

**A CASE STUDY OF THE VOICES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN TEACHERS
IN TWO TEXAS COMMUNITIES BEFORE AND AFTER DESEGREGATION,
1954 TO 1975**

A Dissertation

by

HILARY A. STANDISH

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2006

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Patricia J. Larke
Committee Members,	Lynn M. Burlbaw
	M. Carolyn Clark
	Norvella P. Carter
Head of Department,	Dennie Smith

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ABSTRACT

A Case Study of the Voices of African American Teachers in Two Texas Communities
Before and After Desegregation, 1954 to 1975. (December 2006)

Hilary A. Standish, B.A., Mount Holyoke College;
M.A., Texas A&M University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Patricia J. Larke

This qualitative study explored the experiences of African American educators who worked in two communities in Texas during the years 1954 to 1975. The goal was to document the educators' perceptions of teaching in segregated schools, their recollections of how the desegregation process was implemented in their districts, and their perceptions regarding teaching in desegregated schools. College Station schools desegregated in 1966, and Bryan schools desegregated in 1971. The study considered the years 1954 to 1975. A purposive sample of eleven African American teachers was interviewed. The data was analyzed in two ways.

Findings generated using the categorical content method of narrative analysis revealed the following: In Phase One, when participants worked in segregated schools, they had to deal with numerous hardships; yet they had a high sense of teacher efficacy, had high expectations for students, and were highly regarded in their roles as teachers. 2) In Phase Two, the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling had no immediate impact on the communities' schools, although there were a series of arsons committed against African American schools that proved to be critical in bringing about desegregation. 3) In Phase Three, the participants were typically re-assigned or demoted; yet several factors made

their work easier, although it became difficult to develop meaningful relationships with students and some students felt disconnected from the educational process.

Narrative analysis using the holistic content method discerned three overarching patterns found across the collective body of data. They were a) double consciousness, b) an ethic of caring, and c) resiliency traits. In addition to the above findings, the model of an inverted rite of passage was developed to describe the African American educators' experiences in which participants underwent a process of change, over which they had little control. Desegregation compelled them to leave familiar settings, and to make personal and professional adjustments. In contrast to traditional rites of passage, the participants did not emerge from this process with new-found, elevated statuses. Instead, they occupied a socially ambiguous terrain as they joined predominantly White faculties at desegregated schools.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Norman and Ingrid Standish, for their generosity and continuous support. Without their encouragement I am not sure that I would have found it within myself to complete this journey. I'd also like to dedicate this work to David Magner. He doesn't have email, rarely uses snail mail, but his "cosmic envelopes" really did the trick!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am blessed to have many wonderful people in my life who have assisted me in the process of creating this dissertation. First, I would like to express my gratitude to the eleven participants of the study. They provided me with the primary data upon which this work is based, opened up their homes to me, and willingly shared their insights, memories and opinions. Not only did I learn a great deal about my chosen research topic, but through their stories and living examples I learned lessons about the power of faith, hope and endurance that will continue to impact me both professionally and personally.

I was fortunate to have an excellent ensemble of scholars on my dissertation committee. Dr. Patricia Larke has served as a mentor to me from my earliest days in the doctoral program. Throughout the years she has encouraged me to conduct research and to make conference presentations. As my dissertation project unfolded, she directed me to pertinent resources, loaned me personal copies of books, and helped locate participants. We often held meetings in her home, and at times she fed me. All along the way, she consistently reminded me that I was capable of seeing the study through to the end, and when tensions ran high her words calmed me.

Dr. Lynn Burlbaw likewise pointed out resources to me, at times making photocopies of them for me to keep. Due to his background as an educational historian, he was able to make suggestions regarding the formats of the literature review and the chapter on contextual information related to the research sites. I knew years ago, when I took a course with him, that his expertise would make him a valuable asset to my committee. Dr. Norvella Carter demonstrated consistent support for this project, and always had a smile ready. I thank her for her support and for making the long commutes

to College Station. Dr. Carolyn Clark encouraged my work in her classes and offered ideas for pursuing publications. Her knowledge of qualitative research methods helped me in deciding on analytical methods and in making sure they were implemented in a sound manner. Given her level of scholarship and her pleasant personality, it is no surprise that so many students select her for committee membership.

Special thanks go to my brother, Chris Standish. He “saved” me countless times when technology got the best of me, including the night before my defense when the electricity went out for four hours. He took time out of his own schedule to explain the workings of computers to me or to fix my mistakes, and I truly don’t know if I could have finished this dissertation without his help. I’d also like to acknowledge my friend Dr. GeorgeAnne Ramon-Reuthinger, who offered suggestions and moral support when a computer crash resulted in a significant loss of data.

Finally, thanks go to my friend Dr. Ye Sun for her help in acting as my peer reviewer. Due to our discussions of the data, I was able to reconsider how I might group information or present the findings of the study. She helped motivate me throughout the duration of this project, constantly checking on my progress and praying for my success.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As of this writing in 2006 it has been fifty-two years since the *Brown et al. v. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* legal case was decided by the Supreme Court. This landmark ruling overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and outlawed segregated public educational facilities. The *Brown* verdict represented a radical shift in thinking on the part of the Court and called for wholesale changes in the American educational system. Due to the monumental nature of the *Brown* case, the implementation of desegregation plans and their effects have justly received a great deal of attention in public policy documents and in the literature of numerous fields. In general, the scholarship on this period of educational history has focused on the psychological affects of desegregation on students (e.g. Powell, 1973) or the implications of desegregation on students' academic achievement (e.g. Coleman et al., 1966; Crain & Mahard, 1983). Most of this research has been quantitative in its methodology.

To date, little attention has been paid to the impact of segregation and desegregation on teachers. In a chapter describing early integration efforts in New Orleans, Louisiana from the perspectives of White former teachers, Weider noted, "There have been few studies treating the recollections and reflections of teachers regarding school integration in the United States – and none gives teachers an active voice" (1992, p. 108). More studies are needed regarding the viewpoints of African American teachers in particular (Foster, 1997).

The style and format of this dissertation will follow that of the *American Educational Research Journal*.

This study examines life in schools from the perspectives of African American teachers who taught in both segregated and desegregated schools, focusing on events in two central Texas communities. To form a basis of comparison, the researcher considered the experiences of African American teachers during the period after the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case was decided and yet segregation persisted, during the years the two communities grappled with the implications of the *Brown* ruling, as well as the years immediately following desegregation. The time frame of interest was therefore the years of 1954 to 1975.

This study attempted to give recognition to the voices of members of a group that has for too long been ignored. “Voice” can be defined as the expression and sharing of people’s experiences, visions or worldviews (Delpit, 1995; hooks, 1993). A qualitative design was selected because it offered the best means for understanding participants’ experiences and perspectives. In particular, narrative analysis was adopted so that the reader could hear the voices of African American teachers, in their own words, as they related their personal stories. The teachers interviewed for this research shared information about their individual lives and, at the same time, the narratives demonstrate how the participants’ teaching careers were shaped by social conditions.

