase 2003; Boulton et al. 2002; Boulton 1997; Cemaloglu 2007; Coloroso 2011; Evans Johnson 2008; Field 2003; James 2008; Klein 1991; Mishna 2005; Naylor et al. 2006; Randall 1996; Randall 1995; and Sullivan 2000.

anonymity was paramount to the study's success, I had intended to contact the teachers outside

of school and discuss matters outside of the school's geography because of potential problems

with access. Asking permission of an administrator to speak to an informant was out of the

question, and doing so is unavoidable where interviews occur on school grounds. To put it

simply, I did not want to give a principal, who in some instances would have been implicated as

a bully, the chance to deny access to the potential victims of that bullying. The historical research

method with teachers has always been accomplished by first asking the school board's

permission. As indicated, this is unworkable given the needs of the study. Thus, I discovered that

there is no room in the conventional system at the moment, on the school board's (the now-

defunct Newfoundland & Labrador Eastern School District) side, that would allow this to

happen.

The only portion of Pascoe's approach that was possible to emulate was framing a well-

designed Applied Folkloristic approach that attempted to comment on or help solve a single

social problem: teachers' mistreatment. Thus, the project focused on a single well-defined group

for analysis, a critical and shared problem, and the reasonable assumption that an Applied

Folkloristic methodological approach could help address the given problem. The study became

less about how a single school could challenge traditions that condone its teachers' bullying and

more about how the educational system as a whole and society more broadly have contributed to

and must shift to address teachers' bullying. This new goal became the starting place for this

research, which led to researching the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy*, the anti-bullying

framework adopted by the province, and implemented at the individual school level, because

much of what this policy calls for would fall entirely within the realm of Applied Folklore.[17]

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[17] The *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* was created in 2001; in response to a "growing concern about safety and well-being in our schools, and in recognition of its commitment to the Violence Prevention Initiative, the

For this reason, the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* presented the perfect starting point for the involvement of an applied folkloristics investigation into a significant under-researched portion of the school culture; that of the adults, in schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. This policy, which is updated every two years, primarily documents individual schools' framework to adapt their anti-bullying programs by promoting a bully-free school culture that champions respect among children. Thus, it provides a framework that schools should adopt and adapt locally to make bullying less prevalent in their school cultures. However, there is little in this document about the bullying of teachers, because it falls outside of the general purview of a policy centered on children's in-school interactions. Not fully incorporating parents, teachers, and administrators into this policy counteracts the policy goals—students sometimes witness the bullying of teachers in school, which promotes an ineffectual "do as we say, not as we do" strategy.

This limitation became the cornerstone of the research because it revealed the question at the heart of the study. How can we ask children not to bully when the subsuming adult culture appears to condone it openly? This question points out a significant flaw in the policy, which only exists as long as we allow adults' mistreatment to be a normal activity. As a result, this study became focused on positively impacting teachers' work lives, and through this, how to reinforce the ideals that the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* champions within the adult world.

Unfortunately, there is no precedence in education studies for a study of this type because, until recently, teachers' mistreatment has primarily been regarded as socially condonable. There have been recent studies in Britain, however, (Garner 2015a & 2015b) that have focused on teacher attrition levels, and studies in the United States (Blase & Blase 2011;

Department of Education began the implementation of a Safe and Caring Schools Initiative in the fall of 2001" (*Safe and Caring Schools Policy* 2006).

James et al. 2008; Cemaloglu 2007; Field 2003) that have focused on the societal, financial, and psychological impacts of teacher mistreatment. These studies work to explain the alarming rise in the rates of teacher burnout and attrition and the actual financial cost associated with paying teachers to not go to work due to burnout, mistreatment, or being under investigation for false accusations.

The existence of these studies led toward the necessity of drawing attention to bullying traditions in teacher cultures such as 1) initiation traditions (especially hazing traditions) and unofficial policies about the treatment of new teachers; 2) the presence of administration at certain times and in certain historically teacher-oriented events; and 3) the inclusion and participation of parents in school projects. Highlighting these aspects of teachers' occupational lives helps to illustrate where bullying traditions take hold and where the restrictions on a teacher's ability to communicate on equal terms with their peers, the administration, and the public impacts the quality of their lives. The hope was that by highlighting these problems and suggesting adaptive strategies to curb them through Applied Folkloristics, we could help eliminate the school community's bullying traditions and draw attention to social inequities that cannot necessarily be solved informally.

2.6   Ethical Approval

When the ethics proposal was first drafted (submitted February 23, 2012) for this research,

it centered almost exclusively on the mistreatment of teachers. I was surprised when I received

questions in my review, asking me how I was getting formal approval from the school board to

talk to these teachers (April 3, 2012). The members of ICEHR (Interdisciplinary Committee on

Ethics in Human Research) were not trying to be obstructive in any way, and as expected of

ethics committees, they were erring on the side of caution. They were merely following the

standardized rules for conducting fieldwork with school employees, one of which stipulated that:

> 3. Because interviews will involve employees of the school board, you will
> need to provide documentation showing that the [b]oard is aware of their
> employees' involvement in this research (Personal email, May 14, 2012).

This direction caused some distress as the work was more focused on teachers' daily lives,

not their relationship with their employer/school board, and because it seemed to mean outing

each informant to the school board. On the academic side of the argument, it was more about

ensuring that the school board was aware of the project itself, not the participating individuals.

However, I had not wanted to rule out assistance with contact information from the school board

at this point, so I contacted them directly. They told me that they had no trouble approving such

fieldwork so long as I obtained the school's principal's permission. The email read:

> Hi Jeff,
>
> First, you need District approval to approach any of our schools. Once you
> have permission, you can approach the schools and gain permission from
> the administrator. If the administrator gives you permission, you can then
> approach any teachers on their staff, and that would include the part-time
> [a]nd full-time teachers. With respect to retired teachers, they are no
> longer employed so I guess you would have to contact them individually to
> [s]ee if they would be willing to participate.

Jackie Harvey
Eastern School District
Rural Education and Corporate Services
758-2341 (Personal email, May 14, 2012).

This letter, of course, changed everything from a methodological perspective. I had fully

expected that some of the principals might not want to talk to me because of the study's nature,

but I had not foreseen their ability to impede access to school board resources. My first thought

was to try and figure out how to fight this problem, but the school board was emphatic about its

position, despite remaining openly sympathetic to the study's plight. I called a lawyer at the

NLTA, Stephanie Tuff, who had been recommended to me by one of the professors in the

Education Department, and after reviewing the email that the school board had sent me, she felt

that the NLESD was overstepping by enforcing a policy not designed for the type of study in

question. According to Ms. Tuff, the research was within the purview of the Code of Conduct,

and no one would be acting outside of their rights to have a private conversation with me.

So why did the school board choose to enforce a policy not meant for this type of research?

The answer is probably based more on their desire to adhere to regulations than on any active

decision to enforce a rule that jeopardized an academic inquiry's integrity. The fact is, there is no

real policy to deal with qualitative research of this nature. Their guidelines address quantitative

research, with some adaptations made for qualitative work that focuses on students. Since

teachers are part of the school community, and research conducted in schools is generally

student-centric, the principal's permission is generally about getting permission to conduct

quantitative studies targeting information concerning children. In past studies, it has been

fundamental to involve the principal because obtaining permission to access the students was the

primary concern. It was also to sign-off on allowing the researcher access to the school when the

researcher's presence could affect the school's daily functioning. However, neither of these situations was the case with this study.

Since very little qualitative work with teachers on administrative bullying/mistreatment has been done in Canada, let alone any single province therein, it is not surprising that there is no internal policy on how to deal with this type of research, so this result was probably based more in technicality than reasoned discourse. The bureaucracy's ability to limit communication between teachers and researchers represents a significant obstacle for this type of research, and addressing this obstacle should be of paramount importance. Using a policy like this to silence teachers who are victims of bullying effectively sets a dangerous precedent, no matter how well-meaning the policy's intentions.[18]

I then contacted Dr. Michael Shute, Chair of ICEHR at the time, for further assistance. I wrote:

> Technically I can get approval from them (the school board). I'm currently in discussion with Jackie Harvey about the project, and I can submit the project to her to sign off on…but this situation allows administration to block my contacting teachers. In order to get written permission from the board I have to become subject to their policies (which are designed primarily for quantitative studies, which have historically been about issues of pedagogy, not internal school affairs). Under their guidelines, in order to talk to teachers, I will have to get permission from those that have power over them (principals). This creates a significant conflict of interest when dealing with occupational bullying. Asking me to ask those in positions to bully for permission to talk to those that they may be bull[ied] is pretty rough. Also, it outs all of the teachers that I will be interviewing (as the principals will know who is participating in the study), which makes anonymity all but impossible to maintain.

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[18] It is also important to note that the stance taken by the school board was that I would have to contact the principal of every teacher I interviewed to ask permission to speak to those teachers. Given the historic basis of the system this makes sense because it was quantitative work involving students that the system was built around. Essentially all quantitative work with students was to be signed off on to by the principal, who would then allow the surveys to be distributed to a large volume of informants. However, it serves no purpose for qualitative work other than to slow it down by providing unnecessary obstacles, and worse, providing an obstacle that would allow principals the power to pick and choose who you could speak to about violence and abuse in the workplace. Moreover, it means that while the system is designed for one sign-off for multiple informants, in this study it meant notifying the principal of each teacher involved in the study, which effectively stripped them of their anonymity.

Now, I can just interview retired teachers and substitutes and bypass this issue entirely, but this, I feel, will change the overall findings of the study (Personal email, May 14, 2012).

Dr. Shute and Theresa Heath, ethics officer for ICEHR at the time, responded with article 3.6 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (TCPS2) guidelines, the core document discussing best practice for ethical research in Canada:

Critical Inquiry
Article 3.6
Permission is not required from an organization in order to conduct research on that organization. If a researcher engages the participation of members of an organization without the organization's permission, the researcher shall inform participants of any foreseeable risk that may be posed by their participation.
See pp.35-36 for the full explanation (TCPS2 guidelines, 2012 [2014])
(Personal email, May 15, 2012).

Even though I wanted to include the school district in the decision-making process, in the end, there was no way to solicit their participation without going through their official guidelines, which meant moving forward with the project without the support of the school district. As it turned out after the interviewing began, it was a non-issue because one school district was not large enough to hide the informants' identities. However, when it comes to conducting research that falls outside of the historical purview, the current system requires new guidelines that would allow research to be evaluated separately on its merit; when we step beyond this limited scope and begin asking questions about the occupational culture of a school, or the occupation in general, we encounter a critical problem.

The Critical Inquiry was an excellent workaround for the study. However, it is not a proper solution to the problem as it merely circumvents these overextended guidelines. Using the Inquiry approach meant placing significantly more pressure on me to maintain my informants'

anonymity. It also slowed the research because it removed my access to the school board's resources and added extra unnecessary bureaucratic layers.

Performing qualitative research about the professional work lives of teachers should not leave the school board's hands tied in assisting the study. It looks poorly on the board to emphatically deny access to their employees when they seemed to fully understand that this denial created a conflict of interest with necessary research. This behavior is especially troubling because they offered nothing in the way of solutions themselves. Dr. Shute and Dr. Heath's solution of the Critical Inquiry did allow for the opportunity to act independently of governing bodies. This method did grant the opportunity to explore these governing bodies' strengths and limitations and their power structures. The process of obtaining ethics clearance revealed the need to consider the administrative structure concerning the study of bullying within Newfoundland teachers' everyday lives.

Since, as a Critical Inquiry, the onus fell on me to explain the risks to informants' careers (which was substantial, including everything from sanctions to dismissal), it also fell on me to protect them. I now had to be able to offer the informants plausible deniability in all matters concerning the project. This change meant vastly expanding the project's scope, and fictionalizing many of the details of specific stories. The removal of names of teachers, schools, and landmarks, became a necessity to protect informants from those in power who might interpret their actions as a violation of their *Code of Ethics*.

Once the project gained its ethical clearance on July 12, 2012, I began contacting teachers through friends in the Eastern School District area. The initial interviews quickly proved that maintaining the integrity of many of the stories would have to take a back seat to maintaining the teachers' anonymity. The first teachers that I contacted had been flagged by a few friends who

had informed me that these teachers had experiences that might help get the ball rolling with the research.

The first responses came in swiftly, and three initial interviews in the fall of 2012 came about as a way of beginning the search for mistreated teachers. These interviews included teachers, Lennox, Memphis, and Sawyer, who all worked at different schools. I did this partially because the pool of teacher contacts was small, and because I was hoping that by interviewing teachers from different schools, I would be able to hasten the search for troubled schools by casting a wider net. Luckily each informant was familiar with at least one troubled school, and one school, in particular, was commonly identified as a "bad" one by all three of these informants.

However, during the second interview with Lennox, it suddenly occurred to me that this knowledge might be potentially problematic for the study. My fears were later confirmed when it became apparent that teachers across the district had also heard stories from teachers at these "bad" schools. The concerning part was that the informants knew the identities of the people in each of the stories. This knowledge was most problematic in the geographically specific stories. Throughout the fieldwork, trends developed over several story formats that became repeated. These included stories about teachers being injured, abused in front of other staff, and openly assaulted by students. These formed a set of story archetypes, but in many cases, these stories did not seem to migrate in the typical format of a legend; instead, they seemed to be accounts of these types of stories that happened to local teachers. Thus, the commonality of examples was often as telling as it was startling. The formatting often drifted between memorate—directly observed—or more distantly to proto-memorate or legend. Given the limited geography of the study's original format (the Newfoundland and Labrador Eastern School District), most teachers

seemed to understand, based on the particular variant of the story, where it happened and whom it happened to, even from the briefest of accounts.

What became apparent in the first interview with a tenured teacher was that I was dealing with a tightly knit group despite the vast geographic scope that exists in the province. The first interview with Navy quickly revealed how knowledgeable this teacher was about the lives of other teachers. It was Navy that told the complete story of what had transpired in the Febreze Incident. This incident works well as a case study because it demonstrates various problems with interviewing teachers anonymously. Navy and I had wandered on to the topic of why the NLTA does not defend teachers in the media, and at the time, the Twillingate episode was still relatively fresh in everyone's mind. Navy said:

> Navy (31:57): Oh Twillingate, that nonsense. Do you know what happened at Twillingate?
> Jeff (31:58): I think I know. [A substitute teacher had told me a variation before this interview].
> Navy (32:02): The little boy was running around breathing on the other kids. I doubt he was bullying them, but he was teasing them, as little boys do. When one of the other kids complained to the teacher, [the teacher] took the child aside, to calm him down, and set him by the door…[They] then calmed the class down, and when [they] turned back around to deal with him, he was crying. [The teacher] asked what was wrong, and the boy said that he stunk (32:16). So to alleviate the situation, [the teacher] told the little boy to wait outside, and [they] would get him something to take away the smell. [They] then went to the office and got the Febreze bottle and sprayed the boy's shirt. That's what his mom wanted to have [the teacher] fired for, being a person, and trying to solve the problem.
> Jeff (32:19): Why do you think that the NLTA [Newfoundland and Labrador Teacher's Association] didn't advertise this?
> Navy (32:21): Obviously, I don't know specifics, but I think there's probably something about making comments about cases concerning children that probably limits their ability to do that. We're really not allowed to say anything that might be used to identify a child in a story.
> Jeff (32:35): [writing notes] […] Even though he was already identified in the public?
> Navy (32:37): It doesn't matter […] I don't think so anyway. I wouldn't have commented on it. (Interview with Navy, May 2, 2013)

In the Febreze Incident, the teacher's side of the story was never made public in official news media. Except for a letter, allegedly submitted to the editor of *The Telegram* and published on a private blog, it is doubtful that the public would ever have been made aware of the other side of the affair. The NLTA offered no further public statement about the affair's details outside of their remarks about reviewing the incident and forcing the teacher to formally apologize about the incident to the child's parent(s). It also stated that the teacher was returning to work at the beginning of the next school week. Thus, while not surprised by Navy's knowledge of the incident, I was surprised by the account's level of detail. So, I asked them about how they knew, and their response was surprising. They said simply, "We all knew...[o]r at least everyone I know, knew right away…I know [them] personally, so I guess I might have known a little before everyone else, but the NLTA is a pretty small place (Interview with Navy, March 17, 2014).

At this time, I knew that I had made the correct choice in changing the study to encompass informants from across the province instead of limiting the study to the now-defunct Eastern School District, as the informants would never have been able to remain anonymous. There are simply too many times in the year that teachers come together from across the district to meet for professional development, NLTA meetings, and other professional meetings, for there not to be a commonly known pool of stories. In the first draft of the ethics proposal, the Eastern School District had seemed like such a large geographical area that I had assumed that teachers separated by schools would not be as connected as they were, but with each interview, it became more apparent that the teaching community in Newfoundland and Labrador is a small tightly-knit group. In their first interview, Lennox confirmed with uncanny accuracy school-specific stories discussed with Navy that had happened at Navy's school. This became representative of much of the subsequent fieldwork.

The expanded geographical purview of using the entire province allowed for increased protection of the informants by including more variants of the same story type, to allow for plausible deniability. It also gave access to variants, which allowed for the mixing and matching of story parts, which then granted the ability to obscure the stories further while remaining as faithful as possible to the story's base point. It also worked well for the study that teachers are informed about the goings-on at other schools, because it helped direct questioning by using specific example stories. On the other hand, the stories that were personal accounts became highly problematic in terms of protecting anonymity because these stories were often widely known. For this reason, every first-person story in the collection appears as a third-person narrative.

In the case of stories that were not known province-wide, of which there are many, enough is often known about crucial identifiers in the stories to identify the school the teacher was talking about, and thus it made mixing and matching portions of local variants essential to this process. To give an example, if a school had a publicly leaked document or failed review, most of the teachers that I interviewed knew of it, even if only at a basic level. Bullying events shaped by these events became far more difficult to obscure, and in order to ensure informant anonymity, I had to begin removing, and in some places replacing, these markers with markers from other stories. In cases where another variant did not exist, anonymized information became used instead to protect both the integrity of the story and occlude both the place and the storyteller's identity.

2.7   Anti-Bullying Policies in School

Formally established in 2001 and regularly updated, the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* is

the anti-bullying framework used in Newfoundland and Labrador schools today. This policy uses

a highly adaptive structure designed for implementation on a school-by-school basis. The

framework maintains provincial and district policies, but allows for tailoring the framework to a

specific school community. The 2006 implementation document states:

> The goal of the Safe and Caring Schools Policy is to provide a framework for
> the development and implementation of provincial, district, and school-level
> policies and action plans to ensure that learning and teaching can take place in
> a safe and caring environment (5).

The ability to tailor to specific school communities is particularly important because it

allows for the ideal scenario for a Folklore and Education-led project. It couples traditions

created at the local level with sweeping unifying traditions that weave all Newfoundland schools

together under the framework of this more extensive series of rules and traditions. Many

formalized projects in Folklore and Education parallel this approach to implementation, such as

Louisiana Voices, *Folkvine.org*, *Standards for Folklife Education*, or *The Art of Many Voices*.

All of these projects are designed for ready adaptation into school curricula. Folk Art in

Education (FAIE) structures are often adaptable to school curriculum guidelines for broader

application across varying grade levels. This synergy is typically accomplished through

discussions with stakeholders and by generating a proposed grade-level correlation document

(See Pearson Education Inc. 2006 document for an example). Thus, the existing framework used

to create and maintain *Safe and Caring Schools* is already well adapted for augmentation with a

Folklore and Education project.[19] *Safe and Caring Schools* exerts pressure from the top down. Its

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[19] *Louisiana Voices* is a ground-breaking project that explains how to weave the exploration of local communities
and traditions into classroom curricula. For more information on the project see *Learning Comes Alive! Lousiana
Voices: Folklife in Education Project*, 1999.

weakness is in the creation and modification of traditions to culturally reinforce the ideas laid out by the policy. Thus, it seems an ideal situation for implementing an FAIE structure to strengthen this portion of the program.

Unfortunately, none of the teachers that I spoke to were involved with the local formulation or implementation of the *Safe and Caring Schools* policy in their school communities. The only portion of the policy that they were all uniformly knowledgeable about was enforcement. At the onset of the project, I had incorrectly assumed that the creation of these individualized school implementations was a joint effort of all of the players listed in the documents, mainly: teachers, administration, students, and parents. Instead, it turned out that the consultation was far more limited than that. When I discussed the matter with Navy, who had been teaching at the same school for almost twenty-seven years, they advised that no consultation of the teaching body had occurred, to their knowledge, during the implementation:

> I'm not sure if there was a committee. I wasn't on it if there was, and I don't remember a meeting specifically about ideas for it. We were told about the [positive reinforcement reward system for the kids] and the layout of the [*Safe and Caring Schools* policy] for the school, though. I do remember that (November 7, 2013).

Standards for Folklife Education is an adaptive project developed by Diane Sidener and addressed in her 1997 book, *Standards for Folklife Education: Integrating Language Arts, Social Studies, Arts and Science Through Student Traditions and Culture.* This project has been adapted to a curriculum for tolerance education by Linda Deafenbaugh in her 2017 thesis, *Developing the Capacity for Tolerance Through Folklife Education*.

Folkvine.org was a Folkore and Education project that, according to Kristin Congdon and Karen Branen, married "folklore, folk art, arts education, and technology" (151) and took place between 2003–2007. It brought students into contact with local artists and involved an interactive online component. (For more on the Folkvine.org project see Kristin Congdon and Karen Branen 2011.)

The Art of Many Voices (also called *Many Voices*), implemented in 2006 at a Harrisburg, Pennsylvania high school also has an easily accessible program correlation guide for implementation for Kindergarten to Grade 4. (For more information about *The Art of Many Voices* see Lisa Rathje 2011, and Pearson Education Inc. 2006.)

In the instance with Navy, they felt that the *Safe and Caring Schools* policy implementation occurred at the administrative level instead of the grassroots, as the policy suggests. None of the other teachers had anything to say about the implementation. Many had improvement suggestions, but none of the other consultants knew much about the implementation's development aspect. Several teachers were unaware of the framework; these teachers only remembered what it was after a brief reminder. While this study is small (only twenty-five teachers and four administrators), this does seem to demonstrate a disconnect with the program's stated goals.

Under the title, "3.0 Guiding Principles" section 3.7 of the 2013 Policy states, "The creation and maintenance of a safe, caring and inclusive school requires creativity, on-going collaboration and recognition of the complexities involved." How are these goals being achieved without including teachers in the process? Both the 2006 and 2013 documents (See Appendix 2A) indicate that there should be a basic level of communication back and forth between groups (stakeholders: students, parents, administrators, and teachers) involved in these programs. Some of the interviewed teachers were utterly unaware of this collaboration, indicating a problem in these programs' implementation structure. These findings suggest that the community aspect of this policy has not achieved full realization. Subsequently, this means that more development of the program has to occur before implementing suggestions tendered by this study, as these rely on full community involvement.

2.8   The Final Methodology: Why Ethnography?

Despite being jostled around a little in the research's early goings, I settled into a regular reciprocal ethnographic paradigm. I chose reciprocal ethnography because I wanted teachers to have a public voice, or at least as loud a public voice as I could grant them through the research.

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As Lawless writes, the goal was to pay a "tribute to human subjectivity and creativity [while paying close] attention to concrete human experience" (1992, 303). The ultimate goal was to explain the differing perspectives that teachers have about bullying in their occupation. In giving these teachers a chance to speak for themselves while under the protection of anonymity, it gave them a chance to vent about and explain the other side of their occupation—the one the public never sees, the side that Joseph and Jo Blase call "the dark side of teaching" (2003). From their stories of constant battles with parents, administration, and even children, it becomes clear that bullying has become a part of what defines their everyday life.

In particular, reciprocal ethnography was appealing for this project because I wanted teachers to explain their problems and offer their solutions. It certainly helped that I had four teachers (Ziggy, Sawyer, Aidan, and Tanner) that wanted to be involved with the whole process of reciprocal work; this included reviewing my conclusions carefully with each along the way, to ensure that what I was saying mirrored their thinking. All of these core informants have read and contributed corrections and differing perspectives throughout the process. I felt that getting the informant's opinions about what I was writing was crucial to ensuring that I was not misconstruing anything discussed in the interviews. It also allowed for the establishment of a real rapport that basic ethnography often fails to achieve. By doing this, I hope to realize what Elaine Lawless suggested should be the goal of ethnography in her 1992 paper, "I Was Afraid Someone Like You...An Outsider...Would Misunderstand," which is that it should be to extend Jeff Titon's 1992 methodology, "past the scholar's interpretations, back to the people involved, and into the published work so that a dialogue is actually possible with the reading audience" (306). Barbara Tedlock also approached this notion in her 1991 article, which addressed the notion of "intersubjectivity."

In her 2004 book, *The Ethnographic I,* Caroline Ellis presented the compelling notion that the powerful stories that frame critical events may be "revisable," but this does not diminish them. On the contrary, the editing may make them more pertinent than other stories within a life story, given the "contingencies of present life circumstances" (30). In other words, as edited as these stories may be, they have been edited for specific reasons. Many of these have become fine-tuned as teaching tools that warn new teachers what not to do or are otherwise instructional in teachers' informal occupational lore. Unfortunately, many of these stories do not enter into the repertoire of new teachers until after they step through the schoolhouse door, and they often relate vast swaths of material about internal politics, classroom management strategies, and many other topics in the everyday occupational folklife of teachers, which means that new teachers are often unprepared for their given profession.

Beyond this, I wanted to put a human face on the trouble that our current cultural encroachment into their space has caused. As Barbara Tedlock says, "Since we can only enter into another person's world through communication, we depend upon ethnographic dialogue to create a world of shared intersubjectivity and to reach an understanding of the differences between two worlds" (1991, 70). The study's ultimate point was to create this notion of intersubjectivity between the teachers and myself, and transfer that understanding to the reading audience. There is a significant problem here that affects teachers on a cultural level, and these stories need telling to facilitate a better dialogue between the public and teachers.

2.8.1 Advertising and Soliciting Participation

Friends and social media facilitated finding interviewees for the first interviews, and thus I was initially reliant on personal contacts for advertisement. These contacts eventually paid dividends as each contact reached out to others. As previously discussed, I could not use the NLESD's (Newfoundland and Labrador Eastern School District) resources to contact teachers. Likewise, I decided to avoid the NLTA newsletter, despite being generously offered it as a means of advertising by the NLTA, because I was not sure how teachers felt about the NLTA at the time, and I did not want to bias the work against or in favor of the NLTA in any way before involving teachers. The general word-of-mouth strategy eventually yielded all of the teachers and administrators that I spoke to in the study. The only exceptions were a couple of chance encounters with teachers and administrators at public events and a consultant that reached out to me directly.

This strategy intentionally kept the study small. I had only been looking to recruit half a dozen teachers initially, for ease of processing and protecting the informants. When I decided to expand the target demographic's scope to the entire province instead of concentrating on one school in the NLESD, I did so through the base group of consultants, contacting several individuals living in Labrador and central and western parts of Newfoundland. I solicited their participation primarily through phone calls. Only one consultant reached out of their own accord, having heard about the study from a friend. The remaining interviewees came directly from their contact with other consultants.

2.8.2 The Interviewing Process

My interviewing process was relatively uniform for the first interviews. I had a list of questions that I asked the consultants to answer (see Appendices 2B and 2C). The list changed throughout the interviewing process as I became aware of current terminology such as "mobbing," "challenging," "deviance," and "aggression." This list of questions also changed slightly in composition as I became aware of more important aspects of teachers' occupational folklife. The interviews also became more conversational over time, and questions began to flow into each other in different configurations. To see this progression, please compare Appendices 2B and 2C.

As the questions became more rehearsed, I became better at framing them with follow-up questions. This change allowed me to pull more information from a single interview. The first interview lasted over three hours because of the order in which I asked questions and, in part, because the consultant had many stories of abuse. The second interview took an hour and a half, but my third interview took only fifty-five minutes, which turned out to be the average length of the remaining interviews.

Follow up interviews were specifically tailored to individual informants and narrowed down to stories they had told in the first interview. Thus, the second interviews were where the stories became more fleshed out, through questions that asked the informant to describe specific scenarios and feelings at the time. The second and third interviews were also the interviews where we would compare their stories with stories that were slightly different (places and names left out, and often a significant event was changed slightly; for example, a broken arm might have become a broken leg) from other informants. If the informant knew the story, they would often correct what they felt was wrong with it or tell a story that they had heard that was similar.

I felt it was best to conduct the interviews this way so that the informants did not know the other informants' identities, in order to ensure everyone's anonymity.

If a follow-up interview was necessary, I contacted them either over the phone, or more likely, through email. In addition to follow-up interviews, several of the informants continued to discuss the research with me afterward, and some recorded new stories and sent them to me as well. One such consultant, Ziggy, has contacted me several times since our last interview, and every time they hear a story at work, they type it up and forward it to me. Ziggy was by far my most enthusiastic informant and the one that keeps in contact the most, although Aiden, Sawyer, and Tanner have also kept in touch to discuss events in their respective schools and about other events affecting teachers.

Whenever I felt unsure how my consultants would feel about something they said or something that had occurred after our interviews, Sawyer, Ziggy, Aiden, and Tanner were the first people I would look to for guidance. Their interviews and their unique perspectives fueled much of the debate from subsequent interviews with other informants. Throughout this process, I funneled all of my conclusions through these four primary sources to make sure that what I was saying was also what they wanted me to say. Throughout the work, I try to ensure that when I am voicing my own opinion, I state that it is my opinion. This strategy was deliberate to limit confusion between my thoughts and those of my informants. The collection of new stories halted at the end of the fall of 2016.

Chapter Three: Intersections of Folklore and Bullying

Peyton's Story

Context:

According to Peyton, the teacher at the center of this story was quite well-liked by the staff. They had taught at the school where the incident occurred for the two years leading up to the event. The whole affair devolved from confusion resulting from the teacher having two Facebook pages (a common practice with teachers; many have a private and public page these days). This event took place in Ontario, but it is a story that Peyton experienced first hand, and they use it to explain the importance of maintaining a social distance between work life and home life. Peyton described the teacher at the heart of the conflict as a firm believer in keeping religion and school separate. Peyton said that this teacher understood that their family's religion held "controversial beliefs" and believed that these had no place in the school system (Peyton 2017).

This teacher was a member of a [well-known] fundamentalist Christian group, one that is quite vocal about their beliefs in the local community […] and some of these beliefs […] run [in opposition] to those of the mainstream […] [Later in the interview, Peyton gave some examples of these beliefs, listing: reproductive rights, separate but equal spheres, creationism, and the age of the earth, denial of science, as prominent beliefs that conflicted with mainstream opinions]. The teacher worked to keep knowledge [of their family's religious membership] out of the public for fear that people might not understand that not all members were […] vocal [or necessarily supportive] of these beliefs.

At the beginning of their "year from hell," one of the members of their Bible study group ended up in […] this teacher's class […] [s]o, the teacher had a conversation with the student about [the separation of church and state], and the student agreed that it was a good idea [not to mention their religious views in school] and [they] did their best to do that. They had no issue with their arrangement […] until late January/early February when the student accidentally commented on the teacher's professional page instead of their personal page to say that they were running late for their Bible study but would be there soon. The teacher asked the student to remove the comment, and the student did, but not before classmates saw

the comment. Since the student's page linked to the Bible study, questions about the teacher's background were raised (because the teacher often taught science in this school, as it is the teacher's minor teachable). Parents and students began concluding that the teacher was unfit to teach science due to [their] association with this religious group.

The whole situation erupted when a parent [admonished] the teacher via a school Facebook page saying that, [they] should be ashamed of their views on women and that the school should not allow them to teach science. Peyton said that this took the teacher by surprise because there are views that many people in their religion have that this teacher did not […] agree with […] Peyton said that the teacher was sure that they had never said anything, even to suggest that they had an opinion on any of these views. The teacher felt like they had always avoided these issues in class when they could, and if they were not avoidable, they went with what they felt the school would want them to say [for example, they never taught creationism in school].

After the original post, the poster became an online mob leader of sorts and started educating other parents about the teacher's [supposed] religious views. In short, they began recruiting other people to join in on the bullying of this one teacher. The result was that parents from across the school's community (even parents from other classes or grades) began posting negative comments on this teacher's Facebook page. By the end of the week, the teacher had to take down their professional Facebook page; even with restrictions to access, the page was still flooded with negative comments […] The teacher was so embarrassed that they removed their personal Facebook page as well. The other teachers began a slow withdrawal from the victim, and this made the teacher feel [increasingly isolated] at school.

The students in the class began memeing the teacher [further adding to the isolation and abuse]. When parents and some of their peers began liking the memes it left the teacher feeling […] helpless. The administration refused to step in and defend the teacher [for reasons they left unstated, but the teacher felt that it was because of the issues at the heart of the controversy]. The issues were just too controversial to get involved. The lack of administrative support was the final straw for the teacher. The abuse continued until the teacher chose a position at another school in another town the following year […] [Peyton felt it important to note that the teacher has been teaching science ever since] (Peyton, 2017).

Peyton's narrative offers several examples of obstacles underlying Newfoundland and Labrador's current anti-bullying strategies. This chapter will discuss the relationship between folklore and bullying and how the problems highlighted in this story are further assisted or obfuscated through malevolent and strategic folklore usage. To begin exploring this linkage, we must achieve a more nuanced understanding of how bullying works. Out of necessity, bullies act

in the fringes of social acceptability because their actions are, by definition, anti-social. Thus,

bullies must be socially conscious of where the line of social acceptability lies before acting.

Stepping over this line can result in unwanted opposition from their audience, and confrontation

with the audience can cause a loss of social capital previously accumulated through the bullying.

Therefore, bullies must be masters of finding ways to either cloak or normalize their aberrant

activities, and folklore is featured prominently in their solutions to these obstacles.

It is important to note that the largest source of power rests with the audience in most

bullying scenarios, not with the bully. The resulting power balance from this relationship means

that bullies must often rely on bystanders' tacit acceptance to justify their anti-social behavior.

For this reason, scholars have included neutral observers in their writings since the inception of

the field of study. In his seminal 1978 book, *Bullying at School,* Daniel Olweus highlighted

"Help from neutral students" as a "Measure…at the individual level" (64) that can be encouraged

to curb bullying in schools. This power is displayed later in his three rules:

1. We shall not bully other students.
2. We shall try to help students who are bullied.
3. We shall make a point to include students who become easily left out (82).

Olweus' foundational community-centered approach to bullying includes the bystanders in all

facets of these rules because it relies on them as part of the community to intervene, not bully,

and go out of their way to include marginalized students. Since the launch of Olweus' approach,

scholarly interest in the audience and their participation in bullying activities has intensified.

One of the most prolific scholars researching this relationship is Barbara Coloroso. Her

2008 book, *The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander: From Preschool to High School—How*

Parents and Teachers Can Help Break the Cycle of Violence, revolves around unpacking this

relationship to create a space where bystanders feel empowered to intervene when they see

bullying behavior. Bystander apathy is kryptonite for community-based approaches to bullying; apathy passively reinforces the messages conveyed to victims by their assailants while simultaneously emphasizing the victim's loss of safety. In the foreword of Wayne Nesbit's 1999 book, *Black Eyes and Bruised Souls*, Norman Hadley write*s*, "One of the most important human needs is safety…bullying involves the subtraction of the physical and emotional safety of another human being" (v).

Increasing the audience's agency has been encouraged from the outset of the discipline as the most powerful tool to combat bullying. The bystanders' influence over the loss of safety is why many bullying definitions, like the one included in the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* (SCSP) 2013, include bystanders in their descriptions of bullies. This inclusion of bystanders, as bullies, in these definitions works toward two crucial goals: expanding our social understanding of bullying and increasing agency within the group of would-be bystanders to intervene for the victim.

The inaction of bystanders in Peyton's narrative is consistent throughout the story. There is very little agency to curb the teacher's abuse, and there are several points where early intervention might have helped the situation. The administration could have intervened from the outset, as happened in Holland's story (detailed in Chapter Five). A response left on the professional Facebook page by the administration could have lessened the impact. The administration could have had a meeting with school staff about commenting unprofessionally on employee Facebook pages; they could even have called the online assailants to discuss the Facebook page comments. As for the teacher's peers, they could have come to the teacher's

defense on their social media pages or at least pointed out how inappropriate it was to attack a person for their religious beliefs.[20]

Peyton's story is unique in this collection as it contains the religious persecution of a teacher. For this reason, it works as an excellent aid to guide the narrative in this chapter as it demonstrates how bullying gets broken down by terminological gerrymandering. Religious persecution is an issue that can affect the way that the abuse is perceived and classified by some sources. This problem helps demonstrate how the scope of bullying is infringed upon by the definitional encroachment of other terms.

3.1   Problematizing Bullying as a Legal, Academic, and Social Term

Bullying is defined differently by scholars, organizations, and legal institutions, and many of these working definitions are accepted as valid. For example, every province, and many of the major institutions in Canada, have unique definitions of the term. These differing definitions allow official bodies to tailor bullying definitions to meet their own needs, but it also creates confusion with the term's interpretation. Finding a unifying definition of bullying is essential to solving the problem; the United States *Crisis Prevention Institute* highlights that deciding upon a definition of bullying is the first step to addressing the bullying problem in schools. Their website states:

1. Have a Clear definition of Bullying.

    …An entire school district needs to have the same language within all its schools
    in order to reduce bullying. To start, the schools need to have a common
    definition of bullying (Crisis Prevention Institute, 2013).

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[20] There were some close friends, and a few peers, that did come to the teacher's aid in the beginning but most stopped posting as the abuse continued. Most of the bystanders in this scenario failed to act, and as a result the abuse ballooned in severity and probably lasted longer than it would have with continued intervention.

The goal of a standard definition of bullying, however, should reach beyond a single school district. Bullying should not be a subjective term. The practice of having every major institution defining the term hinders the process of creating a useful unified definition. The confusion caused by the myriad of official bullying definitions that exist today extends into the realm of unofficial definitions, because the official and unofficial are inexorably bound together. Judith Martin argued in her 1995 article, "A Philosophy of Etiquette," that etiquette and law are profoundly tied together, with each serving a role in response to repugnant behavior. Extending her argument into bullying and folklore discussions is logical, because folklore subsumes etiquette, and bullying subsumes all anti-social behavior, even areas covered by Canadian Law. Thus, we can see that because the Law only deals with a narrow spectrum of bullying, it falls to folklore, through etiquette, to deal with what remains.

Understanding why definitions differ helps one comprehend how and why these affect the vernacular interpretations of the term. Each difference in these definitions underlines the variety of perceptions at work that change the frame of the term, which is essential because it helps researchers zero in on subversive messages carried in the surrounding folklore. This section will discuss two ideas: first, how having a plethora of "official" and "semi-official" definitions have adversely affected our understanding of bullying; second, it will use Peyton's narrative to demonstrate how this practice disempowers and denigrates the term.

Bullying definitions are better comprehended when the full context around their derivation is known. Three pieces of information help this process: 1) understanding the conflicting world views underlying bullying definitions, 2) the history of the terminology predating it, and 3) the primary motivations behind the definition's derivation. Missing any of

these critical pieces of knowledge can drastically change the interpretation of a definition. Even seemingly minute variances between two definitions can point to significantly different world views held by their originators. The examination of different definitions helps us to understand why this is the case. This research also aids in understanding how and why changes sometimes communicate a subtextual trivialization of the term, which, in turn, helps address why they are "mirrored" in the folklore surrounding bullying events.

One of the best ways to break these ideas down is to examine several definitions together. For use as an example, several Canadian definitions of bullying that show up in quick keyword searches of "bullying" and "Canada" are used to demonstrate these problems (these definitions come from a spectrum of institutions ranging from non-formal to formal legislated definitions). First, let us look at how these definitions compare and those given to us by bullying scholars. For example, one of the health and safety leaders in Canada, the Canadian Red Cross, defines bullying as:

> a form of aggression where there is a power imbalance; the person doing the bullying has power over the person being victimized (Canadian Red Cross, 2020).

This definition shares several similarities with many scholarly definitions of bullying, such as Wayne Nesbit's short definition:

> a pattern of repeated aggressive behavior with negative intent directed from one person toward another when there is a power difference involved (1999, 10).

The Canadian Red Cross' definition is also in general agreement with the legislated provincial definition in Newfoundland, which forms the basis of the bullying policy that schools in the province follow, the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy (SCSP)*. The *SCSP* 2013 definition states:

> behaviour, typically repeated, that is intended to cause or should be known to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation or property, and can be direct or indirect, and includes assisting or encouraging the behaviour in any way (78).

With abstract notions of bullying, or when defining bullying as a behavior among children, most definitions align with the same two issues: bullying is an expression of aggression, and there is an inherent imbalance of power in the exchange. Peyton's story demonstrates these points. The teacher was assaulted verbally, first by a single bully, and then by a group of bullies (otherwise known as mobbing), and due to the inability of teachers to publicly defend themselves, there is a clear imbalance of power in these online interactions. Unlike the Canadian Red Cross's definition, though, most scholarly definitions also include a propensity for repetition in the behavior, and some acknowledgment of a deficit in empathy on the bully's part (which usually shows up as an intent to harm without thought of consequences); both of these points are evident in Peyton's story.

Repetition is vital for understanding bullying. It is not to say that a single event cannot be bullying, but repetition changes the interpretation from a one-off event to a behavior pattern. For victims, repetition brings with it the dread of future iterations. Peyton emphasizes this in their short narrative several times. It is the continuation of the abuse that made it unbearable for the teacher. The first example occurred when the teacher had to take down their personal Facebook page, then again when they had to take down their professional page a few days later, and finally, they decided to leave the school altogether because the abuse did not stop. Repetition also signals that the bully perceives their actions as socially acceptable. Public repetition of anti-social behaviors also signals a tacit acceptance by audience members and a communal lack of empathy for the victim. In the case of Peyton's story, it takes a special kind of zeal to attack someone repeatedly for over half a year and not question the damage being done to the victim, especially when the victim's only response to the abuse is silence.

Looking at these three separate definitions (a scholarly definition, a definition from a non-formal institution, and an officially legislated definition), undertones of differences have already emerged that should beg the question: why is there no single concrete definition of bullying? Moreover, why does everyone feel it is their right to adapt or create a new version? While readers can only speculate why intent and repetition are absent in the Canadian Red Cross's definition, it should not be surprising that the definition itself is different. On further examination, the exclusion of these typically included features in bullying definitions make sense, given the web page's surrounding context. Immediately following their definition of bullying, they list the different types of bullying as: physical, verbal, social/relational, and cyberbullying, and the descriptors of each contain intent-related content. Their definition requires descriptions of each of their categorized types of bullying in order to be fully understood.

Given the subcategories of bullying laid out by the Canadian Red Cross, it is understandable why repetition is absent because the emphasis in deriving their definition concerns the behavior, not an abstract idea. Much like older definitions of folklore that define the discipline as a list of its genres, so do many older definitions of bullying define the term using a list of included behaviors. It is merely an attempt to categorize all of the different ways one can bully—which is impossible due to creative variation, not to mention its growth into every new form of communication. As scholarly definitions evolved, this approach has become less frequent, but many publicly stated definitions have lagged behind and still attempt to define bullying based on lists.

The primary reason that the Canadian Red Cross's short definition is still functional is that it still covers most of the other two scopes. The other definitions closely mirror each other

because the redefinition of bullying in Nova Scotia in 2012 leaned heavily on scholarly

definitions of bullying for its derivation, and Newfoundland and Labrador used the Nova Scotian

definition as the foundation for theirs. Neither Wayne Nesbit's nor the *SCSP* 2013 definitions are

hindered by the influence of material in the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (*CHRA*) or the

Criminal Code of Canada (*CCC*). These definitions are entirely abstract notions derived to

address the social malaise that bullying represents; neither has any attachment to practical

enforcement, and so individual acts are less critical than the anti-social spectrum of behaviors

covered by other terminology. However, the Canadian Red Cross definition attempts to place

itself alongside terms housed in either the *CCC* or the *CHRA*, which changes the understanding

of bullying completely. The Canadian Red Cross website goes on to redefine bullying in

juxtaposition with harassment; it states that the difference between bullying and harassment is

that:

> Harassment is similar to bullying because someone hurts another person through
> cruel, offensive, and insulting behaviours [but h]arassment is different from
> bullying in that it is a form of discrimination (2017).

Evaluating the severity or classifying abuse is not a concern for abstract or child-centered

notions of bullying. In these perspectives, bullying encompasses the full spectrum of anti-social

behavior, all of which is universally wrong. It is important to note that this is unlike our legal

system, where anti-social activity classifies the behavior. Because of this practice, bullying tends

to end up as the term used when children perform activities that would otherwise be criminal acts

if not for their age. Children's more limited ability to form intent makes bullying the catchall for

everything that the *CCC* or the *CHRA* fails to cover separately as crimes. Interestingly, the

Canadian Red Cross chose discrimination as the point of division between bullying and

harassment, which suggests that the Canadian Red Cross is relying on the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (*CHRA*) for its definition of harassment, as this Act defines harassment as:

> **14(1)** […] a discriminatory practice,
>
> (a) in the provision of goods, services, facilities or accommodation customarily available to the general public,
> (b) in the provision of commercial premises or residential accommodation, or
> (c) in matters related to employment, to harass an individual on a prohibited ground of discrimination (1985, H-6).