Eleven African American educators (all but one of whom is retired from teaching) from College Station and Bryan, Texas, were interviewed for this study. Interview questions focused on teachers’ perceptions of teaching in segregated schools, their recollections of how desegregation plans in their communities were implemented, and their memories and opinions regarding teaching in desegregated schools. Interviews were transcribed and then analyzed in two ways. First, the categorical content method

was used to discern units, categories and sub-categories. These findings are presented in Chapter V in relation to the three chronological phases of the study (teaching in segregated schools, the implementation of desegregation plans and teaching in desegregated schools). Each of these phases related to one of the specific research questions. Secondly, the transcripts were analyzed using the holistic content method. This involved delineating recurring patterns of experience or overarching themes found across the dataset. The three themes that were discovered relate to the guiding research question and are discussed in Chapter VI, which presents interpretations of the findings. By focusing specifically on teachers employed in two school districts, a detailed portrait emerged regarding both the participants' individual experiences and the common patterns of their experiences across the two school districts.

Statement of the Problem

The teaching profession has generally been examined in terms of three aspects; the study of pedagogy, school reforms, and teachers' political associations (Rousmaniere, 1997). Miller (1990) noted that educators' views about their personal teaching experiences are not given adequate attention in discussions of how to improve teaching practices. Although Hoffman (2003) noted that typically teachers record little about their activities in the classroom, in recent decades a growing body of research (e.g. Carter & Doyle, 1996; Graham, 1995; Schubert, 1991) has recognized the wisdom that teachers can impart regarding what occurs in schools. Goodson (1994) has argued that attending to teachers' stories can help dispel popular misconceptions that often guide policy decisions, and can shed light on the complexity of the profession. Due to their daily interactions in classrooms, teachers can best illuminate the social context of their

institutions (Carter, 1993; Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995). To date, little scholarship has focused on the experiences of teachers, as told by teachers themselves, regarding their work in segregated and desegregated classrooms.

For decades after *Brown v. Board of Education*, state and local districts were free to implement their own desegregation plans, and they often found ways to feign compliance with federal law. Thus there was no single, uniform method of desegregation in the United States, or even within any given state, as decisions were made according to the dictates of individual school boards. The desegregation process is best examined on a case-by-case basis. Over twenty years ago Rist noted:

In the midst of the millions of words that have been written and the countless research reports that have been published, there stands a curious omission. We are hard pressed to find accounts of what is “really going on,” of what the day-to-day realities of school desegregation are for teachers, students, parents and administrators (1979, p. 3).

In the intervening years, a number of works have appeared that considered what occurred in American public schools (e.g. Hughes, Gordon & Hillman, 1980; Rossell, Armor & Walberg, 2002) or colleges (e.g. Harris & Jackson, 1975; Smith, 1994) following the *Brown* decision. A few sources provide an in-depth look at particular schools located in Southern communities (e.g. Morris & Morris, 2002a; Pitts, 2003; Walker, 1996a), and Kellar (1999) focused on the desegregation process in the Houston school system. Most research has focused on either urban school districts rather than on occurrences in smaller towns or on events in eastern seaboard states.

It is rare that one hears the perspectives of African American teachers who served during these decades, despite the fact that these individuals are in an excellent position to provide information on this important phase of American history, both locally as well as nationally. Therefore, it is imperative that we listen to the stories of African American educators in order to gain an understanding of the impact segregation and of desegregation on members of the teaching profession. This study adds to the literature by giving voice to the experiences of African American educators in who worked in schools located in College Station and Bryan, Texas.

Purpose of the Study

The ramifications of teaching in segregated and desegregated schools needed to be explored because few studies have documented the viewpoints of African American teachers, especially those who worked prior to and during the desegregation era. This gap in the research is striking considering the importance placed on education by the African American community. For generations education has been highly valued as a means of upward mobility, and teaching has long been considered a noble profession (Ashmore, 1954; Franklin & Anderson, 1978).

This study illuminated what occurred in public schools in College Station and Bryan, Texas, in the years following the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision. In particular, the researcher was interested in the views of African American educators who taught in area schools established for children of color during the period of segregation, who continued teaching during the time desegregation plans were being implemented, and who taught during the initial period of eventual desegregation. The collection of oral histories from such individuals allows others to hear the voices of a

population that has largely been ignored (Callendar, 1997; Foster, 1990, 1996), namely African American educators who served in small community settings.

While documents were consulted in order to establish a social context for the situations in College Station and Bryan, they could provide only a limited view of the past. They could not offer insight on the impact of teaching in segregated schools, on the desegregation process or on teaching in desegregated schools from the perspectives of African American teachers. African American educators therefore constituted the primary sources. The interview questions were designed to elicit responses regarding participants' personal feelings about teaching during the years 1954 to 1975 in order to capture what they experienced during this time span.

In cases in which participants gave their permission, interview transcriptions will be donated to the Brazos Valley African American Museum. This museum was recently established in Bryan, Texas, on the site where the first school for African Americans in Brazos county once stood. Sharing the interview transcriptions will provide visitors to the museum and students in local schools with access to the wisdom of respected community members, and future scholars will be able to learn about a neglected period of educational history from the viewpoints of African American educators.

Research Questions

The guiding research question was: What can African American educators share about their teaching experiences in the selected small-town Texas schools during the years 1954 to 1975? In addition, the specific research questions were developed to address the following topics;

1. What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in segregated schools?
2. What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding how the desegregation process was implemented in their schools and/or communities?
3. What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in desegregated schools?

The goal was to capture participants' views and feelings related to the conditions they experienced during the span of their careers.

Significance of the Study

When *Brown v. Board* declared segregated schools illegal, the ruling was met with differing reactions, and it continued to generate controversy for decades. For African Americans the decision signaled that finally, after generations of marginalization, African Americans would have federal support in their quest for equal educational opportunities. For some White people, *Brown* tapped into their worst fears because it marked the onset of the dismantling of a long-standing social hierarchy in which Whites were the dominant group, and they would have to think and act differently about the educational system.

Across the country many African American teachers lost their jobs when their school systems were restructured (Haney, 1978; Tyack, 1984). Soon after *Brown*, Director-Counsel of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Thurgood Marshall formed a special division "to protect the Negro teacher from arbitrary and discriminatory loss of employment" (Davis, 1956, p. 182). Lawsuits

were issued in numerous Southern states, where some communities seemed more willing to integrate student populations than the teaching force.

In some cases, teachers who remained employed nonetheless found themselves displaced to a new setting or demoted. Others were assigned to teach remedial courses, typically to student populations that were primarily African American. These trends suggest a belief on the part of hiring committees that African American teachers were less qualified than their White counterparts, a belief that runs contrary to the facts (Rabinowitz, 1974; Still, 1950). As evidenced by the stories told to me in conducting this research, desegregation often resulted in a shift not only in terms of the locations in which African American educators worked, but in the social positions they held as teachers.

African American teachers who worked in Bryan and College Station, Texas, schools offered insight into what occurred in two communities that ignored federal desegregation mandates until the last possible moment. In listening to the stories of these teachers, we can gain an insider perspective of life in their schools and also gain an understanding of the human impact of changing educational policies (Huberman, 1993; McEwan & Egan, 1995; Ramon-Reuthinger, 2005; Spindler & Spindler, 2000). The information African American educators can provide, based on their actual experiences, has seldom been preserved in history books. Nor have the realities of these educators been adequately expressed in the extant literature on desegregation. As the years pass, memories fade and the population of those who remember this phase of history dwindles. It is vital that the recollections of those who lived through this period be captured in order

to ensure their legacy. This study adds to the literature by providing a case study of African American teachers' experiences in two central Texas communities.

Definition of Terms

For the sake of clarity it is necessary to define my use of several terms. For the purpose of this study the following operational definitions apply:

African Americans- In this dissertation I used the word "African American" to denote people whose ancestral, geographical origins are in the African continent. I opted for this term because it is currently the most widely accepted descriptor by people of color. In some places in the study that provide historical or background information, the words Black, Colored or Negro are used, since at various eras in the United States these were the commonly used terms and they are used in the works cited. I capitalized all of these labels, as well as the word White, because each denotes a socially constructed category of people (Omi and Winant, 1993) that continues to carry considerable weight in everyday life.

Cross-Over Teachers- African American teachers who were either assigned or volunteered to teach at formerly all-White schools (Wilson & Segall, 2001), or White teachers who worked in African American schools.

Desegregation- Refers to the dismantling of dual, segregated educational systems that were separated along color or racial/ethnic lines. I elected to use the term desegregation, rather than integration, because it is a more accurate descriptor. In both communities the desegregation process consisted of allowing African American children to attend schools to which they were formerly denied access – it did not entail across-the-board, wholesale

integration of entire school populations. Nonetheless, some participants used the word integration, and participants are quoted verbatim.

Freedom of Choice Plan- A desegregation policy enacted in Bryan and College Station, Texas and elsewhere to comply with federal desegregation laws. Freedom of Choice plans removed restrictive attendance boundary limitations, thereby permitting students' parents to select the school that they wished their children to attend (Hughes, Gordon & Hillman, 1980; Southern Regional Council, 1966).

Step Plan- A method of desegregation adopted in Bryan and College Station, Texas and elsewhere to slowly desegregate schools (The School Desegregation in Texas Policy Research Project, 1982). As enacted in the research sites, the plan enrolled students of color at formerly all-White schools one grade level at a time beginning with the first grade and adding an additional grade level each successive year.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in undertaking this study:

1. Participants were reflective individuals capable of expressing their opinions and describing their experiences. During interviews, participants accurately related information to the best of their knowledge and recollections.
2. Participants had adequate teaching experience during the study's time frame of 1954 to 1975 to enable them to provide detailed information.
3. Participants may have felt reluctant to discuss race-related issues with an "outsider," namely a White person of a younger generation, or to re-visit what may have been painful times for them personally. Every effort was made to establish a sense of rapport and trust. Interviewees were told that there were no

incorrect answers to questions asked, that their views were important, and that anonymity could be requested.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher recognized that the following limitations applied to the study:

1. Ten of the eleven project participants were educators who taught in Bryan, Texas, rather than in College Station, Texas. This is due to the fact that the school system in Bryan was larger, served a larger population of African American students and employed more African American teachers who might have served as potential participants. Additionally, the majority of African American teachers in College Station lost their jobs and/or moved to places unknown either immediately before or following desegregation in that community.

Delimitations

The following delimitations helped to restrict the focus of the research:

1. This study investigated the experiences of African American educators in two specific communities in central Texas, not the state or the nation as a whole.
2. Participants represented a purposive sample, thus not every former teacher was included in the study. This was necessitated by the fact that some of the educators who served during the years of interest have either passed away or were too ill to participate.
3. The work did not consider the perspectives of White teachers or of students unless they were brought up by interviewees and were germane to the study.

While it is likely that such individuals have insights on the topic, my focus was on African American teachers because their stories have seldom been heard.

4. This project was limited to a consideration of the years 1954 to 1975. This time span was selected in order to provide a picture of the period of entrenched segregation, the transition period, and the years immediately following desegregation in each of the two communities under study.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation was organized into eight chapters. Chapter I provided an overview of the essence of the research topic and defined the guiding and specific research questions addressed in this investigation. To delineate the scope of the project, operational definitions, assumptions, limitations and delimitations were described. Chapter II provides a review of the literature relevant to the study. Topics include African American educational history in the South, a review of selected desegregation lawsuits, the affects of the *Brown* decision on teachers of color, and the theoretical framework used for the dissertation. Chapter III discusses the historical, social and political aspects of segregation and desegregation in the communities that were selected for the study in order to provide a context for the research sites. Chapter IV describes the participant selection process, pilot study, interview instrument and then details the methodologies used in the study.

Chapter V of the dissertation presents a profile of each participant in order to help the reader understand the teachers as individuals. Chapter VI then continues with a presentation of the findings in relation to the three chronological phases of the study addressed by the specific research questions. The findings of the study are discussed in

terms of categories and sub-categories discovered via a narrative analysis of the interview transcriptions. Direct quotes were used in order to allow the reader to “hear” the voices of the participants in their own words. Chapter VII discusses overarching findings of the study. These relate to the guiding research question and are presented as themes that emerged across the dataset. These themes are explicated in an effort to make connections between the participants’ stories. The dissertation concludes with Chapter VIII, which offers conclusions and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides a review of literature relevant to the study. The review includes information on the educational history of African Americans in the southern United States to demonstrate how policies and social practices in the past have systematically marginalized African Americans. Further details specific to African American education and the desegregation process in the research communities are elaborated upon in Chapter IV. This chapter also discusses selected desegregation legal cases, with a focus on the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case. That legal decision is highlighted because it was a watershed event in United States educational history which set the stage for eventual desegregation, and because it marks the starting point of the research time frame. The chapter then reviews research related to the experiences of African American teachers following the *Brown* ruling, up to around 1975, which marks the end point of the research time frame. Though there are limited resources on the topic, an analysis was necessary in order to form a basis of comparison for the research findings. The chapter also discusses the theoretical frameworks that guided me as a researcher.

African American Educational History in the South

Introduction

Since this country's inception, education has been seen as a primary means of advancement. Legislative decisions as well as popular opinion have supported the notion that an educated citizenry is the key to the promotion of a stable democracy in which individuals are self-reliant and capable of making prudent decisions in their lives (e.g.

Jefferson, 1787, as cited in Boyd, 1950). Yet at the same time, education has not been the great leveler it had been hoped or purported to be, particularly in the case of people of color (Baer & Jones, 1990). Indeed, for much of American history ethnically diverse populations were either intentionally denied educational opportunities or were expected to conform to a class and color-based system designed to keep them in their supposed places (Fanon, 1967)

Beginning with the first African indentured servants brought to the United States (Jones, 1978) and continuing throughout the duration of the slave period, African Americans were socially and legally deemed inferior to Whites and other groups. In the U.S. Constitution (1778), Blacks were construed as being three-fifths of a person and as property (Jordan, 1968). Slaves were stripped of their individuality as human beings and denied all manner of rights, including the right to an education (Woodson, 1968a, 1968b). The 1856 *Dred Scott v. Sanford* Supreme Court decision reiterated the legal view that African Americans were property, not people.