The *Canadian Human Rights Commission* (CHRC) expands on this position by stating that harassment is:

> a form of discrimination. It includes any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates you. Generally, harassment is a behaviour that persists over time. Serious one-time incidents can also sometimes be considered harassment.
>
> Harassment occurs when someone makes unwelcome remarks or jokes about your race, religion, sex, age, disability or any other of the grounds of discrimination; threatens or intimidates you because of your race, religion, sex, age, disability or any other of the grounds of discrimination; makes unwelcome physical contact with you, such as touching, patting, or pinching.[21]

Within the three examples of bullying definitions examined, this is the point of separation. The Canadian Red Cross definition of bullying excludes harassment. This idea runs in stark opposition to many academic works dealing with bullying. For example, the pre-eminent bullying scholar Barabara Coloroso argues that "[genocide] is the most extreme form of bullying" (2007, xxi). In her 2007 book, *Extraordinary Evil: A Brief History of Genocide*, she characterizes bullying as:

> a far too common behavior that is learned in childhood and rooted in contempt for another human being who has been deemed to be, by the bully and his or her accomplices, worthless, inferior, and undeserving of respect (xxi).

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[21] Canadian Human Rights Commission. Accessed online March 28, 2021. "What is Harassment?" Canadian Human Rights Commission (chrc-ccdp.gc.ca).

Given that Coloroso argues that bullying subsumes genocide, the term must also subsume discriminatory practices. Thus, we have a stark division in the official language about bullying. The separation becomes increasingly pronounced with the further removal of other criminally defined anti-social behaviors, defined in the *CCC* or *CHRA*, which happens when the focus shifts to adults.

One could accurately argue that all bullying is a form of discrimination, just not necessarily those forms linked explicitly to the categories of discriminatory topics highlighted by the *CHRA*. All bullying focuses on apathy and hatred. This focus demonstrates the same lack of empathy present in all formats of discrimination. The confusion over what bullying is and is not starts here. Was the teacher at the heart of Peyton's story bullied, or were they harassed? The real question is, why is there a sub-definition for workplace bullying that expressly excludes vast swathes of bullying behavior? The second is, why is it so crucial that bullying not subsume harassment? What changes when bullying, a term not defined in the *CCC* or *CHRA*, is accepted as the parent of all anti-social behavior?

In short, nothing—except, perhaps, the perception of those defining Canadian Law. For many of these scholars, this idea causes stress because it is a sweepingly broad term that is almost impossible to litigate. Jesse Brown, a reporter for *Maclean's,* demonstrates the arguments of those opposed to the Nova Scotia 2012 legislation:

> I've written before about the problems involved in legislating against cyberbullying. I focused on the impossible issue of reaching a definition. Rape, assault, harassment: these are crimes with established parameters. All of them could also be called "bullying." They could also be described as "mean," and I suppose we could enact a law against being mean. But I'd rather have laws against specific crimes, rather than against vast swaths of vaguely defined human behaviour. ("Nova Scotia's Cyber Abuse Law makes bullies of us all," Aug 8, 2013).

It also means admitting that the social-scientific definition of a term ignored in both the *CCC* and the *CHRA* is more critical than the legally defined abuses contained therein. Defining these terms as derivatives of bullying does nothing to diminish these crimes and everything to turn the social focus back towards the real problem, anti-social behavior, a.k.a bullying. When criminally defined behaviors are allowed to define the scope of bullying, the term becomes almost entirely useless. It leaves only criminal anti-social behaviors committed by young offenders and non-criminal anti-social behaviors committed by adults within the severely diminished definition's scope. No scholarly or legislated definition of bullying defines it this way.

Resolving this conundrum is core to resolving the bullying problem because this divisive thinking prevents holistic solutions. Avoiding bullying's many parts through definitional gerrymandering does not help address the overarching issues with bullying in our society. For this reason, social scholars continue to address bullying as an abstract social issue instead of as a practical issue of enforcement because the solutions to bullying are ideological, not punitive. To be clear, all anti-social behavior, including assault, and harassment, need to be included in this strategy because they are the offspring of bullying. Ignoring this critical fact is why definitions of bullying, like that of the Canadian Red Cross, are genuinely problematic. They are trying to manage bullying's place at the table as if it were a lesser sibling of assault and harassment instead of the parent activity that has spawned the other two.

This truncation of scope is not limited to the Canadian Red Cross. Other sites such as The Public Health Services of Canada (PHSC)[22] also follow suit. The PHSC goes one step further and divides bullying up by age, to offer parents specific age-related bullying advice. It is worthy of note that people age out of the spectrum when they reach age 18, again implying that the

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[22] Public Health Services of Canada (PHSC). 2015. Bullying. Accessed Online March 28, 2021. How to recognize bullying - Canada.ca.

scope of bullying ends at adulthood (even though this is probably not their intention). This site

highlights advice about bullying that scholars have problematized for the last twenty years, such

as: "Ignoring the bully" and "standing up for yourself," which are two elements highlighted as

effective strategies in the 12-17 age bracket.[23] Messaging about bullying advice is another topic

entirely because the advice that explains to victims how to cope with or curb their bullying feeds

the status quo.[24] It offers tacit complicity to the bullying by placing the onus on the victim to fix

the problem themselves, which should never be the answer to abuse.

When sites are less concerned about punishment and enforcement like the Canadian

Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)*,* definitions of bullying maintain their

broader scope. For example, CCOHS defines workplace bullying as:

> …usually seen as acts or verbal comments that could mentally hurt or isolate a
> person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact
> as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that
> is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a particular person or group

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[23] In their 2014 school bullying intervention program entitled *Bullying Prevention and Intervention in the School Environment: Factsheets and Tools*, Debra Pepler and Wendy Craig write, "Bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions…" (12). Their guide goes on to list what does not work in bullying prevention programs, stating that:

> There is a growing body of evidence on what works and what does not work. The following are examples of approaches to bullying prevention that have proven not to be effective in reducing bullying and victimization:
>
> - Zero tolerance and disciplinary measures that are solely punitive
> - Advising children who are victimized to fight back
> - Expecting children to solve bullying problems by themselves
> - Advising children to avoiding social media as a way of avoiding electronic bullying
> - Addressing bullying with celebrity, not expertise
> - Offering interventions to the individual children who are bullying or who are being victimized—everyone needs to be involved in bullying prevention
> - One-time interventions (e.g., a 45-minute motivational speech)
> - Limiting in
> - Ignoring adults' bullying and relationships—these are models for children (13).

[24] Victim-oriented solutions are generally accepted as ineffective because they do not address the underlying anti-social behavior. In order to address this problem concisely, a social architecture designed to encompass all community members for the express purpose of the implementation of a communal bullying prevention program is what is needed.

of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression… (CCOHS).

The CCOHS' definition contains repetition, intent to damage, and assertion of power through aggression, but again this definition falls slightly short of outlining all of the significant academic themes, as it does not address the power imbalance between the bully and victim. The list of examples that follows the definition sets out a thought-provoking archetypal list for traditional methods of bullying in the workplace, a list that is closely mirrored by the archetypes laid out by Jo and Josephine Blase in their 2003 book, *Breaking the Silence: Overcoming the Problem of Principal Mistreatment of Teachers* (see Chapter Six for more details about this typology).

It is not to say that scholarly definitions all agree or place the same emphasis on all aspects of bullying. It is merely to say that scholarly definitions attempt to address the whole problem instead of addressing each subcategory individually through punitive actions and enforcement. This chasm between official camps has impacted the unofficial significantly, as it sets a precedent that either perspective is equally valid. This practice lends veracity to the existence of multiple concurrent definitions of the term, all of which influence the unofficial. The result of this practice is mass confusion about what actions are included in the term. This confusion is why studies of teachers reporting instances of bullying in their classrooms as noted in Sheri Bauman and Adrienne Del Rio's 2006 article, "Preservice Teachers' Responses to Bullying Scenarios: Comparing Physical, Verbal, and Relational Bullying," yield such interesting and varied findings, because the perception of what constitutes bullying differs on a per-teacher basis.

The persecution at the heart of Peyton's story reveals the fundamental conflict in our understanding of bullying. Reducing bullying to the realm of children, or socially tolerated anti-

social behavior, demeans the term; moreover, it redefines it in a way that runs in total opposition to its scholarly definitions. It also trivializes bullying acts when they happen in the adult world because bullying is still often defined as a child-centered activity and, therefore, should be something that adults know how to avoid. Thus, when bullying occurs in the adult world, it becomes a point of shame. Reframing the same abuse as harassment or assault is viewed differently in our society because these terms are defined adequately in the adult world. Nesbit writes:

> The visualization of someone being the perpetrator or victim of a violent crime is quite different in our society from someone being a bully or bullied. The former is generally viewed as a crime against humanity while the latter as part of normal growth and development (149).

There is no uniform way in which Canadians become educated about bullying. People learn about bullying from a lot of different sources as they grow. Kids learn about it from adults, other kids, and teachers, all of whom may define the term differently. On top of this, definitions of bullying often change with time, as the term's scholarly understanding is improved, which further expands the problem. Formulating a standardized bullying education process in both adult and child culture that is aligned with the scholarly development of the term is quintessential. Aligning the official and unofficial message is also pivotal, because while the punitive arm that extends from the official branch cannot solve the bullying problem, it certainly can hamper the ability to create and maintain traditions that can.

All bullying behaviors revolve around an inherent lack of empathy for victims. Hate is hate; the source does not matter if the goal is to eliminate hate-based activities in a community. Therefore, dividing up the types of hate is counterproductive if the effort is to remove all anti-social behaviors from a population. Avoiding these unnecessary divisions is why community-

based programs that address bullying, such as the *SCSP*, target empathy as the linchpin in the solution. The holistic approach to the problem is a solution that relies on changing cultural perceptions of anti-social behaviors. Thus, the solution to the actual problem remains entirely in the realm of the unofficial. It falls to a change in culture, not the penal system, to address this issue. This focus on culture change makes folklore an essential tool for re-education and re-enculturation in these programs.

3.2   A Functionalist Approach to Folklore and Bullying

In 1965, William Bascom enumerated folklore's four core functions: education, entertainment, conformity, and validation. As shown by Elliott Oring, they are imperfect but practical divisions (1976). Despite the overlap between functions, and the fact that the social role of folklore can often boil down into integrative/disintegrative roles in identity politics, they also allow us to organize better our "whys" and "hows" from multiple perspectives, to better understand what role an element plays in crucial social functions.

Given that any solution to the bullying problem involves generating cultural change through re-education, using these divisions to examine bullying makes sense. First, under *education*, we look at how people learn to bully, the methods that people use to bully, and through these methods develop an understanding of the informal curricula at play (Bowman & Hamer 2006). These curricula explain both the source of the bully's power and how they wield it against their victims. Second, looking at bullying as *entertainment* reveals the problems with what we think we know about the interaction between the bully and the audience (bystanders and allies of the bully). The audience is a primary source of positive feedback for the bully (Hancock, 2012; Sullivan, 2000; Nesbit, 1999). Third, this performativity encourages *conformity* through its widespread repetition.

Finally, it *validates* anti-social behavior as acceptable, through victim-blaming traditions and an inadequate ability to rely on legal systems to discourage the activity.

Understanding the performative nature of this relationship is essential to understanding why bullies bully:

> I am inclined to suggest that bullying is not based on low self-esteem. Instead, I propose that bullying results from and is consistent with a different system of beliefs and values. The words of abuse, which accompany the physical acts of hitting and beating and the victims' reports of the experiences of bullying approximate the position advanced by Ayn Rand (1961) in her self-proclaimed philosophy of morality. Certainly, the victims' reports of bullying episodes speak of experiencing personal unworthiness, taking away of achievement motivation, being mocked by laughter, and the negating of coping strategies for bullying. These statements do not even hint at low self-esteem in the person who bullies. Rather, they explicitly delineate a model for the development and maintenance of self-esteem (Norman Hadley in Nesbit 1999, xiv).

Reinforcement is a large part of the bullying process, especially when we evaluate the performance of bullying. To assume that the bully bullies because they are hateful is to misunderstand bullying. We are all bullies, and luckily, bullies are, for the most part, not monsters. Bullies are people who temporarily exhibit little to no empathy for their victims throughout their performance of bullying activities. Thus, understanding the real social motivation(s) behind bullying is essential, and examining the performance of bullying as entertainment helps us understand why we often condone it.

Sometimes bullying actions are condoned because they are entertaining, even funny in a mean sort of way. As Coloroso reminds us, sometimes they are condoned because no one wants to stop them, and sometimes they are condoned because people actively support abusing the victim:

> [I]njustice overlooked or ignored becomes a contagion. Bystanders' self-confidence and self-respect are eroded as they wrestle with fears about getting involved. They realize that to do nothing is to abdicate moral responsibility to the peer who is the target. All too often these fears and lack of action turn into apathy—a potent friend of contempt (2011, 37).

Apathy is a critical problem with the audience, and it includes apathy that exists toward the victim, towards the actions of the bully, and towards intervention. All of these apathies work together to distance the observer from the violence, and given enough time, desensitize them to it. In many ways, bullying is entertainment. It creates avenues for discussion around the proverbial water cooler; it presents itself in a group's gossip, rumors, legends, and a host of other oral genres.

In Peyton's story, the students produced memes featuring the teacher in a profoundly negative light.[25] The creation, circulation, and feedback for these memes generated a group unified by the entertainment derived from a teacher's abuse. Positive responses to the memes and their resultant notoriety meant that the memer gained social capital in their group. These memers were bullies, and their memes became entertainment for their audience (the bystanders). All of this happened to the detriment of the teacher. Through the memes, group members chose sides in the drama in a safe environment, distanced somewhat from reality, and interacted with the narrative on a personal level without the fear of the repercussions that direct intervention could have carried with it. Thus, the drama became even more entertaining as it became further removed from the actual event.

Bullies require social validation. Without it, they cannot function as bullies. Like any dramatic performer, they require an audience for success—an audience to perform for, to justify to, and from which to build one's power and self-esteem. As examined in depth by Nesbit (1999) and Coloroso (2008), in cases where bullying is private, the bullied individual(s) simultaneously function as victim and audience. Thus, regardless of the situation, the bully is solely reliant on their audience's presence (virtual or otherwise) for positive feedback.

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[25] Creationism memes that featured the teacher as unintelligent were what Peyton said were the most popular.

In terms of conformity, it is only through its maintenance and the support of the status quo that the bully can know that their behavior will remain tolerated. Contrary to popular belief, bullies do not act outside of cultural norms. In a bully's best-case scenario, bullies act at the limit of cultural norms because they do not want their actions to shift these boundaries and limit their power. Thus, maintaining these social norms is essential to effective bullying. The maintenance of conformity requires the presence of etiquette and traditions—folklore—so the bully must master these to present a frame of reference that allows the audience the opportunity to perceive their behavior as socially acceptable. Anti-bullying advocacy must understand that breaking traditional frames is essential for impeding bullying tactics.

Frames, used malevolently, can allow for the normalization of bullying activities that bullies require to maintain their power. Bullies that cleverly manipulate frames can expand the limitations of social norms to include anti-social behaviors. Jay Mechling argues the power of the play frame quite effectively in *On My Honor*:

> Some social dramas are playful. Play resembles ritual in many respects. Each is a carefully, purposefully constructed frame for stylized activities. But while the ritual frame affirms the group's realities, play assumes doubt. The play frame assumes the "what if?" mode, acting as if reality were different. In the play frame, people can play roles not usually open to them, invert usual categories and usual power relations, and generally experiment with other worlds as they could be (54).

As mentioned above, experimenting with group boundaries is built into the play frame, and it is not the play or the traditional framing that is the evil behind bullying; it is the people that manipulate it for selfish reasons. The memes from Peyton's story are an excellent example of this. The memes are playful enough that even the teacher's peers (the other teachers) commented on them in a positive light. The creation of these memes is about generating esteem, for the authors, from other members of their social group. It does not matter that their gains happen at the expense of the victim. These memes frame the abuse under the auspice of a joke. This practice of obfuscation

allows the audience to perceive the abuse as a joke instead of as abuse. It gives them a way out, even though they know that the behavior is wrong. This strategy provides them with a means of dismissing the behavior. These strategies are dependent on the presence and usage of folklore for the bully to obfuscate and the audience to dismiss the bullying activity.

Frames also aid in the creation of social distance between the victim and the group. In our example, Peyton's teacher is reduced to a caricature through memes, distancing them from the abuse, and their humanity, making it easier to continue or escalate attacks. The memes reframe the abuse as play, specifically jokes. This practice is deeply problematic because it recasts the bully in a positive light as a joker, the victim as the deserving butt of the joke, and the bystanders as the viewing audience. Practices that reframe the audience's role as primarily reactionary are the most problematic for anti-bullying strategies because generating agency in the audience is one of the only ways to curb bullying behavior. Generally speaking, many people do not want to become involved in bullying dramas for many reasons (some more legitimate than others), but frameworks like those framing the memes in Peyton's story allow everyone to be a part of the abuse without having to take a direct role in it, which turns the audience into indirect bullies. At best, the audience's decision not to interfere with the bullying places them on the level of tacitly condoning the actions taking place. We all have a point where we think we will intervene, but knowing and understanding how far one can push is every good bully's job.

3.3   Bullying as a Folk Drama

When we embrace our inner Erving Goffman and begin to look at life as a performance, and begin to evaluate these performances on an individual basis, it benefits us as motivated parents, citizens, and colleagues to ask "What messages are we communicating through our actions?" and

almost as important, "How are these messages being communicated?" It takes very little work to express bullying as a folk drama because the behavior is so common. In the study of folkloristics, which thrives on creative variation, bullying narratives and dramas seem to have an almost endless number of inventively cruel means of expression. Thus, these genres of hate and aggression pass all of the litmus tests for folklore texts. They are traditional, repeated (often by definition), use informal communication, and are rich with a creative variation. The victim(s), bully(ies), and bystanders all carry specific acting roles as developed over time by the community, which mirrors Brunvand's assertion that folk dramas "are essentially performances in which participants assume certain active roles …that accompany the action" (1968, 436).

Bullying is one of the most basic forms of drama, and it appears in almost every genre of communication available to us. These genres include popular culture (film, TV series and sitcoms, and memes) and more traditional genres of folklore (folktale, folksongs, personal experience narratives, and various forms of speech play). These varied genres often focus on different aspects of the bullying drama, but even in older folktales, one thing is clear: most bullying takes place without the use of physical violence. Except for religious discrimination, Peyton's story of online abuse is a familiar story among teachers these days.[26] In occupational settings, "physical" or "direct" bullying is the least common form of bullying.[27] Social bullying, or psychological bullying, or what scholars often label as "indirect" bullying is far more common and includes:

> telling false stories about others, saying bad things behind people's backs, telling others not to be someone's friend, and trying to persuade others to dislike a certain person (Atlas & Pepler 1998, 87).

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[26] An article in *The Guardian* dated April 2nd, 2015 entitled, "Huge rise in online abuse of teachers by pupils and parents, says union," noted that 60% of 1500 teachers polled in a recent survey reported being abused online. This number seems to hold true in Canada as well, with the N.S.T.U. 2008 poll showing that 89 % of teachers saw cyberbullying as their highest concern.

[27] The presence of physical abuse from students is actually quite prevalent among elementary school teachers according to my consultants (all of whom saw this as part of their job), but this did not seem to be the case with junior high or high school teachers. Only one of my consultants in that age range had been physically assaulted by a student, and this was the result of intervening in a student altercation.

Atlas and Pepler's examples are familiar to everyone because all of us are guilty of some, or all, of these activities. All of this is to say that violent crimes only represent a small part of a much larger bullying problem. It is also worthy of note that social or indirect bullying can be exceedingly hard to recognize, and so it often goes unnoticed and unpunished. This lack of punitive force exists because it is only criminal when it qualifies as harassment.

This realization has quickly begun changing the social image of who the bully is. For the most part, the realization that bullies are intelligent people has replaced the bully's traditionalized perception as a big dumb knuckle-dragger. Those that use "indirect" manipulations are often smart, popular, and socially adept. This shift in perception is why scholars have focused far less on physical bullies in recent times and have instead concentrated their research efforts on the smart, popular kids.

Shifting study toward indirect/social bullying is both an adaptation to the world that we now live in, as well as an increasing recognition and concern with subtle forms of harassment that were previously ignored or seen as acceptable. As we move into examining bullying through a much more socially focused lens, we must carefully consider the performance of anti-social behavior. Bullying, at its most fundamental level, is an activity that almost everyone wants to reject. So why do we allow it to happen around us? Coloroso suggests that it has something to do with a social separation to which anyone can fall victim.

Bullying is a process that uses folklore in a precise way. It uses nicknames, jokes, proverbs, personal experiences, folktales, legends, memorates, memes, and even rhymes to forcibly "other" the target. Repeated uses of these tailored bits of folklore work to sever or weaken ties with the victim. The goal is isolation and dehumanization of the victim, so that the audience no longer feels

shame for not showing victims proper respect. According to Coloroso, bullying can only occur when the perpetrator has a deeply rooted contempt for another person that they have labeled as "worthless, inferior, and [specifically] undeserving of respect" (xxi). Bullying is a patterned form of hatred. Through folklore, we aim to build tools to disrupt such patterns of hate.

3.4　Traditionalizing the Bully and the Problem with Bullying as a Rite of Passage

When a society begins proposing a litany of methods for coping with bullying, at least two things must be true: 1) the society admits that bullying is a problem, and 2) some degree of normalization of bullying has already occurred. The plethora of Canadian websites dedicated to coping with bullying, laid alongside the massive number of publications and online campaigns like *It Gets Better*, paints a fairly clear picture. Bullying in Canada is becoming an increasingly significant problem. Bullying scholar Richard Klein writes, "…for centuries, [bullying] has not only been tolerated but accepted as one of those unavoidable unpleasantries associated with childhood…" (1991, 27). One could suggest that the word "childhood" might easily be replaced with "life" because, as we all understand now, bullying extends well past childhood. In her 2008 dissertation, *Workplace Bullying: Aggressive Behavior and its Effect on Job Satisfaction and Productivity,* occupational bullying scholar Judith Fisher-Blando concluded that workplace bullying affects an estimated 75% of employees (92).

Bullying is so commonplace in our society that we often do not even recognize it; the frames that mark out bullying actions from other everyday actions are becoming increasingly subtle as we become increasingly desensitized to them. However, looking at the framing in bullying narratives can give us tools to change perspectives by more quickly identifying and understanding both the action (direct or indirect) and its consequences (immediate and long term). These narratives also

unite us because we understand them at an almost implicit level, which should raise red flags in and of itself.

Bullying narratives are so easily accessible because bullying is something that everyone expects to have happen to them in their lives. Thus, an increase in coping and confrontational strategies to deal with bullying is easily understood, albeit unfortunate. Scholarship that pursues this path has come to be, for the most part, considered outdated because pursuing this route, as practical as it may seem, reinforces both the normality of the behavior while simultaneously promoting a victim-oriented solution. Victim-oriented solutions communicate all of the wrong messages. The onus to solve a situation of abuse should never fall on the victim.

If this seems farfetched, take, for instance, what is reinforced by telling a child to solve the problem for themselves. Bullying scholar Hara Marano presents this problem:

> […] parents often dismiss bullying as a case of "boys being boys," deny its impact, and hold the expectation that children should sort it out themselves…. The same parents harbor the belief that kids should somehow always be able to defend themselves—to "stand up for themselves," "fight back," "not be pushed around by anyone"—and those who don't or can't almost deserve what they get. Bullying is just good old boyhood in a land of aggressive individualists (1995, 52).

Wayne Nesbit also addresses this problem, stating that,

> […] the most commonly-given advice that children who are bullied receive from home is to "stick up for yourself!" This is particularly the case with boys who are bullied. The scenario goes something like this: "Dad, there is this guy in my class who pushes me around and takes my lunch and stuff." The reply: "Well, what are you doing when all this is going on?" The expectation and message is that the child should assert himself physically. Basically, own the problem and strike back (1999, 171).

Unfortunately, this mentality has become entrenched in the North American cultural world view. Dr. Robert Zecker, an American history professor at St. Francis Xavier University, discussed what he considered a malaise in the American worship of rugged individualism in his survey to

American history class. In class, he dubbed this a "bootstrap mentality," in reference to the expression, "hauling oneself up by their own bootstraps." It certainly makes sense in this context. The default perception is that it is always up to the individual to overcome their problems, and bullying is seen as a personal problem. The expectation is, as Marano (1995) suggests, that the victim will stand up for their self and defeat the bully at their own game, and as Marano also points out, the additional expectation is that if they cannot do this, then they deserve the abuse because they cannot hack it as a self-made person.

This perception is so entrenched in the American psyche that Zecker's bootstrap mentality appears as part of the core belief structure, and there is plenty of room to suggest it is the same in Canadian thinking as well, because the notion of the bootstrap is, at its most fundamental level, an expression that reaffirms the values of aggressive capitalism. Peyton's story demonstrates this perception through how the audience left the teacher alone to deal with their bullying themselves. The idea that suggests abuse occurring in front of an individual can be "none of their business" resides at the heart of the bystander problem, and it reinforces the idea that an individual should be able to deal with it themselves. That underlying capitalist idea that anyone can start from anywhere in the system and rise to the top, if they are assertive and possess a solid work ethic, is complementary to this idea because it reinforces rugged individualism. As one would expect of a core value, references to it abound across many genres of cultural expression. As such, we see parallels scattered across a wide range of the folklore genres and reinforced in tandem by various traditions simultaneously. This saying encapsulates the heart of the misconception around capitalism that has caused many of our social problems, because it is physically impossible to haul oneself up by one's own bootstraps. A rise in social status results from social interaction. No one rises or falls without assistance from others.

To illustrate, here is a gendered example that extends from the previous two quotations. When a man fails to defeat their bully, they must exemplify the notion of "taking it like a man." This thinking presents a particularly problematic situation. Sue Askew writes:

> Even though a boy might be physically weaker than another, to be able to 'take it like a man' is usually considered to be a good second-best masculine quality. In this sense, bullying can be seen as a manifestation of pressures put on boys to conform to male stereotypes (1989, 65).

The damage caused by that one small cultural expression is astounding, but lump it into a whole etiquette about how to respond to bullying, and this becomes a trap that quickly spirals out of control for victims because this etiquette actively normalizes the bullying actions.

Many examples, like Sue Askew's, reinforce this normalization, and they are quite visible in the small genres of speech play (which are discussed in Chapter Five), but the enculturation of this thinking runs far more deeply. It extends into almost all forms of popular culture and across almost the entirety of folkloristics genres. Take, for instance, European folktales such as *märchen* and their many variations. These tales often feature bullies as metaphorical entities such as ogres, trolls, and witches, referenced through semiotics and applied to real-life situations. While the folktale's primary function may be entertainment, this does not prevent extrapolation for informal learning.

Through close readings of folktales, it quickly becomes evident that bullies are often pivotal to the tale. They, due to their role as antagonists, are often responsible for propelling the story forward. The inclusion of a folk villain who is a bully explicitly presents the hero with an obstacle to overcome. Even in the instances where direct physical violence between the hero and the villain does not occur, violence is still often framed within the tale, and along with it, the means that the villain uses to control or motivate the hero.

Take, example, a local compilation of Newfoundland folktales, *Little Jack and other Newfoundland folktales,* compiled by John Widdowson (2002). These tales contain world views

and ideas that still resonate in this province. Out of the fifty tales, nearly half—twenty-four—featured physical violence, whereas thirty-three of them contained acts of social violence, be it holding a person against their will, abusive behavior, or uttered threats. In any regard, this short compilation demonstrates how strongly violence is a part of Newfoundland's historical culture. It also features strong elements of justified violence, mostly on the part of the hero. Through the hero's actions, the audience learns what is justifiable and what is not. It also maintains strong threads of violence in gender roles, the use of women as commodities, stealing as an essential life skill, and justification for uttering of threats.

These folktales contain essential cultural information about the historical perception of violence and bullying in the province, from which current perceptions have developed. Some of these tales, such as "Jack and the Goose," even feature abuse directed at the allies. This attitude speaks volumes about the storytellers' world view, audience, and historical attitudes in Newfoundland society. It creates a situation where the main character is heroic, but not necessarily a "good person" by modern standards. In many tales, the heroes champion qualities like generosity, bravery, and courtesy, highlighted through donor roles and other social interactions in the stories. However, by today's standards, many negative features are also present, and the tale's progression often justifies violence in context.

On the other hand, there are tales where Jack adopts the "swing first and ask questions later" policy, which suggests that there has been (in the past) at least some vernacular acceptance of this strategy in the province, because folk heroes reflect the traits most admired by their given society. Keeping this acceptance in mind and working as a counterpoint, many of the storytellers felt that they had to justify Jack's violent actions in their stories, and they did so through explanations of why the villain deserved to be opposed. However, some stories that include monstrous villains like

ogres, trolls, and witches required less, or even no, time to contextualize why Jack could be violent and still be a folk hero.

This framing of the tales highlights the storyteller's world view. The defense of why Jack is violent is probably more rooted in the storyteller's current society than the folktales. The notion that something can be simply portrayed as less than human, explicitly to justify killing or abusing it, parallels the thinking put forward by authors like Barbara Coloroso, Wayne Nesbit, and Valerie Besag, who suggest that the manufactured social distance between the bully and the target helps justify the violence. Besag writes, "Name-calling dehumanizes the victim…thus assuaging any guilt and giving permission for the process to continue once it is outside the human context…" (1988, 43). Simply put, this real-world tradition works to accomplish in real life what the folktale does with metaphorical references to monsters.

By denigrating the victims into something less than human (or deserving of the abuse), it becomes more socially acceptable to treat them in inhuman ways, which is why Jack could act first and ask questions later when confronted by his monsters. Folktales, legends, films, and TV series that feature fantasy creatures help society understand how to treat outsiders and marginalized individuals. Although many take the moralistic stance of defending the different, most still rely on antagonists that persecute them in order to drive the plot forward, and while fantasy has the defense of being fantasy, name-calling and other potentially dehumanizing traditions do not, and are reinforced by the metaphors at work in the fantasy writing. Each piece of this social reinforcement is small but when taken together and read as a collection, the play's cultural world views become clear.

Storytelling reveals a diversity of forms of bullying, and folktale collections reveal a diversity of subversive behaviors (covert and overt) across much of our society's documented history. Even

within these genres, subgenres exist that frame the retelling of bullying narratives differently. Although these subgenres often frame themselves under the auspices of a more significant genre, such as personal experience narrative, memorate, proto-memorate, or legend, all of these stories use specific story types to bring their unique brand of cultural biases to the table: 1) esteem stories (told to garner esteem for the victim in the tale), and 2) empathy stories (used to arouse empathy between audience and teller). Although these divisions may seem somewhat arbitrary, and there is undoubtedly crossover,[28] there is a significant reason to subdivide them this way. Esteem stories set us on a path toward reaffirming the notion of rugged individualism. In contrast, empathy stories attempt to re-infuse respect, or at least acceptance, for the victim.

The stories where victims overcome or survive their abuse frame their victims as folk heroes in their narratives. It may seem ironic that stories of successfully navigated situations should be so detrimental to eliminating the problem, but they create a significant obstacle. They create the social expectation featured in other genres of speech play (previously discussed), which frames bullying events as tests of character. The problem with this thinking is that the differential in power between victim and bully is often too large to be overcome. In these situations, when the would-be hero fails, it creates a scenario where we regard the victim as weak. Moreover, when victims are responsible for their failure, it worsens the shame of the abuse, and it washes clean the hands of the bully. In the foreword of *Black Eyes and Bruised Souls,* clinical psychologist Norman Hadley writes:

> One of the most disturbing findings of [this] research is that both teachers and students are inclined to perceive the person who is bullied as weak. The perception that weakness is a major defining characteristic further victimizes the victim. (1999, vi).

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[28]Stories about defeat in the empathy subgenre often become esteem stories over time because all esteem stories are ultimately about survival and perseverance, and their telling, due to the personal nature of the stories, garners respect from the audience for displaying the strength of character needed to tell a story about their own humiliation.

3.5   Victims as Weak, and the Ritualization of Abuse

In conjunction with folklore that works to reinforce and support these anti-social behaviors, folklore elements exist that help frame one of the most insidious notions about bullying and victims—the notion that bullying is a social rite of passage. If we take Victor Turner's approach (1977) and look to the changes of "states" in the liminaries (victims in this process, then we can see that there has been a change of state. Specifically, there is a diminishing of social status. It may seem abnormal, at first, to discuss the diminishing social status—a reduction—as the result of a rite of passage, but it is not unique. Most militaries have a ceremony for demotion to act as a deterrent to others. Bullying utilizes much of the same thought processes to discourage intervention by threatening similar punishments on those that might try and help the victim.

Both Van Gennep and later Victor Turner determined that "rites [of passage] … accompany every change of place, state, social position, and age" (Turner 1977, 36). These changes should remind us that not all changes need to be, by necessity, positive. Bullying behaviors establish victims as liminaries because they become estranged from the rest of the group. This communal ostracization demonstrates that bullies are working within this system and with community sanction. Turner writes:

> [the] "liminaries" – are betwixt-and-between established states of politico-jural structure. They evade ordinary cognitive classification, too, for they are neither this-nor-that, here-nor-there… [they are] out of mundane structural context, they are in a sense "dead" to the world (1977, 37).

Peyton's story fits this mold well. The bullies' abuse diminished the victim's social status. This process incorporated rumor, online accusations, memes, and false narratives to lower the victim's social status in their peers' eyes. This attack strategy created social distance between the

abused and their peer group, which allowed for the escalation of abuse. The escalation became

further conflated and resulted in the victim's expulsion from the group. Thus, these bullies used

their malevolent folklore to chip away at the group's valuation of the victim. By doing this, they

dehumanized the victim, which allowed group members to join with the bullies in perceiving the

victim as weak, inferior, and thus deserving of the abuse. This change in perception presented the

bullies with an opportunity to escalate their violence. The resultant negativity eventually pushed the

victim out of the physical community, thus achieving their ultimate goal. This process, or a process

similar to this, is created in every instance of bullying and harkens back to Barbara Myerhoff:

"secular ceremonies" and how they "present unquestionable doctrines and... dramatize social, moral

imperatives" (1977, 3).

Bullying is almost always referenced as a drama by bullying scholars because it presents

itself well within that reference frame. It has actors, and these actors act out their parts in a

contextualized frame that seems to remove the event from regular everyday life. In this way,

bullying and the process of dehumanization are ritualized, making the abuse more condonable

because it mirrors the world of play, and these worlds operate by different rules. This constant

reference to bullying as a drama deserves exploration, because most educational scholars tend not

to be critical of the word, as the perception is that it is of little importance. Nevertheless, it occurs in

the discourse about bullying over and over again.

To contextualize the term, folklorist Roger Abrahams writes,

Drama of any sort calls for the creation of a play world by the players, generally
through the use of conventional symbolic objects-masks, costumes, a special area for
playing and conventional stylized actions (1972, 352).

Referencing "bullying" as a drama and invoking the "play world" reveals another vexing

problem. If bullying is a drama and dramas are enacted in a play world, removed from the

mainstream of everyday interaction, we have to reconcile the notion of bullying as play. We have to defend the idea that bullying is not a part of everyday interaction, which is clearly in conflict with the discussion in most academic writings on the subject. However, if we understand bullying as a drama, we can quickly be brought to understand many of the finer points about bullying, as incorporating drama theory provides a link to various forms of play and ritualistic activity.

In folklore, we tend to look toward the unofficial dramas that are typically performed without hard scripts (although the plots adhere to traditionalized formats and progress more-or-less by patterned plotlines that are known and understood by their audience). Variation is included in their composition, and they are performed and composed simultaneously. Abrahams says that folk dramas include "traditional play activity that relies primarily on dialogue to establish its meaning and that tells a story through the combination of dialogue and action, the outcome of which is known to the audience ahead of time" (1972b, 353). Thus, we can see that even by looking at the folk drama genre, this element of "play" is still referenced as one of the critical definitional aspects. Thus, this notion of play is vital to understanding bullying behavior because bullying is often not thought of as play.

Ironically, bullying is often dismissed as "play" in speech play and proverbial fragments such as, "That's just boys being boys" or "girls being girls." So, it is not as far removed from the truth as we might first think. Many people—in the worlds of both adults and children—bully with witticisms to make the audience laugh. When malevolent manipulation of a folklore genre occurs, be it through jokes, riddles, rhymes, or even traditionalized forms of violence (like checking, slashing, or spearing in hockey), the bully is at play. So long as the audience perceives the event in the same light as the bully intends it, they are less likely to intervene to stop the activity than they are to support it, and their positive reinforcement reaffirms the bully's justification for their actions.

Thus, the bullies themselves are responsible for taking actions that should not be part of our regular interaction and presenting them in a new frame of reference so that their audience finds the interaction entertaining instead of repulsive. This skill is the bully's primary source of power. From a folkloristic perspective, we allow them to create the master narrative of their play while simultaneously dictating the rules of engagement in their play world. Through this action, the audience allows the bully and victim to enter a world of play where their actions become tacitly sanctioned. Nevertheless, bullying is so common that we, as an audience, often need more information before we can understand it as bullying, but once we recognize the bullying drama, we do know and understand how such encounters will progress.

In this way, bullying encounters can be viewed as folk dramas because we might not necessarily know the outcome of any particular instance of these folk dramas per se, because of the creative variation instilled in them by the victim and bully, but we surely know the possible outcomes of these interactions. As with the modular compositions of oral composition, once a plot progresses down a particular path, the ending becomes a foregone conclusion. The audience then knows the outcome of the plot before the end occurs. In this way, it becomes easy to understand bullying as a folk drama. In many ways, this referencing parallels Elaine Lawless' work, except it relies on folk drama in place of personal experience narrative to explain the cycles of recurring violence. Simply put, the expectation that violence will occur makes it easier to stomach it when it does, and so we must endeavor to promote a better—more empathetic—frame of reference, which eliminates this expectation and denormalizes the violence (see Lawless 2009, and 2001).

When we accept that bullying is a type of folk drama, we must also accept that we communicate some portion of our social mores through it. When we do this, we arrive at the most troubling aspect of bullying in our society. Bullying has become ritualized in our culture, and we

know this because there are campaigns like *It Gets Better*, which directly tells victims that all they need to do is survive it, pass this tough rite of passage in their lives, to get to a better place on the other side. When we can accept this notion, we can understand how bullying represents some kind of enactment of our moral imperatives. From there, we can endeavor to understand how this process works to "present [a] particular interpretation… of social reality in a way that endows [it] with legitimacy" (Myerhoff 1977, 4) so that we can deconstruct it and build a new structure with a better message that does not sanction violence against others.

Perhaps the best place to start with this is to look at the ritual process and rite of passage itself. Although with bullying we can be speaking of an inversion of the regular rites of passage (because every bullying situation entails attempting to diminish the status of the victim while trying to separate them from their current group), they can be broken down into Arnold van Gennep's three stages. This breakdown fully includes the pre-liminal, liminal, and post-liminal stages, namely separation, transition (limen), and incorporation (1960, 11). When we examine bullying scenarios as rites of passage, the normal progression of the process is stressed. This stress occurs because these scenarios create multiple outcomes for the victim upon exiting the transitional phase, and these outcomes are crucial to the understanding of bullying because failure is the most common outcome, which creates regression in the rites of passage.

In these scenarios, the victim begins the ritual process as a group member, and it is the bullying that forces them into the liminal phase. The confrontation becomes the liminal phase, the resolution of which determines how the transitional phase will progress. If the victim overcomes the bully, the rites of passage continue as usual, and the victim gains esteem and possibly a higher social status in the reincorporation phase. If the victim cannot overpower their bully, they regress to

a lower social status within the group. In more extreme situations, they can even be expelled from the group entirely.

When expulsion occurs, the rites of passage have truly inversed; the victim(s) loses their integration with the group, and the rite results in a permanent separation from the group in which they began the process. To use Peyton's example to illustrate this regression, the teacher begins the story as a respected group member of the teaching staff at their given school. Then the victim is targeted by a bully and is marginalized. The bullying forces the victim into the liminal phase, and since Peyton's teacher was not able to overcome the abuse, the result is a reduction in social status (Peyton's description of the withdrawal of the other teachers and the growing isolation of the victim). In Peyton's story, this process devolved into a cycle of confrontation and regression that resulted in a regression from being accepted, to isolated, to the teacher's complete ostracization. In short, the process begins with acceptance and ends in alienation.

One might ask how this type of interaction has become so commonplace in our society that we do not even necessarily notice it when it happens, or how we condone such harmful traditions of alienation. The answers to these questions are complicated. However, the heart of the solution lies in how we perceive the victim and the bully. For instance, there is an expectation in North American culture that victims do not remain victims, and this taints perception of victims who fail to conquer their bullies. It is okay to lose a battle in our society, but losing a war is a sign of weakness. Thus, the expectation is that we face "challenges" (such as bullies) in our lives, and when we do, it is on us (the victims) to see ourselves through it. By de-emphasizing the role of the bully in their actions and overemphasizing self-reliance, we have arrived at a place where we can objectify the bully in another's life's story while simultaneously distancing ourselves from the

victim because we are merely allowing them to complete an expected rite of passage (overcoming or surviving abuse).

Many forms of folklore and popular culture parallel this framing. In the folktale and modern cinema, it is implied in the villain's existence as previously noted, because there can only be one reason to have a villain in any story, and that is that the villain exists explicitly to create an obstacle to be overcome by the hero. Paula Faria echoes this sentiment in her analysis of Harry Potter when she writes, "Without a villain and the obstacles posed by him/her, there would be no need for a journey" (2008, 43). Thus, the overcoming of the villain highlights the hero's character growth and worthiness of reward. Other genres of folk texts, such as speech play, work to reinforce this cultural perception by treating the bully as a test or problem in the life of the victim while simultaneously providing a condonable reason for non-intervention (the victim needs to learn to stand up for themselves or toughen up). These expressions, jokes, and proverbial fragments all explain what the victim needs to do, which is no less than become a hero in their own life and stand up to their bully.

Instead of condemning the bully's actions as unacceptable, these underlying messages place the onus on the victim to overcome the problem. The unexamined nature of this socially proposed unofficial rite of passage has a significant impact on both the victim and the bully. The fact that bullying is so prevalent in all walks of human existence reinforces this notion that it is something that everyone needs to face by themselves—which then justifies the notion of non-intervention by others. In other words, because everyone else has faced a bullying situation in their lives, bullying has become a marker in human development. This marker is partially due to the notion that bullying scholar John Bird suggested, which is that bullying is "endemic" of human behavior (1995) and why educational scholar Peter Randall wrote, "…it is axiomatic that bullying is an

aggressive, systematic abuse of power and its frequency and diversity suggests that it is an unavoidable trait of human nature" (19).

Thus, because it is an "unavoidable" aspect of human nature, society must create methods to deal with it. Unfortunately, these methods often reinforce the normalcy of bullying instead of combatting it. Instead of eliminating bullying, we have created a way of incorporating it into the natural maturation process. We have turned it into a sacred and variable rite of passage, and by reinforcing this notion, we do an incredible disservice to the victim by placing the onus on them to fix the problem. This thinking also carries the additional penalty that the essential social reaction is to see them as weak or not worthy of basic human dignity and respect when the victim fails in this endeavor. Thus, regarding bullying as a rite of passage establishes a situation where there is no room in the esteemed group for victims who fail to become heroes.

Instead of elevating the victim to a place of respect, given to one that overcomes problems, our cultural response is to lower them to a place of pity or scorn, making it easier for others to disrespect them in the future and drawing the victim into a situation that can quickly spiral out of control, as has been illustrated by Peyton's story. Thus, viewing bullying as a rite of passage is wildly problematic. In many instances of bullying, the power differential between the victim(s) and bully(ies) is simply too extreme for the victims to surmount. The scales in bullying situations are always weighted against the victim. As bullying is a power negotiation between someone with more power (the bully) and someone with less (the victim), the expectation of surmounting this struggle is by its very nature unfair. Therefore, to correctly address the bullying problem, we must dismantle the traditions surrounding and supporting the notions that bullying is play, that it is the victim's problem, that it is a regular part of our maturation process, and that it is some kind of rite of passage.

Chapter Four: Understanding Bullying from the perspectives of Occupational, Educational, and Applied Folklore Studies

This chapter will examine three major streams of folkloristic study for bullying content. 1) The study of Folklore and Education; 2) Occupational Folklore, and 3) Applied Folklore. The first two streams will demonstrate how enculturation has taken place, and the third will suggest possible resolutions to the problems faced by teachers today through the successes of similar projects that have been tackled by folklorists in the past. This project's focus on teachers' occupational bullying, specifically on the associated narratives, has revealed aspects of teachers' professional lives hidden from the public eye. This public knowledge gap should not be surprising because past studies about education have primarily focused on students or pedagogy, not teachers' everyday lived experiences. It can be argued that in the past, FAIE implementations have had a positive impact on the teachers, but the curbing of teachers' maltreatment has not been a primary outcome of these projects. This chapter works to gain some sense of the impact bullying has on this community.

Cultures and subcultures share conceptualizations and ideas about bullies and bullying, which means that these notions cross boundaries fluidly and are perpetually adapting. Elimination of the bullying mentality from a group requires an understanding of the relationships between the group and the cultures and subcultures that subsume it. Changing the bullying mentality in a group depends on the ability to address the social framework in which it has become embedded. Bullying flourishes in situations where there is social inequity and within frameworks where groups compete against each other. For teachers, this situation defines much of their professional life. The structure of the

education system itself makes this possible; several hierarchies exist in the educational system (as noted in Chapter Two, Figure 2.1). Hierarchies are a means of disproportional power distribution and, when left unpoliced, often become havens for serial abusers. These hierarchies leave the general teaching population in the least dominant position possible within these power structures.