At the conclusion of the Civil War, adjustments to the U.S. Constitution in the form of the Thirteenth (1865, abolishing slavery), Fourteenth (1868, granting citizenship to former slaves) and Fifteenth (1870, granting African American males the right to vote) Amendments marked positive improvements in the legal status of African Americans (Bartholomew, 1974). Federal oversight of Reconstruction and the establishment of Freedmen's Bureau programs in the South resulted in social and educational gains, as did the passage of a Civil Rights bill in 1875.

Yet in 1883, the Supreme Court nullified the Civil Rights bill by declaring it unconstitutional. This action signaled that the protection of the constitutional rights of

African Americans was no longer seen as a priority or even as a function of the federal government (Weinberg, 1977). In the South in particular, this stance allowed for the creation of numerous “Jim Crow” laws designed to oppress African Americans by assigning them lesser statuses and socially segregating them from the dominant population. In 1896 the *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court ruling institutionalized these practices by declaring that separate race-based public facilities were constitutional provided that facilities for both races were of equal quality. As Bond (1970) points out, in reality separate facilities were hardly equal. In terms of the educational arena, disparities were evident in the quality and condition of school buildings and supplies (Delaney, Delaney, & Hill Hearsh, 1993), the length of the school year (Anderson, 1988), teacher and administrator salaries and in per pupil expenditures (Fultz, 1995).

Although universal, free, tax-supported education has been the law of the land since the late nineteenth century, problems with the system have persisted (Woodward, 1957). Continued disparities in education are evident, for example, in the achievement gaps between African Americans and Whites, the overrepresentation of African Americans categorized as having emotional or behavioral disorders (Bennett, 2007) and in the high dropout rates among African American students (Wallace, 2002). A Gallup poll conducted in 1994 revealed that whereas 58% of Whites surveyed stated that socioeconomic conditions have improved for African Americans, only 45% of African Americans polled supported that statement (Patterson, 1997).

Debates at the Supreme Court level in 2004 over affirmative action as a factor in college admissions demonstrate that Americans continue to be divided in their beliefs regarding whether or not genuine educational equity yet exists. Opponents of affirmative

action typically subscribe to the “bootstrap theory,” arguing that U.S. schools offer equal opportunities for all to excel if only students would apply themselves. However, this myopic emphasis on individual effort allows for the masking of social problems such as the ongoing reality of racism. It also ignores the fact that social values are played out in our schools on a daily basis (Tatum, 1997). In order to appreciate the degree to which bias has been systematically entrenched in our society and in our schools, we must examine the past (Banks, 1999).

Learning During the Slave Era

It is believed that the first Africans were brought to America (the Virginia Colony) in 1619 as indentured servants (Franklin & McNeil, 1995). In the following decades, the importation of Africans spread to not only the Southern states but to the New England and Middle Colonies as well. Landowners, particularly in the South, came to rely ever more heavily upon the labor of Africans in their capitalist ventures. Legal recognition of slavery varied by location, but generally occurred at the state level during the 1660s or 1670s (ibid). When the first U.S. Census was taken in 1790 there were less than 700,000 slaves in the U.S., but by 1830 the number had increased to two million. At the onset of the Civil War, there were nearly four million slaves (U.S. Census bureau).

Slaves and their children were forced to maintain their statuses as property in perpetuity. Captured Africans who managed to survive the horrors of the Middle Passage voyage across the Atlantic Ocean were forced into bondage and these involuntary immigrants were denied every basic human right (Mannix, 1962; Sobel, 1988). The abuses of this “peculiar institution” are well documented elsewhere (e.g. Genovese, 1965,

1974; Owens, 1976; Phillips, 1929; Stamp, 1956), and the following discussion will thus focus on issues pertaining to education.

There has been a long history of institutionalized and instructional racism in the United States in the form of policies designed to maintain the status quo, including laws affecting education (Baer & Jones, 1990; Woodson, 1933). The most heinous examples are laws which made it illegal to educate African Americans. For example, during the colonial era statutes were enacted to protect the social advantage of Whites by denying African Americans with the means to advance themselves via an education (Lincoln, 1967). A recognition of the power of education is seen in the following comment made by Henry Berry, a member of the Virginia House of Congress, “We have closed every avenue through which light may enter their minds. If only we could extinguish their capacity to see light, our work would be complete” (cited in Horsman, 1981, p. 101). According to Love (2004), “Literacy among Africans was made illegal by colonial statutes and efforts to gain literacy were subject to punishment up to and including dismemberment and death” (p. 236). For example, a law passed in 1695 in Maryland levied a fine of one thousand pounds of tobacco on persons caught teaching African Americans, even those whom were free.

A 1740 South Carolina law made it a criminal offense to teach slaves to write or even to allow literate slaves to exercise this skill in any capacity (Irons, 2002). By the first decade of the nineteenth century, every Northern state had passed laws providing for the eventual cessation of slavery (Urban & Wagoner, 1996), but the practice continued in the Southern states. An 1830 Louisiana law forbade the distribution to slaves or free African Americans any book or form of literature likely to produce discontent. Violation

of the law was a capital offense punishable by imprisonment with hard labor or by the death penalty (Murray, 1953). However, according to Bullock, “Soon after the establishment of the slave regime in the American South, there were set in motion unintentional processes destined to introduce the first of many educational opportunities that the Negroes were to have prior to the Civil War” (1970, p. 1). For example, because slave labor was tied to so many aspects of production, it was necessary that slaves be appropriately trained to carry out their specified duties. In order to enhance the efficiency of their operations, plantation owners paid close attention to age, sex, strength and intelligence when assigning labor.

In some cases, slaves were taught how to read, write or do computations in accordance with their designated roles. In other instances, slaves were taught these skills by sympathetic or curious plantation owners’ wives, or even by bored children seeking a playmate. Some slaves educated their comrades on the sly, knowing full well that they could be punished for doing so. Woodson (1933) noted that clandestine schools operated in most towns in the South prior to the Civil War. Informal schooling often occurred within church settings, setting a pattern linking religion and African American education that still continues today.

The fact that the education of slaves was prohibited did not stop slaves from seeking out opportunities to learn (Webber, 1978), as they recognized that knowledge is a powerful tool. Most understood that although property, status and basic rights could be denied them, once an education was gained it would be impossible to take away (Dickens, 1939; Franklin, 1990). As the slave era neared its end, about five percent of

slaves had managed to learn to read (Randall & Donald, 1969). Approximately 250,000 free African Americans also lived in the South at the time (Kujovich, 1992).

African American Education under the Freedmen's Bureau

At the end of the Civil War in 1865, the eleven Confederate states held approximately four million newly freed African Americans. Having formerly been denied rights to property or freedoms of any kind, the newly emancipated slaves had an immediate need for clothes, food, shelter and employment. On March 3rd of 1865, Congress established the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands under the auspices of the War Department, more commonly known as the Freedmen's Bureau (Morris, 1980). The Bureau attempted to meet these immediate needs for the short term and to assist freed African Americans in developing economic stability over the long term.

The Freedmen's Bureau divided the former Confederate territory into ten districts with an assistant commissioner acting as overseer of each district (Hornsby, 1973). By 1866 there were 12 districts, and at its greatest extent the Bureau held jurisdiction over schools in the District of Columbia, the Indian Territory, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Missouri, Texas, Arkansas, Kentucky and Tennessee (Elliott, 1952). Of importance to this discussion is the establishment of Freedmen's Bureau schools for the education of African Americans.

In July of 1866, Congress stated that abandoned Confederate lands and buildings (those left vacant during the war) could be seized by the Bureau and the sale proceeds could be used to support the Bureau's educational efforts (Peirce, 1971). Texans resented

the presence of the Freedmen's Bureau, and Article X of the 1866 Texas Constitution stated, "A general diffusion of knowledge being essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature of the State to make suitable provisions for the support and maintenance of public schools" (Vernon, 1993, p. 577). The Constitution further stated that school fund monies were to go expressly for the support of "White scholastic inhabitants of the State, and no law shall ever be made appropriating said fund for any other purpose whatever" (ibid, p. 578).

Major General Oliver O. Howard was appointed the Chief Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, and he had to contend with the fact that at this time no formalized educational system existed in the south, even for Whites (Rabinowitz, 1974). He also found that Whites were resistant to the idea of educating former slaves for several reasons. According to Du Bois and Dill (1911) many feared that education would cause Negroes to forget "their place" in the social hierarchy and cause them to agitate for elevated statuses. Some Whites argued that schooling would interfere with African Americans' work obligations, as landowners and others still relied on their labor even if they now had to pay for it (Peirce, 1971). In addition, the prevalent belief was that Black-skinned individuals were genetically inferior, perhaps not even truly human, and therefore education would be a futile waste of time and money (Rice, 1971). Given these views it is not surprising that initially, the majority of Freedmen's Bureau schoolteachers came from the Northern states, often under the auspices of philanthropic organizations or religious societies such as the American Missionary Association (Jones, 1992). Many of the teachers were met with open hostility and faced real or threatened acts of violence (Morris, 1981).

Freedmen's Bureau School Superintendent John W. Alvord estimated in 1866 that there were at least 500 Freedmen's Bureau schools in operation. At the time of peak operations in 1869, approximately 248,000 African American students were enrolled in Freedmen's Bureau schools (Margo, 1990). The Freedmen's Bureau provided support in the form of buildings, transportation of teachers to the South and in supervising schools, but it did not attempt to be directly involved in the daily activities of schools (Parker, 1954). A large portion of educational expenses was typically provided by philanthropic organizations, with the remainder of the funds coming from the Freedmen's Bureau. On a local basis individuals, including some Whites, contributed to the system either via monetary gifts, taxes or the donation of lands or buildings. Depending on location and the year under consideration, students may have been required to pay tuition fees in order to attend schools. For many students this cost, typically around \$1.50 per pupil, proved prohibitive (Elliott, 1952). In addition children's labor was often required in order to contribute to family incomes, and thus many students experienced interruptions in their schooling.

It is important to note that despite, or perhaps in part because of White opposition to African American education, it was not the intent of the Freedmen's Bureau to create integrated schools. Thus even from the very beginnings of formalized education for African Americans in the South, a dual system based on race was sanctioned. A prevailing belief that "races" should not mix can be seen in practices carried out at the local level. For example, Florida and North Carolina laws mandated that textbooks be stored separately based on the races of their intended users (Akin, 1994). However, the high priority given by African Americans to the attainment of an education is witnessed

in the number of free “native schools” which were established by individual African American men and women. John W. Alford, the national Superintendent of Freedmen’s schools, traveled widely throughout his jurisdiction and noted:

Throughout the entire south an effort is being made by the colored people to educate themselves. In the absence of other teaching they are determined to be self-taught; and everywhere some elementary text-book, or the fragment of one, may be seen in the hands of the Negroes (cited in Anderson 1988, p. 6).

Classes in Freedmen’s Bureau schools usually began around eight o’clock in the morning and concluded in the early afternoon. The curriculum consisted of simple and advanced reading skills, simple and higher mathematics, geography and writing. At least one day a week was centered on Bible study. In fact, according to the earliest statistics report (covering late 1865 to July 1866), almost half of the schools were Sunday schools (U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, 1866, in Morris, 1980). This report also noted that among the Bureau’s districts Texas had the highest number of schools that year, leading with 90 schools including Sunday and night schools.

Additional details on Freedmen’s Bureau schools in Texas are provided in Chapter IV.

Freedmen’s Bureau teachers have been described as being extremely devoted to their work, and they considered helping the freedmen to be a divine calling (Hoffman, 2003; Jones, 1992). In addition to learning academic subjects, it would not be unusual for students to receive religious and moral instruction. The Baptist Home Mission instructed its teachers to accomplish this task not only via classroom instruction but by visiting students and their families in their homes (Parker, 1954). Although much literature on the Freedmen’s Bureau teachers describes the teachers as middle-class,

educated White females, Butchart (1990) argues that the role of African Americans as Freedmen's Bureau teachers at the time has been underestimated. He analyzed the records and found, for example, that although African Americans accounted for only 1.2% of the population of New York State, 15.1% of the state's Freedmen's Bureau teachers were African American.

African American teachers also tended to stay in the South much longer, despite their typically being assigned to schools in remote locations and despite the fact that they received less pay than their White counterparts. Butchart (1988) related the following statement from one African American Freedmen's Bureau teacher, "I believe *we* can best instruct our own people, knowing our own peculiarities and needs and necessities" (p. 40, italics in original). A sense of solidarity, a desire to "uplift the race," and a belief in the value of education were motivating factors in taking on a difficult job. At the same time, many African Americans preferred that their children be instructed by African American teachers, as demonstrated by the number of petitions to this effect (Dorsett, 1981). School administrators, however, were often reluctant to hire African American teachers. Some used tactics such as holding teacher preparation classes and qualification exams on different days for Black and White teachers, out of fear of the races mixing (Rabinowitz, 1974). Table 2.1 below provides information on the increasing number of African American teachers employed by the Freedmen's Bureau over the years of its operation. By 1869 African American teachers outnumbered White teachers.