Professional authority and autonomy have shifted from teachers to formal administrative groups such as school boards and teaching associations. While the makeup of administrative groups primarily follows formalized structures (administration/teacher, senior teachers/junior teachers), it is essential to note how they act. Identifying and documenting folk groups inside the formal structure is essential to understanding how these differing perspectives influence information flow across the broader system. Since folklore is concerned primarily with non-institutionalized information, which is often overlooked by other disciplines, it benefits us to focus on informal and non-formal education. Philip Coombs and Ahmed Manzoor define these in conjunction with both the institutions that generate them and in contrast with each other, stating:

> Formal education takes place in schools, academies, and other official institutions […] Non-formal education occurs in community groups, religious associations, and other grassroots organizations. Informal education happens through interactions with family, friends, and neighbors outside specific institutional structures; it is not regulated and does not result in certification or a degree (1974, 3).

As arbitrary as they may seem at first glance, Coombs and Manzoor's divisions are still quite useful as foundational ideas. However, we must still realize that the differences between these types of education are far less arbitrary than their basic structure allows because there is considerable overlap between them. For example, a teacher, who is a father, tells their son to tell their teacher when bullied. On the one hand, this is a formal

message that teachers tell children; on the other, the conveyance occurred within an informal group. The education is formal despite being conveyed in an informal group, and we must remind ourselves that this occurs because not everything conveyed within formal institutions is formal education, and vice versa.

The interplay between formal/informal/non-formal education within formal/non-formal/informal groups is Coombs and Manzoor's only real limitation. Once we accept that formal education and informal/non-formal education overlap, we can acknowledge that ideas may be supported or contested within multiple education streams. The only way to understand this system of conflicting and supporting ideas is to study it. By performing these types of studies, we can help highlight flawed thinking in our formal education approaches. For example, the notion that formal education is the only form of education that "exist[s] to socialize individuals into roles in society" (Coombs & Manzoor, 3) is majorly flawed because socialization is something that is learned uniformly across all three types of education. Socialization is one of the least determining traits of differentiation, as it is a core trait in religious instruction, grassroots associations, and formal schooling; all of these groups work to explain a learner's role in culture/society.

For solutions to social problems caused by an over-emphasis on formal education (which entails most of the problems that this study will look at), it is less critical to be able to differentiate between the types of education than it is to ensure that the messages conveyed through them are communicating the same idea. This alignment is where folkloristics comes into play because the unofficial nature of non-formal and informal education is of central concern to folklorists. The reason behind the widespread success of

Folklore and Education FAIE implementations is that they embrace the full spectrum of education, including the tools that exist outside of the formal to reinforce the learning.

In folkloristics, we call all groups of formal, non-formal, or informal nature "folk groups" because the only limitation that the notion of folk groups imposes on members is that there is some affiliation between them. All groups contain informal and non-formal knowledge. Thus, the informal, formal, or non-formal nature of the division, which refers mainly to how we learn and socialize, matters little. This notion may appear to run contrary to the unofficial orientation of folkloristics that would seem to suggest that folk groups would not apply to officially sanctioned groups, but as Alan Dundes states, the folk is any group of people "who share at least one common factor" (1965, 2). Folk groups are pervasive, and as such, formal structures cannot help being influenced by their informal and non-formal subsets.

4.1   Folklore and Education

Understanding the divisions between informal, formal, and non-formal knowledge in educational practices is critical in understanding what is missing in our educational system today. Linking the different knowledge types with a list of suggested types of institutions merely gives us a place to start our discussion. Paddy Bowman and Lynne Hamer's seminal work on Folklore and Education, *Through the Schoolhouse Door: Folklore, Community, Curriculum,* has already tackled this notion in children's pedagogy, stating:

> The formal training of educators prepares them to teach various subjects
> and grade levels, but much of the craft of excellent teaching flows
> through informal channels. Managing classroom discipline, balancing
> students' needs and abilities, and engaging and inspiring young people
> usually come to both novice and expert teachers through the folkloristic
> process of observing peers and years of learning on the job, as well as
> memories of favorite teachers and crucial learning experiences. The

learning between teachers and folklorists is similarly reciprocal. Working
with teachers improves folklorists' presentation strategies and teaching,
even in higher education. Listening to teachers and administrators helps
us as folklorists to understand k-12 education better, the tough realities
that educators face daily, and, ultimately, community culture.
Collaboration is essential if folklorists are to advocate successfully to
integrate folklore and folklorists' methods into k-12 curricula and to teach
teachers in schools of education, summer institutes, and other
professional development opportunities (4).

Through their work, Bowman and Hamer laid the foundation for further development

in Folklore and Education by explaining the relationship between informal education,

teachers, and pedagogy, and developing the connection between teachers and folklorists.

Essentially, Bowman and Hamer conclude that teachers' institutionalized training gives

them the essential tools to succeed, while the informal and non-formal education they

receive on the job allows them to thrive in their new roles as educators—a sentiment

supported by all of the interviewees.

When folklorists have entered into the equation, they have worked to assist teachers by

making tradition bearers and cultural information more accessible—achieving true

accessibility only occurs when both teachers and students understand the appropriate

cultural metaphors necessary to breakdown the complex ideas housed within formal

knowledge (Cazdan & Hymes, 1978). Many existing curricula already explain the proper

execution of Folklore and Education implementations, and almost all of these documents

list benefits to students, teachers, and the school community. One particularly keen

example of this is Deeksha Nagar's 2015 article "A Guide to Building School Culture

Using Folklore Methods." This article offers a plethora of information about using folklore

to promote positive school culture, positive spatial culture, and how to strengthen parental

engagement—all of which are of direct import for the stated goals of the *Safe and Caring Schools* policy.[29]

The development of these fieldwork components improves connectedness between teachers and the rest of the school community by pulling the parents and other community members back into the education process. This connectivity has been historically significant in Folklore and Education Studies because it connects teachers with the students' culture, which allows them to communicate using the same common vernacular, the positive impact of which is almost immeasurable (See: bell hooks 2003, 1994, for a more detailed discussion).

The process used by folklorists today in pedagogical studies results from almost ninety years of folklore activism in schools (Rosenberg 1996, 5). Dorothy Howard's experimentation with folkloristic fieldwork during her tenure as a teacher in the 1930s marks the humble beginning of this vital subfield of folkloristic study. This subfield continued to crystallize throughout Howard's career, but the formal beginning was her dissertation *Folk Jingles of American Children* (Howard 1939; Grider 1980, 16).

Howard demonstrated the practical uses of folklore in bridging the knowledge gap between child and adult. These uses set the focus for the majority of the subsequent works in Folklore and Education. Unsurprisingly, this activism has been limited primarily to the enrichment of student academic life, but the same process can help us address the ever-expanding rift between teachers and the rest of society. One could argue that this rift exists primarily because communication between teachers and their school communities has

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[29] Other working examples of Folklore and Education curricula are: Pearson Education Canada Inc. 2006, which provides a guiding document for the *Many Voices* initiative, and the1985 workbook by Betty J Belanus, *Folklore in the classroom*, created for the Indiana Historical Bureau; or the *Louisiana Voices* program by the Louisiana Department of Culture.

degraded to the point where a teacher's involvement with their community is seen strictly as an obligatory presence, which is often reinforced by the mediation of their thoughts through administrators or association representatives. The removal of their voice from the public venue alongside the strict rules of professional conduct for teachers has created distance between them and their communities that allows other members of their communities to regard them as "the other."

The fact that folklore activism poses one of the most accessible solutions to this problem, and remains mostly unexplored in this province, is simply because teachers' folk lives, outside of pedagogy, has historically fallen outside of the limited scope of past Folklore and Education studies. This absence exists because the study of Folklore and Education arose out of the folkloristic study of Childlore and not Occupational Folklore. Thus, the core issues within Childlore scholarship have fundamentally shaped both the perspective of approach and the significant focuses of scholars studying Folklore and Education.

4.2 A Brief History of Childlore's Influence on the Study of Folklore and Education

Childlore's influence on pedagogical strategies in Folklore and Education started with the work of its founders: J.O. Halliwell, Alice B. Gomme, and William Wells Newell. J.O. Halliwell, the principal researcher of Childlore in England, published *The Nursery Rhymes of England* (1842) and *The Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales of England* (1849). The study remained primarily focused on the collection of Childlore that was produced for children by adults. Since the adults picked and chose the repertoire, it was they who shaped the underlying informal education for the children. Thus, this focus on adult-led Childlore

meant that Childlore collections contained poignant elements of pedagogy that were already in use from its very inception. Like many of her contemporaries, Lady Gomme's work primarily focused on searching children's folklore for remnants of older traditions. However, her dedication to the development of research methods expanded Childlore's scope not only in terms of raw collected data but, more importantly, it expanded the conceptualization of the field in terms of who the informants should be. Namely, Gomme expanded the field by collecting Childlore from children instead of limiting the fieldwork to teachers and adults.

This conceptual change in informants brought to light one of Childlore's vital features, the rapid cycles of reconceptualization, the breadth of which was made more poignant through interviewing children; adults tend to see a tradition of their past as in stasis. In contrast, children still involved in the traditions are more capable of demonstrating their culture's dynamic essence. The shorter life cycles of Childlore traditions allowed for cross-generational studies without having to wait for human generations to pass. In this way, Gomme's work on Childlore parallels scientists who experiment on fruit flies. Once the children became involved in the study, it became necessary for Childlore scholars to refocus on the notion of "generation" in terms of traditions. In short, the term "generation" (in the context of traditions) had to be changed. The speed of reconceptualization of these traditions forced the term "generation" to refer to the cycle of reconceptualization by their active bearers—children in this case—instead of referring to the older historical interpretation that focused on linking traditions to human-

time relations (such as calendars, life cycle events, or linked directly to the human generations themselves).[30]

Thus, traditions in Childlore no longer differ from one human generation to the next; they differ from one conceptual iteration to the next (Boyes, 1990). In support of this, Elizabeth Tucker writes, the "constant updating of children's rhymes, songs, and games" is "the hallmark of their extraordinary ability to survive" (2008, 5). While scholars today tend to shy away from survival and evolutionary theory due to their proclivity toward linear thinking that restricts and distorts our image of the past, there can be no denying that collections, like those performed by Lady Gomme, laid the foundation for more advanced comparative studies.

Lady Gomme also contributed heavily to the initial phases of Childlore's classification, especially regarding separating the religious from the secular (which marks an exciting separation of non-formal and formal education). Just as importantly, she also included many child-produced and perpetuated traditions in her works, *Traditional Games of England, Scotland and Ireland I & II* (1964 [1894, 1898]), which along with Newell primed the stage for the emergence of Dorothy Howard and her conceptualization of Folklore and Education, and set the field for studying child culture through the eyes of the children.

William Wells Newell carved his path in Childlore by studying children for children's sake and working towards the crux of one of the critical ideas in folkloristics—

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[30] This being said, Lady Gomme was still primarily searching for survivals (aspects of older traditions that have survived in contemporary times through a process of reconceptualization that often distances them from their older or original contexts), a practice that has lost its appeal to modern scholars because of its focus on a primarily devolutionary world view (Zumwalt 1988, 103). In short, we are no longer chasing the true face of the "noble savage" (ur-forms); instead, we have become more focused on the whats, whys and hows, and have come to view traditions in the complete opposite light as ever-evolving (in the correct non-linear interpretation of the term), or at least ever-changing (Toelken 1979) .

the notion that Gary Alan Fine dubbed as "Newell's paradox," namely, that Childlore possessed the critical properties of conservatism and creativity (Tucker 2008, 4). This idea also appears in Barre Toelken's 1979 book, *The Dynamics of Folklore*, as the "Twin Laws of Folklore." Newell led the way in the analysis of child-centered texts in turn of the century scholarship, arguing that the reason that the national characters of America and England were so salient was because of the contestation of their nature during the formative years of their citizens' informal education. Newell made the argument that anthropologist Anthony Cohen would make again almost seventy years later, in his work with cultural barriers in his writings in *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (1985). Thus, Newell laid the path for many folklorists and anthropologists who chose to study the connection between tradition, identity, and enculturation, and he did so using Childlore.

The foundation of Childlore paved the way for Dorothy Howard (1902-1996), one of the most influential writers in the history of Folklore and Education. Howard was the first folklorist to write explicitly about folklore's role in formal education. The contemporary rules for collections laid out by Halliwell and Gomme strongly influenced Howard's formulation of the study of Folklore and Education because she was a Childlore scholar herself, and her collections used the techniques that she learned studying Childlore. Howard's early focus on developing collection processes and methods laid a strong foundation for developing her Folklore and Education implementation in her school. Howard's synthesis of her predecessors' different but complementary perspectives solidified this foundation. Howard stated it best in her dissertation, *Dorothy's World: Childhood in the Sabine Bottom*, where she wrote that folklore served a pivotal, "pedagogical purpose: to open doors for children to the joys of literature in books, and to

self-confidence and pleasure in developing their own power over language, manipulating and playing with words" (1977, 289).

Thus, Howard brought together the notions of adult informal teaching in Childlore, child-led informal teaching in Childlore, and the methodologies of collecting Childlore. She worked tirelessly to enquire about: 1) the universalities of Childlore; 2) their broader implications; and 3) developing and implementing an active strategy to formalize the use of informal and non-formal teaching methods in institutions to better education. This focus became the academic foundation for the formation of the new field of Folklore and Education.

Howard's study of Childlore carried her from the United States, where she had taught and administrated in public school, to Australia, where she put Childlore's universality to the test as a Fulbright scholar. During her Fulbright, Howard's studies played a pivotal role in the development of Folklore and Education the world over (Rosenberg, 1996). Her publications about Australian Childlore (1955, 1958) closely paralleled her American work (1939, 1940, and 1950) and helped set the stage for subsequent Childlore scholars such as Iona and Peter Opie, Elizabeth Tucker, Brian Sutton-Smith, and Sylvia Grider.

Howard's efforts in both countries helped lay the foundation for some of the most central arguments in the field of Folklore and Education; foremost among them, that the folkloristic approach was an essential tool for formal education. Equally as important, Howard concluded that formal education needed to be grounded in the school's culture to be most effective (an idea echoed in the writings of bell hooks). In other words, she concluded that enculturation needed to be occurring on all levels (informal, non-formal,

and formal) of the teaching spectrum simultaneously for best results. Thus, she set about

helping to educate teachers about the types of knowledge not taught by formal methods.

Throughout her professional life, this idea changed Dorothy Howard's first use of

Folklore _in_ Education into a more complete and supportive notion of Folklore _and_

Education. The change that Howard's methodology brought not only brought the children's

rhymes back into the classroom, it brought the community along with them. This creative

thinking by Howard made the partnering of folklore and education practical. Her work

restored to education the non-formal/informal knowledge lost in the governmental attempts

to neutralize the system culturally. She invested her effort into establishing formalized

developments that brought folkloristic study into the classroom, which positively affected

folklorists. Paddy Bowman writes:

> The learning between teachers and folklorists is […] reciprocal. Working
> with teachers improves folklorists' presentation strategies and teaching,
> even in higher education. Listening to teachers and administrators helps
> us as folklorists to understand k-12 education better, the tough realities
> that educators face daily, and, ultimately, community culture.
> Collaboration is essential if folklorists are to advocate successfully to
> integrate folklore and folklorists' methods into k-12 curricula and to
> teach teachers in schools of education, summer institutes, and other
> professional development opportunities (2011, 4).

Perhaps the most convincing reason to invest in folkloristic development within school

curricula was the connection between folklore and the enculturation process. Folklorist

Sylvia Grider stated that folklore is absolutely "instrumental for enculturation" (1980, 162).

One could argue that folklore is the primary means of enculturation because, except for

formalized education, folklore carries most of our education (non-formal and informal),

and this is not a new idea. Franz Boas' notion of cultural relativism (1938) suggested that

folklore has always played a prominent role in every effective pedagogical strategy. If this

were not the case, we would not carry our cultural influences with us in our daily decisions, and the theory of cultural relativism would be critically flawed. Folkloristics is too important to be discarded from the education process because it conveys all of the context-based knowledge necessary for formal learning.

In the interviews, many consultants spoke about struggling to find examples (be they metaphors or similes) to help their students relate to formal knowledge. I have always found it to be one of the hardest parts of teaching. As teachers, it seems we are always searching for better examples of non-formal or informal knowledge to help unlock and reinforce the complex ideas locked within formal knowledge. Folklorist Barre Toelken gives an insight into why the informal and non-formal aspects of folklore are so crucial to the process of formal learning. He states:

> Folklore structures the world view through which a person is educated
> into the language and logic system of this closed society. It provides
> ready formulas for the expression of those cultural ideas in ways
> useful and pleasurable to us and to any group with which we share
> close and informal expressive interactions (1979, 24).

When we learn, part of the process of understanding is regulated through encrypted folklore. Thus, folklore acts as a decryption key that aids both the learning and memory functions.[31] This encryption is why Franz Boas' idea of cultural relativism works; because we build our world views through these learning experiences that ideally include formal knowledge supported by informal and non-formal information. This process also means that when a person's current world view conflicts with a world view embedded in a new piece of information, this becomes an obstacle to learning. The only way to resolve such a disjuncture is through mediation between the two world views, and the most common way

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[31] For similar arguments about the use of metaphors in communication see Diane Goldstein, 1983 and 1995.

to do this is through the use of cultural metaphors. The knowledge and acceptance of both world views are necessary for the teacher to impart this new piece of formal knowledge.

Anthropologists Courtney Cazden and Dell Hymes explain how this integration of non-formal/informal and formal knowledge impacts students, by explaining that in their study (1978), students often failed because instructors could not understand the working-class examples that their students were bringing to school. In essence, the metaphorical languages differed between teacher and student. This division meant that the students could not decrypt the information imparted because the cultural encryption surrounding it was alien to them. This failure illuminated a cultural disjuncture between teacher and student, and this disruption caused a reduction in the quality of instruction. The teacher lacked the informal and non-formal education required to understand the student's work.

Bowman suggests that the immediate solution to this problem is a simple one; in theory, schools need to be more inclusive of their surrounding communities to ensure that the teachers communicate in the most culturally relevant manner possible. Bowman writes:

> Drawing upon empirical studies, folklorists explained the dynamic between marginalized cultural groups and dominant-culture schools, becoming among the first to elucidate the nature of cultural incompatibilities between home and school…[using] efforts to promote the value of uniting the informal learning of home and community with the formal teaching of schools […] to provide "bridges to the curriculum" […] help[s to] connect students' worlds of home and school (2011, 9).

Denying a school's surrounding culture denies the students access to the "knowledge bridges" housed therein. This denial means that pivotal bits of non-formal and informal knowledge embedded in their folklore will fundamentally impede the learning process. Denying the usage and creation of new informal or non-formal culture-based knowledge slows the process of formalized learning because we all need these stories, metaphors, and

similes (knowledge bridges) to help us break down hard-formalized concepts into their easily digestible parts.

The effects of cultural deprivation are far more profound than just impeding the learning of members of non-mainstream ethnicities, Bowman writes:

> Cultural deprivation is now recognized as just one more part of a system that blamed poor people for their poverty […][and] manufactur[ed] the idea that some groups have limited or no positive cultural resources. Folklorists [have] pointed out that groups marginalized on the basis of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status were not culturally deprived; rather, they were ignored, and their cultural knowledge was silenced [...] [This is] part of the legacy of deculturalization imposed through formal schooling to keep immigrant and colonized groups powerless (2011, 9).

The problems created by cultural deprivation can only be corrected through the use of folklore. Only folklore can bridge the cultural gaps between teachers and students, and ultimately between the schools and their communities. Howard began this process of reincorporating folklore back into the school curriculum by assigning collections to students during her tenure as a teacher and principal in the 1930s (Rosenburg 1996). These collections formed a direct link between the school and the school's extended community of parents and neighbors. It also helped to begin opening dialogues between teachers and the community, bringing the culture back into the school.

These kinds of community involvement have direct benefits for the teachers as well as the students. Improving the teacher's cultural-linguistic communication skills is just one aspect of this. Another, and perhaps more important aspect, is that it reconnects teachers with their community. A few of my consultants spoke about school culture as isolating. One of the consultants, a former teacher and administrator, stated that "teachers are cliquish" (Interview with Xen, July 19, 2015); they hang out together because no one else

understands their jobs. Their careers are so all-consuming that teachers often find themselves alienated from society.

The increasing levels of online abuse demonstrate the growing division between teachers and parents. In the United Kingdom, the situation is getting so severe that Dr. Mary Bousted, general secretary of the ATL (Association of Teachers and Lecturers), stated flatly in a recent address to the government:

> If you do not take better care of us, you will reap the bitter reward of parental fury when there is no teacher for their child. This is no threat. This is a crisis of your own making. That time is coming, you have been warned (See Garner 2015b).

Outsiders often rail against teachers on public forums, complaining that teachers are overpaid and underworked. Their arguments typically revolve around two popular misconceptions: The first is that teachers in Canada work only five hours a day, and the second is that teachers get two months of paid vacation. Most teachers only get paid for five hours a day despite working on an average of eight hours in school and often more after that at home. As for the summer vacation, teachers get paid for ten months of the year and are not qualified to collect unemployment like other seasonal workers. Instead, they have portions of their paycheques deferred to cover the months that they cannot work (this does not include substitutes who simply do not get paid over the summer). [32]

Thus, it is arguable now that teachers are becoming "others" in our society. Their jobs are becoming increasingly arcane as the layers of bureaucracy thicken around them.

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[32] Typing the question, "Do teachers get paid over the summer?" will bring up dozens of articles explaining this common misconception that teachers get paid over the summer for work that they do not do. Additionally, searches concerning pay grade, and actual hours worked by teachers will yield dozens more articles on misconceptions about teachers. Perhaps one of the best is "Ten common myths about teaching" by Staff Reports in 2011. This article works to debunk all of the classically assumed statements used against teaches to degrade them or their profession.

The silencing of their voices by our child protection laws and their professional association

rules means that the general population does not hear teacher input in any public venue. It

also affects teachers' social presence, as they are a silent body that acts strictly through an

intermediary.[33] Teachers are no longer allowed to speak about the horrors of their job

because of how their Code of Ethics interprets child-protection laws. This limitation leaves

teachers little recourse for public defense, let alone vindication. There are many reasons for

the expanding fissure dividing teachers from non-teachers, but there are many more

reasons why communities should seek a resolution to this separation. The increased job-

related stress caused by this problem is just one example. Stress on the job decreases

productivity (Field 2003). Bullying in the workplace crushes it (Baron & Newmann, 1996;

Hornstein, 1996; Keashly, 1998). When teachers become defensive, creativity is the first

casualty. Their teaching effectiveness declines, reducing the level of education. Increased

stress levels lead to an increase in sick leave, which increases the cost of education and

decreases the students' level of education. Finally, a litany of health problems caused by

undue stress often removes experienced teachers from the workforce altogether (Ma 2001;

Boulton 1997). Joseph and Jo Blase write:

> When people are mistreated at work, their focus of attention is diverted
> from completing their work to trying to understand and manage the
> mistreatment [...] in other words, to *surviving*. A fearful and stressed
> teacher will generally downshift to the lowest mode of functioning.
> Creativity and innovation suffer. Paths of communication change in the
> school as teachers either talk among themselves or shut down entirely.
> Mistreatment of teachers is especially damaging because such

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[33] Teachers are not allowed to comment on anything that may allow a child to be identified. The Teacher's Code of Ethics states under the heading Teachers-Pupils, "(ii) A teacher regards as confidential, and does not divulge, other than to appropriate persons, any information of a personal or domestic nature concerning either pupils or their homes" (33). In addition to this the Teacher Code of Ethics continues on to state, under the heading Teachers-Professional Organization, "(vi) A teacher recognizes the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association as the official voice of teachers on all matters of a professional nature" (34). With the ambiguity residing in these two passages, it should not be surprising that teachers do not want to speak on the record about anything concerning their professions.

mistreatment is often clearly visible to students. Even when mistreatment is more subtle, the subliminal perception of it by students is certain to undermine teachers; in fact, in some cases, a mistreated teacher may become angry, and the anger may be directed back toward students. Students then resort to further aggressive behavior as they internalize the hostility that has been directed toward them [...] Thus, not only do teachers suffer, but the bullying is passed down the line […] What goes around comes around in many destructive ways. (2003, 13)

Thus, programs like Howard's "uncovered schoolroom," or any of the multiplicity of programs now available through Folk Arts In Education (FAIE) initiatives like the *Louisiana Voices*, that enter the school in the form of rhymes, games, jokes, and poetry, help to reconnect teachers with other members of their community. These programs help to reinvigorate schools. They lighten the mood while providing new aspects of institutional knowledge (non-formal and informal knowledge) to help bridge cultural knowledge gaps while bringing parents and teachers together in a constructive and collaborative approach to education. Collections also bring the cultural metaphors that are so necessary to effective teaching back into the classroom. Lastly, these programs expose the administration to the school's surrounding community, which provides them with increased social capital, while granting parents a grassroots level of culpability for the administration.

Howard's example demonstrates the beginning of the beneficial relationship that exists when Folklore and Educational studies work correctly. From her vision, folklorists began documenting and writing pedagogical approaches that make folkloristics more accessible to teachers. Since Howard's time, a whole field of study has opened up around Folklore and Education. Nevertheless, despite its many successes, some of the foremost folklorists in the field still stumble over getting the word out. Folklore and Educational scholar Lynne Hamer writes:

My fear as a folklorist working in a college of education is that, even
with the work being done to make our materials accessible to educators,
they may well still dismiss FAIE [Folk arts in education] either as
providing interesting diversions from the real business of school or,
worse, as instantiating a dangerous feel-good multiculturalism that
distracts practitioners from efforts to address more substantive, structural
economic and political issues relevant to equitable schooling (2000, 46).

Thus, we encounter Folklore and Educational studies' most significant problem, the

problem that Brian Sutton-Smith so eloquently termed the "Triviality Barrier" in his 1970

article by that title. Even though thirty years have passed between Sutton-Smith's article

and that of Hamer's, the problem endures. Even with the vast online resources of the

American FAIE the message still has to be sold to the public. In Deeksha Nagar's online

resource, *A Guide to Building School Culture Using Folklore Methods*, she writes, "Each

time I sought an appointment or met with a school administrator, I found myself defining

my discipline first before defining ways in which I and other folklorists could contribute"

(2015). Unfortunately, what was true forty years ago is still true today. Despite often being

dismissed as trivial, folklore remains one of the most crucial resources for teachers. Every

teacher uses folklore every day in their teaching. Pointing this out has been, and continues

to be, one of the primary jobs of folklorists involved with education over the last thirty

years, because it is only through this realization that teachers come to accept that we can

help them improve upon their use of it in the classroom.

Sylvia Grider stated in her presidential address to the American Folklore Society in

1995:

[T]eaching is so fundamental to the function and process of folklore that
tradition cannot exist without it […] Through modeling and encouraging
the development of fieldworker skills and attitudes, teachers foster an
environment in which children are enabled to be both the resource and
the analyst for the study of expressive human behavior. The act of
teaching is the connection between the formulaic classroom exercise and

the age-old process of tradition. In both instances, the precious materials
that provide essential cultural continuity are transmitted from the masters
to the neophytes, from one generation to the next (179).

4.3   Educators and Occupational Folklore

Ironically, the adaptation of the same principles with informal and non-formal

education into teachers' formal education appears underdeveloped, with the significant

exception in its use in child pedagogy. This situation is unfortunate because the most

crucial information that teachers learn throughout their careers is often not learned from

professors in universities but from peers in the workplace. Thus, the informal curriculum

revealed to new teachers first stepping through the schoolhouse door reveals areas of the

occupation obfuscated from the public: internal divisions within the culture; the shibboleths

that mark these divisions; and the perceptions of teachers and education touted in public.

Thus, this study works to create a collection of this informal and non-formal

knowledge to help begin the process of rectifying this oversight (in this case, this

knowledge is what new teachers should know about the occupation before stepping foot in

a classroom or interacting with parents, students, or administrators). This collection of

informal and non-formal knowledge that is by-and-large left out of formal teacher training

involves examples of pivotal issues that occur in teachers' daily folklives, especially

concerning the parts of the occupation kept purposefully obfuscated from the public. These

narratives also subsume the knowledge of details concerning cultural divisions in many

schools across the province. Lastly, from a professional standpoint, they subsume the

troubling messages supported in various ways by schools, their surrounding communities,

and their governing bodies. By examining these stories, we can advance the study of genres

of aggression and occupational folk narratives, particularly with survival stories (Farrow 2005; Lawless 2001) and bullying narratives.

The study of these narratives leads to an understanding of several important matters. They explain and define the reasoning behind the perceived boundaries dividing teacher groups and subgroups, while also explaining how teachers feel they are perceived by outsiders (non-group members). One of the informants said it best when they stated:

> I think everyone goes through school and sees teachers all day long, and so they think they're experts on them […] but no one outside of the profession really knows the job or what it actually entails because they just can't know (Interview with Kingsley, June 5, 2015).

Kingsley, a retired administrator, and former teacher, went on to speak about the areas of the occupation that the public does not see:

> No one sees how political schools are […] there's a whole series of systems in play here that the public doesn't see. No one sees how teachers cringe every time there's a budget cut […] No one sees what goes on behind closed doors when a teacher is accused of something […] and no one […] sees substitutes sitting alone in the lunchroom because they're just temps. No one sees this stuff [...] They think the job is easy […] [and] they [teachers] just don't get the respect they deserve anymore (Interview with Kingsley, June 5, 2015).

This line of thinking brings us into the dark side of teaching. However, it does highlight the positive aspects of Folklore and Occupational Studies. The fact that this project has focused on all of the parts of a teacher's folklife that are not readily available to the public often dredges up the worst about the occupation of teaching, but it needs to happen; without understanding these darker aspects of the occupation, there can be no hope of improving them. Ironically, it is focusing on the darkest aspects of the informal and non-formal knowledge in the occupation that highlights the inherent usefulness of a folkloristic approach. Since folklore is a mirror of culture, it reflects these problems, and its very

presence proves that problems exist (Dundes, 2007). For instance, the existence of hazing

traditions by senior teachers (for example, overloading new teachers with students who

have behavioral or neurological disorders) demonstrates that there is at best an inequity

among the staff and, at worst, an antipathy toward new teachers.

These types of stories mark clear divisions in the cultures, between employees, and

between the levels within the institutions that subsume them (Racine 1999). Folklorist

Robert McCarl writes:

> […] the most central form of verbal interaction in any work culture is
> simply telling stories [...] these naturally occurring narrative exchanges
> lie at the heart of folklife […] Through the performance of these work-
> related accounts, individuals reveal and confirm their position in the
> informal canon of technique performance (1986, 79).

Although often criticized for his division of groups along institutional lines (Jones

1991; Stewart 1989), there is something to be said about these divisions, because they exist

on formal and informal levels. They might not be as stark as suggested by McCarl, but they

are relevant. The narratives surrounding employees in different social groups inside an

organization may differ significantly from department to department or subculture to

subculture, in much the same way that non-occupational groups differ in perspectives.

These stories provide a road map to what is important to employees of differing groups,

and just as significantly, how these groups differ from each other (Racine 1999).

These types of stories illuminate a clear distinction in a difference of perspective and

thought. As a researcher, I may not know the answer to the complex problems highlighted

in these collected stories, but I know that these stories convey essential information about

the social divisions within these institutions, and pointing this out is the first step in

rectifying problematic inter-group relations. These stories, and the differences of opinion

that they highlight, act as markers for these groups in much the same way that Anthony Cohen suggested that symbolic boundaries exist between peoples of different nationalities, where the key idea is that these boundaries set group members apart from those that follow oppositional ideas (Cohen 1985). These markers, therefore, can be seen as framing the membership of oppositional folk groups. These folk groups appear as microcosms of Cohen's assertion of nationality, where nationals only demonstrate their national membership when challenged, because it is less about being a member of the group and more about being politically opposed to the other side. Roger Abrahams discusses this process as a "discourse of difference," which highlights these divisive stories and their opinions as working "shibboleths" (2003, 211).

These narratives and stories also help define groups and individual identities as they force the teachers to decide what side they will take in the conversation. Thus, these stories about informal cultural practices are used heavily in the teacher's professional discourse of difference. Their formal training, received in university, sets teachers apart from non-teachers, but these non-formal and informal group divisions inside the workplace encourage them to take stances and engage with their discourses of identity as teachers. It is the informal and non-formal knowledge that defines what kind of educator a teacher will be.

For the schools in Newfoundland, it seems that McCarl's notion that narratives make up the heart of occupational folklife applies. For teachers, their repertoires of narratives, coupled with their ability to weave these into salient statements about policy, seems to be a large part of their professional identity. However, these statements do not stop at the formulation of their own professional identity. They also mark a teacher as a member or

non-member of policy-centric internal folk groups. The performance of these narratives

publicly places members in folk groups that support or reject these given policies.

These stories range from legends to rumor to personal experience narratives and

connect the teachers' opinions with their stance's practical reasoning. For example, with

this study's teachers, many of their narratives about bullying were used to highlight the

notions of disrespect directed at teachers today. This vein of conversation would almost

always lead to a discussion of institutional problems that reflected this same disrespect,

problems that exist mostly at that teacher's level.

Every teacher interviewed had stories that highlighted these problematic areas, and

these stories left no doubt in the audience—me—about how the storyteller felt about the

content. For example, there was not a single interview without a teacher or administrator

stating where they stood regarding the "no-zero policy."[34] These stories about the no-zero

policy have special framings that often speak to disempowerment and the loss of respect

for their occupation in Canada. Regardless of their institutional position as an administrator

or as a teacher, informants gave clear examples of how this policy negatively affected both

the students and occupation. Consultants from both professions made it clear that this was

not a policy that they supported. However, in general, teachers saw the no-zero policy as a

personal affront and sign of disrespect to their professionalism by the policy-makers,

because it took their ability to make decisions within their profession's defined parameters

away from them. However, administrators tended to voice their opposition to the policy in

terms of social harm to the children. Of course, this begs the question, "Why is it only on

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[34] A slang term for the 'second-chance' policy, 2.13 of the Administrative Regulations Policy IL –
Assessment and Evaluation, a former Eastern school district policy adopted de facto by the English school
board. This policy forbids assigning of 0s to marking sheets until the end of the term.

the level of the policy-makers that this was considered a good idea?" Is it perhaps because the policy-makers have not been made aware of informal and non-formal education that teachers gain on the job, which explains why no-zero policies do not work?

The no-zero policy unites both teachers and administrators against it because the policy grossly impacts both occupations. It removes from teachers their right as educators to use their professional judgment, and it removes the principals' ability to hold children accountable for their actions. On the other hand, many policies engender a clear division between teachers and administrators. For instance, only one of the administrators I spoke to spoke about the added workload that "pathways" (individualized curricula for students in a teacher's class) force on teachers, whereas almost all of my teachers mentioned them at least once every interview. This small example denotes a disconnect between the perspectives of administrators and educators. Pathways impact administrators' daily lives far less than other policies, while they are a constant aspect of teachers' lives. Thus, administrators and teachers often find themselves misaligned on policies because they affect one group more than the other.

Neither group particularly likes the current application of pathways, but it is the administration's job to see the policy enforced, whereas the teachers feel that it is their job to get it changed. The no-zero and pathways policies are only a couple of the many examples of the institutional disagreements between professions within the institutions. By looking at the official policies, it becomes understandable how they shape the interaction and, thus, the group divisions. Administrators only deal with these policies when there are complaints from parents or teachers, whereas teachers face the daily repercussions.

These same divisions hold between teachers and the parental community of the schools. What the parents do not see about teaching is what causes the social distance between the two groups. The public does not see how much extra time it takes to assess and monitor all of the different "pathways" present in every class, and this creates a division between teachers and the public. Teachers are looking at the difficulties of managing a dozen individualized pathway curricula simultaneously in a single class, while the parent focuses on the system's impact on one particular child. Parents do not see how often teachers get bullied into taking on extra-curricular activities. They do not see the inner workings of the school or how much of a teacher's work must get done on their unpaid time—understanding these aspects of teachers' work grants a new perspective of the rift developing between the public and school teachers about a growing list of policies that the government sells to the public. The no-zero policy is perhaps one of the key exceptions to this rule. Unlike pathways, which are supported by most people except the overburdened unsupported teachers—precisely because of the lack of support for them—the no-zero policy is flawed in a way that does not require insider information.

The no-zero policy packaging sold the policy to the public as a helpful tool that gives students a second chance and forces students to do the work by not allowing them just to get incompletes. Of course, the policy's problem arises when one glances at it and realizes that there is absolutely no way to get the kids to do the work because the policy prohibits penalizing students for work handed in late. It is perhaps the one policy that unites both parents and educators alike. The teachers revealed that it was only the policy-makers that supported it. Even academics have weighed in as against the policy, because it is uniformly

viewed as an overreaching extrapolation from a single case study in the U.S. involving six children with learning disorders (Selby & Murphy 1992).[35]

Ignoring or being ignorant of the non-formal and informal knowledge teachers bring to the table is a fundamental problem within the system. The teachers see decisions made about their occupation without their consultation as disrespectful, but the truth is that their removal from the decision-making process highlights a fundamental dysfunction within the institution. The no-zero policy highlights this fact in the most basic way possible. The parents do not want it, teachers do not want it, and administrators do not want it, and yet it was deployed and remained in effect for several years.

Unfortunately, it seems that Kingsley was right in suggesting that there is a growing lack of respect for educators in our society. If one examines the media of late, it certainly appears that teachers are becoming scapegoats for the displaced ire of an entire generation. When forums regarding articles that question the integrity of a teacher or the profession appear, these spaces become filled with messages of ignorance and hate. These messages range from hate-filled messages addressed toward the teacher in question to hate-filled messages directed at the entire occupation. Even forums that reference minor policy shifts (such as the articles about deciding what temperature in Labrador is too cold for schools to remain open) become bogged down with this negativity. These forums, which will be examined later in this work, cast a light of general disdain or scorn for educators (See CBC 2015 article, "What's too cool for school").

It is only recently that journalists and researchers have begun to document this unsettling development. Public displays of apathy and hatred are just now starting to be

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[35] For more on the subject, see Michael Zwaagstra's 2012 report, "Zero support for no-zero policies."

collected in academic studies. According to statistics gathered in the United Kingdom in

2015, there has been a continued rise in all manner of disrespectful behavior aimed at

teachers. Javier Espinoza, the education editor for *The Telegraph*, quoted:

> - Eight out of ten teachers verbally assaulted by students last year (30% increase from 2014 - 2015)
> - Students who bully teachers are not being expelled
> - 73% of teachers believe there is a behavior problem in schools
> - Threats of physical assault saw a 10% rise to 23% in the past year
> - Increase of physical assault up 7% (2015a)

In another article by Espinoza entitled, "'Stress pushing teachers to leave profession,' figures show," stated:

> - 76% of teachers said they are "seriously considering" leaving their job in the last year, compared to 69% in 2014.
> - 68% said they considered leaving the profession entirely.
> - 67% of teachers said their job was having an adverse effect on their mental health.
> - [55% of [Britain's] 1,800 schools made stress-related claims in 2014]
> - 83% have experienced more workplace stress in the last year, compared to 80% in 2014
> - 84% say their job has impacted negatively on their health and wellbeing in the last 12 months; compared to 80% in 2014
> - 78% have experienced work related anxiousness, 84% loss of sleep, 33% poor health, 25% increased use of caffeine, alcohol or tobacco, 11% relationship breakdown and nearly 2% self-harm (March 18, 2015c)

Other articles (2015b, 2015d) by Espinoza, "False claims put pressure on school

staff," and "'Four in 10 new teachers' quit within a year,' union warns" reveals that one in

five teachers will expect to have false claims made against them by a student and one in

seven will have false claims made against them by a parent or guardian. Additionally,

Espinoza reported that:

> [only] 62 per cent of newly qualified teachers who gained Qualified Teacher Status were still teaching 12 months later. (All of these numbers appear in *The Telegraph, The Independent,* and *The Guardian*).[36]

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[36]Hannah Richardson later reported that this trend continues unabated, in her article, "Four out of 10 teachers plan to quit, survey suggests" (2019).

These statistics point to a systemic problem in the occupation of teaching. Thus, a qualitative collection to corroborate these problems is desperately needed to develop this dysfunction's exact nature further. Specific examples give voice to victims who otherwise remain anonymous and "othered" by the general population. Empathy is needed if we are ever going to find solutions to these problems. It is time for ethnographers and folklorists alike to give voices to these teachers, to prevent what bell hooks describes as a common problem:

> [S]adly, it is often the public school setting where the sense of hopelessness about teaching is the most intense and widespread. Understanding that [...] when we are no longer positively engaged [we do] violence to the self (2003, 15).

hooks speaks to a growing sense of helplessness, in turn-of-the-millennium teachers. The Internet exacerbates this feeling, and this is reflected in the folklore that surrounds the occupation. The notion of ambient intimacy (Thompson 2008), the idea that we are connected to our network of connections all the time, means that teachers carry around the negativity of parents, administrators, and even students where ever they go. It is becoming impossible to disconnect with our second selves (our online personas), and this inability has serious repercussions. Abuse over email, social media, and even over a teacher's cell phone is running rampant, and the informal and non-formal educational sources have yet to build strong enough defenses for this virtual crisis. These elements together create a crushing, trapped effect that overwhelms many teachers.

Another cause of concern for teachers is the cultural misconceptions that surround their profession. These misconceptions erode and undermine the entire profession. Beliefs such as teachers get two-month paid vacations every year; teachers only work five hours a

day; teachers are overpaid; and teaching is easy because all teachers do is "play" with kids

all day all work to denigrate the proud occupation of teaching. Dispelling these commonly

held beliefs is essential if teachers are ever to gain the respect they deserve. Comparing

Canadian teachers' treatment to teachers' treatment in Finland reveals how far teachers

have fallen in North America. Finnish teachers are all but sacrosanct; here, teachers have

become a persecuted and marginalized group in our society.[37]

Michael Owen Jones and Polly Stewart both intimated that folkloristic study of

occupational groups should primarily interpret the folklore inherently in those groups

(Jones 1994 & 1991; Stewart 1989). We, as folklorists, are uniquely positioned regarding

the study of genre-related materials. We bring both the ability to highlight and the ability to

analyze these often overlooked or dismissed texts. In doing so, we bring critical

information to light about problematic internal group divisions, textual material, and their

interpretations. When we bring these elements together, they highlight the conflicting

world views that impact teachers' ability to do their job and those that impact the entire

educational system's core values. Jones writes:

> […] informal organization "points" to the tendency of human beings, when
> thrown together in an organization, to develop relations with each other
> that are not specified by the formal organization structure and that
> sometimes seem to develop in opposition to these formal channels (1991,
> 32)

Through Applied Folklore strategies, we can suggest possible solutions to these types

of problems. The entire field of Folklore and Education is thick with examples of

successful implementations of folkloristic strategies. All we need is to adapt these same

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[37] See Catapano 2015; Crouch 2015; Hancock 2011; Wood 2018, for more details about why education is viewed differently in Finland. One of the aspects that comes up over and over again is the high social status of teachers in Finland.

types of policies to support teachers as well as students. For example, on the topic of occupational bullying, it is pivotal that the folklore surrounding the incidents be carefully studied because they explain how people bully in this culture, which is an essential step in eliminating it. Etiquette creates a direct relationship between folklore and bullying. Etiquette regulates human interaction. Thus, if bullying is present in a system, then the bully has found a way of making the behavior socially acceptable, and the traditions surrounding the bullying event explain how this has occurred. Franz Boas poignantly stated, "...civilization is not something absolute…[it] is relative, and [...] our ideas and conceptions are true only so far as our civilization goes" (589). Boas was not speaking of bullying at the time, he was speaking of cultural relativity; but this includes the genres of aggression, which are as crucial to the study of humankind as any other form of expression.

Culture not only influences our attitudes on bullying, but it actively sculpts the bullying acts themselves. For example, in our society, waving around a gun is not a socially acceptable form of bullying (we have laws against this), but name-calling, pranking, joking, flaming (online attacks), and other potentially destructive media of communication are, because most people see these genres as trivial. Therefore, the messages that extend from them must also be trivial. Brian Sutton-Smith argued that even the most seemingly innocuous piece of folklore contains a depth of history and cultural understanding that is pivotal to understanding human communication (1970). Moreover, the embedded social materials in folklore elements support the enculturation of these ideas, so it is essential to understand what it is we are communicating when we use any specific instance of folklore.

Teachers' professional culture contains and interacts with a variety of folk groups, many of which overlap. These folk groups include the school's teachers, the administration

itself, teachers and administration, student culture, teachers and students, and the greater school community, which also contains parents. Each group has etiquette, and each is framed within the dominant cultures associated with the region, nationality, and organizational structure of the school in which they exist. These various influences act on individuals every day of their working lives. For the teachers in this study, because they come from such disparate backgrounds (various schools across Newfoundland and Labrador and in varying stages of their careers), getting at the smaller groups with an anonymous study like this was impossible. Suffice it to say that there are certainly smaller groups of teachers, administrators, students, and parents at work in any given school, and their influential powers would differ from school to school and group to group.

Through this process, the groups studied were four related macro groups in which the school community was the largest. This group encompasses teachers, students, administration, and parents. The next largest group is the school itself. This group includes teachers, administrators, and students. The third group is the occupational group of teachers and administrators in a school. The last group is the classroom group, meaning a single teacher and the students that surround them. These groups produce unique traditions, and the literature references them as possessing their own "cultures" (Racine 1999). They also interact in a manner that forces their traditions into a constant intermingling state, which means that traditions started in one group often find their way into others.