Despite the obvious dedication on the part of African American teachers, the Bureau had difficulty in securing and retaining enough of them to meet the current and

perceived future needs of African American children. One Freedmen's Bureau agent in Arkansas complained that the teachers employed were barely literate themselves and

Table 2.1.
Figures for White and African American Freedmen's Bureau Teachers

Year	Jan. 1867	July 1867	July 1868	July 1869	July 1870
White Teachers	1,092	1,497	1,495	1,551	1,536
African American Teachers	549	910	1,296	1,742	1,746
Total	1,641	2,407	2,791	3,293	3,300

Adapted from Morris (1981). Figures include both day school and night school teachers.

were useless as educators (Bentley, 1955). It became clear that if the southern educational system were to become self-sustaining it would be necessary to establish teacher education institutions for African Americans so that a well-trained teaching force would be on hand when federal troops withdrew. Largely through the donations of benevolent societies, funds were raised and teacher education programs established. By 1871 there were eleven African American colleges or universities and 61 Normal schools in operation (ibid).

The Reconstruction Act of 1867 required the removal of citizen agents and the implementation of army officers in their stead to oversee rebuilding efforts in the South, including compliance with universal schooling laws (Nunn, 1962). This meant that all citizens (including Freedmen) were entitled to a tax-supported education. Passage of the Act might have raised hopes among those who so desired to uplift themselves via an

education. However, both Reconstruction and the Freedmen's Bureau sponsorship of schools were intended from the onset to be only temporary vehicles (to end in 1877 and 1870, respectively), and the Bureau's aim was the establishment of an educational system that would become self-sustaining. In January, 1869 Congress eliminated the Freedmen's Bureau with the exception of its educational programs, which were to cease operations in 1870 (Peirce, 1971). At that point many schools closed, while others were turned over to the auspices of the religious and philanthropic societies that had helped sponsor them (Bentley, 1955).

Although the effectiveness of the Freedmen's Bureau schools has been debated, there is little doubt that their establishment caused Southern Whites to realize that universal education would likely be the trend of the future. At the same time, because African Americans and Whites were instructed separately, the groundwork had been laid for a dual and unequal educational system (Foner, 1988). That pattern, although challenged many times over the years, would define American education for many decades.

African American Education in the South after Reconstruction

After Reconstruction, segregationist Democrats gained control of local and state politics in the majority of Southern states, and Jim Crow laws flourished (Nyaggah & Gethaiga, 1995). Various state and local statutes required separation of the races in myriad aspects of life, from the prohibition of interracial marriage, to the banning of African Americans from White barbershops, theaters and restaurants (Woodward, 1957). As Anderson explains:

From the end of Reconstruction until the late 1960s, black Southerners existed in a social system that virtually denied them citizenship, the right to vote, and the voluntary control of their labor power. They remained an oppressed people.

Black education developed within this context of political and economic oppression (1988, p. 2).

By 1885, most Southern states accepted the premise of universal education but each of them had laws mandating dual systems of schools based on race (Emerson, 2003). In 1896 the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case (discussed below) gave legal authority to existing segregation policies by declaring that public establishments could be divided along color lines provided that they were equal (Raffel, 2002; Thomas, 1997).

With the withdrawal of the Freedmen's Bureau and its associated financial contributions in 1870, schools for African Americans in the South had to find support elsewhere. Legally states were required to support African American schools with tax funds, but these monies were often diverted to other uses (Pierce, Kincheloe, Moore, Drewry & Carmichael, 1955). As always, some funds were locally appropriated or donated. Regarding higher education, Congress extended the 1862 Morrill Act to apply to African Americans in 1890. This measure provided for the establishment of land grant Negro colleges, one in each southern state, for the scientific, technical and industrial training of African Americans (Klein, 1930). Private colleges had been established for African Americans even earlier, as there were no legal grounds for their prevention after the Civil War. In Texas, Paul Quinn College was established in Austin in 1872. By the

time *Brown* was decided in 1954, there were 13 public or private African American colleges and universities in the State of Texas (Heintze, 1985).

Northern philanthropic organizations contributed substantially to the creation of or continuance of African American public schools. The Peabody Education Foundation was established in 1867 to assist the South in establishing schools after the financial ruin resulting from the Civil War. The Peabody College Fund allotted 1.5 million dollars for the education of White and African American students with the stipulation that funds be locally matched (Smith, 1950). It also designated \$150,000 for the exclusive use of African Americans via the John F. Slater Fund. The Slater Fund was conceived in 1882 for college and secondary level African American education.

The Southern Education Foundation, established in 1901, assisted southern education through its General Education Fund. The Anna T. Jeanes Foundation (also known as The Negro Rural School Fund), begun in 1908, focused its efforts on rural schools and vocational training (Pincham, 2005). In 1913 Julius Rosenwald also developed a foundation to build African American schools in rural southern areas, which had long suffered from a lack of educational opportunities (Southern Education Foundation, 1979). The Rosenwald Fund erected over 5,000 African American schools in the south between 1913 and 1932 (Hughes, Gordon & Hillman, 1980).

Table 2.2 details changes in the illiteracy rates in the South (including the states of Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas and the District of Columbia) over several decades. For the sake of comparison,

illiteracy rates are provided for both African Americans and for Whites since formalized education, for either group, was in its infancy in many Southern communities at the end of Reconstruction (Urban & Wagoner, 1996). African American illiteracy rates in the south stood at approximately 76% in 1880, but the percentage of those who could not read and write steadily declined in subsequent decades.

Table 2.2
Illiteracy Rates for African Americans and Whites in the South

Decade	African Americans	Whites	Difference
1880	76.2	21.5	54.7
1890	60.7	14.9	45.8
1900	48.0	11.7	36.3
1910	33.3	8.0	25.3
1920	26.0	5.7	20.3
1930	19.7	3.8	15.9
1940	10.7-15.1	3.8-5.0	6.9-10.1
1950	8.9-12.0	2.4-3.3	6.5-8.7

Information is adapted from Margo (1990). Margo's figures were based on U.S. Census information regarding individuals aged ten or older. Illiteracy rates are presented as percentages of the respective populations. In the 1940 and 1950 Censuses the U.S. Census Bureau rephrased their surveys to address years of schooling rather than directly inquiring about illiteracy, and thus Margo tabulated a margin of error in his figures for those decades.

While Smith (1950) describes the directors of the various philanthropic organizations in exceedingly glowing terms, Harlan (1958) suggests ulterior motivations may have existed. He states that Peabody and Slater funds were only given out to schools which trained African Americans for low-paying, low-status trades. Indeed, by the early decades of the nineteenth century the issue of the day was not so much a debate on *if* African Americans should be educated, but *in what manner* they should be educated

(Watkins, 2001). This debate was most visible in the differing opinions of Booker Taliefero Washington and William Edward Burghardt Du Bois. While their views and the impact of each man have been well documented elsewhere (e.g. Anderson, 1988; Brodwin, 1972; Bullock, 1970), it is important to note that much attention was focused on the following question; What are the purposes of education?