From the standpoint of folkloristics, this constant intermingling of school cultures creates a situation that, while familiar, is quite complicated. The complexity is in the tracking of folkloric materials. The top-down approach of schools works to set a basic frame of interaction for space (an etiquette), and while many of the members of these

diverse groups follow this etiquette, they cannot help but generate their own on top of this. Thus, several overlapping etiquettes are enacted simultaneously in the same space, and while most of these etiquettes are complementary, they may still conflict in a variety of ways.

Josephine and Jo Blase did the teaching community an incredible service when they documented the typical methods used by administrators who bully. Although this typology specifically addresses teachers' administrative bullying, they cannot help but provide inklings for a broader typology of bullying behavior. Their typology organization allows for natural extrapolation for new classifications of bullying and expansion into unexplored areas such as the bullying of substitute teachers and non-tenured teachers by peers.

In addition to this, the Blases concentrate a great deal of time and effort on explaining what good principals should look like and creating strategies for documenting what a good principal should be involved in doing for their teachers. Joseph Blase explains:

> […] exemplary transformational principals contribute to teachers' growth and development by
> - Modeling, building, and persistently supporting an environment of trust and openness among teachers, whom they consider professionals and experts
> - Systematically structuring schools to encourage authentic collaboration by establishing readiness and common goals and by responding to the school's unique characteristics
> - Supporting shared decision-making efforts by providing basic resources for teachers' professional development
> - Maintaining the school's focus on teaching and learning
> - Supporting teacher experimentation and innovation, granting professional autonomy, and viewing failure as an opportunity to learn
> - Modeling professional behavior, especially by exhibiting a sense of caring, optimism, honesty, friendliness, and enthusiasm
> - Encouraging risk taking and minimizing threat (or constraints on teacher discretion and growth)
> - Praising teachers and using other symbolic rewards (e.g., valuing and respecting teachers

- Setting the stage for confronting the […] problems of the school through effective communication, action research, and exemplary procedural methods for solving problems (2003, 5-6).

Folkloristic experience can help with what these educational scholars do not involve themselves with, which is the interpretation and structural breakdown of the narratives that they have collected. This interpretation is not a shortcoming of their work. It is merely a perspective that bullying scholars have not yet examined. Few other disciplines are involved with analyzing narratives in the way folklorists analyze narratives. Folkloristic analysis differentiates between legends, rumors, memorates, and personal experience narratives (such as those found in many bullying collections, for example, Blase 2001, 2003; Hornstein 1996; Adams 1992). Folklorists make these distinctions because the choice of the genre contains additional information seldom analyzed elsewhere. The choice of one genre over another often details and highlights different aspects of the text, which means that these items could very well highlight different statements about bullying. This subtext is simply not an element taken into account by educational scholars; nor is the composition of the story, nor the storyteller's perspective. Any of these gaps can hide world views and subversive messages critical to understanding the political landscape navigated by teachers every day.

4.4   Folklore and Activism

Activism has played a substantial role in the development of Folklore and Education studies. In many respects, the sub-discipline of Folklore and Education is tied as closely to activism as it has been to Childlore's study. This entanglement is because activism quickly became the driving force behind Dorothy Howard's interest in the field she created. From the time that Howard became a principal, she adopted a folkloristic approach to take back her school's agency. Instead of presiding over a school detached from its community stakeholders, she used fieldwork to seek out these stakeholders and invite them to participate in their children's education, by supplying the complementary informal and non-formal aspects of their education. In doing so, she began the relationship between activism and Folklore and Education.

Even today, conservation and revivification of old traditions account for much of the publicly oriented folkloristics activism, but there are other avenues for application. Frank Proschan writes:

> A folklorist working with a community in turmoil will likely have a more difficult time observing and documenting traditional practices than one working in a situation of lesser change. For many folklorists, this argues in favor of finding another research situation—one more congenial [...] [b]ut when we gravitate toward the pastoral and avoid situations of social upheaval, we give up unique opportunities for productive folklore research (148).

Here, Proschan hints at the other side of Applied Folklore—a side that can easily be misused by the unscrupulous, and folklorists must use carefully: folklore to correct and change behavior. Educational scholars Terrence Deal and Kent Peterson tackle this idea with shaping school culture in their 2009 book, *Shaping School Culture: Pitfalls, Paradoxes, and Promises.* This kind of change is the aspect of "control" that comes out of

Bascom's functions. Whether we speak of conformity, validation, entertainment, or education, there is always an underlying understanding that those who control the information can control the material's interpretation. Carter Woodson writes:

> If you control a man's thinking, you do not have to worry about his actions. When you determine what a man shall think you do not have to concern yourself about what he will do. If you make a person feel that he/she is inferior, you do not have to compel him/her to accept an inferior status, he/she will seek […] it (125).

Of course, Woodson was speaking of the black community and about the uses of folklore and historical endeavors of social control. However, Lawless writes at length about the notion of controlling one's narratives because when we allow others to write our story, we allow them to trap us by removing the agency in our own lives. One of the central issues with escape, according to Lawless, is breaking the cycle of violence, which means that these women must realize that they are worthy of escape. The men in their lives compose the stories used to control these women, and in order for the women to create their own personal narratives, these stories must first be rejected. The women need to be the composers of their narratives. In much the same way, all groups that suffer victimization at the hands of other groups do so in part because they are not in control of their narratives. Bullying can only happen when there is a power imbalance in a relationship, and sometimes the power to write the narrative is not available to the victim. It is at these times when this pivotal authorship needs to fall to an advocate.

The ability to sculpt the folklore is essential for activists in folklore. Lawless writes about a similar situation in her 2003 article, "Woman as Abject: 'Resisting Cultural and Religious Myths That Condone Violence against Women,'" in which she points out that myths contain elements of old-world views that promote or at least condone violence

against women. Thus, to change the world views presenting obstacles in violence against women, these stories need to be confronted, problematized, edited, or removed from popular repertoires. This work is similar to what teachers are dealing with in the misconceptions (commonly called myths by non-folklorists) surrounding their occupation, which condone hatred against teachers.

Millie Rahn writes:

> By definition, folklorists are advocates for the people and the traditions with whom they work [...] [because folklorists] often see people and things that mainstream culture and history do not see or do not wish to acknowledge (2006, 32).

Therefore, as ethnographers, it is our job to highlight these problematic narratives and subversive themes within the folklore haunts our informants. The hope being that drawing attention to them will aid in their elimination. This power is one of the primary responsibilities of the activist in Folklore today.

We must responsibly help our consultants sculpt their messages and ensure that the folklore instances that we promote do not betray the educational institutions core values. Folklore and Education activism has historically taken on three primary tasks: integration, decentralization, and equity. Activists in Folklore and Education work to 1) connect the communities with their schools using a variety of folkloristic methods (integration); 2) return power to the community by disrupting power relations within institutionalized hierarchies (decentralization or democratization); 3) promote equity among all groups involved in the endeavor.

Although not one of Bascom's four functions (1977), integration is the better part of folklore. Conformity, validation, education, and entertainment all work to create a shared

experience, and these experiences draw group members that share them closer together. It should not be a surprise that folklorists and educators alike have learned to use folklore to do just that, draw disparate groups together. The benefits to teachers, though, does not stop at this integrating effect. Their specific occupational folklore subsumes a vast wealth of informal information for teachers waiting to enter the workforce. Community involvement programs also draw parental involvement into the system, and when parents are involved in the academic lives of their children, the children do better in school (Lazar & Slostad 1999; Henderson 1988; Comer & Haynes 1991), and teachers get the chance to interact with parents as peers.

Sociologist C.J. Pascoe gives us a plethora of examples of this process in progress. She highlights how the communication of these subversive messages (in this case messages that suggest that homosexuality is abnormal) can occur without either the communicator or the audience understanding what has transpired:

> Walking into her room, students saw a row of floor-to-ceiling cabinets decorated with long laminated ribbons designed to look like film from a movie reel. Down the center of these film rolls ran pictures of River students from proms and Winter Balls of years past. While a senior picture or two occasionally interrupted the parade of formal dresses and tuxes, the vast majority of the pictures showed boy-girl pairs dressed in their formal best. This had the effect of creating an environment in which a gender-differentiated heterosexuality was celebrated and made a focal point […] Mrs. Mac established a comfortable rapport with her students through lighthearted teasing. Much of this teasing revolved around students' romantic relationships. One morning, as usual, friends Jeremy and Angela walked in late, chatting amiably. Ms. Mac looked at them and shook her head, sighing, "Ah, the couple of the year coming in late." Jeremy and Angela rolled their eyes and laughed as they took their seats. Ms. Mac's comment effectively transformed a cross-gender friendship into a heterosexualized pairing. In commenting on Jeremy and Angela this way, she turned them into a pair who would fit right in with the normative images on her wall (31-32).

Although these are only two small examples, Pascoe illustrates a common theme in her observation about heteronormativity. Examples of other problematic messages continue to accrue during her fieldwork. They included a series of traditions, ritualistic displays of male students' metaphorical feminization through humor, competitive games, and dance. When such texts and movements embracing dominant gender and ethnic stereotypes are performed in front of the entire school community, and the subversive ideas therein go unnoticed, the damage has already occurred.

As the reader progresses through Pascoe's book, the list of complementary heterocentric traditions grows until, despite all of the teachers' best intentions, it is apparent that the school has constructed a heteronormative atmosphere. The teachers were not intentionally making the school uncomfortable for people of other orientations. They were merely oblivious to the messages encoded in their typical everyday interactions. Pascoe dubs this phenomenon the school's "unofficial gender and sexuality curriculum": the school's hidden non-formal curriculum. Pascoe writes:

> Whether or not they are teaching specifically about sexuality or gender,
> teachers need to be aware of how they contribute to the "hidden
> curriculum" of the classroom. Teachers shouldn't try to garner masculine
> favor by allowing sexism or homophobia to go unchecked. For example,
> the boys who formed the Man Party in response to Mrs. Mac's class
> assignment should have been questioned about their plan and motivations
> for the party. Their desire to deny women the right to vote and to make
> fun of girls by showing how little they knew about women's history
> could have been used as a moment to teach about sexism, citizenship, and
> voting rights (172).

Close textual readings of the folklore in a school, like that done by Pascoe, make the idea of building a "new social order" possible. The child-centered school that Rugg and Shumaker wrote about in 1928 becomes a more plausible future. There is no force more

integrative than folklore. Unfortunately, few disintegrative forces are more potent in human

endeavors either, so folklore requires careful management because it is a double-edged

blade. For the contributors to this collection, mismanagement of the negative folklore

surrounding them has become an increasingly worse problem. Traditions of non-

interference, apathy, and outright disdain for teachers now plague the system. One of the

consultants, Xen, stated:

> There are a lot of good parents out there. Most are good, I think, maybe even
> 99.99%, but those last 0.01% (are terrible) [...] and unless the principal is ready
> to put their job on the line in a continuous series of confrontations with them,
> the teachers are the ones who suffer […] and then the kids […] because it
> always trickles downhill (Interview with Xen, June 17, 2015).

As it stands now, teachers are quickly becoming one of the worst bullied

demographics in the western world, and it is going to take a monumental change of culture

to fix it. A series of British reports released by the teacher's union, NASWUT (*The

Guardian* 2015), show a 30% increase in verbal bullying incidents since 2014 (now at 80%

of teachers reporting incidents) where parents or students bully teachers. A parallel study

completed in 2015, about rates of online abuse, concluded 60% of teachers in 2015

reported abuse, up from 21% in 2014. Another report stated an increase in false sexual

misconduct claims; one in five teachers are accused of misconduct by a pupil and one in

seven by a parent. These numbers are up by a third since 2014 (Espinoza 2015b). Threats

of physical violence are also up by 10% since 2014, and the number of reported assaults on

teachers has also risen as teachers are reporting more of the "low-level" assaults that they

have historically not reported. Finally, the teacher retention rate plummeted to the point

where 40% of new teachers will quit after their first year of teaching (Espinoza 2015b). In

Canada, these statistics, at least the ones we are tracking, are only slightly better. Our

retention rate has dipped to 70% for the first time in Canadian history (Karsenti & Collin 2013).

These statistics tell grim a story about changing cultures within our schools and the shifting perception of teachers, and neither is good. There is very little information released about these statistics on the Canadian front, which, according to most informants, is bad. When asked about this, one of the consultants, Kingsley, said, "I bet those are pretty close to ours" (Interview with Kingsley, June 5, 2015). Xen advised that I call the NLTA (Newfoundland Teachers Association) about provincial statistics for teacher abuse because, according to them, there are reports associated with any kind of abuse. The NLTA advised that I speak with the CTF (Canadian Teachers Federation). Neither had any numbers to share with the public. I told this to Xen, and their reaction was, "Oh, they have the numbers. They must have decided not to share them. No assault happens in this province without paperwork" (personal correspondence with Xen, July 19, 2015). Teachers know what is happening. A majority of the consultants, 19 out of 29, stated that physical abuse is just understood to be part of the job. That statistic is even worse than it sounds because 100% of the elementary consultants confirmed that thinking, with all of them reporting instances of abuse.

Most of the elementary consultants noted that one should expect to get hit when working with children. That statistic is better for secondary schools (only 4 of 12 of my secondary school consultants reported physical abuse), but all of my secondary school consultants said that physical abuse was not uncommon in schools. Those who had not reported physical abuse instances felt that it was just luck that they had avoided it thus far.

In 1916, John Dewey suggested that a democratic focus was the solution to many American cultural problems. For schooling, he believed in a genuinely decentralized mode of operation that maximized teachers' potential to be creative by allowing them the ability to teach their curricula as they saw fit. Dewey also believed that it had to incorporate community- and individually-informed (informal/non-formal) learning into its mix in order for a school to be successful. In many ways, Dewey became a champion of early writers in Folklore and Education scholarship because schools' democratization meshed well with grassroots community movements. The democratic ideals of trust and tolerance provided a strong foundation on which to build new school cultures. Thus, democracy in the education movement closely paralleled the development of Folklore and Education and other activist-driven forms of Folklore in both time and focus.

Folklore is, by its very nature, democratic. If a majority of the tradition bearers do not like a practice, then that version of the tradition will die, or it will come to act as a point of division, a tradition of separation, between the group practicing it and those that do not. Thus, folklore has a built-in notion of democratization (although this can range from democratic to populist). This democratic notion does not mean that it cannot be abused and used in an authoritarian manner. It merely means that most traditions work until the group that created them deems them obsolete.

David Tyack, the author of *The One Best System*, cuttingly critiqued the one best system policy for its reinforcement of social stratification to which Folklore and Education scholars were also very much opposed. "The one best system" attempted to remove the schools' culture in an ill-fated effort to create equality in American schools. The result was, as Tyack pointed out, a fundamental failure because it reinforced elite class culture. Instead

of teaching critical thinking, it taught citizens their place in society. These school reforms made the nature of schools in the 1930s and 40s highly contested. In fact, throughout the 1930s, much of the study in Public-Sector Folklore focused on folklore's common attributes for the express reason of using it to undermine failing school reforms.

Folklore became the means to establish links between schools and their communities because it contested elite culture's top-down approach. While elite culture was walling teachers up in the ivory tower (mirroring government actions today), folklore was being used to tear down the walls (Bowman & Hamer 2001, 7). These links were emphasized by bell hooks when discussing her teaching strategies. She wrote in her book, *Teaching to Transgress*, "To teach in varied communities not only must our paradigms shift but also the way we think, write, speak. The engaged voice must never be fixed and absolute but always changing, always evolving in dialogue with a world beyond itself" (1994, 11). Effective teachers adopt a voice that reflects the culture of those they teach.

In another book, *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope*, hooks writes, "Educators who challenge themselves to teach beyond the classroom setting […] move into the world sharing knowledge, [and] learn a diversity of styles to convey information" (2003, 43). hooks' teaching was about conveying experience, and that required being able to connect with the audience in as meaningful a way as was possible for the teacher. Thus, it required understanding the community from which the students came. This strategy was opposed to the *One Best System* because it meant leveling the playing field for the students who came from backgrounds that existed outside of the mainstream (mainly lower socioeconomic backgrounds).

For the most part, the study of decentralization theory in Folklore and Educational scholarship revolved around notions of either freedom or pedagogy. Thus, the notion of decentralization meant looking at how to best connect with the audience (the students) and the greater community that produced them. Now, little scholarship exists that analyzes teachers' lives outside of acting as teachers or role models for children.

How could a researcher, someone brought up through formal education and in many ways, the champions of higher education, be expected to notice that teachers' positions would change so dramatically in such a short amount of time? The activist folklorists of the early and mid-twentieth century were so focused on working toward the goal of decentralizing education through developing new curricula and new teaching techniques that included the whole school community (teachers, administration, parents, and students), that the change in perspective of the parents and supporting community seems to have mostly gone unnoticed.

When Howard began incorporating folklore fieldwork into her curricula in local schools in the 1930s and 40s, her goal was to push forward two separate notions laid out by educator Rachel Davis DuBois, and philosopher John Dewey. DuBois wanted to expand curricula to make them more multicultural, while Dewey wanted to improve education in a more general way by adopting a more democratic perspective in order to encourage the inclusion of local communities in decision-making; in essence, Dewey was among the first voices to actively argue for decentralized education.

Howard reconciled these two perspectives through the practice of including her students in the collection of local folkloric materials. She created a curriculum that tackled social studies from a highly ethnographic viewpoint. By incorporating ethnography into her

curricula, she established a powerful bond between the school and its surrounding communities while demonstrating the benefit to students of a decentralized education system or teacher-led learning (Rosenberg, 1996). Through this collaborative approach with members of the local community, Howard brought back into practice the notion of it taking a village to raise a child.

Unfortunately for teachers, this activism has never extended to improving their professional lives. For all of the great work that folklorists have been a part of over the past fifty years in Folklore and Education research through activism, we have never sought to help teachers deal with the increasingly skewed perception of their vocation. In North American society, it is far too easy to turn a teacher into the social "other," alienated and ostracized from the community. Teachers have several things that make their alienation easier than other professional groups. Everyone has had experience with bad teachers in their lives, so it is easy to empathize with parents and students when a teacher is framed as a bad teacher. Most of what happens in school today is withheld from the public, so when someone complains loudly about a bad teacher, there is only one narrative available for consumption, and it is the one voiced by the accuser. Teachers, and the integrity of their vocation, are suffering because of this.

Folklore activism offers a solution to this problem. Anonymous ethnographies help to level the playing field in situations such as this. Furthermore, the same inclusion of the community that works to help the children can work in favor of teachers as well. This connection with the community helps to secure them a place in it. Lastly, folkloristic collection and anonymous ethnographic work offer teachers an outlet to express their opinions about the current state of education, the abuse suffered by teachers, the decisions

made over their heads by the school board, bullying bosses and colleagues, and about school policies. Ethnographic work helps to restore power to the teachers. In effect, the folkloristic process, by its very nature, works to offer a means of decentralizing the power of the system that has trapped teachers.

One of the major arguments against decentralization is that it infers an inequality in the teaching strategies that range from one school to another. Bell hooks suggested that the solution is to "Forg[e] […] a learning community that values wholeness over division, disassociation, splitting, the democratic educator works to create closeness" (49). For hooks, this closeness glorifies difference instead of consuming it, or as she states, "an intimacy that doesn't annihilate difference" (49). In a few short sentences, bell hooks summarized the defense to the arguments of equity.

Furthermore, as Tycak pointed out in his book *One Best System*, the system worked to further stratify school communities instead of uniting them (1974). The design of the *One Best System* was to promote equality by enforcing conformity across all schools. The centralization of this system meant the alienation of all schools from their communities. By relying on a central board to make all of the curriculum decisions, the material became harder to teach locally because of a metaphorical disconnect between those writing the material and the cultural upbringing of the students learning it. This strategy led to inferior education, disgruntled teachers, and career-minded principals who cared more for the bureaucracy than they did for the teachers or children in their care.

According to Josephine Blase, 10 to 20% of Americans work for abusive bosses. If this statistic is representational of the schools' situation in Canada, it suggests that many

schools entertain abusive administrators (2003, 2). Gary Anderson explains why this is such a scary situation:

> Just as abusive teachers cannot preside over a caring and rigorous classroom, abusive principals cannot foster the kind of caring learning communities schools require to be successful. Furthermore [...] an abusive principal is more likely to foster abusive teachers. Principals' abuse has a ripple effect that impacts not only teachers, but their colleagues and students as well as their relationships with friends and family (Gary L. Anderson in Blase & Blase, 2003, Foreword, xiii)

Throughout this research, I have learned about three principals in the province who have either been "transferred" from one school to another or offered "early retirement" because of complaints made about their abusive actions. In their interview, Jordan stated that they knew of a principal who was removed from one school because "every teacher at that school wrote letters to either the school board or the NLTA about their conduct" (Interview with Jordan, August 8, 2012). The NLESD's official response was to transfer the principal to another school where, according to the interviewees, the same litany of abuses occurred again.

Folkloristics presents several avenues to assist with the fight against workplace abuse. Options include, but are certainly not limited to: public dramatizations to raise awareness (Garlough 2008); ethnographies that document hidden informal and non-formal messages—what C.J. Pascoe dubbed "hidden curriculums," to raise awareness and highlight troubling practices in the workplace (Pascoe 2007); help with strategizing new informal and non-formal traditions that positively reinforce a safe atmosphere; the organization of grassroots movements among teachers to give them more power in the negotiation of how their administrators are chosen and penalized for offenses against

teachers; knowledge of how to create strategies to increase community involvement and oversight of administrations from outside of the institution.

Regardless of strategic choice, folklore offers many supporting initiatives to promote safe working environments. Most preventative strategies, including those adopted by official Canadian workplace safety guides that set the national standards, involve reading into the informal and non-formal messages circulating in the workplace. However, these tend to focus almost entirely on using specifically directed messages to assail another person because these policies extend from Canadian Law, which frames violent behaviors as those defined in the *Criminal Code*.

An example of a formalized list of the types of workplace violence *Violence in the Workplace, 2nd Edition: A CLV special report,* lists workplace violence as:

- Verbal threats of violence;
- The application of force (with or without a weapon) and threats thereof;
- Carrying a weapon;
- Verbal and emotional abuse;
- Unwanted comments, inferences, or suggestions;
- Harassment based on sex, religion, race, disability, sexual orientation, and other grounds;
- Various forms of intimidation and aggressive behaviour;
- "Bullying," which is an attempt to undermine individuals through cruel or humiliating behavior; and/or
- "Mobbing," which involves a collective effort to psychologically harass a person (2004, 9-10).

This list includes a wide array of behaviors, but most of these behaviors reference direct criminal behaviors, and the rest are vaguely defined categories of informal behaviors. Where this list loses its specificity is where folkloristics comes into play. As Pascoe pointed out in her study, and Diane Goldstein discusses in her work on AIDS legends, folklore that damages group integration or that specifically alienates group members still exists in older workspaces. The bulk of these texts can even exist in an

undirected manner. Additionally, rumors, gossip, and legends are extremely useful bullying methods that can effectively work in conjunction with bullying or mobbing (ganging up), but they are far less likely to be noticed by non-victims. Sometimes the people affecting the public perception of a space or place do not even know that they are doing it. Such is the case with the earlier passage from Pascoe. Mrs. Mac had no intention of alienating students of non-heterosexual orientations, and yet the visible traditions in her classroom and the stories that she uses to frame her official material accomplished this alienation despite her best intentions.

Sifting out the right messages from the wrong in folklore is vital in any workspace. It is one of the primary ways that folkloristics can work to level the playing field for everyone. We can democratize interaction in a space through the use of tailored or invented traditions and the introduction of new etiquette. We can replace outdated traditions that carry culturally unacceptable world views. These newer traditions can steer interaction by changing or reinforcing etiquette away from problematic areas and can even help with the enculturation of new world views. The inclusion of the work community in this process is vital because their participation is required to fully integrate the new traditions.

The additional benefit of consulting the entire membership of a group about these types of changes is that this format works to create grassroots movements, and these types of movements could assert enough pressure on the system from the bottom up to help balance the power structure in schools, which is historically top-down in its approach and implementation. Perhaps, with enough of these groups, the counterforce that they generate

could balance the system. These implementations also present forums where teachers could

explain "teacher problems" to the community.

Either way, folklife implementations are already affecting positive social change.

Lisa Higgins and Susan Eleuturio write:

> Through folk-arts residencies, teachers gain much-needed human and curricular
> resources; students are deeply engaged and learn to connect a sense of place
> with community knowledge; and folk artists are recognized as expert teachers.
> When teachers, students, and artists engage in content-rich, well-planned
> residencies—ones that are strongly linked to established educational
> standards—the results are not only exciting but also valuable […] we have
> been able to show stakeholders ways to achieve their objectives with exciting
> outcomes […] and clearly linked with […] educational standards (138).

Finally, Linda Deafenbaugh discusses the other advantages of Folklore and Education

implementations, stating that:

> [I]t is worth pausing to consider the interrelationships between school and
> community […] ways of knowing, particularly in how the learning actively
> values each. It is counterproductive for communities to experience school ways
> of knowing as disrespectful or as reinforcing political power imbalances in
> society. Community field investigations can be valuable for building stronger
> connections between schools and communities with many positive benefits for
> all involved (2015, 82).

Chapter Five: Folklore and the Framing of the Modern Bullying Narrative

There is a reason that all bullying stories feel familiar to us. We have been immersed in different variants of the bully/victim story all of our lives, so there is always something reverberating with our past experiences in any new bullying story we encounter. The bully/victim drama is a common theme throughout most of the folklore genres, and it is the contention of this work that this commonality is a reflection that bullying is and has always been a significant concern of the human endeavor. From a folklorist's perspective, looking back through older forms of folk narrative, the appearance of bullying in both literal and figurative formats is a common theme, and this should not be a surprise; the plots of bullying instances lend themselves easily to narrative forms.

Unfortunately, the association between folklore and bullying runs deeper than just the conveyance of the bullying narrative. Bullying is an informally learned genre of aggression that is shaped and sculpted within a given culture. Each culture's uniqueness produces different variants of dismissals to allow bullies and bystanders the ability to rationalize bullying activities. Barbara Coloroso writes:

> Bullying is a learned behavior. People have to learn to treat another person with contempt, to see that person as less than them, not worthy of their respect, and outside of their "circle of caring." (56).

Thus, the question is not whether bullying is folklore. The right question is, how does bullying fit within the scope of folkloristics? This query puts us in the frame of mind to understand why bullying is such a prolific theme across almost the complete breadth of human communication, including folklore. The goal of this chapter is to demonstrate the consistency in the framing of bullying in folklore genres.

Starting with the oldest studied forms of folklore and working toward the more modern forms, this chapter will demonstrate a problematic uniformity in the presentation of bullying in narrative formats. The commonality of these plots helps to establish the argument that the folklore genres in use today convey themes that are often counterproductive to the creation of a bully-free culture. These plots frame bullying in a constructive light that works to normalize and rationalize the bully's necessity in our everyday cultural existence.

5.1   Framing, Problematic Plots, and the Brothers Grimm

The Grimm tales 002, 021, 053, and 055 ("The Companionship of the Cat and the Mouse," "Cinderella," "Snow White," and "Rumpelstiltskin"), categorized as Children's and Household Tales, all feature vital elements of social, and to some extent physical, bullying.[38] In the tale "The Companionship of the Cat and the Mouse," the mouse is bullied into doing the cat's work while the cat eats the mouse's food. At the end of the tale, the mouse confronts the cat, and the cat eats the mouse. In Jack Zipes' 2003 translation of this short tale, it ends, "you see, that's the way of the world" (14). It is true that interpretation may vary; for instance, the literal meaning is, "that's how all situations with mice and cats end." However, when reading figuratively, it reads as, "it is a dog-eat-dog world out there," which is a decidedly pro-bullying sentiment. The aggressor gets what they want in the end, and the victim gets eaten. The end of the tale states quite clearly that if one does not have

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[38] The tales included in this discussion vary widely between märchen, folktale, and fairy tales. The presence of magic or fairies seems to make little difference when it comes to the inclusion of bullying as a key theme in the tales.

the power to resist the bully, then one should keep their head down and mouth shut. The
Zipes translation ends:

> "Oh," said the mouse. "Now I know what's happened! It's as clear as day.
> Some nice friend you are! You ate it all up when you went to be a godfather.
> First the skin, then half, then…"
> "You better be quiet!" yelled the cat. "One more word, and I'll eat you up!"
> "All gone" was already on the tip of the mouse's tongue. No sooner did she say
> it than the cat jumped on her, grabbed her, and devoured her. You see, that's
> the way of the world. (14).

As sinister as this message is, it is relatively overt, and many would simply suggest
that this trickster tale is communicating common sense. Like all trickster tales, there is an
uneven power relation between the characters in the story, and the trickster takes advantage
of the less powerful (such as those collected by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz 1999).[39]
In analyzing the place of the trickster in her 1975 article, "A Tolerated Margin of Mess,"
Barbara Babcock-Abrahams writes, "While trickster's power endows his group with
vitality and other boons, it also carries the threat and the possibility of chaos […] the tale of
the trickster […] is one of the oldest and most persistent cultural pattern[s] of negation and
one of the oldest of narrative forms" (148 & 158). Thus, the genre of trickster tales itself
embodies one of the essential elements of bullying relationships, and yet not all trickster
tales cast the trickster in a harmful or even exploitative light. However, when we widen our
search for bullying messages into other tale types, types that appear at first glance to be
defined by other themes such as magic or fairies, we discover that these too, weave
bullying into the very fabric of their composition.

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[39] The tales collected for *American Indian Trickster Tales* are particularly strong examples of trickster tales
for the use of this dissertation. For instance, "A Lousy Fisherman" features a raven that tricks a bear into
going fishing with him and then kills the bear by cutting off his testicles which he uses as his bait to fish and
then later rips out the tongue of a witness (the cormorant) and the tale ends with him killing the bear's wife.

By comparing and analyzing these tales with the trickster tales, it becomes an almost effortless endeavor to draw out a distinct overlap in bullying themes. These themes communicate that bullying is typical, and bullies are necessary. These ideas sound awful, and they are, but many would say that they are voicing common sense in the context of the communication. This idea comes about because many feel that human beings need to be challenged in order to develop appropriately, and somewhere along the way, bullying became an accepted part of that challenge/development process.

Bullying can be dismissed and obfuscated in many ways, and examples abound in folklore. Take for instance the tale "Cinderella," Grimm tale 21, also referenced in Aarne-Thompson-Uther Index as tale types ATU 510 A, 510 B, and variants 511 & 511 B. Cinderella is a servant, so the abuse, while cruel, is socially sanctioned because her bullies are her superiors, namely her stepmother and stepsisters. According to folklorist Stith Thompson (1946), Cinderella's abuse is a defining aspect of these tales. Thompson writes, "In Cinderella, the heroine is abused by her stepmother and stepsisters" (127).

Cinderella is an extraordinary tale among bullying narratives because of its myriad variants and extreme longevity. When we consider Cinderella's variants outside of the Brothers Grimm and Charles Perrault collections, we can see that the bullying motif stretches back at least into the ninth century. According to Neil Philip (1989), the Cinderella story has been traced even further back to a Chinese variant, "Yeh-hsien," that existed as far back as the Tang dynasty (618-907AD) (7). Zipes has even gone so far as to suggest that Cinderella's first variants can even be traced back to the last Ice Age by applying August Nitschke's seminal 1977 work *Soziale Ordnungen im Spiegel der Märchen*, to this study in his book, *Breaking the Magic Spell*. This longevity means that in

what may be the longest-lived story in western history (and certainly in western folklore), bullying is the central theme.

Cinderella's occupation frames the type of bullying in the story. She is a housemaid, a significant socioeconomic descent for the daughter of a rich man (in Zipes 2003 translation). Her oppressors/bullies—her stepsisters and stepmother—impose classic occupational bullying tactics on her, overloading her with menial and demeaning work and setting seemingly impossible tasks for her to accomplish to highlight and remind her of her lower social standing. Her name itself is often demeaning, as Thompson (1946) explains, "Her name is always connected in some way to ashes…indicating her lowly position in the household" (127).

The position of housemaid silences Cinderella, and her bullies restrict her movement out of the house. To complement these strategies, she is also kept out of sight by her stepmother and sisters. In the Grimm and Perrault variants, these types of indignities highlight Cinderella's piety and fortitude. In these interpretations, these traits make her worthy of the prince. This tale highlights the suggestion that the good get rewarded, where "good" indicates faithful, submissive, and hardworking. This tale also highlights Zipe's notion of the "bourgeoisification" of the folktale, where the difference between class and economic status becomes conflated as folktales migrate from feudal contexts into the capitalistic culture. Cinderella's hard work makes her worthy of nobility, and her fortitude demonstrates her faith in a better tomorrow. Despite its age, this two-hundred-year-old variant aptly describes the capitalistic mores embraced today, specifically the basic capitalist notion that the system rewards hard work.

In many ways, Cinderella's problems directly parallel those of the substitute teacher. The tantalizing hope of a better station to come situates young teachers at the bottom of the hierarchy, ever-aspiring to a permanent position. Meanwhile, society acts in the sisters' place and silences teachers by cutting them off from the community and removing their ability to voice their opinions in public. Like Cinderella, young teachers endure these indignities on the capitalist assumption that things will get better if they work hard enough.

The position of substitutes in their professional culture also figuratively mirrors that of Cinderella. Substitutes are at the bottom of their occupational hierarchy, and like Cinderella, they are easily abused (commonly through excessive or impossible work). They are also silenced like Cinderella, although their silencing occurs through their relation to their organizational hierarchy, folk codes of silence, and official legislation. These codes are derivative of the *Teachers' Code of Ethics* and the ambiguity surrounding a couple of passages contained therein, concerning when it is, and is not, appropriate to talk about their work. The silencing occurs because, despite being technically able to speak about their work in a general way in public, most teachers refrain from any comment as there is no personal advantage to be had by doing so.

A teacher who comments publicly on any issue risks accidentally offending a superior who has many unofficial means of punishing them. On the other side of the coin, they run the risk of accidentally breaking the law by saying too much. In this case, their superiors must punish them with official sanctions. Substitute teachers have it even worse than others because they have no job security. They are at the bottom of the social ladder, and substitute teachers' supply far outweighs demand. Teachers keep their heads down and accept the abuse because there is no accessible way to confront or counter it.

Perhaps the most significant and most insidious parallel between Cinderella and substitute teachers is that substitutes must suffer through all of this abuse in the hope that one day, things will get better—because there is no guarantee that it will. Just as with Cinderella, they must have faith and be able to endure, in order to garner that sought-after submissiveness that Alison Laurie contended was the most attractive quality of a fairy tale princess in her article, "Fairy Tale Liberation" (1970). New teachers have to believe that they will find full-time work one day and eventually become tenured teachers, because otherwise they have invested a lot of money and time on an education that will never pay for itself. Thus, they believe that so long as they keep the faith, work hard, and keep their heads down, the institution will reward them.

In the tales "Snow White" and "Rumpelstiltskin," we see a shift to physical violence. Snow White is continuously assaulted by her stepmother, who tries to kill her several times through the course of the tale, including hiring a hitman (huntsman) to kill and dismember her for proof. When the hitman fails, she goes herself and attempts to kill Snow White through a variety of different methods. The king in "Rumpelstiltskin" forcibly confines the heroine in his castle against her will for several days, forcing her to seek the help of a loan shark (Rumpelstiltskin) to remain alive, all while being forced to work.

Despite the lack of what most people would consider "bullying" in these tales, bullying is still quite prevalent. Both stories feature characters acting under threat of aggression, and both of these tales normalize the notion that bullying features unequal power relationships. They also normalize the notion that people in charge can mistreat their subordinates without social repercussions. In this way, these two tales, which seem to have nothing of "bullying" in them at first glance, actually demonstrate the full breadth of what

academics regard as the transgression of bullying. For example, Newfoundland and Labrador's *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* defines bullying as a:

> […] behaviour, typically repeated, that is intended to cause or should be known to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation or property, and can be direct or indirect, and includes assisting or encouraging the behaviour in any way (78). [40]

Thus, we have to firmly re-imagine our perspective on bullying because even the official provincial definition asks us to consider murder and even, as Barbara Coloroso has contended, genocide, as forms of violence subsumed by such a definition. This shift toward defining bullying by expectation or intent to cause damage to the victim is an important development in the interpretation of bullying in folklore. Most people think of bullying as children pushing each other around on the school grounds, not Goliath trying to kill David.

Despite their age, these folktales convey overt messages about how we are to spot bullying and react to it. Through these four short tales, we can see a firm message of "do not rock the boat." The mouse tries to disturb the natural order of things in "The Companionship of the Cat and Mouse" and gets eaten as a result. Cinderella, on the other hand, does not rock the boat and is rewarded for keeping her head down. Finally, "Snow White" and "Rumplestiltskin" demonstrate the impunity with which we feel those with power are allowed to act against the powerless.

5.2   Jack Tales and the Framing of the Modern Bullying Narrative

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[40] This definition is taken from the NovaScotia.ca website under 'press releases' (http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130208006). Nova Scotia currently leads Canadian law in regard to bullying and cyberbullying due to their development of the first Canadian anti-cyberbullying laws in 2013. As a result this definition is now the new foundational definition of all subsequent definitions of bullying. This definition also appears in Newfoundland and Labrador's *Safe and Caring Schools Policy,* page 78.

John Widdowson's *Little Jack and other Newfoundland Folktales* uses more colloquial stories as a framework to understand the plots that have influenced story formulation in this province. These folktales represent bullies in literal and figurative ways, such as in "Greensleeves," "Daddy Redcap," "Jack and the Three Giants," and "Jack and the Giant." In the latter two, Jack is assailed by bullies that try to kill him, although sometimes this murderous intent is only communicated through the presence of a malevolent being such as an ogre or giant.

The most persuasive example of bullying in this collection is "Peg Bearskin" (ATU327B). The tale's variant in Widdowson's collection is relatively positive; Peg does not always end up happy at the end of these tales. Regardless of the end, Peg suffers significantly from her family's actions, all of whom hate her. This hatred is demonstrated right from the beginning of the story when her sisters try to abandon her. They fail because Peg is too persistent. When it becomes clear that Peg is not going to let them leave without her, her sisters shower her with rocks in an attempt to drive her away. The Elizabeth Brewer variant details:

> So anyway, nine months after she had three children. An' they were three girls. There were two as pretty as ever the sun shined on. An' one was big, ugly an' hairy, so they named her Peg Bearskin…the three of 'em grew up together. **Nobody liked Peg, nobody**. So they were getting' kind of fed up with her […] So they said to their mother, they said, "We're going' away." An' they said they were goina go away unknown to her, that they didn't want her […] after a while [Peg] found out they were gone, so she said she was goin' […] too […][Peg catches them up] […] So they want her to go back, but she wouldn't go back. **An' they threw stones at her an' that** […] (2002, 67-68).

Peg's devotion to her undeserving sisters eventually wins out in the end, and her sisters allow her to follow them. Perhaps even more so than in Cinderella, Peg remains loyal to her family despite the abuse. This acceptance of abuse highlights Maria Tatar's notion about the

heroine's "rise or return to the ranks of royalty once they have been humbled and humiliated" (2003, 94). Even though she proves herself cunning and capable at every turn, everyone in the tale still hates Peg:

> So after a while she went back to the king again. An' the king said to her, "What can I do for ya now, Peg?" "Well," she said, "I come to see if you'd be satisfied for your youngest son to marry me." But he didn't like that one bit […] [Peg goes and steals a resplendent horse from the witch and the king is forced to let her marry his youngest son] […] So they got married. But he was never happy. He was always cryin' and all of that. So one day she said to him, she said, "You don't want me." An' he said, "No." "Well," she said, "Kill me." "No," he said. "I won't do that." So then she said […] "burn me. An' it'd do me no hurt." So after a while he threw her in the fire an' she went up the chimley in flames (2002, 70-71).

This feeling toward Peg extends from her family to her eventual father-in-law, who, despite understanding her usefulness, is more than a little reluctant to allow her to marry his youngest son. When she does, her prince does not love her back, but he does not hate her enough to kill her when she asks him to. She makes him burn her to ashes instead, assuring him that it will not hurt her. Luckily for them, she is born anew—like a phoenix— as a beautiful woman her husband supposedly wants.

The abuse directed at Peg throughout the tale is matter-of-factly justified. There is no stated reason why no one liked Peg other than that she was ugly, so we are left to assume that this is a reasonable cause to hate someone. It may also be that it is merely typical for the hero/heroine to be unpopular at the beginning of a Peg Bearskin tale, and ugly is merely a stand-in for the many ways that someone could be different. That said, a literal reading of the tale does seem to imply that Peg is ugly and, therefore, is deserving of everyone's animosity. The virtue of feminine beauty is a theme that repeats in many of the Jack tales

and the Grimm tales discussed earlier; thus, the mistreatment of an ugly heroine resonates with this recurring world view.[41]

It is clear from reading the other tales in the Widdowson collection that the notion that beauty represents good and ugly represents evil is a common theme in many tales, and because of this, all of the action directed against Peg seems reasonable in the context of the telling. Furthermore, the justification for bullying Peg seems to use the same matter-of-fact wording about the abuse. Essentially, she had it coming because she was ugly/strange and, therefore, undeserving of love. This thinking is akin to what many today would call "victim-blaming"; everyone blames Peg even though she is the victim of the forbidden act, not its source. Victim-blaming is an example of one way in which we rationalize abuse and normalize bullying. The act of making someone "the other" or "scapegoating" is a prime example of what Rush Dozier and Barbara Coloroso suggest is a crucial step in the escalation of violence.

This notion of "deserved abuse" can certainly be seen throughout the Jack tales, especially when bullying is more figurative and enacted through an ogre or giant who stands in for the bully. Using a proxy like a troll or ogre allows for anger to be directed against it without bogging down the story with extra contextualization needed to explain why the individual is deserving of the abuse the hero assails it with (the perception of these mythical creatures is as malevolent beings). This notion is particularly evident in "Jack and the Three Giants," in which Jack murders the three giants without any reflection about the

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[41] This notion of beauty is mirrored in what Pauline Greenhill, Anita Best, and Emilie Anderson-Gregoire discuss in their article, "Queering Gender: Transformations in "Peg Bearskin," "La Poiluse," and Related Tales," when they discuss the notions of tomboyism and beauty, where beauty represents the female (Peg's sisters) and thus Peg gets left with the binary opposite male designation and is 'allowed' to act outside of her given gender role (199-200).

action whatsoever, but it is also interestingly present in "Daddy Redcap." In this tale, Daddy Redcap is a bully who beats up the boys and takes their soup, but when Jack kills Daddy Redcap, there is no sense of overreaction to Jack's retaliation.

Scapegoating in folktales demonstrates another format of justified aggression. It is communicated through the heroes' actions and directed at the villains and sometimes their helpers. While the most blatant bullying in "Greensleeves" (ATU313) is by the heroine's father, evidenced in the trials he imposes on Jack, it is important to note that there are instances that frame Jack as the bully as well. For example, Jack, the hero in "Greensleeves," bullies Ann into helping him by sitting on her clothes until she agrees to do so. Now, this may seem a mild form of coercion, and surely it is given that Ann is motivated to help Jack, but it does not stop us from asking why it is okay to bully Ann in such a manner. Is it because she is a woman, or is it because she is magical and less human, making it all right to trick her this way? Is it an aggressive form of flirtation, or is it defining the action as a "trick" that makes it more palatable?[42]

This second notion, "othering," is something that we deal with a lot in the real world with bullying problems. Understanding when something is or is not bullying is very complicated. Determining this forces us to make a variety of assumptions, the first and foremost being that we understand what bullying is. Whether we define bullying academically or base our definition on a less concrete foundation, we then battle with various terms that encroach upon this definition from many directions—for example,

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[42] This, of course, also opens a discussion on gender and gender roles, and even their perceived social worth, but this is a much larger argument that concerns specific information about how we condone specific actions. What Jack does is perceived as playful instead of coercive in the context of this story, and demonstrating how coercion is justified is the more important aspect of the argument, rather than the rationalization of why this action is justified in this one particular group of stories. For more discussion of this type of gender-related justification of abuse see Leary 1994, or Taggart 1990.

harassment, abuse, or assault. On top of these other official terms that reduce the scope of bullying, we must also make decisions about intent.

Part of understanding bullying is knowing that the bully must intend harm, or barring that, they should at least know that what they are doing will likely cause harm. When terms like "joke," "prank," or "trick" get involved in evaluating behavior, they can obfuscate damage by greying intent. Without intent, the behavior is not bullying. Jokes, pranks, and tricks can become a means to an end, both in the real world and in worlds of fantasy, because fantasy worlds mirror real-world problems in metaphorical ways.

Understanding that there is positive social value in pranks, jokes, and tricks is vital because these genres create a spirit of community, but the people they create this feeling with and between are not always the target of said pranks, jokes, and tricks. As within any folklore genre, the traditions that exist within each can integrate or disintegrate social bonds. When used for the latter, they often cross the line into the realm of bullying. Alan Dundes (2007) cautions in his article, "The Ritual Murder of Blood Libel Legend":

> Not all folklore constitutes a positive and constructive force in human society. Folklore is powerful […] material, and it, unfortunately, has the capacity to act as a dangerous and all too potent force for evil (399).

As with fairy tales such as "Cinderella," the Little Jack collection often references other folklore genres for bullying, such as derogatory nicknames, cruel pranks, and jokes. For instance, in both the tales "Poverty Parting with Good Company," and "Hard Head," Jack is dubbed "Hard Head." In both of these tales, Jack is already an outsider. In the latter tale the princess notes that Jack "is a stranger here. An' the boys is pickin' on him" (117) and much like with Peg, being strange is excuse enough for the aggression directed at the hero. In Greensleeves, Jack's bullying of Ann is described as a trick and, therefore, it is not

bullying. The language normalizes the behavior (just as being picked on sounds softer than being bullied). In addition to nicknames, there are traditions of class that also factor into these tales. In almost all of the tales in which the hero or heroine must conquer class barriers, traditions highlight and explain the class division and how they are kept separate.

This same social distance exists around teachers, and in much the same way as we see it displayed here in the *Little Jack* collection. The use of nicknames, pranks, and other forms of folklore get used to distance teachers from their students. These traditions make teachers "strange," which, as we can see in the folktales, means that it is now permissible to treat them in ways we would not usually treat other people. Barbara Coloroso writes, "Hate has a nearly limitless ability to dehumanize its victims, shutting down the most basic human capacities for sympathy and compassion" (23). "Othering" is the doorway to hate-based expression.

When we use folklore to make someone strange or different or even when highlighting the differences between them and others, we begin walking down a dangerous path, leading to the victims becoming fringe members or even outsiders of their communities. The silence that extends from the *Teachers' Association Act* prohibits teachers from a wide variety of public interaction. Moreover, what is left ambiguous in the Act has created a folk code of silence that leaves teachers uncomfortable enough that many will not comment on the parts that they are allowed to discuss. This separation makes them outsiders, and their inability to speak out against reinforced social markers that mark them as separate makes them a vulnerable group in our society.

As with Cinderella and Peg Bearskin, their isolation is abuse and leads to escalating abuse by others. Students and their parents are given free rein to abuse teachers by the

public's tacit approval, voiced through non-intervention in teacher-related issues. These abuses are starting to typify the communication with teachers, at least to the point where both teachers and the public see irate parents yelling at teachers as part of the job. While the tight rein that the NLTA keeps over its members alone may not seem overtly terrible (as many institutions carry non-disclosure agreements with their staff), when taken together with the abuses that teachers suffer as a result of it, it begins to tell the tale of a scapegoat. There is also a problem with comparing the cone of silence around teachers with similar situations in other institutions, because few have employees as entwined with the public as teachers.

For example, many teachers get dubbed with derogatory nicknames. One teacher was dubbed "Officer ---" by the children because they were seen as being too strict by the students. Another teacher was dubbed "the Nazi" for much the same reason. When we reinforce these names in any way, this amounts to tacitly approving the teacher's dehumanization. If this feels extreme, think about nicknames like "troll" and "ogre"; it is far easier to make fun of the troll than it is to make fun of "John" or "Judy" because there is no humanity tied up in "ogre" or "troll." In the same way, folktales use trolls and ogres as stand-ins for real-life bullies. The danger inherent in nicknames is that they can obscure the humanity on the other end of the interaction.

Each extra layer of folklore that we place between teachers and the rest of society creates extra social distance, and the most troubling aspect of creating social distance is that the more social distance created between two people, the less empathy they will have for each other. According to Coloroso, this path leads to social bullying, and because of this, it is considered one of the first warning signs. When a group is allowed by society's

tacit approval to bully other groups or members, the bullying will escalate into harsher forms of bullying.

Folktales and fairy tales are useful for comparison because they have long cogent narratives that often parallel reality in interesting ways. By noting these parallels and their commonality, we can often get some idea of how the people who composed these tales felt about various social issues, like bullying. However, these tales are fantasy, and what gets covered in them can only be applied to reality through metaphor. Thus, it is up to the audience to interpret the tales as they will, because fantasy can highlight many aspects of our culture, including those that we are often not comfortable dealing with directly. In this way, these tales prove to be more honest about their depiction of bullying and violence than real-life interactions because they are referencing them through metaphor. The justifications for such behaviors (when performed by the hero/heroine) are also almost always included in the story. When they are not, this often points to a particularly noteworthy reason (such as "scapegoatism"). Analyzing these reasons helps us understand how we perceive harassment, abuse, and other forms of violence, but it also grants us an insight into how we justify them from a cultural standpoint.

5.3   Teachers, Personal Experience Narratives, and Legends

While fairy tales set in fantasy worlds provide valuable insight into the enculturation of bullying, non-fiction narrative genres, and those that directly question the interaction of fact and fiction further demonstrate this prevalence; for example, personal experience narratives, legends, and rumors. Personal experience narratives made up the majority of the stories collected in the fieldwork for this dissertation. However, all stories in the collection

appear as legends, or quasi-legends, for the reasons explained in Chapter Two (mainly for plausible deniability of the consultants). However, even in their unedited format, they contained and encouraged legendary characteristics. I have tried to maintain the conversational style of the personal narratives recorded in the collection process. Barbara Allan argues that the conversational style is the heart of personal experience narratives in her 1989 article, "Personal Experience Narratives: Use and Meaning in Interaction" while still trying to make sure that they are highlighting the legend's description of "an extraordinary event [that according to Richard Dorson has] at its core…[a] noteworthy, remarkable, astonishing, or otherwise memorable aspect" (1962, 18).

Both personal experience narratives and legends seem to offer the most accurate view of how teachers encounter bullying in their everyday lives, but they also commonly reference themes that we have already analyzed in folktales. This overlap is significant because it demonstrates how the folklore from one genre works directly to reinforce ideas in another. It also highlights why a folkloristic approach is necessary to solve this problem, namely because it addresses the folklore uniformly instead of cherry-picking a few decontextualized traditions. In short, the message needs to change uniformly, and this requires a careful examination of all of the surrounding folklore.

While it is true that we learn about bullying from many sources such as the other oral genres and popular media, it is through the personal experience narrative and actual lived experience (be it as a bully, a victim, or a bystander) that we truly learn what bullying means to our culture/society/group and ourselves. The bully/victim drama is one of the most basic human concepts, which is why we respond to it so naturally. Empathizing with the victim should never be a difficult task, and yet sometimes it is. Therein lies the major

cultural problem that we must deal with as a society, but before we can examine this, we must first understand why our empathy is sometimes a little "off."

A common question addressed to victims helps to begin this discussion: "Why didn't you stand up for yourself?" This statement either demonstrates a fundamental lack of empathy with the victim, which is the root cause of bullying, or it demonstrates the positive value that we ascribe to bullying in our society. Either way, this question rests at the heart of our problem. This sentiment shows up time and time again throughout oral narratives on bullying. Many of the stories that follow demonstrate that the bully is not the sole source of a victim's victimization. The bully is merely the start of the process; their peers are primarily responsible for reinforcing their victim status.

If there is any doubt that our society embraces bullying, one has only to look to self-help guides for parents dealing with their bullied children (Frankel & Heaphy 2015; Haber et al. 2007; Losey 2011; Dosani 2008; Beane 2008; Field 1999). These guides explain what the victim, or parents of a victim, can do to solve the problem, because they operate on the belief that it is the victim's problem to solve. It is easy to argue that many of these guides transfer the responsibility of curbing bullying from society to the parents/victims, but they contain many excellent ideas on how to raise better, more empathetic children who are less inclined toward bullying. However, none of these books address the informal learning conveyed through their stories and examples; the result is that teaching victims how to cope normalizes bullying.

This issue is why I have concentrated on the narratives, legends, and rumors, because these genres, unlike folktale or its subgenres, tend to deal most directly with bullying. However, when we analyze these texts, we see a commonality between their messages

about bullying and those conveyed in the other oral genres. Most disturbingly, we see bullying contextualized as a regular part of everyday interaction, an expected form of interaction between people of differing power relations. Lastly, we see bullying portrayed as a quasi-rite-of-passage or even life cycle event. Normalization of bullying even shows up in the use of religious proverbs like, "God never gives us more than we can handle," which in the context of bullying translates to "deal with it yourself."

To demonstrate how bullying narratives reinforce these ideas, it helps to break them down into functional sub-genres. There are two basic types of taxonomy that we can bring into play when examining the stories collected for this dissertation. The first would be the categorization of these stories within the existing genres of folklore. This division is helpful, in that these genres communicate specific information about the narratives themselves. For example, in the context of this collection, a legend may communicate that while the teacher informant did not know whom the incident described happened to, they accept the possibility that it did occur or at least the possibility that it could occur because otherwise there would be little reason to tell it. On the other hand, a legend could also indicate that a teacher does not feel comfortable being specific about events, places, or people in the story in question and so translates personal narrative into legend for the relaying of the tale, in much the same way that I have done in the writing of this thesis.

Unfortunately, due to the anonymous nature of this work, examining this type of genre-related information is difficult because, in order to guarantee the anonymity of the informants, I have translated most of the stories into legends or quasi-legends (intentionally vague stories told entirely in the third person) so I can only speak in general terms about this. Thus, the only option available was to categorize them functionally by their intended

impact on the audience, which seemed aimed at an emotional response. When I sat down and reread the interviews, especially those that contained variants of the injured teacher narrative, it occurred to me that some of these tales were conveyed in a manner meant to shock me into understanding. In contrast, other narratives merely conveyed a level of emotional understanding for the stories I asked them about (essentially, a story elicited a response story). These reactive stories were the easiest to classify as they communicated an understanding of a shared experience, while the shocking stories were harder to classify without the context of the full story. Analyzing the intended response to these stories led to an unconventional means of classification.

5.4   Dividing Bullying Narratives into Sub-Genres

Throughout the collection process, thirty-five stories were gathered that were both descriptive and over a couple of paragraphs long. Of these thirty-five, seven were variants of the injured teacher story, and the rest ranged from narratives about online assaults to stories about students theatrically refusing to write tests. Aside from these, there are many short referential narratives used to show similarities with bullying stories that came up during the interviews. Functionally, most of the bullying narratives that were collected fell under the framing of three different subtypes based on the emotional impact intended by the storyteller: the Empathy Story, the Sympathy Story, and the Esteem Story. Each subtype creates a different frame of reference for the story itself. The first creates an empathetic bond between the audience and teller, the second garners sympathy, and the last builds self-esteem (as discussed in Chapter Two). As there is significant redaction at work in the editing of these materials, examples that explain these three are, by necessity, composite stories assembled from various sources from the fieldwork and presented in a

shared perspective (third-person narratives that tend toward legend in their structure). These sample stories represent the three fundamental strategies used by informants to relay bullying information.

5.4.1 The Empathy Story

Empathy stories establish an empathetic bond between two people and inform the audience of personal connections with the material. These stories aim at creating a rapport with the audience that communicates a common notion of safety. Outrage and sympathy are only attributed to these stories when several appear together to explain a broader idea. These stories are generally short (often taking only a paragraph of text to transcribe) and are frequently used to reinforce more dramatic bullying ideas in regular conversations. Additionally, these stories can also be used as sample tales to elicit bullying experiences from the audience. For example, to elicit stories about parents bullying teachers to increase students' marks, I tend to use a story from my history.

This bullying narrative is a story from my time as a per-course instructor at Memorial University, and I had a few students attempt to pressure me into giving them higher marks than they deserved by threatening to give me a poor teaching evaluation. The most memorable of these came from a student that only showed up for two classes in the first three months of the semester and then demanded to know why I was failing him on his assignments. After the third email that I had sent him about missing work, he decided to start coming to class, which, at the time, was the majority of the way through the third month of classes.

After the first class, he followed me back to my office and asked me how he could get an eighty per cent in my course. I told him that was not possible, as he had already

failed forty per cent of the course mark by not passing in assignments. He first tried to

excuse himself for missing over two and half months of class, but when it became clear to

him that I was not sympathizing with his plight, he threatened me with a poor evaluation.

This story became an empathy story that I used to inform my audience of my relation to

this material, and it explained that I empathized and understood at least some of the

predicaments that teachers now find themselves in today.[43]

By establishing common ground through these kinds of stories, the teller

demonstrates a shared experience, or empathy, for the other teller's story. I have found that

these stories, or expanded versions of them, really help set the stage for more open

communication. Unsurprisingly, demonstrating experience and vulnerability prompts more

profound answers and often more personal narratives from interviewees. This response is

reflective of a fairly standard approach in ethnography. For instance, bell hooks writes:

> When [we] bring narratives of their experiences […] it eliminates the
> possibility that we can function as all-knowing, silent interrogators […]
> [people] who expect [others] to share confessional narratives but who are
> themselves unwilling to share are exercising power in a manner that could be
> coercive (1997, 21).

Although hooks was speaking of teaching students, this idea holds for ethnography,

which should be no surprise for anyone who studies ethnographic work. Indeed, the power

of Elaine Lawless' work stems from her earnest portrayal of her understanding of the

victim cycle, as a former victim herself. Using stories that communicate empathy, Lawless,

Barbara Myerhoff, and Carolyn Ellis all establish strong connections with their consultants,

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[43] It is important to point out, however, that my experience as an instructor in university is quite different
from that of a teacher in a public school. In a public school almost none of what I did would have been
allowed, let alone been backed by the administration.

and because of this, they garner surprisingly candid and sometimes heartbreaking responses from them.

In my research, empathetic stories were the most commonly collected because they expose less personal vulnerability than sympathetic stories and are less self-aggrandizing than esteem stories. They are often short and act well as answers to suggested stories to demonstrate the commonality of specific problems, for example,

> Jeff: I've heard several stories about teachers being denied letters of recommendation […] One story cost a teacher three years of evaluated teaching, and [they] had to start from scratch at a new school.

> Xen: Yah, I knew a vice-principal that had to quit their job because their principal refused to write a letter of recommendation for them. They had to quit and apply for new ones […] I think […] because I think that they would have needed that same principal to agree to transfer them as well (Interview with Xen, July 19, 2015).

As we can see from this short response excerpt from an interview with Xen, their story is neither overly emotionally evocative nor self-aggrandizing. The point was not to direct the audience to the suffering of this vice-principal; it was to inform them that similar situations existed in their experience. When I asked for more detail about this story, the informant gave a far more detailed version of the story that worked to explain the injustice of the principal's actions, and thus, the second version of this story was a sympathy story.

Unlike sympathy stories, empathy stories grant leeway for leaving details out. They also ironically allow the teller to distance themselves from the tale by selecting a format that does not emphasize themselves. The goal of most empathetic stories in this collection appears to be informative, regardless of whether they came as a personal experience narrative, anecdote, rumor, or legend; these stories aimed at establishing the normality of bullying in a teacher's life. For instance, Val narrated a series of stories about the process

of interning. Val explained that the teacher supervising the intern would criticize everything the intern did in unconstructive ways, in these stories. They would also offload all of their administrative duties on the intern, while preventing them from teaching. When the teacher finally let the intern teach, they bullied them in front of the class by mocking and heckling them. Val advised that the teacher would get the students riled up—the teacher was funny and well-loved by the students—and then they would turn the class over to the intern after the class had become uncontrollable. The teacher would then mock the intern for being unable to take control. When the intern could not calm the students down fast enough for the supervising teacher's liking, the teacher would publicly call the intern down for it in front of the class, dismiss the intern, and resume control of the class. Val said, "They never…[gave] positive reviews, even when they knew [the intern was] doing a good job. It almost made… [the intern] stop wanting to teach" (Interview with Val, January 1, 2014).

Empathy stories are essential to this study, not because they are the most popular stories but because they are the shortest ones, and therein lies the key to understanding the commonality of the problem. Empathy stories underline how little context we need to understand an episode of bullying. They may not seem as impactful because they do not ask us to emote in response. They ask that we understand them. When we remove the context around these stories almost entirely and break them down to their most basic forms, we are still fully capable of understanding the action in them because bullying is so familiar to us.

The empathy stories that were collected helped highlight many problems with the school system's inner workings, but they also highlighted themes that they had in common

with other forms of oral narrative. The best example of this is that they emphasized power relations in this type of occupational bullying. Because they were so short, most of these stories focused on instances where the teller felt that additional context was not needed. This decision meant that they focused on easily understandable relationships and power relations (teacher/student, teacher/administrator, teacher/parent) that required little to no extra contextualization. Many were stories about interactions within the bureaucracy and were instances of institutionalized abuse.

These disparate power-relations harken back to *Cinderella* and class (be it social or economic), where abuse is directed downward from the top. Regardless of how this unequal power relation occurs, be it a formal occupational job title or if it is just because the sisters are prettier than the heroine, as in the tale "Peg Bearskin," the fact that there is an expectation of abuse, even if openly condemned, demonstrates the normality of the action. These empathy tales highlight the commonality of institutional abuses that victims suffer day-in and day-out.

5.4.2   The Sympathy Story

Sympathy stories garner pity either for the group or for the victim. More importantly, however, these tales are tailored to incite outrage against the perpetrator of the violence. In many ways, these stories are akin to empathy stories, except that they are longer and intentionally composed to highlight the teller's or central character's role as victims to stimulate an outraged response in their audience. These stories often involve shocking the audience with the cruelty of the bully or the depravity of the acts used to humiliate the victim. Unsurprisingly, most of the sympathy stories that center around one person were

either direct personal experience narratives or the personal experience narratives of a bystander. For instance:

> In [their] second year on the job [they were] tripped by a student and [...] fell and shattered [their] kneecap. After all of the rehabilitation [they] finally made it back to work, and the first thing that [the principal] did was call them into the office and make [them] apologize to the parents of the student for not maintaining better control over [their] classroom. The students [responsible] were not punished for it either. They said it was an accident, and the administration said that it was [their] word against [the students'] and none of the other students in the class would admit to it being intentional" (compiled from three variations of the 'injured teacher story').

The injured teacher story variant above is a bare-bones example of a sympathy story. This story expresses outrage at the system and invites audience members to share this reaction with the storyteller. It shocks them into understanding how unfair the system is with the revelation that the principal forced the teacher to apologize to the student and their parents for the teachers's injury. This story can be lengthened by adding additional detail to the assault, the extent of the injury, or detailing the apology. Lengthening these aspects of the story acts to strengthen the emotional response. Sympathy stories tend to focus on one person in the story, the victim. Unlike empathy stories, the goal reaches beyond the connection with the material. The goal is to shock, horrify, or disgust the audience to spark a reaction of outrage at the story's injustice(s). One of the best examples of a sympathetic story in the collection came from two separate stories that formed a complete narrative of one event,

> [they] had a problem with a student in [their] class who was prone to violent outbursts. [The student] had a lengthy history of it, and one day they were really agitated […] and on those days [the teacher would] just ask them if they want to leave, and they normally do, and they go off and cool off and then come back […] but anyway they took offense to something [the teacher] said when [they] asked them to leave and they did, but they told another student that if [the teacher] upset them again, they were going to [kill their child] […] so when [the teacher] found out about this [they were] obviously very upset and

[they] took it to the administration and the administration jumped right on it they were really good [according to this teacher] […] [the student] was not in the next day while they were in talks with the board dealing with it […] but the principal wanted to expel them because […] they had a violent history [and they had threatened a life] […] the board was not supportive of that. They said [the principal] could suspend them, but they had to be able to come back, but [...] [the principal was allowed to] remove [...] them from [their] class (Interview with Tanner, February 2, 2015).

The first part of this story is a little shocking because no one, except the principal and the teacher, seemed to place any weight on the student's threat. The board assessed the teacher's risk and must have decided it was low despite the student's violent history, and then decided that the student should return to the same school. The teacher who filed the complaint still worked there and was still accessible to a student who now had even more reason to dislike them. The story resumes later in the interview,

[the student was removed from the first teacher's class and placed in their spouse's class]]…] the board had told [them] that because [their spouse wasn't involved] directly […] that [they were] supposed to act as a professional […] [and] should still be able to teach [the student]. [Their spouse] went into the Vice Principal's office and said look […] this is beyond professionalism this is a serious conflict of interest […] anyway, the principal eventually won but it was the board's perspective that [the spouse] should still have to teach [the student] because [the spouse was] a professional […] and this was a person that said if they got upset they were going to murder one of [their] children (Interview with Tanner, February 2, 2015).

This story works well as an example of a sympathy story because it is an eye-opening one. The board decided not to err on the side of safety for the teacher and their child. Instead, they decided that the appropriate action would be to move the student out of that teacher's class and into their spouse's class and expect them to accept that (even though the threat was to their child). This two-part story explains how teachers often have to internally defend their positions through the educational bureaucracy's inner workings and how their professional status gets used against them when convenient for higher administration. Not

only does it highlight an instance where two teachers and a principal felt that the board did not have their backs, but it intimates that this kind of problem happens all the time. For example, another story I collected detailed a problem with the board in which a vice principal had offered a position to a tenure-track teacher without informing them that when they accepted this position, they would lose not only their tenure-track evaluation years but the track itself. The informant said, "if the principal had not taken [their] side and helped with the aid of the NLTA [they felt that they] would have lost their position" (Interview with Aiden, May 5, 2015).

This story's goal was not to point the finger at a board and say that it is not working; the goal was to point out problems that teachers were seeing as either abuse or, at the very least, not conducive to the development of a strong relationship between the institution and its members. Like all sympathy stories, it is obvious where the storyteller's loyalties lay, and the story underscores why the audience should be outraged. The feeling that teachers are not supported and that everyday interactions at the workplace alienate them speaks powerfully to both the power relations without and within the institution. In addition to this, a common theme in bullying stories involving teachers is that if they want to survive in this occupation, they have to do everything themselves. Finally, the commonality of these stories marks them as normal, even typical, and this is reflective of how the other oral genres depict bullying, as expected and tacitly condoned.

5.4.3   The Esteem Story

The last form of the bullying story works to garner esteem from the audience. Thus, the esteem story is a clever brag. These stories focus on a bullying event in a teller's life.

They are, by their very nature, self-aggrandizing. These stories follow two specific plot lines. In the first, they mirror a hero tale in many ways. There is a folk villain (the bully) and a folk hero (normally the teller), and they engage in a series of conflicts. The first part of the story paints the bully as a villain, and the subsequent reaction of the teller proves their character in the story is a folk hero by defeating their respective villain(s), by displaying valued traits like those underlined in fairy or folktales.

This story type works because the folk villain in these stories serves two primary functions; they are the champion of everything that the hero opposes (antipathy of the hero's culture), and they act as an obstacle to be overcome in the story (often by the hero "standing their ground"). It should not be surprising that "being a bully" is one of most folk villains' primary traits. On the other hand, the folk hero champions everything about a society that its members value. For instance, the ability to overcome personal obstacles is a prime trait of a hero. Esteem stories paint the bully as a personal obstacle in much the same way that folktales do. This framing firmly places the onus on the victim to overcome the problem, a message that we have seen reflected in other genres and self-help guides.[44] Thus, the first type of esteem story (the hero story) ultimately functions to paint the teller as a hero, or at least someone worthy of respect, because they stood up to their bully and won. For example,

> [The teacher was] bewildered by the first question…and insulted, very insulted. [they'd] never heard that before [...] If [their] standards [were] higher than other teachers—which they shouldn't be because they all have the same testables [...] [45] The curriculum literally dictates the standard […] So [the teacher] stood [their] ground. [They] told them [that they enforce curriculum

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[44] For more information on coping mechanisms for dealing with bullying see: Elliott 2003; Boulton 2002; Sullivan 2000; Nesbit 1999; Boulton 1997.

[45] A "testable" is piece of information that is marked as important within a curriculum. In this sense the teacher is saying that all of the teachers in the same grade are teaching the same information, and the children should therefore be able to write a test produced by any of the teachers.

standards] and [they] told them if they had any more concerns, they are welcome to bring them to [them] after [their] presentation. [Lennox continued] The worst thing that you can do is become defensive in situations like that, so [the teacher] silenced them by plowing on through the presentation. They [the parents] didn't like it, but [the teacher] wasn't going to stand up there and try and defend [themselves] against accusations from people that didn't know [them]" (Interview with Lennox, August 17, 2013).

Martin Lovelace documents a series of these types of stories in his 1979 work, "'We Had Words': Narratives of Verbal Conflicts," in which employees George Burton and Bill Tollard, face off against their overbearing bosses multiple times. Lovelace writes eloquently of a critical reason for the longevity of these kinds of tales, namely the catharsis that these types of narratives have for the teller. He states, "Bill seemed to be savouring again [the tale's] cathartic effect and this kind of gratification may be a reason for their being sustained in his narrative repertory" (34).

The stories that Lovelace collected in his interviews all depict classic examples of these "hero stories." In these stories, the victims stand up to their bullies and emerge victorious, as Bill did when he threatened to quit and forced his boss to back down. These tales work quite well within this research's confines because they are occupational, they relay the same notion that victims need to stand up for themselves, and they paint the picture of working men conquering their professional obstacles through their ingenuity and righteous fury. Like other hero tales, these stories give the audience hope that they can do the same in their own lives. However, these occupational narratives are particular to the occupation, and adapting the messages from one profession to another is quite tricky. For example, adapting it from the private "farming vocation" to the highly politicized teaching world is far easier said than done. How would Lovelace's stories change if five hundred qualified people were waiting to take Bill's place for lower wages? In the occupational

world, power is distributed differently from one vocation to the next. What works in one profession simply cannot work in others, and stories like this can establish unreasonable expectations for victims.

Only a few examples of hero stories emerged from my research, and they all referenced decisions made unilaterally by the NLESD. Unlike the hero stories that I was used to hearing from martial artists about why they began practicing martial arts, these stories broadly featured others' support in the intervention.[46] I suspect that the interviewed teachers did not tell stories that depicted them, personally, as heroes because their stories were about institutional abuse. I also suspect that institutional abuse was the focus of their esteem stories because it was the part of their occupation that they felt they had the least ability to change. Examples of these stories were Aidan's story about the death threat (featured on pages 164–165) and Aidan's story about the near loss of a teacher's tenure (featured on page 165) due to an unscrupulous vice principal. These examples featured teacher opposition to the school board with the accompanying support of their administrations or the Teachers' Association.

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[46] Before I began studying teachers and bullying, I had been practicing with and interviewing local martial artists (mostly Kenpo and Jiu-jitsu instructors in the metro area) about their experiences with learning and teaching martial arts. Many of those interviewed used personal experiences with bullying as a key factor in why they began practicing and why their art appealed to others. Many of these stories featured this hero narrative. In fact, many of the demonstrations for new students that I attended or participated in used bullying situations to pose a "what would you do?" question to get people to think about self-defence. Pedro Sauer, the head of the branch of Jiu-jitsu that a majority of the instructors belonged to at the time—who is himself a master of Gracie Jiu-jitsu, often explained growing up in Brazil and the types of confrontations that he got into growing up to illustrate how Jiu-jitsu saved his life. Many of the stories that Professor Sauer used to explain self-defence are hero stories; not all of them are personal experience narratives, many are hero stories told to him by his students about the application of the techniques he had taught them that they used to defend themselves. A really great example of a recruitment story involving a bullying scenario is Ed O'Neil's first jiu-jitsu story. In it, Ed O'Neil explains why he began practicing jiu-jitsu. His instructor, Rorion Gracie, posed a scenario that Ed O'Neil did not know how to deal with and this changed his mindset about jiu-jitsu (See Gracie Jiu-jitsu Academy 2011).

The other type of esteem story, and by far the most common type featured in this collection, is a less direct tale of opposition. It is the Survival Story. In these texts, it is the victim's survival of the bullying that generates the esteem. These stories feature impossible barriers and unconquerable bullies. The feat worthy of note is not the teller's ability to stand up to the bully; it is their ability to endure, despite the hardships piled on them by their assailant(s).[47] In this way, these stories eerily reflect the plight of Cinderella. These stories often extend beyond the realm of garnering sympathy and outrage. They, like the hero story, are used to elicit esteem and respect from their peers. For this reason, these stories tend to feature the worst, most abject forms of violence because they need to communicate the depths of despair that the survivor has had to overcome in order for these stories to serve their function of being worthy of esteem. For example:

> It was about halfway through their year from hell […] so maybe late January early February […] that they started getting emails from one of the mothers telling them how disgusting she felt the teacher's views on women were […] the teacher was taken aback by the email and showed it to the principal, who spoke with the mother about the inappropriateness of her email, but that apparently got her back up. She began posting things [on Facebook] that were taken out of context about the teacher's religion in parent groups. She even organized a petition against them […] The teacher didn't even believe those things […] It didn't take long for [that parent]'s views to be taken up by some of the staff. [They] were well known in the community, and the teacher was new, they had just transferred in. There were a few that stuck with the teacher, but most began distancing themselves from them [because they didn't want to be associated with the teacher]. It really didn't take that long. If [their friends] weren't around, they ended up sitting alone somewhere […] The other teachers were always professional. They were just distant to them […] It was lonely […] they felt alone (Interview with Peyton, August 17, 2013)

From the survivor and hero tales, we see bullying presented as a life test. This frame is mirrored in folktale in that the hero must often endure some kind of hardship before

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[47] Jane Farrow discusses the notion of survivor stories in her 2005 article, "Workplace Culture, Folklore, and Adaptation" as a means of explaining how community in the workplace is enriched and how this identity is communicated to new members (7-8).

being able to overcome the central villain. This hero theme constructs bullying as normal behavior because it bestows a positive function on the bully. The framework itself directs us to skip over the abuse (although these stories themselves focus on the abuse) and focus on the challenge of overcoming or enduring the bullying. This shift in perception allows the audience to disassociate themselves from the bullying act because the storyteller has already done most of the dissociative work for them, by conveying the story as one of perseverance, not persecution. By focusing on the obstacle and not the situation's particulars, we remove ourselves from the situation. When we do this, we allow bullying to become normal. This change in focus is why we can look at a victim suffering under the torment of their bully and ask, "Why didn't you stand up for yourself?"

The teller of a survivor story asks the audience to suffer along with them. They ask for the audience to empathize and sympathize with their plight so that they can understand both the impossibility of escape from the situation and the virtue represented in the victim's ability to persevere. An essential aspect of these survivor stories is that the teller survived and is now doing better. The bullying has passed, and in its passing, it has made them stronger. Thus, the story's bullying becomes less about bullying and more about a remarkable obstacle in the teller's life history, one that the teller uses as quasi-rite-of-passage in the story to demonstrate how they became so strong. Regardless of whether the esteem story follows the Hero Story or Survivor Story path, it reinforces the normality of bullying, and the necessity of bullying, in a life's story.

5.5 The Problem with the Frame

There is a major problem in the way that bullies and bullying are perceived. Collections of folklore like those discussed in this chapter display sentiments paralleled by bullying scholars that suggest that bullying is an expected part of normal human growth. Collections of folklore like *Little Jack,* offer significant clues as to why this is the case. They explain how we approach bullying tales, because they outline the cultural world view from which our current world views have descended. They reveal reservations about others, and others' mistreatment, in ways that-while metaphorical, are often more honest than real-world stories. In particular, these tales are a fascinating study of "scapegoatism" and its relation to victims of bullying, because they convey the unspoken, ugly hatred in a palatable manner, which is one of the most insidious problems plaguing us today.

These stories reveal disassociation strategies, such as derogatory nicknames to dehumanize targets, and other terms for bullying that soften the audience's perception of the abuse. They also demonstrate essential aspects of world view, such as how power relations should look and how the less powerful should act. These ideas are still relevant today, and when placed alongside the stories of this collection, they not only demonstrate how long these issues have plagued human society, but they also underscore some of the solutions to these problems. A transformation is necessary to convert bullying into a cultural taboo, and the first step in this process is to educate the public about how we dismiss it, such as using terms that diminish, trivialize, or obfuscate it.

Hero and Survivor Stories can instill hope, but these stories often set impossible expectations for victims of bullying, because often standing up to a bully is not a viable option, and it is critically important to note that not all bullying is survived. To ask people

to cope with these cultural expectations is unconscionable, and this message needs to be made implicit. On the other hand, the heroes and heroines of most fairy tales and folktales have helpers, and this part of the narrative needs to be brought into focus, because people do not survive bullying alone, and they do not often stand up to their bullies alone either. We all need support. The aspects of Hero Tales that have a benefit to us moving forward are not the parts that highlight a person pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps, but rather the parts where their friends come to their rescue, or help to catch them before they fall in the first place.

In the case of teachers, this peer support comes almost entirely from within the bureaucracy; be it other teachers, administrators, or through the NLTA or various school boards, their support is unseen by the public. This obfuscation is a problem because it means that outsiders are only ever aware of student problems. When something goes wrong, the reporting follows suit from the same perception. It also leaves teachers feeling isolated from the rest of society because they cannot vent or express themselves publicly. Addressing this cone of silence needs to be a priority. Without this action, rectifying one of the most significant barriers between teachers and the rest of society is impossible, and teachers will continue to have to insource their support from the same sources that often create the problems. As long as teachers cannot say what is wrong with their careers to those that can change it, we are all complicit in their repression.

Chapter Six: Institutional & Non-institutional Bullying Stories

This chapter's primary purpose is to typify how bullying happens within the schoolhouse workplace's occupational boundaries. The goal is to highlight what bullying in school looks like to teachers, and learn from examining their occupational folklore (specifically bullying stories involving teachers). Since folkloristics primarily focuses on understanding the artistic communications within groups, even harmful communications, it makes sense to turn this lens on teachers' professional lives to understand the messaging conveyed in the bullying communication occurring therein. It is important to remember that bullying is a type of communication that is limited and guided by the social mores of those that use it and those that perceive it. As such, the power communicated cannot help being shaped by that same social interaction. The power utilized in bullying stems from one of two major sources, institutional or non-institutional, both of which guide how the drama progresses, and both are at play every day in a teacher's occupational life.[48]

It is essential to understand that while this notion appears to create a mutually exclusive binary relationship between the two forms, incidents from one vein can and do have a substantial effect on the development of dramas in the other. The fundamental difference between these institutional and non-institutional bullying stories is the origin of the power differential between bully and victim. Institutionalized bullying draws its power from the structure of the system itself, such as the governing hierarchy. In contrast, non-

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[48] Because of the potential risk associated with collecting narratives of occupational bullying (giving official documentation to well-known but hidden stories of abuse), and because of the possibility of identification of tellers through the details of such incidents, many of these examples are presented as composite stories. Some examples are blended from multiple sources so as to accurately convey their messages while further obscuring their narrators. As discussed in Chapter Two, interviewee names have been removed and replaced with initials that correspond to either the order in which they were interviewed or their chosen pseudonyms.

institutionalized bullying is more about political and social capital between those who would otherwise be equals.

Regardless of whether bullying is institutional or non-institutional, folklore plays a pivotal role in the enculturation process. When bullying generates power over another person, the expression of this power occurs in one of two ways; through traditionalized repetitive attacks, or through the use of malevolent traditions such as derogatory nicknames, rhymes, or other formulaic assaults. In either case, the abuse is traditionalized either through repetition or through embedding hostile messages within otherwise benign traditional communication media. There may be many differing motivations for bullies to bully, but ultimately the execution comes down to one straightforward idea: bullies seek power and communicate it through aggression and hate. Whether it is the power that comes from having an elevated position in a structural hierarchy or power derived from the aggression itself, the goal, social power, remains the same.

This chapter follows a typology that will help formalize the discussion around the types of bullying that teachers endure in their working lives. The bullying documented here is almost invariably tolerated, because teachers cannot present it to the public themselves and because the public has become conditioned to ignore it when it happens in front of them. This inculcation is more profound than most think. Take, for instance, the term "soft bullying." Bullying exists on the murky fringes of social acceptability. Each bullying scenario is interpreted differently by everyone (Naylor et al., 2006). A large part of the breakdown in interpretation occurs because every person interprets other people's interactions through their empathetic lens. There is no universally agreed-upon definition of bullying (as discussed in Chapter Three), and because of this, a person's interpretation of

whether or not an action is considered bullying falls entirely upon how empathetic they are to it. It is also essential to understand that most bullying falls into what many have termed "soft bullying." Soft bullying is synonymous with indirect bullying. There is no fundamental difference, as both involve insults, exclusion, and/or other non-physically aggressive actions taken to make the victim feel left out, abnormal, unliked, or otherwise "less than" the people doing the bullying. The fact that the term "soft bullying" has come into use in recent times is quite disconcerting.[49] Since the term itself forces a comparison with its opposite "hard bullying," which does not exist, the only thing left to compare it with is "bullying." Thus, the only purpose for the placement of the descriptor "soft" before the term is to classify this type of bullying as somehow less harmful, and more condonable, than more direct (physical) forms of bullying.

The term itself acts as another dismissive term, in a long list of dismissive terms (see Chapter Three for more on dismissive terms), which grants us the ability to condone and ignore certain forms of aggression, and thus occlude the most significant portion of the bullying problem. Paralleling this, the folklore surrounding bullying events often helps to dismiss them further. Take, for instance, that age-old children's chant, "sticks and stones will break your bones, but names will never hurt you." This snippet of folklore supports the same vein of thought put forward by users of this "soft bullying" term. In granting us the ability to ignore vast swathes of anti-social behavior through folklore and definitional fragmentation, we impede understanding of the real systemic problem of violence and aggression in our society.

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[49] For examples of works involving the term "soft bullying" see the articles "School Climate" (2012) by Sean Cadigan and "Bullying in a girl's world" (2015) by Nills Vidar Vambheim.

A different term, used mostly in more extreme indirect bullying cases, is "emotional terrorism." This term comes much closer to the descriptive mark, because indirect bullying victims are almost always forever changed by it. The list of damages ranges widely from temporary depression to suicide. Dismissing the indirect portion of the bullying spectrum is very dangerous. (For more information about the damage that bullying causes in the workplace, see: Cemalogu 2007; Gemzoe Mikkelsen and Einarsen 2002; Ma 2001.) Thus, it benefits us to take a hard look at indirect bullying and how varied and insidious the forms can be.

6.1   A Typology of Institutional Bullying

Before we can harness Applied Folklore to fix the growing problem of institutionalized bullying, we must first come to understand what institutionalized bullying is, how we foster it, and how we perpetuate it. These questions are crucial to understanding how to disrupt it through intervention. Take, for example, Deet's empathic statement of the trickle-down influence of bullying:

> We work in a system where an administrator really has the ability to bully teachers, and teachers have the power to bully students [but] when students bully other students, we seem really shocked and horrified (Interview with Deet, April 4, 2013).

When Deet said this, they were making a point that we teach children how to bully by surrounding them with bullying adults. Bullying is a learned behavior, yet we often pretend that children's culture exists outside of that of adults. When adults bully each other in their professional lives and expose children to this, we must include ourselves as a direct source of this informal teaching. Deet's quote also demonstrates quite clearly how interrelated institutional and non-institutional bullying are. On the one hand, it highlights

the trickle-down power of institutionalized bullying, while simultaneously pointing out that children use this learned knowledge to bully in non-institutional ways, by using it to bully each other.

This application draws attention to two of the worst cultural inaccuracies about bullying inherent in our world view. The first is that institutionalized abuse is a normal part of a person's life, and the second is the belief that children learn how to bully primarily from other children. When there is bullying throughout the adult portion of the school system, it will be present in the children. Bullying happens in all walks of life within the school community (Blase, 2003). It happens between administrators and teachers. It happens between teachers, and it even happens in counterhegemonic ways when teachers discover ways to bully administrators, or children abuse the limitations placed on teachers and bully them. This bullying becomes second-nature as it becomes institutionalized within the school culture.

The following typology comes from an attempt to classify the abuse detailed in the stories in this collection. This typology format reflects and expands on the Blases' 2003 work, *Breaking the Silence: Overcoming the Problem of Principal Mistreatment of Teachers.* This chapter extends their typology of teacher abuse in schools into other relationships not focused on within their work scope. Within the institutionalized portion of this typology, I have focused on the relationships between teachers of unequal positions in the informal hierarchy (substitute, short term replacement/untenured, tenure track, and tenured teachers) to draw out a few types of institutionalized abuses not already highlighted by the Blases. Many of the relationships that follow are somewhat neutral in legislated institutional power relations, but the social power derived from etiquette and tradition is

well-defined and easily weaponized. These scenarios demonstrate how varied and effective bullying strategies are when leveled against teachers by other teachers.

The constant presence of abuse in our corporate and social structures has both normalized and obfuscated it within our society. The Blases demonstrate precisely how prevalent abuse is between administration and teachers in their previously mentioned 2003 book, and Glynn Sharpe expanded on this in his 2011 thesis, *Behind the closed door,* to show how teachers typically abuse students. These describe perfect examples of institutionalized bullying, partially because they have become normalized in our education system and partially because the power being abused extends directly from the institution itself.

When bullying becomes second-nature and formalized within the culture, it becomes enculturated. When it does the same within an organization, it is said to be "institutionalized." In either situation, bullying defines and formalizes power differentials between groups and individuals within these groups. When an institution allows abuse to become institutionalized, the abuse gains protection from the institution itself, because it becomes regarded as the institution's process. Thus, there are two central properties of institutionalized abuse. The first property is that the power used against the victim extends from the institution. The second is that the abuse then becomes formalized and protected within the system. The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries offers one of the most comprehensive definitions of institutionalized bullying. Their 2011 publication states:

> Corporate/institutional bullying occurs when bullying is entrenched in an organization and becomes accepted as part of the workplace culture […]
> Corporate/institutional bullying can manifest itself in different ways: Placing unreasonable expectations on employees, where failure to meet those expectations

means making life unpleasant (or dismissing) anyone who objects. Dismissing employees suffering from stress as "weak" while completely ignoring or denying potential work-related causes of the stress. Encouraging employees to fabricate complaints about colleagues with promises of promotion or threats of discipline. Signs of corporate and institutional bullying include: Failure to meet organizational goals. Increased frequencies of grievances, resignations, and requests for transfers. Increased absence due to sickness. Increased disciplinary actions. (2).

6.1.1   Problems Facing Substitutes

It is crucial to think of the power structure at work as a hierarchy because, as the popular expression states, "Shit flows downhill." The institutional bullying surrounding substitutes is a thick smoldering morass that occludes and obscures abuse through the accepted social perception that newcomers to a field should be hazed. People who exist at the bottom of such a structure will always be the most victimized, and substitutes occupy the bottom-most rung of all of the previously discussed educational hierarchies in play. There is a large and growing distance (both socially and occupationally) between them and the full-time staff.[50]

This social structure sets many obstacles in the way of substitutes advancing in their careers. These teachers have to fight nepotistic tendencies in some administrations, they have to fight for hours against other desperate substitutes, and there is no universal or even regional seniority list of which to speak. The only organization of what is and is not fair, regarding calling substitutes, is left to the principals and vice-principals to work out on their own. To use Sawyer's words, "You hope that you get picked, and when you aren't, you try your best to be happy for the person that got picked instead" (Personal communication, October 10, 2014).

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[50] For more information on the types of career advice given to substitute teachers, see article, "Survival Skills for occasional teachers" (1988) by Lorraine Jardine and Jack Shallhorn. The other major power relation in the adult culture within the schoolhouses, teacher/administrator, has been intentionally left out of this typology because it has been well documented in the past by scholars of bullying, Jo and Josephine Blase (2003).

Furthermore, substitutes have to kowtow to the teachers they substitute for, no matter how unfair or unreasonable their requests or actions toward the substitute may be. Francis illustrates this problem with this example, "[The teacher] was an English substitute at what was essentially a bi-lingual school, so [they were] bottom of the [social hierarchy], even among substitutes, and [they were] made to work every morning, lunch, and afternoon duty shift because of that" (Field notes taken from interview with Francis, December 13, 2015). This form of dumping unpaid work on the teacher furthest down the social hierarchy is not surprising behavior in the workplace. Tactics like teachers trading duty shifts for days that they are not coming in on is standard fare in many schools. There is often no one overseeing these schedules to ensure that the substitute that is in for a week does not work on all of their downtimes. Many teachers see this as a perk of seniority, and they do not question whether it is fair or not; in the brief time that they were substitutes before finding permanent positions, they were on the receiving end of the tradition. Even apart from the thinly veiled apathy directed at new teachers, the problem with this thinking is that now substitutes in St. John's can substitute for five to ten years without the hope of a full-time position, so they are subjected to tis type of abuse far longer than their predecessors.

Scenarios like these occur and pass largely unpunished because substitutes will not complain about their treatment. They know that complaining can and probably will negatively affect their employability. Sawyer discussed these "perks of seniority" as "ensuring an unsustainable workload" for substitute teachers (Interview with Sawyer, October 2, 2012). This unsustainable workload is a classic abuse of power in institutionalized bullying and gives the full-time teachers, often those responsible for the workload, a reason to complain about

the new teacher. These tactics force substitutes to work long hours every day that they are not paid for, because substitutes are mandated only five hours a day.

There is also a substantial financial burden for most substitutes that makes them highly susceptible to victimization. A vast majority of substitutes bear the weight of two degrees' worth of student loans, and despite a decent hourly wage, there is no guarantee that sub days will happen. Thus, many substitutes have acute financial pressure forcing them to take any calls that come their way. These financial burdens force substitutes to solicit work from several different schools simultaneously, because to do less is to starve. In tandem with this financial pressure, administrations often take unkindly to substitutes who cannot take a call because they are substituting at another school. According to the substitute interviewees, many schools punish the substitute by simply dropping them off their call list or deprioritizing them on the list. While this is understandable from the school's perspective, in that administrators do not want to waste time in the morning fussing with finding replacement teachers, it does create a very precarious situation for substitutes that live paycheque to paycheque.