Washington essentially believed that the route to success was in the acquisition of skills that would ensure gainful employment, because it was only when one was financially solvent that he could pursue political goals (Banner-Haley, 1994). Thus Washington emphasized industrial and vocational training at the Tuskegee Institute and in his other ventures (Cohen, 1974). These principles helped in shaping The National Negro Business League, which Washington founded in 1900. In order to gain funds to support his programs, Washington networked with wealthy Whites (e.g. Andrew Carnegie and Julius Rosenwald). Due to these social connections and the fact that he stressed economic gains over civil rights, Washington was accused by some as being a sell-out to his race (Buchanan & Hutcheson, 1999). In contrast, Du Bois argued that African Americans should not conform themselves to the mold created for them by Whites, but that they should educate the most talented among them to serve as leaders in the fight for social equality on all levels, not merely at the economic level. Du Bois saw college-educated teachers as playing a central role in this struggle (Du Bois, 1903). Although Booker T. Washington had his detractors, his idea of gradual advancement held great influence for decades (Franklin & Anderson, 1978).

Gradualism, it seems, was more palatable to Whites who were reluctant to relinquish their senses of entitlement. For example, Washington's educational

philosophies were praised at a 1900 conference of the Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South, held in Montgomery, Alabama. In published proceedings of the conference, Holland Frissell linked post-war educational efforts to a reduction in crime and stated, “These black masses can be made industrious, self-respecting citizens *of untold value to the white population* if they are educated in the *proper way*” (Frissell, 1900, p. 88, italics added). Frissell stated that too much stress had been placed on book learning at the expense of vocational training, adding that emphasis would be more fittingly placed on “That sort of education [which] is capable of producing a class of hard-working, docile Negroes, which will place the South in the foreground among the industrial countries of the world” (ibid, p. 88).

Bullock (1938) has argued that whether an African American school offered a vocational or a liberal, classical education as advocated by Du Bois, students were still trained to fit into a caste-like society, albeit at differing rungs of the limited social ladder open to them. Anderson (1988) suggested that northern White philanthropists deliberately funded industrial education in order to pacify White segregationists by supplying them with a cheap source of manual laborers. He related the story of John Davidson, who founded a high school in Georgia. Mr. Davidson sacrificed his own money to keep the school afloat, even mortgaging his home. When he later accepted much-needed financial support from Northern benefactors, he had to do so with the condition that the school’s academic curriculum be modified to a vocational one.

The role of African Americans in supporting their own schools should not be overlooked. For example, Fairclough (2000) reported that by 1930 the number of one-teacher schools assembling in churches exceeded the number of Rosenwald Fund

schools. Teachers, parents and community members often paid for supplies or items needed for extracurricular activities (Causey, 1999; Coppin, 1913). In her study of African American education in Wilmington, North Carolina, Emerson (2003) reported on a school that was the only high school for African Americans in the town from 1919 to 1968. The school was established and supported by African Americans independent of any other financial assistance. As tax-payers, African Americans supported their schools indirectly. Supposedly, under the “separate but equal” premise, tax monies should have been doled out to African American and White schools in equal measure. However, given the racial climate of the South (and elsewhere in the country) it is not surprising that abuses occurred (Butchart, 1998).

In 1942 Carleton Washburne, superintendent of schools in the state of Louisiana, stated unashamedly, “We have twice as many colored children of school age as we have white, and we use their money. Colored children are mighty profitable to us” (1942, p. 111). Obvious misuse of funds such as this were often based on the erroneous reasoning that African American schools had shorter academic years and thus did not deserve the same money for operating costs as did White schools (Margo, 1990). This is circular thinking and such justifications are directly implicated in the cycle of poverty. African American schools often had reduced academic terms, not due to a lack of interest in education but because the labor of children was needed to enhance the family income. In the agricultural belts of the South this meant that students were compelled to miss school during spring planting and fall harvest cycles.

African American Educators in Segregated Schools

There is a solid body of research regarding the establishment of educational enterprises for African Americans in the decades immediately following the Civil War, largely due to the fact that missionary and philanthropic organizations kept records. Less is known about subsequent years, but financial documents provide some insight into the conditions under which African American teachers worked when the influence of benevolent groups waned. Allison (1999) points out, “In the racially segregated South, gradualism was considered the proper strategy for Black teachers to adopt to improve their conditions” (1999, p. 108). He adds that it is clear that gradualism did not work. This is evidenced in the fact that after several decades of accommodation, African American teacher salaries remained stagnant or in some cases decreased (Perry, 1975) despite the fact that increasing numbers of the teachers were degreed (Fultz, 2004).

The National Education Association (NEA) began as a union for White teachers, so in 1904 the National Association of Teachers in Colored Schools was founded at the Tuskegee Institute (McCuiston, 1932) in Alabama. Branches were later established in twenty states (Foster, 1993) operating dual school systems (the organization changed its name to the American Teachers Association in 1937, and merged with the NEA in 1966). Many African American teachers also joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Beginning in the late 1930s African American teachers in several states, with the assistance of the NAACP, financed lawsuits seeking equal pay (Perkins, 1989). The majority of the lawsuits argued between 1936 and 1948 (27 out of 38) were successful (Welch, 1973), but the number of cases represented a mere fraction of the jurisdictions practicing salary discrimination and

agreements only applied to the specific school board being sued (Marshall, 1947). As Fairclough (2001) points out, involvement with the NAACP involved personal risk to African American teachers, since the organization openly challenged the practices of employers and White officials in courts.

In some instances school boards dismissed teachers involved in legal suits (Tushnet, 1987). Tactics such as using test scores as measures of competence, or paying less for elementary level teachers (African Americans' typical teaching assignments) created additional loopholes (Baker, 1999). Taking the eleven former Confederate states as a whole, the average White teacher in 1940 earned \$910 per year while the average African American teacher earned only \$504 per year (Allison, 1999). In 1941 the NAACP estimated that African American teachers typically earned only 40 to 50 percent of what White teachers in the South earned (Margo, 1990). According to Bullock (1970), salary discrepancies in Texas were less pronounced than in other Southern states, "The Negro teachers' reward was better in Texas, where they received an average salary which approximated three-fourths of that paid the white..." (p. 181). It was not until the passage of the Gilmer-Aikin laws in 1949 that a law clearly stated that all teachers in the state who were similarly qualified should receive the same pay (Kemerer & Walsh, 1994; Still, 1950).

Not only were African American teachers poorly paid, but often rigid restrictions were placed on their personal lives (Franklin, 1990). As role models to students it was expected that they exhibit virtue and chastity and avoid gambling, drinking and idleness (Jones, 1992). One way to monitor African American teachers' behaviors was to have them reside in boarding houses. "Teacherages" were modeled on Booker T.

Washington's ideal of communal work, and allowed principals to have direct oversight over their employees. Less is known about smaller communities with small schools. Hoffman (2003) has noted that typically teachers did not record the details of their working conditions.

Walker and Thompkins (2004) commented that most of the literature on segregated schools focuses on the inferiority of the schools. This is likely due to the fact that their authors relied on documents related to expenditures. There is no doubt that segregated schools were under-financed and that a lack of adequate funding had negative repercussions for both students and teachers, to say nothing of the negative effects that segregation itself would obviously engender. Yet missing from the reports is the insider perspective of life in schools from the viewpoints of those who attended them or worked in them. Hundley (1965) broke new ground when she described the atmosphere in a segregated school in the Washington D.C. area. Her findings contradicted the bleak portrait of other studies (e.g. Bond, 1970) because she considered non-tangible factors. For example, Hundley found that despite inequities the teachers at Dunbar High School not only offered students a good education but provided them with self-confidence. In the following decades an interest in oral history and ethnographic methods resulted in additional studies that aimed for an emic understanding of conditions in segregated schools in the South.