There are also traditions arranged to save schools money with which substitutes must contend. For instance, the pay rates of substitutes increase if they contract four consecutive days for the same teacher. Some administrators will swap substitute classes around or simply not hire the same substitute for four consecutive days in order to sidestep this cost. The substitutes also advised that even when the administration knew that they would need a sub on a given day, they would withhold the offer of employment if there was a chance that there might be a closure. Thus, the system forces substitutes to cultivate relationships with multiple schools, and then punishes them when this becomes inconvenient.

Under the current conditions, substituting in St. John's is a minefield for new teachers. New teachers must quickly find a balance between the number of schools they put their names in to substitute for and the number of days they can get from each. Too many conflicts between schools can quickly leave a substitute with no hours and bridges burnt in every direction. This situation has occurred because the historical demand for substitutes in the urban areas of St. John's, Mount Pearl, and Paradise is simply not high enough to employ the numbers of substitutes trying to live in the area. This problematic state of affairs forces those stuck in the area, for whatever reasons, into the further complication of having to take on a part-time job on top of their substitution hours. Taking on part-time work is difficult to maintain because substitutes are on call every day during the workweek.

This sorry state of affairs has become highlighted in the background of an interesting development over the 2019 school year. In the last year, the supply of substitutes has virtually dried up in St. John's because the NLESD (Newfoundland and Labrador English School District) finally approved the creation of TA positions previously requested by the NLTA, and many substitutes have quit substituting to take these significantly lower-paying TA positions because they are full-time permanent positions. The TA positions created to help teachers by bringing in non-teachers to assist them in the classrooms have led to a teacher shortage in the classrooms, because substituting is such unstable work. The prospect of having full-time work in the schools was too large a draw for the desperate substitutes in the surrounding area to pass up.

Outside of leaving the profession, there are several things substitutes can do to help relieve some of the subbing pressures for themselves. They can specialize in special needs, administration, or French. They can upgrade their teachables, pursue master's degrees, or look

for work in education outside of the public school system. These solutions present pros and cons, and the answer most commonly given is that teachers need to move out of the metro area. When a teacher cannot do this, there is little else they can do and little sympathy from their peers for not doing it. Many substitutes in this situation have to pursue one of these other options because the length of time spent as a substitute has increased intolerably over the last thirty years.

To put this change in context, I added up all of the time spent as a substitute for the five oldest teachers interviewed, and their combined total was less than a year and a half. It was a matter of months for three of the five, and for the other two, it was a matter of weeks before they found a permanent placement. This number marks a stark contrast with those stepping into the workforce today. The five substitutes that I spoke with have substituted in St. John's for a combined twenty-seven years, four having taught over five years, and the other having taught for two. New teachers in the St. John's area can expect between five and seven years as a substitute now, before there is even hope that they will have a shot at a permanent position, and most will expect to teach as a substitute for longer still due to the continually shrinking unit allotment for education in the province.[51]

This situation has added a further complication on top of the rest of their problems, which is that the senior teachers making decisions about the institution do not have the same experience with the complications now facing modern substitute teachers. For many older teachers, substituting was a brief period of hazing on the journey that quickly led to a

[51] See articles: "Dale Kirby predicts deeper school cuts in September" 2015; "Teacher cuts will impact 170 schools in English system – Kirby" 2015; "77.5 positions to be cut but new teachers will still be hired" 2015; "Leaked memo warns of serious school issues due to cuts" 2017. The first article advises of the government's announcement that another 77.5 teaching positions will be discontinued in 2015; this is on top of the 160 that were discontinued in 2013. The second outlines the impact that these cuts had on education.

permanent position. To many substitutes in the St. John's area, the distance between a substitute and a full-time replacement is becoming almost insurmountable. Many substitutes now find themselves in the public sector because they cannot afford to teach anymore. For instance, Aiden graduated with their degree and became so desperate for sub days that they had to take a full-time job, which paid less than a third of their teacher's wage and prevented them from being able to sub at all. Aiden had to move outside of St. John's, a move that forced them to relocate their entire family before they were able to find full-time work as a teacher.

The other side of this argument is that once a substitute is in the system and has made the right connections, they are disincentivized by the system to improve the plight of other substitute teachers in the region, because it could negatively impact the precarious balance that they have achieved. After working so hard to achieve this delicate balance, rocking the boat could mean losing any semblance of control over their careers. Thus, a teacher's time as a substitute has become such a hurdle in their development that very few teachers will risk losing what little regular work they have clawed together on a chance of improving the system for everyone else.

I was able to see this at work in the life of one of the interviewees, Sawyer. Their perspective changed between interviews as they progressed up the imagined seniority ladder at a particular school (that neither kept seniority lists that the teacher had ever seen, nor stuck to any discernable pattern of contacting substitutes of which they were aware) because they were getting more calls. For example, Sawyer went from arguing about a district-based seniority list in one of their first interviews, to explaining how the vice-principals' autonomy ensured that the best teachers got the openings in another interview occurring almost two

years later. In Sawyer's defense, the dissolution of the districts occurred within this time, so the idea of a district substitute list was no longer viable, since the only school districts now encompass the entirety of Newfoundland and Labrador, although these regions still technically exist as a subset of these districts.

The substitutes interviewed indicated two very different preferences for solutions to these problems. A few spoke of an institutional solution by which a seniority list was created and managed by the school board or NLTA in a region-by-region arrangement. This solution would remove the autonomy of the administrations from the equation, meaning that all substitutes on this prospective list would be managed by one, supposedly fair, organization in much the way that the Lecturers Union of Memorial University of Newfoundland (LUMUN) handles sessional work. Of course, this solution would add another branch to the bureaucracy that would need to be staffed and monitored. Among the part-time members of the NLTA, there have been petitions for creating such a governing body to be established within the organization to deal with the issues directly affecting substitutes. However, to date, no such body exists. One of the informants spoke of this briefly because they received an email designed to measure response to such a body.[52]

The other solution suggested by teachers inferred that merely having more information available and people to talk to about how to tackle life as a substitute would go a long way to solving this problem. To this end, the NLTA hosted its first Professional Development (PD) day on substitution in 2018. One teacher suggested a mentoring program of some sort, a

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[52] In recent years the NLTA has begun taking steps to rectify some of the problems facing their part-time members, such as the creation of professional development days/seminars for substitutes. Historically part time workers were not invited to Professional Development (PD) days. These new PD days tend to be specifically tailored to substitutes. They tend not to be the same PD seminars that full-time teachers would normally attend.

suggestion covered in several significant writings about new teachers (although most of these were written in response to high teacher attrition rates in early years).[53] The response from the other informants to this suggestion was lukewarm at best. Those that opposed such a program argued against it on two fronts: first, it would mean more unpaid work time for the mentor; secondly, they felt that it was not addressing the core problem. Those that disagreed with this suggestion felt that it was a work-around solution at best and a waste of resources. There was less than a handful of teachers that agreed that this could be a viable solution. Many thought it was an interesting idea, but ultimately felt that it would hinder developing a real solution.

The last significant oversight that substitutes spoke about, and perhaps the worst, is the policing of complaints made against substitutes. There are no substantial Canadian statistics to back up the feeling that there is a rise in false accusations. However, the recent numbers out of the UK suggest that one in seven teachers will have false claims made against them by parents, and one in six will have false claims made against them by students. Articles in the media such as, "False abuse accusations against teachers 'on the rise'" by Mark Gollom, or "Falsely accused teacher calls for accountability" by Kathy Tomlinson in April of 2012, and "Overwhelmed Canadian Teachers May be Quitting in Droves," by Justina Reichel (2013) highlight the beginning stages of public awareness of the problem that has been plaguing the UK for almost a decade.

If the UK statistics hold for Canada, as high as one in four teachers could be the subjects of false allegations this year. I would argue that the statistic is probably higher in Canada, and not just because of issues not reported against parents and students, but because no one is quantifying false claims statistics made internally. This research gap is no doubt partly

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[53] Benjamin Kutsyuruba notes in his 2014 dissertation that there has been no pan-Canadian study of this phenomenon that has been sweeping across the globe in almost all developed countries.

because most of these claims are not illegal, as they do not meet the standards of slander, and teacher associations do not want petty conflicts against their members getting out into the news media. It seems false allegations have become another accepted part of the occupation. This situation cannot continue, especially since the repercussions of reporting a false claim by a teacher against a substitute are simply too high. The loss of social capital, regardless of the outcome of an investigation, would no doubt negatively impact the teacher's career, perhaps even catastrophically, for the rest of their lives. All of the substitute interviewees, and former recent substitute interviewees, spoke about how crushing it was to have a teacher that they were filling in for making a poor or false assessment of their work and how devastating it was to have a false claim leveled against them by such a teacher. Since substitutes contract exclusively on a school-to-school basis and since their evaluation is far from standardized, a negative comment can cause a permanent employment loss.

As an example, Ziggy detailed an incident that a substitute teacher had with a full-time teacher that they were replacing. The substitute advised that they were subbing for a teacher that did not like them because the class liked the substitute more than the teacher. The teacher sabotaged the substitute by discarding the substitute's class plans and daily notes. Although the substitute had written diligent notes every day during their brief replacement, the teacher reported them as not being done to the administration. Ziggy now takes notes in their notebook and leaves photocopies of them every day. The accusing teacher even went so far as to comment to their principal that they did not like the substitute's teaching style and did not want them back in their classroom. After this incident, the substitute had to cultivate relationships elsewhere because the teacher pool and administration at that school had become poisoned against them.

Ziggy told another story featuring a substitute that followed a school's snow day procedures for midday cancellations and became the failed policy's scapegoat. Ziggy explained that the midday cancellation policy centered around a form that guardians had to fill out at the beginning of the year at the time of the incident. The form simply stated what to do with the child in the event of a midday cancellation. One of the children's forms indicated that their house was the proper location to leave the child in such an event. Thus, the substitute put the child on the bus, and the bus driver let the child out at their house as requested in the document, and the parents were not home. The house, as it turned out, was locked, and the child had no key. Luckily, a neighbor took them in and called their parents, but there was a significant backlash. The blame for the situation landed on the substitute teacher, not those that drafted the policy in the first place, not the bus driver that left the child at the house, nor the parent who came up with the poor plan in the first place, but the teacher who followed it. According to both Ziggy and Navy, the substitute ended up having to take a part-time job for almost two years because they could not find work anywhere after word got out that they were to blame for the child sitting on the porch in a snowstorm. The local media ran the story and restaged a picture of the child sitting on their porch in the snowstorm, which further exacerbated the situation. Unfortunately, I was unable to locate the photo because no one could recall exactly when it happened.

6.1.2   Problems Facing Full-time Untenured Teachers

Problems facing untenured teachers reflect much of the same unease as those affecting substitutes, which makes sense. Untenured teachers are more or less in the same boat as substitutes. This group includes teachers who work full-time but are not yet tenured and those that have long-term replacements. The step-up from substitute to a full-time teacher is a

significant one in developing a teacher's career because they have contracts to teach for a certain length of time. Their employment is constant, so that they are no longer tied to their phones. They no longer live their lives on call, and they often become a part of the school community. Although their jobs may still be negotiable, they are not as worried about many of the financial issues and insecurities that substitutes face. However, untenured teachers face a myriad of new problems due to the nature of their temporary positions.

These new problems revolve around becoming part of the school community and finding their place among the permanent staff, something that being a substitute does not prepare them for. The scenarios collected ranged from exclusion to sabotage. As these teachers have very little in the way of job security beyond their contract, these teachers have to walk softly in confrontations with students, parents, and other teachers (especially with teachers that have tenure). For untenured teachers, complaints against co-workers can come back to haunt them, and complaints against superiors will undoubtedly have severe repercussions for their careers.

Sabotage

Unlike substitutes, the sabotage stories for untenured and long-term replacement teachers were far more strategic than the host of tactics leveled against substitutes. These incidents were often planned by groups of other teachers to impact the life of the victim negatively. One example that came up a few times from different sources in different schools involved determining the distribution of "behaviorals" (children with behavioral disorders) at year-end for the next year of classes. For many schools, this occurs at a meeting at the school year's end, where the teachers of a grade level get together and mark out the students with

behavioral and neurological problems and then disperse them among the upcoming-year classes. In a perfect world, these students get divided evenly across the units, but this is often not the case. Determination problems can happen in two main ways: uneven distribution agreed upon at the end of year meeting; or, parental interference ending in student transfers. Either way, these scenarios generally end in the same way. According to several informants, it is common practice at some schools to place extra behaviorals in the newest teacher's classes.

Lennox told a story about a teacher that had trouble getting tenure because of this very practice. They advised that not only were there more behaviorals to start in this teacher's class than in the other classes, but within the first week, several of the students' friends ended up being transferred into their class because their parents wanted them to be in classes together and the principal signed off on the transfers. According to Lennox, the teacher protested but was overruled by the principal. As a result, more than half of the teacher's class consisted of students with behavioral or neurological disorders. According to Lennox, this action made the class completely untenable. Lennox commented that it was one of the worst classes they had ever seen in their teaching years. As a result, the teacher's first year of their tenure track was given a poor evaluation because of poor performance scores in their sabotaged class. When it happened to them a second time (in their third year of teaching), the teacher lost their offer of tenure (Interview with Lennox, August 17, 2013).

Lennox further explained that in addition to losing their tenure, the principal then refused to write a letter of recommendation for the teacher because of the poor evaluations. This decision left the teacher with two options: stay on as a full-time teacher with no hope of tenure, or strike out independently without a recommendation from their administration. The teacher chose the latter, and luckily, found work elsewhere, where the policies surrounding

class determination were far stricter and far less open to sabotage for new teachers. At this new school, the teacher quickly gained tenure and, to the best of Lennox's knowledge at the time of the interview, was still working at that school several years later.

While the teacher in Lennox's story was lucky because it all worked out in the end, the story itself highlights a full collection of ways in which an untenured teacher can fall victim to bullying through institutionalized sabotage. This story begins with intentional sabotage by the other teachers of that grade level and then the principal's further sabotaging. The other teachers met and, as a group, put more "challenging kids" into a vacant class because, at the time of this decision, there was no teacher yet hired to oppose this decision. Right from the beginning, the incoming teacher was already experiencing institutionalized aggression, which was further exacerbated by the principal's actions. The principal further impacted the teacher by allowing additional students with behavioural problems to transfer into their class. Then they chose to evaluate the teacher as if they were presiding over a normal class and failed them because the academic outcomes were lower than other classes. By failing the teacher's first year of evaluation, it forced an extension of the teacher's tenure track, and then in their final year of evaluation, the principal again used the failure of the first year to deny them their tenure, effectively wasting three years of the teacher's life. The abuse is taken one step further by the principal when they used the two sabotaged evaluation years as an excuse to deny the teacher a letter of recommendation.

Each level of this story highlights how untenured teachers are susceptible to institutionalized aggression, and these four examples all came from a single story. Each piece is important because they all point to troublesome traditions of abuse of new staff. They also point to troubling questions, foremost among them, how do we stop these kinds of abuses

from happening? If new teachers felt freer to avail themselves of the EAP (Employee Assistance Program), would that help? These are important questions because none of the things these teachers or administrators did to this teacher were illegal. Many would say that it was merely the new teacher having to "pay their dues."

Exclusion and trouble with integrating into the new school community

In addition to the institutionalized bullying revolving around class determination and the issues that stem from these problems, there is another treacherous avenue that new teachers must walk—the dangerous path of negotiating their place in the new school community. Unlike substitutes, untenured teachers have to deal with the school community daily, including parents, other teachers, administration, and students. They must attend staff parties, staff meetings, seminars, and many other events throughout the year as a community member, and their time as a substitute has done very little to prepare them for this transition. In many cases, this is not a problem, but when the other teachers dislike a new teacher, the school community can cause real harm to young teachers.

Sawyer detailed a story of a teacher that arrived at a school for a year-long replacement, who was targeted by another teacher for a reason they had no control over. The assailing teacher was a tenured teacher, who, according to Sawyer, had liked the replacement teacher who had been there the year before. They had wanted that teacher to retain their position for the duration of the replacement. However, seniority (which matters in long-term replacements) placed the new teacher before this favored previous teacher, and bumped them out of their position. This slighted teacher organized lunchroom snubbings and created a

generally unwelcoming atmosphere for the teacher. They succeeded so well at this that the teacher requested another transfer at the end of the year.

This example is mentioned here in institutionalized abuse because this was not wholly motivated by hate, or at least not at first. According to Sawyer, this bullying was motivated by the bully feeling cheated out of a friend by the administration. Rather than directing their ire upward toward the administration, where there could be repercussions for their actions, they instead directed their anger toward a vulnerable target, which other teachers condoned.

The techniques used by the bully may sound small and petty, and indeed they were, but taken together, they made the position utterly untenable for the new teacher. The other teachers arranged for the new teacher to work on their free periods by asking them to "help out" the other staff. They denied them time to make their class preparations. They also denied the new teacher access to their preparation materials, which overloaded the teacher and forced them to do all of their preparation work independently. Finally, the group made sure that there was no friendly ear available to them. No one came to bat for the teacher, because no one wanted to rock the boat. The group simply accepted that it was the right of a senior staff member to treat a perceived subordinate however they wanted. This treatment is what marks this as an act of institutionalized bullying as opposed to non-institutional. It was organized, enacted, and accepted by the group (no matter who the replacement was).

Time spent as a substitute does not prepare teachers for this kind of environmental stress. The community's new political aspect often comes as a total shock to teachers who have spent years being ignored by full-time staff in the lunchrooms and classrooms throughout the province. Whether tenure track or not, their position's vulnerable nature places

them at an extreme disadvantage in confrontations with other full-time staff; when these types of interactions go unaddressed, the institutionalization of abuse worsens.

6.1.3   Problems Facing Tenured Teachers

The tenured teachers interviewed were all happy with their current positions, with only one exception—the teacher/administrator who had recently retired. Their stories tended to focus on the bullying that they saw occur between other teachers. The stories that concerned them tended toward stories of parental and administrative bullying. Only one teacher spoke of bullying by other tenured teachers, and that bullying had started with the administration. However, unlike substitute or untenured teachers that administrators can quickly deal with, disliked tenured teachers must leave of their own volition.

Most of the major complaints that involved the administrations had first started as parental complaints that had been escalated over the teacher's head, only to come back down on the teacher as an order from the administration to change whatever had caused the initial complaint. In most cases, when a complaint goes to the administration, they will review it and find in favor of the teacher, but it can cause serious problems for the teacher when they do not. Most of these problems revolve around the loss of power, which may come in many different forms. It can be a loss of respect for the teacher from the administration, parents, and students alike, or it may simply be a loss of control over the students and their parents. When an administration undermines the teacher's authority, and the teacher has to capitulate to parental demands, it communicates to other parents that going over the teacher's head is a valid course of action, which further undermines the teacher's authority. On top of this, the students quickly catch on that complaining loudly enough is an excellent way to force the

teacher into letting them get their way. Corrupt administrations can destroy a teacher's authority.

For tenured teachers, at least to an outsider, it seems that the most significant problem that they have to deal with is a general lack of respect. The Twillingate example is probably the best local illustration of this. Forums attached to the Febreze articles highlighted the contempt that the public held toward teachers and their profession (see Chapter One for more detail). It also highlighted two fundamental reasons that make these problems so challenging for teachers. First, the teacher is not allowed to defend themselves publicly, which leaves the creation and the framing of the narrative to an outsider who does not understand the inner workings of the hearing process (which no one will talk about, except in hypothetical situations). Secondly, the posts on these forums highlight the public's ignorance of teachers and their profession while highlighting the public perception that educators face today.

Due to their rank in the school hierarchy, tenured teachers only face bullying from one place on an institutional basis: the administration. One teacher that Lennox spoke about had a digestive problem and had to take their free period before their lunch so that they had time to eat, which they needed to do at specific times of the day. This situation meant that their disability severely hampered their ability to perform lunch-time duty. The administration fixed the problem by assigning the teacher to receive the children every morning and then see them out every day. This solution may sound like a simple reaction by the administration, but, according to Lennox, the other teachers were the ones that were forcing the issue with the administration, and the administration's decision was not a punishment for the teacher, but rather appeasement made for the others. On top of this forced extra-duty, the other teachers often gossiped about the assailed teacher. The situation got so bad that the teacher felt

compelled to explain their medical condition to the other teachers. Up to this point, the teacher had not disclosed their condition to anyone other than the principal. This action solved many of the teacher's problems, but it leaves us wondering why the administration let it get that far. Moreover, what could the administration have done differently?

In many other situations, though, the administration is the problem for tenured teachers. In all probability, this is because their status at the top of the teacher's hierarchy protects them somewhat from bullying from other, less highly ranked teachers in the school hierarchy. Thus, the only ones left to bully them are either other tenured teachers through non-institutional means, or administrators through the misuse of their institutional power. Administrative bullying is a terrible problem. If we accept that 10-20% of employees work for an abusive boss, then this leaves a truly devastating number of teachers working for abusive principals (Blase & Blase 2003). As previously discussed, the Blases' 2003 work presents one of the most detailed typologies of institutional bullying that exists, and it paints a stark eye-opening picture of the repercussions of allowing bullying administrations to continue. The truth is that the informants gave many examples of many forms of this type of bullying. These stories spanned the breadth of the teachers' hierarchy, but stories of administration taking particular and prolonged action against individual teachers happened mostly at the tenured level.

The teacher with the medical problem discussed previously by Lennox felt (according to Lennox) that the school's administrator was actively trying to chase them out. In stories, Lennox described the strategies that their principal used to make others feel unwelcome in their school. For instance, a teacher who did not remain with Lennox's group was continually called into the office and "bawled at" for various minor problems that were allowed with other teachers. When this same teacher was injured in an assault by a student, the principal

forced the teacher to apologize to the child's parents in a private meeting, after the teacher returned from several months spent in rehabilitation.

Another form of aggression that this same principal used was not defending teachers that they did not like. Lennox stated that "if [they] didn't like you, you could count on every exchange that went over your head […] coming down on the wrong side of the argument for you" (Interview with Lennox, August 17, 2013).

Lennox continued:

> if [the principal] didn't like you, you can count on the fact that [they] let you know it […] it's the little things like sending children you sent to the office back to your class with [a vice-principal], or worse coming down [themselves] to tell you that you should be able to handle these problems yourself [in front of the class] (Interview with Lennox, August 17, 2013).

There were no examples of confrontational bullying through verbal abuse by administration except for the few stories about one principal that were too specific to include. This principal was also the focus of stories from several informants. Included in these stories was a narrative depicting the arrival of the principal at their current school. The narrative focused on the circumstances of the principal's transfer to the school. The rumor, which was not confirmable, suggested that the principal had been shuffled between schools because of their incompetence and abrasive manner. In speaking with Xen and Kingsley about this phenomenon, both mentioned other administrators who had been similarly shuffled from one school to another for similar reasons. The results of the Queen of Peace School in Labrador and the leaked EAP assessment of the administration there

show the only openly known result of such an inquiry, which was an early retirement for the principal.[54]

Several of the teachers brought up Queen of Peace because of the leaked assessment's consequences, which concluded that the administration was toxic. Forced retirements and administrative evaluations, according to members of the NLTA, are not the focus of the EAP program. According to one of the EAP program directors, the program primarily offers advice on how to improve administrations, not ferret out bad or corrupt administrators. The EAP program focuses almost entirely on the positive, and actions like those taken at Queen of Peace should be considered extreme cases and exceptions rather than the rule.[55]

Given the above context and the stories surrounding these particular principals I am confident that confrontational bullying exists within the system, but this small sample of teachers simply did not have experience with it beyond these instances. Most

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[54] For more information about this story see articles: Opinion Column, *The Telegram* 18 March 2013; Windelar 2013; "Labrador school called toxic" 2013; "Queen of peace middle school – concerned parent" 2013.

[55] This being said, another example of principal mistreatment of teachers arose in 2017 and has recently come to trial. In 2017 a 2013 winner of a pan-Canadian award for most outstanding principal, Robin McGrath, was accused of four counts of assault, and the trial has truly rocked the C.B.S school community to its foundation. Since this time the details of the case have become public knowledge, as seen in a CBC News post entitled, "2 portraits of accused principal Robin McGrath emerge, as assault trial breaks." The article asserts two conflicting images of the embattled principal have emerged. The defense's portrait is of an even-tempered, jovial man, who is a model educator. This Robin McGrath's disciplining of students never strayed beyond the realm of a stern talking-to. The prosecution's Robin McGrath, however, is a small angry man who once grabbed a student and dragged them into a cold shower, and who grabbed another by the face. He also allegedly bear-hugged a student until they cried. In the prosecution's version McGrath is painted as a classic tyrant principal (one that would have easily fit into the description of a bullying principal from the Blase's 2003 book). For the teachers giving testimony against McGrath, he was portrayed as a small man with a Napoleon complex who terrified them into silence. One witness described the school as coloured by "systemic fear." Regardless of the outcome of the trial, this situation calls for another close examination of the administrative review system. If McGrath is guilty of that which he is accused, this will highlight another example of a bullying administration in a Newfoundland and Labrador school going unchecked and allowed to terrorize not only the teachers, but the student body as well. It would mark the 2nd toxic administration in the province to be unveiled in four years (see articles: CBC News 2020b & Windelar 2013).

administrative bullying that the interviewees discussed was leveled against them through passive-aggressive bullying, like that against the injured teacher. Another example of this was a vice-principal who, for example, would not grant a teacher the substitutes that they requested; would not come to a teacher's room promptly when requested; would not schedule the duty shifts evenly unless the teacher actively pointed out that they were assigned more shifts than the other teachers in a given week. These passive-aggressive strategies are the easiest and safest for administrators to use to make teachers feel unwelcome. They can use these strategies quite belligerently, because when taken as isolated incidents, they seem innocuous. Thus, they are challenging for others to identify, so they present the least amount of risk to the administrators themselves; there is almost always plausible deniability.

6.2   Typology of Non-Institutionalized Bullying with Teachers

Most bullying is non-institutionalized. Non-institutionalized bullying is any form of bullying that occurs between peers. It also includes any type of bullying that works counter-hegemonically, where the person with less institutional power bullies someone with more institutional power. Non-institutionalized bullying tends to stick out in an organization because there are no traditions in the space to normalize it within the professional culture. However, it is also typical for repeated non-institutionalized bullying behavior to become institutionalized over time. All that is required for this to occur is the existence of a bully that is talented enough to push the boundaries of social acceptance far enough to normalize it. The relationship between non-institutionalized and institutionalized bullying can sometimes be seen as a progression from one to the other. Likewise, when changes occur at an institutional level that removes the ability to continue a tradition of

institutional bullying, the institutional may transition back into non-institutionalized forms. Thus, non-institutional and institutional bullying can be viewed in much the same manner that etiquette and the law are—which is to say, that they are locked in a cyclical relationship of migration back and forth between the two (see Martin 1995). Through compiling the collected data into common trends, I have created the following typology of non-institutionalized bullying. I have used the Blases' (2003) format to present it as an extension of their already established model.

Common Non-Institutionalized Bullying

Students

Discounting information, ignoring, or refusing to comply
Acting out or openly mocking the teacher
Lying to parents and administration
Threats
Physical assault (tripping, traditional dare games with teachers' body, "pantsing")
Spreading rumors

Parents

Ignoring the teacher
Discounting teacher's opinion
Spreading rumors and lies about the teacher (online or otherwise)
Organizing parent groups against a teacher
Mocking the teacher in public spaces
Verbal or written attacks (email, over the phone, or in-person)
Going over the teacher's head/Reporting teacher for disciplinary action

Teachers

Spreading rumors or lies about another teacher
Complaining/lying to superiors to get another teacher in trouble
Ignoring the victim
Encouraging others to ignore the victim
Sabotaging another teacher
Withholding help (sample curricula, not allowing another a breakteacher to use the bathroom)
Withholding student assistants

6.2.1   Typical Ways that Students Bully Teachers

Stories of students bullying teachers should be disturbing, and they should raise red flags, because these stories mark significant problems within the system. Informants used several of these bullying stories as examples of what to expect and what not to do for new teachers. They are often accompanied by vernacular solutions that help new teachers develop "workarounds" to the highly regulated environment that they are entering. Despite how bad some of these stories may sound, most informants intimated that their university education

prepared them well for many of these types of interactions with children; what they did not

know before their internship was how these events could impact their relationships with their

peers and superiors. Thus, most of these stories reveal information that may seem eye-opening

to those not familiar with public education; for example, the commonality of physical assault

with students. However, these stories represent the warnings to teachers about the often-

unexpected political ramifications of these events. These stories also represent a shared

experience of silent suffering and communicate shared support between peers. They also

outline the social boundaries of this group and communicate expected reactions from

outsiders.

6.2.2 Discounting Information, Ignoring, or Non-compliance

This practice is a classic passive-aggressive strategy employed by bullies throughout the

spectrum of teacher's professional networks. Defining it is the refusal to work, refusal to stop

anti-social behavior, and/or refusal to adhere to school or classroom rules. Ignoring teachers

takes the refusal one step further by refusing to engage with the teacher on a basic human

level. Ignoring is characterized by a refusal to acknowledge that a teacher's instructions,

words, or actions have occurred.

Non-compliance has become an increasingly common tool in the student's toolbox as

the responsibility of disciplining shifts back to the parents. For example, Aiden recounts a

situation where the student was very disrespectful of a teacher's gender and would say things

overtly inappropriate, and then they would put on their earphones and pretend that they could

not hear the teacher's response. They also used the earphones passive-aggressively when the

teacher asked them to do their work (Interview with Aiden, July 16, 2014). The teacher in

Aiden's story was unable to do anything with the student. The student simply pretended that

they could not hear the teacher after they put their earphones on. Since the teacher could not touch the student or their possessions, there was simply nothing to do except tell the principal. Teachers are highly discouraged from physically forcing a student to go to the principal; if the student refuses to go, then all that remains is to tell the principal about the incident. Telling the principal can be a significant problem according to new teachers, because communicating weakness to the principal can cost them precious substitution hours at a school. As a result of this very problem, this student was left to themselves because the teacher saw no other alternative.

Another example came from Emerson, who recounted a story about a student that would ignore a teacher's directions when other teachers were around, which was not a particularly bad problem until they went on an outing and the child convinced other children to pretend that they did not hear the teacher calling them back to the group. The result was that one of the students fell into a body of water because the three of them were roughhousing in a place where they should not have been. As a result, a formal reprimand was given to the teacher for their inability to control the class. Emerson said that it was an "eye-opening experience" (Interview with Emerson, 2013), and now if that teacher has children that do not listen in-class, they document every detail and email their parents and principal immediately about the behavior.

Another teacher, Sawyer, related several anecdotes about ignoring teachers. They recalled a situation where a teacher came in for a week-long replacement and the teacher encountered a student that they dubbed "a torment." According to Sawyer, the child would say, "blah, blah, blah" whenever the teacher spoke and openly refused to take any form of direction. According to Sawyer, the student "[d]idn't do any work, wouldn't sit for a story,

wouldn't do a thing, and [they were] constantly trying to leave the classroom" (Personal communication, 10 October 2014). The teacher was in their second year of substituting at the time and was reluctant to get the office involved. The next day the child continued to misbehave, and the teacher felt that they were out of options and resorted to calling the vice-principal.

The vice-principal responded by taking the issue up with the child's parents. Ultimately this solved the problem, but not before the teacher had finished substituting in that class. For the teacher, the week became about trying to guilt the child with statements like "your parents would be disappointed" or "[your teacher] will be disappointed," and this would work briefly, but the child would lose focus after a few short minutes and would resume acting out (Personal communication with Sawyer, October 10, 2014). Ultimately it was a medication that resolved the problem, and the teacher insisted that the child was not trying to bully them most of the time, but there were times when they would aggressively ignore the teacher, and at these times, the teacher felt like the child was trying to get their way through the use of passive-aggressive force. The story highlighted Emerson's point about not getting the administration involved in class affairs because the substitute was not requested by the school again.

Tanner had a lot to say about re-testing as an example of a refusal to comply. Tanner has had students bully them into writing re-test after re-test because they simply refuse to write tests. Under the no-zero policy, a zero on a test is no excuse for having a bad grade, because the no-zero policy views zeros as not indicative of ability and, therefore, not a viable grade. Under the policy in place at the time, the teacher had to allow re-tests. Tanner explains their frustration:

[…] there's no reason for kids to pass anything in on time anymore and no reason for them to write a test anymore until they're ready to write it if they get a zero on a test, they have to be retested […] we can't deduct marks for late assignments either, so what's the motivation to prepare for tests or pass things in on time? We've actually created a scenario where it's better to just not write the test because if they don't, we can't assign a mark to them. We have to give them a re-test (Interview with Tanner, February 2, 2015).

Another issue that has teachers stirring the pot is the issue of "positive reinforcement only." Teachers must now grant bonus points for work received on time, hoping that an academic bribe will inspire students to pass their work in by the due date because they cannot deduct points for late work. Tanner gave an impassioned albeit frustrated rant about this problem, explaining that the "positive reinforcement only" policy, when married with the no-zero policy, is a recipe for disaster. Tanner suggested that positive reinforcement simply does not work in this regard because the only students who pass things in on time are the students that already would have passed it in on time before the policy went into effect.

None of the teachers have seen any indication that either of these strategies is causing positive changes. They feel that eliminating deadlines in junior high and high school sets children up to fail in university, and teaching children that nothing that they do ever has negative repercussions is reinforcing an already poor behavioral strategy. Every teacher interviewed saw the no-zero policy and positive-reinforcement-only policies as affronts to the profession of teaching. While most support the use of positive reinforcement as a primary tool for adjusting behavior, they have no confidence in a policy that lacks any kind of teeth for punishing students when they are clearly in the wrong.

Tanner spoke about the no-zero policy several times. In another interview, they stated, "I'm a professional, that's what everyone on the board says, so logically my opinion

[on this matter] means nothing" (Interview with Tanner, June 3, 2015). They went on to say that complaints to the board about the policy have thus far fallen on deaf ears, "No matter how many times parents [or] teachers speak up about the policy it remains. Everyone knows it's a bad policy that reinforces bad behavior, but we still have it because our opinions are not respected" (Interview with Tanner, June 3, 2015).[56]

Tanner went as far as to say that while they understand the underlying notions behind these policies, it does not mean that they are functional on a practical basis. Teachers are trained professionals, and their opinions on student performance should be respected, not circumvented by creating policies that attempt to remove their agency from the process. Tanner contends that the proof that they are not working is evident in how the policies are being taken advantage of by the students. Students are now able to passive-aggressively bully teachers through non-compliance into having to waste their scarce free time. Shortly after the above interview with Tanner, in September of 2015, there was a cumulative sigh of relief amongst the informants when the NLESD finally capitulated and allowed schools to revoke their no-zero policies on a school-to-school basis. Almost all of the schools in the province have since revoked the policy.

Stories about non-compliance and ignoring teachers have a few common themes. The first is that they explain how vulnerable teachers' power is to student push-back. The second is that they explain how decisions made outside of individual teachers' control can adversely affect and limit their ability to manage their classroom. Lastly, they act as stories that unify teachers as a folk group through a shared sense of persecution. These stories frame an "us versus them" world view, but sadly the "them" in that statement can mean

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[56] Since this interview, schools have begun to separately repeal the no-zero policy as the hard line with keeping it has been relaxed within the ever-evolving Department of Education.

anyone who is not a teacher, from parent to administrator to school board member. This

division is a common theme throughout the work, as teachers work to explain what it

means politically to be a teacher. In the stories included in this small collection, there are

two main aspects of this world view. The first is that administration is to be approached

with caution, especially for new and substitute teachers. The second is that parental support

in this system is paramount. If removed or if the parents are uninvolved, the teacher's

ability to do their job is significantly impacted, which results in a lower quality of

education for the students. For example, if the child's parents in Sawyer's "torment" story

were not involved, the child would have continued misbehaving and distracting other

children in the class.

6.2.3   Acting Out or Openly Mocking the Teacher

The best example of this came from Deet, who recounted several events that occurred

in their classroom over the years, including one that happened to them while teaching in a

difference province:

> [It was] almost the end of the year […] and [two students figured] out that if
> you take the water bottles from the vending machine and poke little pinholes in
> them, you can really squirt it at each other in clandestine ways, and so they
> were doing this […] and finally [the teacher] caught on, and [they] got control
> of the classroom and [finally got the class] going [again] […] and then Henley
> takes their water bottle— doesn't even poke a hole in it—and squirts it in
> another student's face. So [the teacher was like] […] to tell you the truth [I
> forget exactly what was said], but he just looked at [the teacher] and said, "fuck
> you, you prick." And I don't [remember exactly what the teacher said in
> response], but it was probably something trying to make them feel uneasy or
> put on the spot. [That teacher] put students on the spot when they challenge
> [them]. So […] [they couldn't] overlook this one because they did tell [the
> teacher that they were] a fucking prick [in front of the class] so [they] had to
> automatically go to the principal's office which [that teacher didn't] like
> because [they always felt] like it's better if [one uses] that as [their] last option
> [because it shows weakness] […] anyway, [the student] went to the principal's
> office [and the] principal loses it on them like in a way that I don't think that
> people should talk to children […] ever, no matter what they are doing, and

[they] expelled [them] […] I really feel like that just wasn't enough to get [them] expelled, but it just shows you what [students with bad reputations] lives are like. (Interview with Deet, July 4, 2013)

Henley, the student in the above story, committed suicide that summer after being expelled, and Deet had to return to the school in the fall to face a student body that blamed the faculty for the undue stress that the expulsion had caused in Henley's life. Deet continued:

I came back to substitute, and so I was there at the beginning of the [next] year, and it was just […] awkward and weird because this student—[they were] a popular student and a good athlete—killed [themselves], and the faculty, led by the administration immediately decided not to put a memorial up for [them] because they didn't want to promote suicide. I don't know what you can do with that information, but I feel like they were embarrassed and didn't want to put a picture up that said, "We failed," because [we] did fail. (Interview with Deet, July 4, 2013)

Although this story took place before Deet came to Newfoundland, it is now part of the repertoire here as Deet tells this story to new teachers to remind them of the awesome effect that minor decisions in their regular daily activities can have on those that they teach. Deet's story also demonstrates, yet again, the "us versus them" attitude embodied in the school system between teachers, administration, and students. It also touches on vernacular strategies used for classroom management.

6.2.4   Lying to Parents and Administration

Lying is one of the quintessential tools in the bully tool kit. Bullies must frame everything that they do in the correct light, or their actions could be identified for what they are by those they depend on for support. It is important to understand that even as far back as Daniel Olweus' initial endeavors into the realm of bullying, Olweus noted that that

bullies are extremely adept at talking themselves out of situations and convincing

themselves that their actions are justifiable (Olweus 1993, 60). Sawyer related a great

example that highlights what cooperation between teachers and administration should look

like in handling situations where lying was a problem. In a personal communication,

Sawyer wrote,

> One of the kids would walk behind [the teacher], mimicking what [they were]
> saying, so [the teacher] sent [them] to the office. The office sent a note home.
> The parent responded to the vice-principal, saying, "their [child] denies it, and
> they stand by [them]." So [the teacher] told the VP again what happened, and
> she said she doesn't put up with any "bullshit," and she dealt with the parents,
> and the kid confessed and had to write an apology (Personal communication
> with Sawyer, October 25, 2015).

Grey had a similar story in which a child had lied to his parents about not being

appropriately informed of his homework assignment, so his parents accused the teacher of not

giving the children enough time to do the work. When the parents confronted the teacher, they

would not let the teacher get a word in edgewise and left in a huff to inform the

administration. The administration immediately demanded that the teacher grant the student

an extension, which the teacher was not opposed to in the first place (this was before the no-

zero policy went into effect). The teacher directed the parents and the principal to the class

website and then to the emails they had sent out informing parents of the assignment. The

parents admitted their error, apologized, and withdrew their complaint against the teacher. On

the other hand, the principal did apologize for their involvement but told the teacher that they

handled the situation poorly and placed a comment in their evaluation for tenure.

The common themes in these stories again highlight the boundaries between teachers

and administration, but they also demonstrate how dependent teachers have become on the

administration to back them up and what teachers have to do when the administration fails to

support them. This theme of self-defence repeats itself within the confines of this collection again and again. Aiden spoke for several minutes about the need to carry a notepad with them at all times to record any activity or incident that might be questioned by outsiders. Tanner uses a small portion of their free period to do the same thing, and Navy keeps detailed notes on their daily calendar. Ziggy takes notes on their phone and in their notebook as well. Every teacher, even those with supportive administrations, seems to have one of these strategies for self-protection against false accusations, which teachers have become inundated with in recent years.[57] Tanner stated that legislation is needed that protects teachers from frivolous lawsuits. When asked about the guardian's rights, Tanner was also quite emphatic that the situation needs to change. Tanner stated bluntly:

> Either teachers are granted the rights of the guardian while the students are in their care, or society stops treating teachers like babysitters and learns to accept them as the professionals that we are supposed to be (Interview with Tanner, June 3, 2015).

6.2.5   Threats and Verbal Assault

Threats are another strong tradition in the repertoire of the bully. Threats allow for the marriage of direct action with indirect action as they tie physical and verbal assault together through coercion. With a well-placed threat, a bully can eliminate having to use further physical or verbal transgressions against the victim. Canadian numbers are limited to provincial and regional union reports, such as the 2017 report put out by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, *Workplace Violence, and Harassment Against Teachers: Results of a Comprehensive Members Survey*, which states that the rate of harassment and threats made against their members came in at 43%, with an addendum stating that only 10%

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[57] For more information about statistics for false claims see Espinoza 2015, Garner 2015, and Gallom 2012.

of the members will fill out these forms (2017). The report goes on to say that 74% of

assaulted teachers do not feel safe in their classrooms after assaults. It also reports that 25% of

teachers are actively discouraged from reporting violence to the school board or police.

Reports coming out of the UK and the United States are more comprehensive than Canadian

reporting, and both show a marked increase in the reporting of threats. In the UK, the number

of reported threats rose by 10% from the previous year, meaning that almost a quarter of all

teachers in the United Kingdom reported threats last year. In the same report, there was a

marked increase in the verbal assault rate as well. The report showed an increase of 30%.

According to this comprehensive report, 80% of all teachers experienced a verbal assault in

2014.[58] Unsurprisingly, with the adoption of trolling[59] as a typical and condonable pastime,

there has been a significant upswing in all forms of verbal assault against teachers.

 The UK statistics are, to put it in the most favorable light, bleak. Without some

counteraction against online abuse, teacher drop-out rates seem doomed to continue to rise,

and without stronger legal recourses, there is simply no protection available to teachers.

Threats are also occurring in Canadian schools. The frequency of threats differs significantly

from school to school, but teachers from certain schools ranked the probability of getting

threatened by a student, even receiving death threats from students, as a fairly common

occurrence.[60]

 In Chapter Five, Tanner detailed a story about a situation where a threat occurred

against a fellow teacher. The story culminated in a lengthy, drawn-out hearing with the school

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[58] See Garner 2015a and 2015b, Espinoza 2015a, 2015b, and 2015c, and the 2015 publication from the associated press at theguardian.com for more details on the growing problem with the teaching profession in the UK.
[59] Stalking someone online with the explicit goal of making them upset.
[60] These findings seem to coincide with Thierry Karsenti and Simon Collin's findings in their 2013 article, "Why are New Teachers Leaving the Profession?"

board because they tried to return the assailing student to the school where the suspension had

occurred. When the board determined that the child should be allowed to return to the school,

the only class available in which to put them belonged to the spouse of the threatened teacher.

When the spouse refused to admit the student into their class, they had to rely on the school's

administration to convince the board that the assailing student would be better off going to a

new school and starting there with a clean slate.

Another story relayed by Grey about an incident in another school involved a student

outburst that culminated in a death threat. Grey states:

> I was teaching, and I heard a huge bang, and then glass shattering, and I looked
> out the door to see a student cursing out the teacher across the hall; "fuck you,
> I'm going to kill you" he yelled. Death threats aren't uncommon. That kid
> smashed the window when he slammed the door. The administration did
> nothing (Interview with Grey & Cam, October 7, 2015).

Deet explained another situation that happened to them while teaching overseas,

involving a threat that led to the loss of two teachers' tenure bids. Deet explains:

> This was close to when the teacher and their spouse were terminated—which
> was […] [they were] just teaching the class, preparing for the tests, when a
> student [who] was a nice student [normally that the teacher liked]. [They] had a
> lot of fire, but [they] definitely needed to learn [control] as a lot of students do
> at that age. [The teacher and they] got into a bit of a back and forth, and it
> ended with [the teacher] telling [them] to come back after class—as [this
> teacher] usually did—[so that they could] discuss some make-up work and [the
> teacher] said something to spark [them]. I'm not sure what it was, [but the
> student] got up, and as [they were] leaving [and] said, "fuck you, I'm going to
> kill you," which is a threat that I heard that was tossed around […] but nothing
> that I've ever heard personally in Canada. So that's difficult, and [the teacher]
> couldn't get past it because that is a student bullying [them] in the eyes of the
> class, and [the teacher does] need to maintain some sense of authority and
> control. What ended up happening was [the teacher] went to the principal, and
> the principal agreed that it was a sensitive issue, and the principal went to look
> into it. The vice-principal came back in a meeting with [the teacher] and the
> other teachers; there were two [other] high school teachers there because we
> were all concerned about it. [The student] was dealing with some issues, and

basically, the vice-principal said, "we can't do anything about it because it's your words against the student's." We didn't really take too kindly to that because although that may have been the case, we are the teachers, so we're not likely to lie about these kinds of things— serious issues. It later turned out that some students came up to us and said that they did overhear [what was said], and they did tell the vice-principal, and so [the administration was] really just trying to look past it. In the end, the teacher gave them an ultimatum that [they were] leaving or this [was] being dealt with. The family was brought in. Apparently, the family was very embarrassed because of their [child's] behavior. They took it very seriously. However, I think that there was some blowback against the school afterward. The teacher and their spouse were terminated at the end of the year. (Interview with Deet, July 4, 2013).

Several teachers mentioned death threats from students, although they were clear that death threats were not ordinary occurrences in their work-life, and yet at least four secondary school teachers in a sample of only twelve secondary teachers had stories of death threats. Deet stated in their story that the teacher could not let it drop because of the context in which the comment occurred, and this caused a problem for the administration. Although it happened in a school outside of the country, it was in a school that follows the Alberta school structure and curriculum, and it bears remarkable similarities to the indifference directed at the teacher and their spouse at the heart of Aiden's death threat story. As we can see from just a few sample stories, there is a real danger in standing up for oneself within this structure, and an undeniable reliance on others for help when a teacher has to. Teachers use stories like these to relay the sorry plight of education in the province and the country and warn new teachers about how to survive in this overtly political system.

6.2.6   Physical Assault

There is a significant upswing in recordings of physical abuse between 2014-2015. The UK numbers show a 7% rise in the number of reported assaults (Espinoza 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, Garner 2015a, 2015b). Most of the informants, regardless of gender, reported being physically assaulted in some manner, and those who had not felt it was inevitable, because to all of them, it was part of the job. One of the primary/elementary teachers, Ziggy, put it best when they stated emphatically, "If you're a teacher, you're going to get hit. It's the worst-kept secret in the profession" (Personal communication with Ziggy, August 1, 2015). There are no comprehensive Canadian statistics available for assaults on Canadian teachers, but Ontario has completed several studies in the last four years, one of which concluded that 70% of teachers have witnessed or been the victim of student attacks (Smol 2017).

Tanner had to restrain a student that was fighting with another student and got punched in the face for their intervention. Both Sawyer and Navy stated outright that it is just part of the job, especially with young children. Lennox was injured on the job by a student, and there have been several stories that are general enough (they appear in different permutations from school to school) that suggest that this is a common occurrence in schools across the province. For example, one of the most familiar stories to come out of these interviews (the story appeared seven times in three variants across the twenty-nine interviewees) was the "Injured Teacher" story.

In the Injured Teacher story, a teacher is assaulted and injured by a student. The teacher is forced to apologize to the class, administration, and/or the child's parents. Two of the three variants are very similar, centering around either a broken arm or a broken wrist as the result of a tripping prank performed by a student. In one of these variants, the teacher protests having the student remain in their class, and the administration denies the request to move the

student to another class. The third story variant centers around a violent student who physically assaults a teacher trying to escort them out of the class. This variant results in the teacher falling and shattering their kneecap. As a result, the teacher has to take months off of work to recover. When they finally return to work, the administration forces them to apologize to the parents for allowing the situation to get out of hand.

These stories reveal significant beliefs about a teacher's plight in the complicated political system in which they work. It is a story that states a clear warning to new teachers that says, "This is part of the job. If you cannot cope with this, then you should find a new profession." It also communicates that the teacher is at fault for being assailed. These stories should raise questions about why they happen and how the consequences are justified. How has respect for teachers diminished so precipitously? These stories outline injustices within the system, and regardless of whether or not they are true, they are legends, which means they are expressed as truth. These stories represent ideas that many teachers believe to be true, which is just as unsettling. In the teachers' defense, many of them gave specific names of assaulted teachers, and their information was rarely more than one person removed from the incident.

There were assurances from several teachers that at least one of the variants is true (two informants named the same school in the assault, and one of them said they knew the teacher personally, so I am inclined to believe them). There are no public records available to confirm this incident, and since teachers are not allowed to discuss matters concerning underage children, the public will likely never know how bad physical assault statistics are among teachers. When I tried to get injury statistics from the NLTA, they informed me that they did not collect those statistics and advised me to consult with the Canadian Teachers' Federation,

which has never responded to any of my inquiries. However, a localized study in Ontario determined that 70% of elementary teachers in the province have experienced physical abuse, with 40% reporting personal assaults (Vomeiro, 2018).

Another form of assault that is less common is sexual assault. Assaults often center around touching a targeted portion of a teacher's body or attempting to embarrass the teacher. For example, Quinn explains, "Sometimes it happens that things get touched. Sometimes it's accidental, and sometimes it's not. It's our job to make sure that they know this is not okay" (Interview with Quinn, June 6, 2013). Quinn's spouse was "pantsed"[61] at school in front of their class, and the student involved was suspended. However, they returned to Quinn's spouse's homeroom and were permitted to finish their year. While the incident took place in Canada before Quinn's family moved to Newfoundland, both Quinn and their spouse insisted that assaults like this happen here, too.

Stories of physical assaults, regardless of their veracity, demonstrate an underlying fear of and discontent with the status quo. The fact that so many of the teachers felt that physical abuse was part of the job demonstrates a fundamental problem with the occupation. It takes further adverse action after the assault for the stories to even become noteworthy. These stories seem to communicate that people should know that students regularly abuse teachers, and teachers have no recourse through which to defend themselves.

6.2.7 Spreading Rumors and Lies About Teachers

The spreading of rumors or lies is another essential tool in the toolkit of bullies. Rumors need not necessarily be false, but they can quickly take flight as legends, and the way they grow is difficult to control. Rumors are a social bully's best friend. They can be tough to trace

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[61] "Pantsed" or "pantsing" refers to the act of pulling down someone's pants without their permission.

to the source, and if utilized well, they can significantly damage the reputation of their target(s). None of my consultants had ever had rumors spread about themselves, but the worry was there. For instance, Aiden stated:

> [A teacher in my] internship […] got asked out by a few students because [they] looked so young […] but that got around, and [they] had to put a pin in that because [they were] afraid of what it might change to […] [they] tried to keep it professional with the students and luckily nothing came of it, but that's how rumors start (Interview with Aiden, November 16, 2014).

A principal of one of the schools that several interviewed teachers came from had many rumors spread about them. Rumors about the principal were diverse. One such rumor that was repeated by several teachers was that this principal did not like children. Another rumor was that their presence in the school resulted from a transfer granted by the school board. The rumor contended that the transfer was the result of a unanimous staff petition for their removal. I could not track down where the rumors began, but they were undoubtedly prolific amongst the staff there. Even the substitutes knew about them. Stories about the principal interacting in thoroughly unprofessional ways with staff and around children ,and contradicting whole sections of the *Safe and Caring Schools* policy at work in the school abounded while I was researching with the teachers there.

Every teacher from that school I interviewed mentioned it, some in a dismissive way and some in a very involved manner. Even teachers interviewed in a far less formal fashion than sit-down interviews confirmed the rumors about the principal. When it comes to damages that students can cause with their false claims at a school, it is essential to understand that it is difficult to prosecute students for libel or character defamation. Hence, teachers, and even administration, are often defenseless against this subversive form of indirect bullying. Elizabeth de Leon studied false accusations in some detail in her 2017

dissertation, "Teachers' Descriptions Of The Impact Of False Accusations By Students And Parents," in which she lays out the inadequacies of Canadian tracking procedures and concludes that we need more administrative training on how to deal with these cases.

Outside of the one school principal, there were no stories collected about students starting rumors about teachers, yet the teachers all acknowledged that it happens. This statement is not to say that it is not common, however— just that the small sample of interviews (which did not include students) failed to net any. The only Canadian statistic I could find for it was that 13% of male respondents in an Ontario study advised that they were falsely accused of impropriety, but statistics outside of the country show far more severe conclusions. The statistics coming out of the UK indicate a more disturbing trend, stating the one in five teachers will have a false claim made against them by a student, and one in seven will have a false claim made against them by a parent (Espinoza 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, Garner 2015a, 2015b). Most of the stories about rumors collected against teachers originated from parents, other teachers, or administrators.

6.3   Typical Ways that Parents Bully Teachers

If the British numbers have any relation to Canadian numbers, about one in seven will have false claims made against them by parents. This statistic brings the false accusation rate up to between a quarter and a third of teachers having to deal with false allegations made against them every year (Espinoza 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, Garner 2015a, 2015b). In some cases, parents are using these allegations to organize the mobbing of teachers. They are verbally assaulting teachers on the Internet and in person, in front of peers and students, and harassing them through endless streams of text messages, social media posts, and emails.

When speaking to Xen about this, they said, "99.99% of parents are great, wonderful caring people. It's that other .01% that makes it awful for everyone—one bad apple, so to speak" (Interview with Xen, July 19, 2015). Parents, unlike students, do not often rely on physical assault or direct methods to bully. Instead, they tend to use indirect methods of bullying such as: ignoring, discounting, and demeaning a teacher's opinion, spreading rumors and lies about the teachers (online or otherwise), organizing groups against a teacher (mobbing), mocking the teacher (especially in public spaces), verbal abuse, harassment, or written attacks (email, and social media), and bypassing a teacher's authority and reporting the teacher for disciplinary action. One common theme residing in these methods is that each of these promotes disrespect for teachers and the occupation of teaching as a whole. These stories speak to the teachers' perceptions of parents and represent a significant problem to educators under the current system.

6.3.1   Ignoring

When I asked Sawyer if there was a difference between how students and parents

ignore teachers, Sawyer jokingly responded,

> [s]tudents never listen […] ever. How could you ever tell if they were ignoring
> you? Parents you deal with one on one for the most part […] but it's rare for
> them to show up and ignore you. They came for a reason. Mostly parental
> ignoring is done by not responding to correspondence. (Personal
> communication with Sawyer, October 25, 2015).

When a parent bully ignores a teacher, it is to make a point. This strategy comes

about in conjunction with other strategies, for instance, when discounting a teacher's

opinion or when otherwise circumventing their authority. Ignoring only works when one

can demonstrate that one is ignoring someone else. Thus, unless there is a specific

interaction to leave the teacher out of, ignoring does not work. A social venue is required

(which in modern times is often virtual) where the bully knows that the teacher will be. The

shift toward electronic forums has given parent bullies a new way to ensure that the teacher

sees that they are being ignored, and with the notions of ambient or virtual presence, the

teacher is continuously reminded of this act, making it all the more effective.

Bean wrote to me in a personal correspondence:

> [A teacher] had created a webpage for the classroom, [all of the teachers at this
> school] have to have an electronic component, but [this teacher went above and
> beyond and] linked it to Facebook. In general, the page is just for posting
> assignments and due dates, so parents know when things are due, but since it
> was linked to a class group on Facebook, the assignments sometimes came up
> in the Facebook group. One day a parent said something [negative] about one
> of the assignments, so [the teacher] spoke up to explain why it was there.
> [The individual] kept calling [them] down for the assignment, saying that it
> was […] a waste of time [they complained that the teacher was overloading the
> students because this assignment was one of three book reports due that
> semester]. [This bothered the teacher and when they] got home [they were]
> upset so [they] wrote a lengthy post explaining everything that an exercise like
> a book report […] helps with. Instead of fighting back the [original poster]

began talking to others about [the teacher] and how the school overloads kids [and how it was borderline abuse]. [They] would not acknowledge anything that the teacher said after that on the forum. They all just began talking around [them]. (Interview with Bean, March 18, 2015)

When ignoring is used to bully, it usually requires multiple bullies to ensure that the point is getting across, but even in situations where one person ignores another, the effect is isolating, and isolation is the ultimate goal of such techniques. When groups use ignoring techniques, as in the example above, it runs the gamut of communicating disrespect for the victim and any institution with which they are associated. Furthermore, actions like these devalue what little agency teachers have to deal with these issues. These tactics specifically target a victim's self-esteem, to make them feel worthless and less worthy of membership in the bully's social group.

6.3.2   Demeaning, Mocking, and Other Forms of Verbal Abuse

This strategy includes all forms of what Blase and Blase termed "direct action," including verbal abuse (derogatory comments, shaming, nitpicking, and nicknaming).[62] It also includes vulgar or obscene gestures, mimicking, and unconstructive criticism. These are statements or actions that are direct in their approach in communicating a distinct dislike of the victim—they are direct communications of hatred. These strategies demean the target. Teachers are often extremely vulnerable to these kinds of attacks because they work under a strict gag order. The NLTA's Code of Ethics forbids teachers from speaking about students, situations in their classrooms, or their careers in general. They are not allowed to publicly comment on many issues, such as how they feel about a given policy or

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[62] It is important that Blase and Blase's "direct action" not be confused with "direct bullying," because "direct bullying" implies a physicality to the interaction, whereas "direct action" merely implies a confrontational style to the bullying.

any aspect of the school board's functionality. Thus, attacking them about specific things that happened in their classes often leaves them in a position where they can get into real trouble if they respond. This situation leaves teachers continuously at the mercy of oppositional opinions in the media.

Verbal attacks take many forms. They can be public or private, but the intended effect is to make the target feel weak, stupid, weird, or isolated. Attacks may focus on a personal level, such as how a teacher dresses, or a speech impediment, or may focus on humiliation, such as the recounting or posting of materials that depict the teacher in an embarrassing light. Other common forms of attack revolve around demeaning their opinion(s). These situations can be devastating to a teacher, and we are beginning to see the repercussions of these actions. According to a series of British reports, self-harm has risen to 2% of British teachers in 2014–2015 (Espinoza 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, Garner 2015a, 2015b). Aside from this disturbing statistic of elevated rates of self-harm, demeaning them also demeans their authority in the classroom. It demeans the field of education and all occupations that stem from it. Other reports mark a distinct increase in breakdowns in teachers' relationships as a result of bullying, and it does not help the profession that anti-intellectualizing sentiments are becoming increasingly popular (Cemaloglu 2007; Gemzoe et al. 2002).

Mocking is a distinct subcategory of this kind of abuse because of the delivery system used in these attacks. While verbal abuse is about demeaning a victim in a direct verbal attack, mocking also contains an essential aspect of humor. This inclusion makes it different than other forms of "direct" verbal assault because the mocking focuses on the audience. The goal with mocking is humiliation. Mocking events are often retold for new

audiences, morphing from a dramatic performance to a personal experience narrative. Through this process, the victim becomes a means of gaining social status for the bully and subsequent storytellers. This status is gained entirely from the humor used to "put the victim in their place." The gained social capital is the critical difference between mocking and verbal assault. Mocking is aimed at creating a positive response from the audience, while verbal assault is an attack used to demean the victim. Mocking lends itself equally well to public and private forums (in public forums, there is a dramatic quality taken on by the assailant). In the case of most verbal assaults, the assailant must have little respect or empathy for the victim.

In many ways, this makes mocking a far more insidious problem than verbal abuse because it obfuscates the disrespect directed toward the victim under the veiled protection extended to humorous remarks in our society. Thus, humor allows parents to say what they want to teachers while risking very little other than possible having to apologize. The ability to say, "it was just a joke," or "just kidding" provides the bully with an easy escape back into the realm of public acceptability. Peyton gives a strong account of the protection that humor provides an attacker. Peyton writes:

> It was about halfway through the teacher's year from hell […] so maybe late January early February […] and they started getting emails from one of the mothers telling them how disgusting she felt their views on women were […] they were taken aback by the email, so they showed it to the principal who spoke with the mother about the inappropriateness of her email […] but that apparently got her back up. **She began posting […] [m]emes and Internet jokes that insulted [their religion and these became] commonplace, and because they were supposedly funny, no one seemed to care that they were gross misinterpretations [**...] She even organized a petition against the teacher […] and they don't even believe any of those things (August 17, 2013)

Peyton commented about the teacher's "year from hell" several times in the interview, but they spoke only briefly about the content of these attacks, stating that in the entire year, parents only spoke up once against the content of these memes. Usually, the group chose to either support them or remain silent about the content. This behavior seems to be typical for online interaction. In conversing with Lennox, it became apparent that teachers commonly become the subject of discussion for class parents on Facebook community forums, in a small way like celebrities with a small following. Lennox narrates:

> [The administration] refused to step in to resolve the problem. [The teacher] was told several times that the [administrator] felt that they should be able to handle these little problems [their self] […] but when it's one person against a group […] I mean that stinks, and some of the other teachers were showing [the teacher] the posts that were going up on Facebook about [them]. It was awful. Whole sections were jokes about how [the teacher] dressed, how [they] smelled, and how they got [the] job. The teacher [spent] all year [dealing] with [them] and even then it wasn't fully resolved (Interview with Lennox, August 17, 2013).

Lennox's story depicts a classic example of how complaining about teachers can become a means of socialization. Lennox's friends showed the teacher the posts that mocked them, their profession, and their sexual orientation. These jokes, instead of raising hackles, prompted people to reply with increasingly offensive material. According to Lennox, the forums became communication via one-upmanship. The parents hosting and communicating on this forum had very little respect for teachers, their profession, or education in general. According to Aiden, this is a familiar feeling:

> People in this province don't care about education [...] if they did, then being a teacher in Newfoundland would be different. We are always wondering when departments are going to be downsized, when we are going to lose our classroom supports, or have our class sizes increased because "it doesn't affect the quality of education of the children." Do they even think anyone believes that? Maybe they do (Interview with Aiden, November 16, 2015).

Aiden used several popular expressions to explain their views of the external perception of teachers, stating that the worst of these expressions is the long-standing proverb, "Those that can, do. Those that can't, teach" (Interview with Aiden, December 15, 2014). This demeaning of the teaching profession sums up the entirety of the social perception of teaching. The idea that teachers failed into their role as teachers and that they are not successful individuals pursuing meaningful careers is ridiculous. Teaching degrees are highly competitive, and teachers work hard to get into their professional programs. Despite this, teachers are often viewed as a monetary drain on our society. Aiden has become increasingly disappointed by the attitudes of their community toward teaching. They went on to say that there are everyday things that get thrown in their faces all the time. Statements about teachers having their summers off with pay, playing with kids all day, the greed of teachers, the laziness of teachers, and the entitlement of teachers all work together to create a cultural devaluing of teaching. Education in this province has been cut or reduced on an almost universal scale.

Aiden was not alone in this perception; many of the teachers interviewed (certainly all who have less than ten years of experience) felt that teachers were by and large undervalued. Lennox and Holland were both quite open about the types of complaints leveled against teachers and their profession on community forums. They explained that there is a general perception of teachers and administrators as being lazy. They felt this came from incorrect assumptions around the number of Personal Development days, the summer vacation, and the incorrect notion that teachers only work when they are in school. Another topic that many teachers felt that they had to defend was their rate of pay. The assertion that all teachers are universally overpaid is a topic that comes up a lot on

Canadian teachers' forums. In reviewing online comments about the teachers' pay scale, there are several common misconceptions. These misconceptions seem based on incomplete understandings of how to read the public document explaining teachers' pay scale, how teachers get paid, how they get promoted, and how seniority works.

It should be unsurprising, then, that online mobbing's growth in recent years has begun to ramp up. According to surveys in Canada and the UK, there is a direct link to teacher burnout and mobbing exposure.[63] The examples in this collection that featured mobbing showed a reliance on mobbers to use personal details in a teacher's life to attack them, rather than centering around incorrect or unpopular professional decisions. However, only three mobbing stories were collected, and as it is such a small sample, it is hard to determine any trends from this. Outside of Canada, mobbing numbers are not much better understood, but we do know that in the UK, about 60% of teachers report online abuse, and this, coupled with the 80% who reported verbal abuse, shows that mobbing is probably a pervasive subset of either form of bullying. These numbers certainly support teachers who think that outsiders perceive them and their profession negatively.

6.3.3 Circumventing the Teacher's Authority or Reporting the Teacher for Disciplinary Action

This method is by far the most common type of abuse, and while it does not, at first glance, appear to be bullying, it can be utilized quite aggressively. Take, for instance, the Febreze Incident discussed in the introduction. The mother first called and verbally

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[63] See articles "Investigating the Relationship among the Level of Mobbing Experience, Job Satisfaction and Burnout Levels of Primary and Secondary School Teachers" by Veysel Okçu and Hakan Cetin and "Nearly four in ten qualifying teachers quitting the classroom after one year: Figures disclosed showed that only 62 per cent were still in teaching a year after gaining their Qualified Teacher Status" by Richard Garner.

assaulted the teacher. When she did not get what she wanted out of the exchange (because the teacher hung up on her), she immediately went over the teacher's head. This action got the teacher suspended, albeit with pay. This reaction was also not enough for the mother, so she took it to the media. She wanted the teacher fired without a hearing, so she took the story to the press. Each escalation came with increasingly dire repercussions for the teacher, and the teacher was left undefended in the public eye at each step in the escalation. Deet gives an example of this kind of escalation:

> There's two students in class from town, and they were just wrestling one day with their hands when the teacher was lecturing. So [the] comment was, "quit holding hands and let's get going." Like there's a connotation there […] But the students laughed; both students laughed. They looked kind of sheepish, though, and they paid attention for the rest of the class. During parent-teacher interviews, [the teacher] was forewarned that there was a parent […] upset about something [that was] said in class and [the teacher] knew which parent it was and [they] knew they were coming for parent-teacher interviews so [the teacher] knew [they were] going to have to deal with something there and [they] felt like [they were] bullied in the parent-teacher interview because [they] were repeatedly attacked for making these comments and fostering inappropriate relationships […] just making inappropriate comments that make the students feel vulnerable or something like that. So what [the teacher] tried to explain was that [their] son wasn't paying attention and was holding [another] student's hands. They were wrestling for an eraser that's why they were doing that in class. And this is what [the teacher] said to them and they […] you know like [they] said, these were the connotations and the students laughed and [the teacher reiterated that they were] "sorry that it made their son feel this way can [they all] move on from this" but it was just like this [parent] kept on ratcheting it up to the administration. So [the teacher] said that's fine. So that's not good enough so [they told the parent that they were going] to talk to the superintendent […] ok, that's fine. And then it dawned on [them] in this interview […] [it] was sheer luck that [the teacher] was being evaluated by the superintendent during that class, and so [the superintendent] actually had notes. So [they were] able to go and say, do you want the official notes? This was observed, the superintendent was there, and he didn't say anything afterward because [the superintendent] […] understood that it was jovial. (Interview with Deet, July 4, 2013).

Deet makes it clear with this example how reliant on external power the teacher is in situations of escalation, as they are utterly dependant on their administration to back up their actions. The current configuration of the power structure behind educators has upset the power balance between parents and teachers. By removing their agency to defend their actions, the provincial government and NLTA (as the government requires all public-school teachers to be a part of the association) have created a situation in which teachers rely on their bureaucracy for power instead of their professional status. Thus, the institutional problems with the hierarchy have bled into the relationships between parents and teachers. It is now to the point where confrontations that begin with non-institutional bullying often extend into the realm of institutionalized bullying. Both Tanner and Deet intimated the notion that the professional model (education-as-service model) has gone too far. They suggested that this has turned the parent into the client instead of the child. Since "the customer is always right," this has translated into a lousy power relation for the teacher.

6.3.4 Spreading rumors and lies about the teachers

The spreading of rumors and lies is a classic way to derail a victim. In this strategy, the bully spreads stories (they may be true or false), and these stories paint the victim in a humiliating or demeaning light. The use of this method by parents does not differ significantly from its use by students. This method can be one of the hardest forms of bullying to deal with because the story often changes after each telling. Thus, tracing it back to its point of origin becomes tricky if not outright impossible. Structurally, these stories share very little in common with each other. The only structural factor that links them together is the theme, which will universally explain or highlight embarrassing

portions of a victim's life. In addition to the traditional means of spreading these stories, social media now expands the target audience while accelerating dissemination speed, making rumors spread on the Internet, a particularly tricky problem for teachers because social media is mostly unmonitored.

There are so many forms of social media now that it is impossible to monitor them all, and no one associated with teaching can be held responsible for doing this, because it is a far bigger job than any single school administration could hope to handle. Stories started in online forums seldom remain there. The best example of an electronic series of rumors against a teacher stems from one of the informants, Peyton, whose story appears in Chapter Three. The repercussions from that attack did not subside until the teacher moved away from the community. Similarly, Holland's mobbing story detailed in the next section could also be classified as spreading lies and rumors, as it also featured a problem that got so bad that the teacher had to deal with it by leaving the community.

6.3.5 Mobbing

In this strategy, the bullying parent enlists the help of other parents to demean and isolate teacher(s) using a combination of other strategies to do so, such as verbal abuse, embarrassing stories, rumors, and mocking. Online forums expand this list to include genres such as memes and jokes. A classic example of a teacher facing a mobbing situation came from Lennox. In the first interview with Lennox, they spoke about an incident where a group of parents ambushed a teacher at a parent/teacher meeting. It was the first parent/teacher night of the year. At this meeting, the teacher always has a short twenty-minute general information session about course expectations and what their children can expect in the coming school year. However, the meeting suddenly became an attack on the

teacher's teaching methods. According to Lennox, it all began when a parent interrupted

the teacher as they began their presentation and said:

> We've heard that you are a really tough marker and hard to please, and we were
> wondering what you're going to change this year so that your standards are
> closer to those of other teachers? (Interview with Lennox, August 17, 2013).

According to Lennox, the meeting derailed at this point, and before the teacher could

answer the first question, they were inundated by other questions. Lennox states,

> [The teacher] was bewildered by the first question [...] and insulted, very
> insulted. If their standards are higher than other teachers—which they shouldn't
> be [...] The curriculum literally dictates the standard [...] So [the teacher]
> stood [their] ground. [They] told them [that they enforce curriculum standards]
> and [they] told them if they had any more concerns, they are welcome to bring
> them to [them] after [the] presentation. The worst thing that you can do is
> become defensive in situations like that, so [the teacher] silenced them by
> plowing on through the presentation. They didn't like it, but [the teacher]
> wasn't going to stand up there and try and defend [themself] against
> accusations from people that didn't know [them] (Interview with Lennox,
> August 17, 2013).
> In Lennox's case, the teacher was able to turn the situation around before it got out of

hand, but this is quite rare. The strategy Lennox featured to counter mobbing was through

aggressive engagement with the parents. Essentially, the teacher counter-bullied in order to

regain control of the quickly escalating situation. In most situations, though, mobbing is

challenging to overcome, especially when there is already an unfair power dynamic between

the victim and the mob. The introduction of online forums and social media pushes these

groups into becoming more common because technology greatly aids and accelerates the

meeting of like-minded individuals. Although not all of the teachers interviewed knew

specific online mobbing examples, many felt that it is a significant problem facing teachers

today. Holland's recounting of an incident in a local school explains why this type of bullying

is at the forefront of teachers' minds these days. Holland said:

[A] parent posted a status about how [their] child gets bullied, and none of the teachers do anything about it. With that, it was a chain reaction of parents commenting about the teachers here [...] no names were mentioned until [a single teacher's name] was posted by a parent going on about how much [their child] hates [said, teacher] […] The principals at both schools [the junior and senior high schools] saw it [at] lunchtime [that day], and one of them called the [parent] to tell [them] to take it down and apologize to the teacher for the misrepresentation. [The parent] then came in [to the school] minutes later with the child [neither of] whom [...] had [anything] to say to [to the teacher] about why [the child hated them so much]. The only reason [the child] could think of was that that the first day of school [they] asked to go get a drink and [the teacher] said no [because recess was just over and they did not want to start a drink parade]. [The teacher] met [their malcontent] again two weeks into the school year during curriculum night. [The parent refused to] look at them or speak to [the teacher]. At the end of the night, the other grade five teachers approached [the parent] to remind [them] how inappropriate it was to do that on Facebook and to tell [them that if they] had a problem with any teacher it was important to contact the teacher themselves or the school principal [...] not post it on social media. [The malcontent never] apologize[d] at all. Instead, the parent created another group, a "community" group, which became a site dedicated to hating the named teacher, except this time, they were careful not to use names. The teacher became completely alienated from the entire community outside of the school [as a result] and requested a transfer out of the community at the end of the year because there was nothing that the school could do to stop the parents from writing inflammatory comments about the new teacher (Interview with Holland, October 28, 2015).

This story displays a fundamental problem for teachers with social media. Due to the limited nature of teachers' public communication, it is hard for teachers to speak out on forums where the speakers are known. No one came to the aid of these teachers, and it bears mentioning that other teachers did not rally to their defense due to the cone of silence under which they operate. It also bears mentioning that a forum explicitly created to ridicule local teachers was created and then re-created because the community felt it necessary to have a commons in which to complain about teachers. Such a forum goes a long way toward showing the ignorant and disrespectful nature with which some view teachers and education. The parents posted derogatory comments about teachers' religions,

mannerisms, and other identifying features, and the administrations felt that they could do nothing to stop it because they were not named outright on the forum. From what Holland detailed, though, each teacher's identity could have been derived from the forum's information, so it was not anonymous. Until the forum members began naming individual teachers explicitly, the administration felt it was not their place to comment on it. Is there a better way to handle these situations going forward?

Moreover, should administrators be responsible for this kind of monitoring? This behavior is so disturbing because it is public. These individuals were not anonymous. This event demonstrated that enough people felt it was all right to have an entire forum dedicated to hating its teachers, at least in one Newfoundland community. This forum was important to this group because they immediately replaced it with another when told to take it down.

This narrative exemplifies online mobbing because it is a bully using others to isolate their victim from the community. It is a rare event that a victim of mobbing can win a confrontation with their bullies (especially when it becomes a matter of free speech, which teachers do not have when it comes to defending themselves), which is why mobbing instances against teachers are so problematic. Holland's only suggestion for new teachers (besides not teaching in that particular community) was that when teachers find themselves in a position like this, they need to lean on the teaching community and garner support within the community to take action, because group action is the only defense against this kind of mobbing tactic at this time.

6.4   Typical Methods that Teachers use to Bully other Teachers

Teachers are sometimes guilty of bullying other teachers, as well. The list of ways to sabotage and disrupt other teachers is long and inventive, and an unfortunate part of many teachers' lives. Teachers work in a highly competitive environment (especially teachers in urban areas), which creates an atmosphere for trouble. Many actions can cause friction in these close-knit school communities, and dealing with cliques and negotiating social strata can be both difficult and overwhelming to new teachers.

At the non-institutional level, bullying between teachers tends to happen for personal reasons. Either it is to communicate dislike for the victim or gain esteem by placing themselves higher in the social strata. The rationale for the activities can be almost as diverse as the actions used to communicate them. They range from squabbles over misunderstandings, to jealousy, to feeling threatened by incoming teachers. The bullying acts between teachers can take a myriad of forms ranging from the utterly overt to the most passive-aggressive machinations imaginable, but regardless of the form, they all communicate an underlying message of apathy and hate.

6.4.1 Spreading rumors or lies about another teacher

Much like the use of rumors and lies by parents and students, rumors and lies are wielded against other teachers in the hope of changing the group's perception of their target. Bullying rumors or lies always feature the target in some way that either demeans or embarrasses them. For instance, Lennox recounts a situation between a teacher and the other teachers at their school:

> So everyday teachers have a ton of unpaid time that they work. They have to arrive before the students (that's unpaid) to receive the students. They have to work over their unpaid lunches as "duty teachers," and they have to monitor detentions and see that the students either get on the bus or to a guardian [who] is again, unpaid. After this, they have to remain on school grounds until they are allowed to go home. This time is also unpaid. So teachers are touchy about having to work on their unpaid time because it is a waste of their valuable time. Anyway, this teacher had a medical condition that greatly reduced their ability to digest food properly. So the teacher is forced to either starve all day or eat intermittently throughout the day so as to pace their digestion. This meant that the teacher was taking long lunches because their doctor had said that's what they needed to do, but to the other teachers, this teacher just looked like they were being lazy and so rumors started to flow around the school detailing how lazy this teacher was. When the medical condition was revealed, the other teachers did not believe it and started even more rumors about the teacher faking a condition to get time off during the day (Interview with Lennox, August 17, 2013).

This example shows how organically rumors can grow, from a simple beginning based on truth to something altogether different. This teacher became a pariah at school until the administration "fixed" the problem by creating an unequal work schedule for the teachers' unpaid work at the school. The administration's solution forced this teacher to work every morning and afternoon duty shift, which means they now worked during more of their unpaid time than any other school teacher. As unfair as it was, this solution calmed the other teachers down because they no longer felt cheated out of their scant free time.

The positive side of rumors is that studying them can reveal vital information about the culture that created them. Rumors exist for many reasons. Bullying rumors exist primarily to reinforce power relations through the communication of hate. However, to the trained eye, bullying rumors convey more than just hatred; they communicate world views that explain why the apathy is accepted. Rumors contain the world views of both the bully and the culture in which the bully operates. If an audience sees fit to believe a rumor or lie enough to perpetuate it, it conveys a vested interest that the audience shares with the bully.

Rumors highlight the boundaries of social etiquette, and bullying rumors always highlight boundaries in reference to the victim acting outside of cultural propriety. They mark these boundaries in a way that makes it clear what is socially acceptable and what is not. In this way, the information conveyed within these stories is extremely useful for understanding both the social boundaries at play in the culture and how to navigate them appropriately. Teachers had little to say in defense of rumors except to say that it was everyone's job to keep rumors from circulating, but if it becomes a problem, the administration is the only body empowered to stop them (although this very thing was attempted in the last example and failed). This type of action becomes bullying when weaponized rumors target and isolate individual teachers, which becomes an accepted part of the group's regular interaction. Although this kind of bullying tends to range significantly in terms of aggression directed at the victim, so long as the intent is to cause harm by denial of access to socialization, this very much remains a form of socially tolerated bullying.

6.4.2 Ignoring the victim; Encouraging others to ignore the victim

I did not gather many stories about ignoring and ostracization specifically, but Peyton's story from Chapter Three and Holland and Lennox's stories from this chapter indicate that this strategy still functions well as a tool of alienation. Kingsley mentioned teachers having to sit alone at lunch in their musings about what the public does not see, but aside from several other teachers mentioning cliquishness in the lunchrooms, there were no other specific examples. Both Ziggy and Sawyer mentioned that being left alone in the lunchroom was alienating, but they also observed that there was often no malevolence in it. They had no examples of being explicitly ignored by a group of teachers. Although it sounds juvenile in behavior, this form of bullying is quite common in and out of school environments. In the work environment, this could be as small as not allowing teachers to sit with the group during the lunch break, or it could be as bad as a group of teachers punishing another teacher by ignoring them overtly and aggressively. Peyton talks about this in their story about a community-led mobbing attack on a teacher:

> It didn't take long for [that parent]'s views to be taken up by some of the staff. [The parent was] well-known in the community, and [the teacher] was new, [they'd] just transferred in. There were a few [teachers] that stuck with [them], but most began distancing themselves from [them]. It really didn't take that long. If [their friends] weren't around [they would end] up sitting alone somewhere […] They were always professional. They were just distant […] It was a lonely time for [them] (Interview with Peyton, August 17, 2013).

6.4.3 Sabotaging another teacher

Sabotage is another common way to passive-aggressively bully others. Methods of sabotage differ widely, as they are limited only by what the saboteur feels they can do covertly, and because they remain anonymous, it is one of the forms of bullying that can

work to deflate the typical power relations in a bullying scenario. Sabotage can be used against someone further up in the social hierarchy. None of the consultants had any examples of this type of sabotage, though, because, as Navy so clearly stated, "It's not done. It's not worth it" (Interview with Navy, May 2, 2013).

For Navy, the very idea of doing something like this seemed too risky. According to them, "In teaching your reputation is everything" (Interview with Navy, May 2, 2013), and risking a bad reputation is too much of a risk for those on the lowest rungs of the social order. This notion seems to have held, because throughout the collection process, I collected no tales of revenge sabotage by substitutes or untenured teachers against teachers further up on the social strata. Thus, the stories collected correlated with normal power relations in bullying situations, meaning that the bully was the one with the power in all of these scenarios.

The forms of non-institutionalized sabotage collected in this survey were: withholding help, theft, and impeding assistance. The first form of withholding help ranged from not standing in for a teacher when they needed to leave a room (for example, an emergency bathroom break), to withholding helpful information such as sample class plans or helpful tips to avoid causing extra work for the victim. Ziggy gave a clear example of this in their first interview stating,

> [A teacher] asked [the teacher they were subbing for] for [their] class plan for the day because the plan left on [their] desk was very broad. [The teacher they were replacing] told [the substitute] to just use the plan from the neighboring class for the day […] When [they] asked, [the neighboring teacher] said [they were] busy and that there was no plan written up and that [they] should just make [their] own up […] which as a substitute there is never time for […] so [they] went back to [their] class and had to scramble through the class all day trying to come up with things to do because there was no class plan (Interview with Ziggy, April 23, 2014).

Although this example seems like it could be innocuous, it became clear throughout the interview that these teachers either went out of their way to make things harder for the substitute whenever they subbed, or they simply worked to deny them help. At best, their actions displayed a total lack of empathy for the substitute; at worst, they were actions meant to cause harm. Regardless of their motivations, they succinctly displayed their complete unwillingness to help or even socialize with the substitute, and the administration picked up on the animosity and stopped requesting the substitute.

In other stories, teachers in neighboring classrooms had refused to stand in the hall to monitor the classroom for another teacher when they needed to leave. This situation sounds minor, but when a teacher needs to go to the bathroom, they have to either ask their neighbors to stand in for them, wait until the next free period, which could be hours away, or call the office and have an administrator come to stand in for them. This denial forces them to have to call in the administration, which might or might not be something that puts a black mark on their name in the future (because the teacher cannot handle their bathroom breaks well enough not to waste the administration's time).

The final form of sabotage collected came in the form of theft or accusations of theft, or damage to personal property. Sawyer related a particularly poignant example of this:

> [A teacher] in [their] second year of subbing got a call one night from the teacher that [they] had subbed for the day before. The call was asking about a pair of glasses that had gone missing from [the teacher's] desk. The teacher on the phone accused [the substitute] of either [stealing the glasses themselves] or of knowing the identity of the student that had done this (Personal communication with Sawyer, October 10, 2014).

The substitute was never asked to sub again at this school because of this sabotage. Sabotage can be a useful passive-aggressive technique, especially when used against those of lower standing. A teacher can make even a peer look inept, overwhelmed by the job,

dishonest, or even anti-social through its use. The only limitation of sabotage is the line

between what is considered bad manners and what is openly regarded as reprehensible

behavior. Bullies can remain successful if they are perceived as having poor people skills

or having poor manners, but if the culture actively condemns their actions, this behavior

becomes far less effective.

6.5   Vernacular Solutions

Information about vernacular solutions came in two forms. First, from being asked

directly about the solutions to the typical abuses, and second, from the descriptions of

actions taken to curb such behaviors. The direct method extolled some excellent

professional advice that, while applicable in most professional situations, was emphasized

as necessary for all teachers. Specifically, all informants discussed the importance of taking

and keeping notes. What to note was more variable, but suffice it to say, in any conflict

with students or parents it was quintessential to survival. Noting interactions with other

teachers and administrators only came up as a strategy when the abuse was already beyond

the point where civil interaction could not resolve it. Most teachers agreed that if a

colleague continued to act against other teachers in an anti-social manner, then recording

interactions with them was a viable option to curb the behavior.

A majority of consultants had suggestions about approaching many of the typical

abuse situations highlighted above with students and parents. The same teachers had

significantly less input about dealing with anti-social behavior directed at them from

parents, peers, and superiors. These recommendations included tips about proper classroom

control to deter and prevent many of the above situations from developing between

students and teachers. All of the teachers agreed that counter-bullying was to be avoided at

all costs. However, many of the stories addressing individual situations of bullying, such as Lennox's example of the first parent-teacher meeting or Deet's example of how a teacher handled two students wrestling in class, could be considered examples of teachers wrangling control back through counter-bullying (aggressively ignoring the parents in the case of Lennox's story, and embarrassing the students in the case of Deet's example). Given the context of these situations and the personalities of those involved, the interpretation of the "bullying" event would fall into one's subjective interpretation of bullying. In Deet's example, a second teacher (the superintendent) in the classroom that day interpreted the interaction as jovial and deemed it as not bullying because of this. Despite this, it is understandable how someone could interpret that event as homophobic, humiliating, or both.

Thus, the illustrations in the stories about how to curb bullying sometimes ran contradictory to the handling of actual situations. Several of the teachers, Deet included, mentioned before in some of their stories that they felt that these situations could have been handled better, in retrospect. With students, examples of advice about issues of control tended to reflect more directly with actual situations. For example, when asked about prevention, Navy offered a variety of preventative measures for student bullying. For Navy, everything was about empathy with students. They advised that spending the first week building a trust-based atmosphere in their classroom was the best way to approach these situations. Navy stated:

> I think the biggest thing there is, is building a rapport with your students. Letting them know they can come talk to you if they need to. I think that's key for so many areas, but especially that. I also make sure that they know that if they need to talk, there are a number of different ways that they can do it. Like they're not going to raise their hand and say, "Can I talk to you," like we go over this in September. I tell them that they can write notes to me. Even if it's

just to say that they want to talk to me in private. I think that's the key […] building a rapport with the children and letting them know that they have that outlet. And we do talk about anything that makes [them] feel uncomfortable. It doesn't have to hurt physically […] Anything that makes [them] uncomfortable, uneasy, or that [they] don't think is right, and [they] don't know what to do about it. Tell me. Knowing that I will help goes a long way towards resolving most of these issues (Interview with Navy, May 2, 2013).

Navy was also an ardent supporter of the *Roots of Empathy* program, a program that revolves around bringing an infant into elementary school classrooms to teach children empathy by showing them how to care about others. Navy said, "when it's run according to the program […] they [the students] really do learn empathy from it" (Interview with Navy, May 2, 2013). Navy felt that connecting to the students by creating a classroom guided by etiquette that reinforced empathy and respect for others was ultimately the best way to deal with the full spectrum of bullying expected from students. Navy's feelings about the empathetic classroom resonated with all of the other teachers interviewed; however, several teachers advised that this empathetic classroom looks drastically different in primary, elementary, middle school, and high school classrooms, and that the same tactics may not be transferable from one school to another.

When asked why they thought some strategies were transferrable and some not, Navy responded with, "every school has a different culture" (May 2, 2013). In expanding on this notion, Navy said, "every administration is different, and that sets the tone for the school" (May 2, 2013). This difference to which Navy was referring was the different etiquette that can dominate the school's internal workings, that radiate out from the administration. To place a counterpoint on this, when Aiden, Deet, and Tanner discussed this, as teachers who spent years working in First Nations' communities, they felt that the surrounding culture's impact had at least as much to do with the cultural differences

between schools. Aiden felt strongly about this, stating that it was "the community [that] defines it. [The community is] why death threats are more common in [this school] because they are more common in this community, and so they get discounted more easily here" (June 8, 2015).

The vernacular solutions that were mostly absent were those about how to best deal with parents, peers, and superiors. Most of the advice given to new teachers about dealing with superiors tended to be along the lines of keeping one's head down, doing one's work, and not calling on them unless necessary—but all of these pieces of advice work contrary to a respectful and safe work environment. Following this, most of the advice for dealing with parents was documentation and knowing where one stood with the administration, because if one was in good standing, they could count on them to back them up. The unfortunate portion of this is that if one was not in good standing with the administration, they could almost count on their authority being undermined by a capitulating administration. Thus, most of the vernacular solutions offered up were practical solutions aimed at survival, not how to use the system to their advantage or how to thrive in the position.

The vernacular solutions also sometimes conflicted with each other. For example, Navy outlined that gaining the students' trust was paramount to creating a safe and respectful classroom. While all teachers would probably agree with this, many would agree with Emmerson's suggestion about communicating all student issues to parents immediately, which could certainly impact the level of trust between students and teachers. There are many variables at play in every situation outlined in this chapter, and all need to be understood before specific advice can be helpful to new teachers. Thus, the collection of

vernacular solutions in this dissertation fell a little flat, because few solutions were so universal that they could be widely applied. Most require a detailed understanding of the situation and the surrounding cultures of the school and school community. They would also need to be reviewed to make sure that they are inclusive in approach and do not conflict with fundamental education policies. More collection of such strategies is necessary. I am confident that there are great strategies out there in use now, but we must be cautious in our approach to learning, collecting, and disseminating them to prevent accidentally promoting conflicting or possibly harmful strategies.

6.6   Final Thoughts about this Typology of Abuse

This typology grants a blueprint for understanding what kind of abuse is prevalent in the current education system. From it, we can develop strategies that help address bullying within the professional cultures of the schoolhouse. The forms of bullying documented in this collection highlight social power imbalances within the system. Right now, it takes a benevolent and almost ever-present principal to combat these passive-aggressive strategies, especially regarding policing social media. Holding principals responsible for what happens online feels like a scapegoating strategy, as no one person can hope to surveil all of the social media accounts of every student, parent, and teacher of a given school community.

The solution to online abuse is the same as with any abuse; it is simply the creation of a more caring culture that makes assaults an immoral activity, and that starts with holding people accountable for what they say to each other. In another vein, the presence of stories that demonstrate a teacher's reliance on principal or parental power also demonstrates the gross inadequacies in the power balance in schools today. The stories that

senior teachers tell new teachers communicate many necessary lessons for new and aspiring teachers. These stories teach them what to expect on the job, and present vernacular solutions and/or avoidance strategies for some of their career's ugliest problems. However, some of this thinking reflects a broken system, because much of the information relayed in these stories is about coping, and as discussed in Chapter Three, when an anti-bullying system relies on a victim to fix their own abuse, it is fatally flawed. Finally, this collection's stories reveal a disturbing level of distrust between new teachers and the administrators that they rely on for work.

Looking at the collection as a whole, we learn that despite the problems with students and the limitations under which teachers currently act, many teachers have found ways to sidestep official policy. The practical, unofficial solutions that teachers use, such as documentation, parental involvement, framing problems as shared challenges for teachers and parents, and involving administration to protect themselves, convey important information that new teachers should know given the current climate in the schools. There are still stories that emerge from the student collection that raise red flags, such as the rate of physical assault (especially in elementary schools), rising rates of verbal assault, and the almost incomprehensible effectiveness of student non-compliance strategies. Teachers are finding workarounds for these problems every day, and these solutions need to be collected, reviewed, and, when appropriate, disseminated throughout the teaching network.

These stories also demonstrate that, concerning the teacher/parent relationship, there has been a significant power shift. Teacher reliance on backing from a parent or the administration for negative reinforcement leaves teachers in an extremely vulnerable position. Several teachers openly admitted that they hated the fact that they dedicate whole

portions of their day to "CYA" (Cover Your Ass) activities just so that they can defend themselves when either the parents or the administration decide to come after them. The fatalistic inevitability that painted the reasoning for these strategies is yet another troublesome red flag. Blase and Blase (2003) have effectively documented how this points to diminishing returns from teachers regarding their teaching quality.

The different subdivisions of parental bullying illuminate some growing problems teachers are aware of and cautiously monitoring. The defensive stance under which teachers now work culls ingenuity from the field, reducing the overall quality of education we pass on to our children. Every moment a teacher spends on these CYA activities is a moment taken away from the actual job to which they have dedicated their lives. The new propensity of parental groups to engage in the online mobbing of teachers (using a variety of forms: posting rumors, posting lies, and the direct verbal assault of teachers) is something that needs addressing, or we will see the impact in the teacher retention rates in the province, and the country as a whole.

The bullying between teachers illuminates several types of non-institutionalized bullying, all of which may seem petty, but cumulatively, they can damage a teacher's psychological health. Since their teaching peers are the only people with whom teachers can discuss specific traumatic events (outside of seeking professional help), the denial of access to this group can be devastating. It bears mentioning that these separate spheres of bullying do not occur in vacuums, and their students or superiors can also bully teachers who are the targets of bullying from their peers. A teacher may very well be bullied from several sources simultaneously, thus increasing their isolation and eliminating any sense of safety in the workplace. When the workplace is no longer safe for those that work there,

morale fails. Bullied teachers begin looking inward, their responses become about

defending themselves, and their creativity levels suffer (Blase & Blase 2003). As Peyton

intimated, their world becomes about survival from their "living nightmare."

Conclusion

There were three primary focuses of this project. First, to address and typify teachers'

mistreatment in Newfoundland and Labrador, and place as human a face on this problem as

realistically possible. Second, explain bullying in relation to folklore to demonstrate that

bullying cannot be addressed unless the folklore surrounding and facilitating it is addressed

simultaneously. Finally, to collect vernacular solutions and recommendations that teachers

have come up with to prevent and avoid examples of previously highlighted maltreatment,

with the hope of formulating suggestions that could help benefit teachers as a group

moving forward.

Chapter One revolved around showcasing the negative perception of teachers present

in online media. By analyzing the Febreze Incident and the corresponding news releases

that broadcast it to the world, the chapter demonstrated that even if this negative sentiment

represents a small portion of the population, it is regularly present when a teacher is

featured in a negative light in the media. Many improvements have been developed to curb

the Internet's inherent negativity since the inception of this project. For instance, CBC

News adopted a policy to eliminate anonymous comments on their articles. Since then,

they have even removed the ability to make comments on certain articles. However, there

are often forums created on social media (the reporters themselves often have their own

social media pages) such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, which feature the same

articles and invite discussion.

Despite this, comments continue to appear regularly on articles or on forums reacting

to articles that criticize individual teachers and educational institutions in the province.

Even with the elimination of much of the online anonymity, these types of comments

persist. This persistence further suggests that teachers' negative portrayal in the media is an accepted aspect of our society, because commenters seem to have no reservations about putting their names behind their ignorant ideas. The articles depicting teachers in the COVID-19 pandemic or the Robin McGrath trial (2019-2020) reveal that this negativity persists today (see Appendix 7A & 7B for sample comments). Even the positive comments voiced in defense of teachers, the profession, and the association, reference the open hostility toward them in public venues. Displaying collected stories about teachers and their hardships can help educate outsiders about how things are in the schools. Reading the comments on forums, it has become clear that there is a disconnect here, and many commenters are utterly ignorant of the situation in schools.

Chapter Two worked to explain the current state of education in the province and the limitations under which teachers operate to explain the challenges that this study encountered. The chapter revealed one of the primary areas of concern for research about teachers' maltreatment in the province because it points out the flaw in the clearance procedure for school board assistance—the school board's adherence to insisting that a principal sign off on access to teachers is profoundly concerning. If there is to be any degree of transparency for school administrations in this province, exceptions must be made allowable for credible academic inquiries. The old policy for conducting academic research still makes sense for most studies, and it is important that it remain intact because it exists to give the school board the power to limit the impact of a researchers' presence in the school environment. However, when research involves studying the administration's treatment of staff and students, and the appropriate steps to limit the impact on the school environment have been taken (such as not interviewing staff on school property or limiting

the study to outside of school operating hours), this one-size-fits-all protocol is fundamentally inappropriate.

Chapters Three and Five concentrated on the relationship between bullying and folklore to show that there is a long history of the use of folklore in bullying and vice versa. Furthermore, both chapters work to explain how normalized bullying is within the Newfoundland culture. Whether we are looking back at the representations of bullying in "Jack" tales or examining the contemporary legends and proto-legends in this collection, bullying is seen as a "normal" activity. The perception of bullying as a rite of passage is perhaps one of the most insidious parts of this process. The inclusion of bullies as mere obstacles in a life story diminishes the bully's agency in the event. Turning a bully into a necessary obstacle featured in a critical event in a victim's life story does two things; it tacitly condones their actions (because their inclusion is necessary), and it dehumanizes them. It demonstrates and reinforces a reversal of the same lack of empathy that the bully showed the victim. While this composition allows the victim a chance to regain their agency in the drama, regardless of whether the story is framed as a Hero or Survival Tale, it fundamentally normalizes the abuse and increases the empathetic disconnect between bully and victim.

Also, in Chapter Three, Peyton's story of isolation is used to demonstrate another disconnection in our understanding of bullying. This disconnect exists between the official understandings (official legal understanding vs. official academic understanding) of bullying, and it fundamentally complicates and hinders the creation of solutions to the problem. The seemingly unreconcilable chasm existing in the official streams of understanding forces current solutions into the unofficial stream. Regardless, a cultural

change is needed to address the bullying issue. At the very least, Canada should have one

official definition of bullying. Since the solution to bullying is a change in culture, not law,

this definition need not be punitive (as is the current case with the provincial definitions).

The experience of conducting this research has left me with many unresolved questions

about how to tackle this problem outside of the schoolhouse. Is there a way of creating

small grassroots programs for educating the public about bullying? Is there a way to engage

with local artists to help with this problem? Would movements like t-shirt or picture

campaigns supporting slogans like, "Harassment is Bullying," "Assault is Bullying,"

"Threats are Bullying," "Sexism is Bullying," "Homophobia is Bullying," "Discrimination

is Bullying" help in changing the public perception of what bullying is in the adult world,

and steer it toward a more academic understanding? A change in perception is necessary to

stop definitional confusion feeding into the unofficial stream from the official. In schools,

the next steps are a little more straightforward. Small changes in the outcomes of existing

programs set alongside the introduction of new FAIE implementations could help lay a

solid foundation for a more consistent approach to all forms of bullying in school.[64]

Chapter Four explains the history of the sub-discipline of Folklore and Education and

points out that it offers the best solution to this problem, as the solution falls into the realm

of a culture change. Linda Deafenbaugh's 2017 thesis, alongside Dr. Deeksha Nagar's

2015 guide, presents essential opportunities to create inroads toward this solution in

schools. What starts as a cultural reinforcement of tolerance through students exploring

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[64] The 2006 document, *Many Voices: Combined-Grade Correlation Package*, lays out an excellent basis for a program focusing on community. It demonstrates how a program can be expanded in many different ways as the students involved in the program progress through the years. Higgins & Eleuterio 2011, Nagar 2015, and Defeanbaugh's 2017 examples provide excellent starting points for developing local programs for the exploration of multiculturalism, tolerance, and cultural change in school environments.

their own cultures can be further advanced by using the empathy learned from this exercise as the foundation for cultural change in the rest of the community. This tested strategy is why Olweus' *Whole School Approach* works; because it addresses **all** bullying placed in a student's path instead of concentrating on specific bullying events. It also bears noting that on the *Public Safety Canada* page it states:

> […] clear and consistent behavioural norms. The use of **positive** and **negative** consequences shape a student's behaviour. Problematic behaviours are decreased when they are consistently identified and swiftly reprimanded (Public Safety Canada, 2018).

Many of the teachers interviewed advised that positive reinforcement only is a problem in our schools because it reinforces a division between actions and repercussions. While all of the teachers believed that positive reinforcement should come first, removing the ability to impose repercussions damages students in the long run and undermines teachers' authority and professional judgment in the present.

Chapter Six expanded the Blases' 2003 typology of teacher mistreatment by adding on the abuse that teachers encounter in their lives that does not extend from the administration. Of course, abuse is more common (both institutional and non-institutional) when there is an abusive principal in control. Bullying principals are a terrible thing. These principals poison the culture of a school from the top down. No successful anti-bullying implementation can be achieved in an atmosphere of fear. The interviewees spoke of several abusive principals—and these principals exist outside of the publicly known incidents mentioned in this thesis. Some of these principals are known to have bullied teachers for their entire careers, from inception to retirement, without being noticed by their superiors. Bullying between teachers, parents, or students (non-institutional bullying) exists far more commonly in spaces that are already dominated by a bullying mentality. As

mentioned before, when there is bullying in the adult portion of the school, it will be present in the students (Blase 2003).

One of the most important findings in Chapter Six was that despite teachers having a wide and varied repertoire of solutions, advice, and suggestions about how to deal with the varying types of bullying teachers encounter, these pieces of advice can range from that which is truly inappropriate, to those that are appropriate only under specific circumstances, to those that are more universal in their application. It is clear from some of the stories in this collection that despite understanding that counter-bullying should never be used as a solution to bullying, some teachers either do not see their actions as constituting counter-bullying, or feel actively justified in its use. Deet mentioned that the teacher in several of their stories was profoundly aware of their possible missteps in this regard. They mentioned that while some of their stories made the teacher "sound horrible," the context under which the interactions took place was not intended to be negative (Interview with Deet, July 4, 2013).

The teacher from Deet's story still carries around the guilt of feeling partially to blame for the series of events that led to the suicide of one of their students, even while fully understanding that they could not have taken another action once the student overstepped the boundaries of acceptable behavior. The truth is that even though Deet advised several times during the interview that there might have been better ways of handling the students in these scenarios, it is evident from their stories that there was fundamentally sound communication in the teacher's classroom. Interaction there was based primarily on trust. The teacher may have used humor as a control mechanism, but their humor was not intended as harsh or demeaning. It was meant to keep the classroom

conversation light and positive. Deet's examples show the limitations of using humor as a control mechanism in a classroom, and highlights situations where the students have misconstrued it. These stories act as cautionary tales about when not to use humor in this manner.

Deet's examples illustrate the kind of information and advice that teachers discuss with other teachers. It is not to say that it is not beneficial to everyone to know the limitations of humor as a method of control, but only some teachers use this method of control in the first place. Like most of the advice coming from these interviews, Deet's examples are highly contextual. They are useful to teachers who embrace the same style of classroom management techniques, but are less useful to teachers who do not. When it comes to bullying, some of the humor falls into the arena of counter-bullying, which works against creating a safe place for all school community members. Thus, when it comes to stories about bullying and the advice that teachers have towards it, more work needs to be done to make sure that teachers' perceptions of bullying are aligned when it comes to identifying it and selecting the appropriate measures to curb it. As discussed in Chapter Three, despite the schools in the province having a unified definition of bullying, everyone (teachers included) is still left to make their own evaluations about what is and is not bullying, making the messaging in bullying stories variable on the subject (for more information about the problems with teacher's individualized perceptions of bullying see Naylor et al., 2006).

A review of the official system is needed because bullying principals still exist, and it is up to the official system to ensure that teachers in the province work in a non-abusive environment. Works like Sarah Cassidy's 2015 article "Teachers Face a Storm of

Bullying" or Helene Mulholland's 2012 article "Bullied Teachers Fear Culture of 'Macho Managers'" show just how multi-directional the abuse of teachers is becoming (see also: Okcu & Cetin 2017, *The Guardian* 2015, for more information on abuse).

On the other hand, schools are the perfect place to begin grassroots cultural changes. Folklore and Education can bring the non-formal knowledge of parents, community leaders, and artists back into the schools. Two key focuses of Folklore and Education Implementations are tolerance and appreciation, either of which improves empathy towards others. Empathy is anathema to bullying, and folklore has the power to make normal that which may appear strange to the students of a class's dominant culture. This normalization removes paths to othering from the bully playbook, in the best manner possible. It helps bridge cultural gaps between students and strengthens multiculturalism within a school, when approached correctly.

The province needs this kind of training in the schools, and Folklore and Education offers the most holistic approach to this. There are many local artists in the province that make themselves available to schools. Arts NL and the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council are already participating in twenty-three ArtsSmarts program implementations across the province, bringing local artists into the schools to teach art education. This program encourages participation in arts and improves the appreciation of art and culture with participating students (ArtsNL, 2020). These implementations parallel *Many Voices* in their structure, but they do not fully mirror the outcomes. Tweaking their objectives toward focusing more on cultural sensitivity as in *Many Voices,* or toward Linda Deafenbaugh's tolerance education, would improve exposure to multiculturalism, tolerance, and empathy education (Pearson 2006; Deafenbaugh 2017).

The ArtsSmarts program offers an excellent opportunity for implementing empathy-based training that could extend the empathy outcomes in school that start in the Roots of Empathy program into the remaining grades, and reinforce the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* goals. Implementations like this provide an opportunity to create cultural change from the ground up, as outlined in Deeksha Nagar's 2015 guide, "A Guide to Building School Culture Using Folklore Methods." Thus, the first steps to creating positive cultural change have already been taken in some schools. The next step is convincing and explaining the added benefits of Folklore and Education implementations to education officials, and either tweaking the current arts programs or introducing new programs that parallel them and work in tandem with those already in existence. This process of bringing empathy education into schools increases the chance that the *Safe and Caring Schools* policy will create a safer community space for all. Each program creates school traditions, and with enough of these positive traditions reinforcing each other within the school culture, the chance that they will positively impact the school's culture itself is improved.

For teachers, Folklore and Education implementations will ultimately help with the interactions between themselves and students. Empathy improves respect. However, it also allows teachers to interact as peers with key members of the surrounding community, including local artists, community leaders, and parents. This development provides an excellent opportunity to help reintegrate teachers into the surrounding community and disintegrate, at least, some of the unofficial barriers that make teachers "others." While this may not impact certain differences (official differences) such as the silence under which they operate, it could help eliminate the falsities surrounding the occupation, like the idea that teachers fail into their positions, or the long list of fallacies about pay rates and

summer vacations that teachers endure (Staff Reports 2011). It could also prompt teachers

to give their opinion on many things that they are allowed to give their opinions on, by

providing a forum in which they could feel comfortable doing so.

Finally, more collection of teacher maltreatment stories is necessary. These stories

paint a picture of the dark side of teaching, and they place a human face on events that

build empathy for the victims. Empathy is the key to victory over bullying. Greg Jobin-

Leads quotes Gibrán Rivera in his book *When We Fight We Win! Twenty-First Century*

Social Movements and the Activists That Are Transforming Our World, stating that:

> […] if you look at evolution for what it is and you look at the human species,
> you see that we couldn't have made it without connection, without empathy,
> without turning to one another, without caring for each other. These are the
> evolutionary traits that allow us to get anywhere that is good (156).

These stories may highlight the continuance of abuse, but disseminating them could help

pull problem administrations into the EAP crosshairs. Despite the NLTA's insistence that

the EAP is primarily involved in helping administrations improve themselves, it is also

clear that when administrations are deemed toxic by the public or by the EAP, the system

has a way of dealing with them.

There have been substantial improvements over the last eight years with some

forms of bullying in the province's schools. The *Safe and Caring Schools* policy has

developed considerably over this time, and with each new version, it gets better. However,

we are still miles away from addressing the bullying occurring between adults in the school

community. While the *Safe and Caring Schools* policy may include teachers, parents, and

administrators, it is still clearly an afterthought, and it does little to reinforce any desired

outcomes with these groups. It is still painfully obvious that how parents are allowed to

treat teachers is more a function of how involved the administration is with supporting

teachers' decisions, than it is about respect for teachers. Folklore and Education

implementations can help develop mutual respect between groups by providing forums

where they must interact as peers, but they are not the full solution to the problem. The

variability in the perception of what constitutes bullying in the adult world needs to change.

Fishy smelling student sprayed down by teacher:

Fried capelin lunch provokes Febreze treatment

CBC News · Posted: Feb 06, 2012 5:35 PM NT | Last Updated: February 7, 2012

The furious mother of a student at a central Newfoundland elementary school says her 10-year-old son came home saying his teacher had sprayed him with air freshener after his lunch of fried fish.

Patti Rideout said she was "very hurt and very angry" over her son's treatment at Twillingate Island Elementary School last week.
Christian Roberts was teased and bullied after eating a meal of fish at lunchtime last week, says his mother. (Facebook)
"I feel like he's been embarrassed, bullied, and I think what she [did] was very disgraceful," Rideout told CBC News. "I think my son was treated not like a human being — I think he was treated like a dog, or a cat … I'm very hurt and very angry over this."

Rideout said she made her son Christian a meal of fried capelin Thursday for lunch. When Christian went back to school, she said, the students started teasing and laughing at him.

His teacher put him in the hall for a period — then sprayed him with Febreze. Rideout called it bullying, and said school officials are doing nothing about it.

"I want her fired…I don't want it to happen to any other child — no child deserves to go through that," she said.

Rideout said she called the teacher at home that night looking for an apology, but the teacher hung up. During a meeting with the school principal on Monday, Rideout said, the principal told her that people make mistakes, but provided no apology. A spokesperson for the local school board confirmed a complaint had been received from a parent and that the matter is under investigation. (CBC News. 2012)

Appendix 1B – Timeline of the Febreze Incident

February 2, 2012   The day of the incident.
According to the news sources the mother Patti Rideout contacts the teacher and is hung up on.

February 6, 2012   Patti Rideout goes to principal and principal offers no apology for the actions of the teacher.

February 6, 2012   Article published by the CBC details the above (see article, "Fishy smelling student sprayed down by teacher").The only comment from the school board is that "a complaint had been received from a parent and that the matter is under investigation." This seems to suggest that the facts in the article are uncorroborated. Article is published anonymously.

February 7, 2012   VOCM Blogosphere picks up the story and a significant online debate ensues about what the proper action was that should have been taken by the school board.
It is also picked up on "Crosstalk" and the *Brody and Samantha Show*. *Sightsnbytes.wordpress.com* publishes, "The media is NOT your friend. By Ted White.
Fark.com opens forum, "Apparently you can't just febreze those little shiats you teach in class." Posted by Dumbass.

February 8, 2012   *The Telegram* publishes, "Mom surprised by media attention." By Jim Hildebrand.
The Telegram publishes, "Apology sent." By Andrew Robinson.
CBC "Crosstalk," "The boy who was sprayed with Febreze: did the parent over-react or did the teacher go too far?"

February 9, 2012   The story is picked up by *The Daily Mail Reporter* in the UK, "Teacher suspended after spraying down 'fishy-smelling' boy, 10, with air freshener." Article is published anonymously. Article notes that school officials have apologized but that Rideout demanded a personal apology from teacher or that she be fired.

February 10, 2012   The incident is mentioned on *The Talk*, and the actions of the teacher are openly condemned by three of the show's hosts; to the credit of one of the hosts the teacher's missing perspective is mentioned but she is quickly silenced by one of the other hosts because they believe that there is no defensible scenario for spraying a child with chemicals.
The Telegram publishes opinion column article, "Missing the point. Letter to the editor." By Pamela Blackwood.

The Telegram publishes opinion column article, "Febreze-bearing teacher gives boost to bullies." By Brian Jones.

February 12, 2012   Blog published by Grandfallswoman, "Febreze Revisited," stating that a letter was sent by the mayor of Twillingate and the parents of the other children in the class to *The Telegram*. The letter was written from the perspective of the other parents and paints a very different picture. The introduction highlights that the teacher in question "could not speak for herself" so the mayor and the parents of the other children spoke for her.

February 18, 2012   *The Telegram* publishes, "Bullies need to be taught a lesson." By Bob Wakeham.

February 22, 2012   *The Telegram* publishes, "Teacher in Febreze Incident back at work." By Colin Maclean.

February 23, 2012   *Ifactory.ca* publishes, "Flabbergasted by Febreze." By Sean Cadigan.

Appendix 1C – Febreze Revisited – Blog post by Grandfallswoman

Rebuttal letter to *Telegram*, later posted on grandfallswoman's blog:

CONCERNED PARENTS
– February 12, 2012 at 18:35:28

CONCERNED PARENTS OF THE TWILLINGATE ISLAND ELEMENTARY GRADE 5 CLASS

We, as the parents, feel it is important to let the public know that there are 2 sides to the "febrezing" story and our children should not be portrayed as mean, malicious bullies or teasers. That could not be further from the truth. We are not trying to speak harshly of the mother or the victim, but the public should know the story through the students' eyes. Majority of the students in the class came home and told the exact same story to their parents: In the day of the incident, Christian came back to school from lunch smelling of capelin (which we all know can be of a strong scent). The children complained of the smell in the classroom. This being typical behaviour of 10 year old children. It was then, that Christian starting chasing the children around the classroom, trying to hug them, and spreading the capelin scent on their clothes (laughing while doing so). You can imagine the commotion that this caused in a class of 20 children. When the teacher came in, she tried to get control of her class.

Acting in compassion, meaning no harm or embarrassment to the child, she then went looking for some sort of deodorizer. She found some febreze, sprayed some in his locker and a little on his shirt. The student remained in the hallway for a short period of time until everything calmed down. He then continued to work with the other students on their social studies projects. End of Story! Our children are devastated because they are being portrayed as bullies. They feel confused because they don't understand why this innocent act has gone to extreme measures. The students are concerned that they will lose a teacher that they respect and admire. There's no denying her skills as a teacher. We, as parents, feel she should return to class and rebuild her reputation as the fine teacher we know her to be.

The above letter was sent to the Nova Central School District and it is also mentioned on other media. In reading your editorial, and the fact that you should know Journalism 101, there are TWO sides to every story as mentioned in the above letter. We are not rude, obnoxious adults of bully-raisers nor are our children brats or miscreants. This could not be further from the truth. You wrote that Ms. Rideout said that the mass media attention has taken her by surprise but to date she is still willing to talk to anyone who wants to listen. Instead of the incident being dealt with within the school and the school district, it is now being aired across Canada and the United States as an one-sided story. This has left us no

choice but to defend us and our children because we were judged very unfairly. Until it hit the media and they were being called bullies, our children didn't think much about the incident. Our children want to resume normal everyday life in their classroom with their teacher. AN APOLOGY FROM YOU IS EXPECTED (Grandfallswoman 2012).

Appendix 1D – Online reaction to Febreze Incident

I have tried to show a cross section of all of the differing opinions available on the articles that have been included in this section of the thesis. Please note that all of these comments are taken as they appeared in the articles from which they originated. I have noted which articles that these comments were attached to at the end of the line. Please see Appendix 1A for more details about where in the timeline each article appeared.

The Telegram Opinion Columns

Dave McGowan:

"that teacher needs to be fired" (Jones, 2012).

The Telegram Opinion Columns

Disillusioned Parent:

CYFS and the Child and Youth Advocate aren't involved. Local authorities aren't investigating under the Criminal Code of Canada/Persons in Positions of Trust. The matter was handled internally by the district school board. The teacher eventually admitted wrongdoing. After a few days off [they return] to [their] position with the caveat that [they] now [have] to apologize to the victim in front of the class. [Their] colleagues in the NLTA and Safe Schools claim [they were] merely trying to help a victim whose mother erred in feeding him capelin at home for lunch. Normal procedure is to isolate victim, continue teaching all the other children and if a smell is involved, spray the victim with a chemical soup. The theory that half the parents are a "rude and obnoxious crowd of bully-raisers" may very well be true. The really sad part though is that teachers who have such vast influence on social behavior are promoting this type of conduct as helpful and normal (Jones 2012)

The Telegram Opinion Columns

Richard:

The fact that The Telegram is publishing such biased material when the teacher is not permitted, by nature of [their] profession, to give [their] side of the story is what is truly ridiculous about all this. Teachers make thousands of decisions in the run of a day and they are not all easy ones. What may have been an error in judgement was most likely done in the best interests of the student. The teacher may have been trying to diffuse a bullying

situation. However, we do not know the facts as we have not heard the other side of the story. Instead, your editorial is content to paint the teacher as villainous. It is quite frankly irresponsible and you should be ashamed (Jones, 2012).

Daily Mail Reporter Online News Comment Board

Mike:

I'm with the teacher on this one. Seems from what I read, the child was getting ridiculed by [their] classmates over the smell, and the teacher was trying to help. Maybe not the ideal situation or solution, but as a parent, I would be thanking her for trying. Shake it off, mom. (Daily Mail Reporter, 2012).

Daily Mail Reporter Online News Comment Board

Avon:

The are better ways to deal with things like this instead bullying the child yourself. This teacher is acting like a immature child and a bully, she needs to be fired if this is the way she is going to handle things like this. If she sprayed my child with anything she would be very scared and think twice about putting stuff on other people's children (Daily Mail Reporter, 2012).

VOCM Blog: "No common scents"

Bullying. stop it:

ok, so everyone agrees that the teacher made poor judgement. which cannot be fixed. of course [they] went about things the wrong way. but what"s done is done. i don"t think [they] deserve… a with pay holiday for this. however losing [their] job over this would just be wrong. [They're] only human. you live and you learn. now, put yourself in this childs shoes and [their] mothers shoes. this child has been bullied about the main problem. and then [they were] bullied again about the problem the teacher had created. it"s simply not good enough. if this was my child and i didn"t get as much as an apology from the teacher. i probably would have did the same thing. but as a mother, letting something like this slide, and to possibly happen again to another child would only be causing a bigger problem. it has to stop. i"m sure every teacher who has read this story has thought about how good their judgement has been towards the students. let"s just hope that it"s a real eye opener to most to make sure these kinds of things don"t happen to our children. it is their job after all. (Barnes, 2012).

CBC Newfoundland and Labrador

Troy N Lilly Bishop:

What they neglected to say in this article is the student who was sprayed by the teacher has been repeatedly bullied and that's why the parent isn't happy with the teacher. The school board even said that the teacher went about it the wrong way. The teacher should of went to the parent and not the child and should of talked to the parent about the bullying much earlier. Bullying is a big problem in today's school but it seems alot of the teachers could care less about it and just collect their paycheck. Why don't news media tell the whole story on the internet lol (Bishop, 2012).

Sights&Bytes.wordpress.com
"The Media is not your friend"

Ted White:

I believe the culprit in this situation is the media. There is enough going on in the province these days that stories like this should have been kept for the community newspaper, or not published at all. CBC news went one step further by actually posting a picture of the ten year old child on their website. God knows [they] must have already suffered embarrassment enough, but to not only have the story broadcast on national television, but on the Internet as well. Bully for you CBC, you should know better! (White 2012).

Appendix 2A – "Guiding Principles" an excerpt from the Safe and Caring Schools Policy

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Safe and caring learning environments are built on the following principles:

• a positive learning environment is respectful and caring of all of its members;

• fair and consistently implemented school policies and codes of behaviour contribute to positive environments and reduce bullying, racism, and other forms of harassment;

• an inclusive curriculum develops an understanding of the underlying causes of violence and inequality, recognizes diversity, promotes equal opportunity, and enhances safety, respect and mutual understanding;

• positive social behaviour, beliefs and values are taught and reinforced throughout the curriculum;

• disciplinary practices are pro-active and based on principles of mutual respect and shared responsibility; and

• the involvement of all members of the school community through shared decision-making, problem solving and inter-agency collaboration ensures these principles are universal (5)

These principles were updated in 2013 edition of the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy*

to read:

3. Guiding Principles
Safe, caring and inclusive learning environments are built on the following principles:
3.1. Everyone has a role and responsibilities in building a safe, caring and inclusive school climate. Success depends on the active involvement of all stakeholders who are committed to a shared vision, common goals and the on-going work required in achieving them.
3.2. Building a safe, caring and inclusive school environment requires a focus on developing respectful and caring relationships throughout the school community – among students, among adults and between students and adults.

3.3. Inclusive educational practices must be embedded in all aspects of the learning environment to support the well-being and achievement of all students.

3.4. Fair and consistently implemented school policies and Codes of Conduct contribute to positive learning environments and reduce bullying, harassment, intimidation and discrimination.

3.5. Positive social behaviours must be taught, modelled and reinforced throughout the curriculum and imbedded in all aspects of school life.

3.6. Inter-agency collaboration and community partnerships are essential components of building and maintaining a safe, caring and inclusive school environment.**5** Government of Newfoundland and Labrador - Education I Safe & Caring Schools Policy - Revised • 2013

3.7. The creation and maintenance of a safe, caring and inclusive school requires creativity, on-going collaboration and recognition of the complexities involved. For example, the size, population and location of a school will affect school climate and community partnerships. (4-5)

Appendix 2B – First Interview Questions

Interview Questions (Core questions)

1. Please define bullying in your own words.
2. How do you tell if a child is being bullied?
3. How do you tell if an adult is being bullied?
4. What do you do if you see a child being bullied?
5. What do you do if you see a child bullying another?
6. What do you do when you see other adults being bullied?
7. What do you do when you yourself are bullied?
8. Have you ever looked back on your life and realized that you have bullied others? If so, can you give an example?
9. Have you ever seen a colleague being bullied?
10. Have you ever had a parent attempt to bully you into some course of action for their child? If so, did it happen in front of minors?
11. Have you ever seen a parent bully another teacher or administration member into some course of action for their child? If so, did it happen in front of minors?
12. In your opinion what is more harmful direct (physical) bullying, or indirect (social) bullying?
13. Has a child ever attempted to bully you into a course of action? If so, can you explain the situation and how you dealt with it?
14. How do you feel about the monitoring of children's myspace, facebook, and twitter accounts?
15. Does what you teach in class differ from the advice you would give your own child? Would your advice differ depending on the situation (direct vs. indirect)?
16. If a child came to you and told you that they were being bullied what is your personal procedure for dealing with the problem?
17. What kind of interaction do you have with the current anti-bullying/anti-violence campaigns? Do you think that they are effective? Can you suggest any way to improve their message?

Appendix 2C – Final Interview Questions

Final Interview Questions:

1. Do you believe bullying must be repeated to be considered bullying?
2. Have you ever been bullied by a child? Has a child ever tried to bully you? If so, what did you do?
3. Have you ever heard of the term mobbing? If so, do you think it differs from bullying? Or is it the same thing?
4. Has a child ever challenged you in class? What do you do when a child acts in a deviant manner in your class?
5. How are deviancy and challenging different from bullying in your opinion?
6. Do you have any stories of bullying that took place while you were teaching? How did you react? What would you suggest to a new teacher dealing with the same situation?
7. What kind of training has your education provided you with to better deal with bullying in your occupation?
8. Have parents ever challenged you? Have parents ever tried to get you to change a child's mark(s)?
9. Have you ever seen or heard about other teachers being bullied by parents?
10. Have you ever been bullied by another teacher? Have you ever been alienated by other teachers?
11. Have you ever heard about other teachers being bullied by another teacher? Have you ever heard about this from a child?
12. Have you ever been bullied by an administrator? Have you ever witnessed a teacher bullied by an administrator? If so, were there children present?
13. Do you feel well protected against bullying in your job?
14. How do you feel about how substitute teachers are treated by the system as a whole? Do you feel that bullying of substitute teachers is becoming institutionalized? If so, how so? Can you give me an example?
15. How do you feel about the methods used to select substitutes? How do you feel about their treatment in general? Do you think that there is any security in being a substitute now? If so, can you explain this to me?
16. How do you view the organizational within a school? Do you see it as a fairly democratic endeavor or do you see it as a pyramid power structure?
17. Do you feel that there is a growing sense of entitlement in students and parents?
18. What, if anything, do you think would help new teachers deal with occupational bullying? Do you have any recommendations? Can you give an example of how this would work?

Appendix 3 – Rehtaeh Parsons

The P/PM in Ontario was updated in 2012, ultimately as a result of the Rehtaeh Parsons case in Nova Scotia.[65] At this point, bullying became redefined in Ontario as a **children's crime**. The new policy states,

"bullying" means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a **pupil** where,
(a) the behaviour is intended by the **pupil** to have the effect of, or the **pupil** ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of,
(i) causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or
(ii) creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and
(b) the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education" (Ontario P/PM #144 2009, 2).

By changing the word 'individual' to 'pupil' in the definition, the Ontarian government

has effectively redefined this P/PM as intended only to students, and thus children.

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[65] For more information about the Rehtaeh Parsons story please see Canning 2021.

Appendix 7A – Comments Associated with the Robin McGrath Case

August 19, Tara Bradbury, a reporter for *The Telegram,* posted @tara_bradbury,

Assault/threats trial of elem school principal Robin McGrath continues. A teacher has testified McGrath once held scissors up to a devel delayed child who had just pulled cords from the smartboard, "If you do it again I'll cut your fingers off." She felt it was empty threat...

Kimberly Churchill responded with,

So more than one teacher knew and protected the abuser & not the vulnerable innocent child entrusted in their care?! How do special needs parents like me "trust" those we are told to trust when things are hidden & covered up to protect their own jobs! Despicable. Unforgivable!

@newfiejo responded with,

Dam right you have to live with that for the rest of your life. Like you actually cared, he got caught so you can't hide it anymore. You should of reported it ASAP! Correct me if I'm wrong, do teachers have a professional oath to follow when it comes to child abuse? Charge her

AS Sullivan responded with,

There is no way I would let that happen to any child let alone an especially vulnerable one. I can understand the teacher being intimidated and frightened, however, her own morals and ethics (and job obligations)should have overrode those feelings and she should have protected that child immediately. Then made a call to the authorities. Wow.

In response to an article in *The Telegram,* "McGrath spoke of having made a child soil himself and about hiding knives in his office, witness says" NL Proud posted,

Former Principal Robin McGrath is a monster.

Robin McGrath has assaulted, abused, and harassed children and teachers in his care at every school he has ever taught.
Children were so afraid of him that they would collapse in their chair with fear at the mere mention of his name, and teachers were so afraid of retribution that they remained silent.
All those who abuse children don't deserve fresh air - and that includes Robin McGrath.
While Capital Punishment does not exist in Canada or Newfoundland and Labrador and has not since 1976, we strongly agree that exceptions should be made for those who would use their hands to abuse a child.

Child abusers need a short drop, and a sudden stop.
Robin McGrath needs to be jailed for life.

Judy Manning responded with:

They ALL deserve what is coming. Fine to jump ship right before it comes out. They are all guilty. Either by action or inaction. If these witnesses were so terrified imagine how terrified the children were. No sympathy from me. THEY are all guilty.

Norma Newman wrote:

I can't believe this went on so long as it did and no one had the guts to stand up to this piece of shit !you have a full school of teachers and one bully controlled all of them this is really hard to believe . Why do so many ppl choose to ignore or hide what is happening around them because he was the principle he abused his authority to the max and his colleagues allowed it they should all be facing charges with him! He's nothing but a bully ! You wonder how kids become bullies they had a principle show them first hand how to be one .Then they do this anti-bully stuff in school and the program is lead by a bully well done let's see if he can bully his lawyer into getting him off with just revoking his degree & banning him from teaching bet that's all he gets but then again we had a teacher bully in school and no one ever said anything about him cuz I guess back in our days that's the way teaching was done

Lynn Applin responded to the above with:

I want to point out the Whistle Blower stories. They are often the one who lose their jobs and are no longer employable. Same as ladies who file sexual haressment suits often lose their jobs.
What this man did to those teachers is probably not much different. He was in a position of power and used every inch of it to control/manipulate his staff.
While I do not agree with them hiding what he was doing ... I can certainly understand how their minds worked.
I had an employer tell me once that if I ever spoke his name or some of the things that were said or done, he would find out and make sure I was unemployable. For a young female age 23 this was a scary position to find myself in. If it happened today I would probably have a different reaction but back then I took his word as gospel. (Yes it is may seem silly now but it certainly wasn't at the time).
So don't judge them too harshly until you have stood in their shoes.

There are similar comments on forums related to almost all McGrath articles. The above defense of victims was the only defense I could find on comment forums on Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter from the articles relating to the case. Many comments became personal attacks on the witnesses that came forward,

Lloyd Mushrow commented:

The teacher appear worst than him for allowing this to happen,they should have known better to put their own jobs before the rights of the children. Using the excuse of repercussions for him is the weakest excuse ever, thought more about their career than doing the right thing to protect the most vulnerable the children. Fire the works of the them, has none of them understand their jobs

Very few in the public seem to understand that the teachers were also victims of the abuse. Ryan Cooke, a reporter at CBC News wrote a twitter post on August 25, "Day 7 of Robin McGrath's trial. Crown prosecutor Shawn Patten has called a new witness — a teacher at the primary/elementary school where McGrath was principal" (2020b). In subsequent posts under this title, Cooke captures two quotes from the trial that show the impact of this victimization:

[I thought] let me get out of here and do the right thing once I'm away from here. But trust me. I knew every day that something needed to be done. I knew that these were innocent children and trust me I knew I had a duty to protect them and I know I fell down on that duty.

I went and told them I couldn't work in that school anymore, that I had to be in a new school and I wanted to tell them why. I couldn't do it. I couldn't find my voice.

Appendix 7B – Comments Associated with COVID-19 and Teachers

Two articles (CBC News 2020c, CBC News 2020d) posted by CBC News between August 31st and September 2nd, 2020 demonstrate a negativity level toward teachers that is truly ugly despite many of the comments being in defense of teachers' stated hesitations.

For example, 2020c generated these comments:

Jay Brent writes,

I'm reading some of these comments and I am completely dismayed at the responses as it shows that people don't really understand what it is that teachers (And some parents) are fighting for. First, teachers want to be in school. They do not want to be 100% online. Second, I keep seeing "kids need to be in school it's the new normal". But it's not a "new normal" !!!! it's pretty much completely normal! Lol!!! No pexiglass to separate. Class sizes up to 38 in high school. Poor ventilation. What's different? Wear a mask (some of them won't listen) in the hall!? There's nothing different! Third, I keep seeing, "well we had to adapt" teachers need to adapt. That's so unfair. It's literally a teachers job to adapt. We adapt on a daily basis to meet our students needs. The issue is the plan is not giving us room to adapt! Everything is pretty well the same as it always was when you walk through those school doors even though everything else is operating at a portion of the capacity. Really people! Bars even invested in patios, pexiglass, reduced capacity to enable social distancing to keep people safe.
Any time you think it's only "about the teachers" Remember teachers are also parents who have seen what it's like to be in a school, and they are afraid for their kids, too. Teachers shouldn't be made to feel guilty about wanting to be safe. They have every right to worry about their health given the circumstances and next to no PPE provided. We are not health care experts with proper training. Most people would refuse to walk into a small room right now with 35 other people in close proximity with no PpE. Why should teachers and students be expected to do that? Class size and staffing are key issues here.
And don't forget. What happens in a school will have a trickle down effect. Hospitals will be affected if there is a major outbreak. Daycares will be affected. Stores and business will be affected. Just think about all of this before you dismiss the concerns of parents and teachers.

Sue Dodge writes:

Listen...it's NOT gonna hurt a kid to miss a year of school due to a life threatening virus. I think they're ALL crazy..putting the kids & their families at such a high risk. How long do you think we're going to last WITHOUT a case? Look at Montreal..didn't get the day..they went to school Thursday...had a case..kids told to stay home Friday..why? NOBODY to teach them....so foolish..

Don Rose Dwayne Black writes:

The NELSD could not organize a one car parade.
It's not about the kids, it is about directors / the higher ups who sit in their offices outside of the classrooms making up silly policies.
Why not reach out to industries who have continued to operate during Covid. No doubt there are some who have struggled but also some who have thrived.
But no Stack and all the Asst Directors and that joke of a school board think they can do it better
I wonder what will happen in a covid case enters the schools.
Ms. Fitzgerald will have some fun doing contact tracing.
30 kids with 30 friends who in turn have 30 friends (already up to 27,000 people self isolating

Despite the legitimate grounds that teachers and parents on the forum are arguing against the

re-opening of schools, comments like the ones below still appear:

Carig Kukoc:

Ontario teacher unions just files OHS complaints. I can only assume Newfoundlan won't be far behind.

And:

Reply to @Carig Kukoc: If there's a group that will work relentlessly to not work, it's teachers. I remember when the profession was noble.

The second article, CBC News 2020d, was met with open hostility online:

Dwight Crosby:

"Teachers called back to work 1 week early". No wonder there's a grievance. Being called back early after sitting around binge watching Netflix since March is a real slap in the face. Charlie Chafe

Using students as pawns during this crisis is despicable. Defund the NLTA.

SamSmitty:

As I don't suffer from the current covid hysteria if NL is looking for scab teachers let me know. I'd love a cushy teaching job with a pension. Degree in engineering and masters in business. High school math and physics would suit me best.

Fredrick Obrien:

Reply to @William Squires: excellent comparison.

Not only cancel school, outsource education to an online education company.

Teachers can use up sick leave, collect EI. Pension contributions frozen until schools are reopened, with that teachers eligibility for retirement gets delayed.

Schools not be opened until a proven Vaccine is available. Proven vaccine usually have about 4-5 years of testing, but we want to ensure the safety and health of the teachers.

Darryl Martin:

Reply to @William Squires: Health care workers have appropriate PPE and safety procedures.

Robin Wheel:

They certainly had no problem following the advice of public health when they were advised to close schools. Now they think they know better than public health? Come on teachers, think outside of the box and come up with solutions that work. Here is your chance to shape the future, so try to be a positive example for your students.

John Smith:

so it's OK for teachers to go to Walmart and the restaurants and the gas station...but ask them to go to work? They will fight it tooth and nail....

David News:

So so many issues so many people want something different or more.

The government should simply close school for the year. Get a better handle on Covid-19 and hit the reset button next fall.

By the time we add up all the costs of back to school it is likely to rival the cost of CERB. Completely crazy

Robin Wheel:

Reply to @David News: Right! It becomes a bit ridiculous. And the media and their analysis, opinions, and non-stop interference doesn't help!

Lola Rose:

This is total nonsense by the NLTA. Most teachers are overpaid for little work. I never heard of such foolishness. NL currently has 1 active case.

Bill Water:

Given that the NLTA has had 6 months to prepare for this date and that the membership are all highly educated people the response of the teachers and their leadership has been deplorable. Where are the constructive solutions. School shifts. Increased online teaching. Focusing on core curriculum during this difficult time. Increased online material for students to access. Using existing and programs to permit testing at home, thus increasing instructional time. As well we all know that we do have absentees and that a full compliment of students is rarity and will be exacerbated with covid . We have an association that appears consumed with the negative and not looking of positive solutions other that increased units.

Don Rose:

Like all unions, it will be the same handful of perpetually disgruntled employees that will continuously file frivolous grievance after frivolous grievance and lose a little more credibility each time. Barely anyone signed the petition, barely anyone attended the demonstration, so now they'll try to flood the system with administrative backlogs. Petty and predictable.

Edithshayne Miller:

How is it that we had to work thru this at its worst and risk our health and now the teachers "once again " are trying to find a way not to do their jobs ..RIDICULOUS

Amanda Bambury:

Teachers should be striking over lack of space to distance. There should be an online plan developed and put into action. Our education system has been depleted and it's time it is invested in again. Our teachers and children are worth it!!

Ryan James Smith:

Idk why they don't just quit teaching and work in a grocery store instead.

Bryce Mugford:

Just go get another job. Dominion are hiring Scabs.

Despite the negativity, several people came to the defense of teachers.

Kelly Cribb:

Maybe people should read the article before commenting. Teachers want to go to school and teach, they just want it to be safe for themselves and for the children. It's so sad that people feel the need to belittle and gang up on teachers. Teachers have supported all others who have returned to work and they do not get the same respect in return. It's shameful.

You can say things like "I've had to work during this" without then turning around and attacking other groups. We are all in this together

Carling Ricette:

How can your fellow mankind be so nasty. Teachers did not cause any off this. They are not in a social class all by themselves. They are the educators of our future and don't deserve your ugliness regarding their safety. Don't compare them to nurses. Wanna get ugly. How many cases actually were hospitalized? They were all stressed out all over the province over the half a dozen who were hospitalized. Poor things. At least they had all that protective gear on them so they wouldn't bring the virus home with them. And look at the security to bet in the hospital. Just like the schools right. And retail got all that plexi glass and spacing. The limit capacity. They are doing their part to flatten the curve. Teachers are dogs man. Dragging all the youngsters in the schools with no mask got anyone. No COVID questions our contact tracing. No attempt to social distancing
. Kids will sit shoulder to shoulder, face to face. Nothing the teacher can do about it. As the president of NLTA SAID, YOUR KIDS ARE SAFER AT WALMART. I can qaurantee you, primary and elementary is not safe fo teacher or students and instead of throwing stones at them we should be protecting of teacher and especially our kids because they are not safe

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