Walker (2000) conducted an analysis of all articles, books and conference papers examining segregated schools operating between the years 1935 to 1969 that were informed by the case study method. Among the 17 sources Walker found, she identified recurring themes missing from and contradicting earlier studies. These include affective

factors such as positive relationships between students, parents and teachers, and a climate of high expectations for success. These assets have been reported in subsequent studies as well. For example, Chafe, Gavins and Korstad (2001), quoted a retired North Carolina teacher as recalling how teachers interacted with students outside of school in a deliberate effort to get to know them on a personal level. Ramsey (2000), reporting on another North Carolina school, found that teachers instilled self-confidence in their pupils in an effort to assist them in combating the racism they faced on a daily basis.

In a study which incorporated interviews of graduates of a segregated high school in Alabama, Morris and Morris (2000) found the most common recollection of participants was that the teachers really cared about the students. A similar sentiment was cited by Collins, who interviewed individuals in east Texas whom had attended segregated schools:

I remember my high school teachers. Mr. Albert and my daddy. Those two Black men were really there for us. If it weren't for those guys, I don't know if I'd gone to college cause Mr. Albert was instrumental in getting me into Prairie View (2003, p. 92).

Duren (2002) interviewed 17 African American women in the South and Midwest and found “caring” to be a prevalent descriptor about their experiences attending segregated schools. The titles alone are quite telling in the case of two books; *The price they paid: Desegregation in an African American community* (Morris & Morris, 2002a), and *A victory of sorts: Desegregation in a southern community* (Pitts, 2003). Each of these volumes documents disparities in terms of funding, yet also reports that the shift to desegregated schools in the research communities was seen as a loss on numerous levels.

Legal Efforts to Dismantle Segregated Schools

Plessy v. Ferguson and Its Fall-out

In order to put the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case in perspective, it is necessary to look at the case which it overturned and several other legal precedents. At the close of the 19th century the Supreme Court made a ruling that inflicted long-lasting damages to African American civil liberties and educational rights. In Louisiana a suit was brought forth in 1892 by Homer Adolph Plessy following his arrest on the charge of illegally riding in a Whites'-only rail car, despite his being seven-eighths White. According to the "one drop" rule, he was considered an African American.

Mr. Plessy challenged the constitutionality of the 1890 Louisiana law establishing separate train compartments based on race by arguing that racial classifications and enforced separations stigmatized African Americans (Cottrol, Diamond & Ware, 2003). Eventually the case made its way up to the Supreme Court. The justices ruled in 1896 that separation of the races did not contradict the intent of the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, or of the Fourteenth Amendment, which proclaimed (in Section 1) that no citizen could be deprived of his life, liberty or property nor be denied due process of the law. According to the Court's opinion:

We consider the underlying fallacy of the plaintiff's argument to consist of the assumption that the enforced separation of the two races stamps the colored race with a badge of inferiority. If this be so, it is not by reason of anything found in the act, but solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it... If one race be inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United

States cannot put them on the same plane (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537, 1986).

The most infamous portion of the *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling is the “separate but equal” doctrine, as it allowed the perpetuation of injustices for decades to come by giving legal authority to existing segregation policies. Although *Plessy* did not expressly involve education, the Supreme Court indirectly gave its blessings to state-mandated school segregation (Blaustein & Ferguson, 1957). In the opinion of the court, public facilities could be divided along color lines provided they were of equal quality (Raffel, 2002; Thomas, 1997). In actual practice, facilities for people of color continued to be inferior to those for Whites (Dorsey, 1976; Marshall, 2002; Myrdal, 1944).

In the educational realm inequalities were justified on economic grounds. For example in post-Reconstruction Mississippi, tax monies for education were to be distributed for the equal support of both Black and White schools. However, in 1890 a Constitutional convention had determined that the means for determining distribution of funds would be left in the hands of local school boards. Bond (1970) related that:

In 1907 a ‘white’ county had a per capita expenditure for the education of white children of \$5.65 as compared to \$3.50 for Negro pupils. In the same year, a ‘black’ county spent \$80.00 per white child and \$2.50 per Negro pupil. In general, the pattern established in Mississippi was common to all the Southern states (p. 203).

A revision to the Alabama Constitution which took effect in 1908 resulted in a significant decrease in the salaries of African American teachers and a decrease in the length of academic terms at segregated schools. Annual reports from the period spanning

1891 to 1909 ceased reporting data on expenditures by race (Bond, 1970), perhaps in an effort to mask the reality of how funds were dispersed. The 1909 reappearance of such data indicates that per capita expenditures for Whites exceeded those of Blacks by over 500% (Pierce, Kincheloe, Moore, Drewry & Carmichael, 1955). In Texas the 1866 Constitution declared that the public school fund was to be used exclusively for the education of White Texans (Barr, 1996; Eby, 1921), necessitating that African Americans generate all monies on their own.

Economic factors, combined with lackluster concern for the education of African Americans on the part of school boards, resulted in disparities that were to continue for generations (Jones, 1928). It has been well documented that children who attended segregated schools in the South received textbooks that were discarded from White schools. Facilities were often of a ramshackle nature and teachers struggled with overcrowding. Materials such as uniforms for athletic teams might be cast-offs from White schools' teams, or might be purchased or created with funds raised due to the initiative of African American students, parents and teachers rather than from local coffers (Foster, 1997). Morgan noted, "They looked to their Black teachers to put things right, but their teachers had no power and very little influence. In fact, the teachers' jobs existed at the will of the local politician and/or the white superintendent of schools" (1995, p. 128). The continuation of dual, race-based schools sent a strong message about the philosophies of the dominant power structure: African Americans were not deemed equal to Whites and therefore there was no need to assume a pretense that suggested they were.

Higher Education Lawsuits

In spite of entrenched racism and the various obstacles placed before African Americans in their attempts to gain an education, the quest for knowledge continued, “A determination to acquire formal knowledge has been one of the striking features of the Black struggle for equality” (Fairclough, 2000, p. 6). Throughout the South individuals and groups agitated for improvements (Dickens, 1939). As the decades went by and disparities continued unabated, numerous petitions and legal suits were brought forth. Some of these resulted in positive gains, particularly at the level of higher education. The NAACP adopted a strategy of specifically targeting institutions of higher education for compelling reasons. Compared to the thousands of segregated public schools in the South, there were fewer state-funded colleges and universities, and:

“A victory against a state’s single law school or medical school would have positive reverberations across the state. Without the need to fight a long series of pitched battles with dozens of different school boards across the different counties of a state, the NAACP could focus its efforts on one statewide professional program and achieve dramatic results” (Cottrol, Diamond & Ware, 2003, p. 58).

In 1935 Donald Murray, a graduate of Amherst College in Massachusetts, filed suit against the University of Maryland (*Pearson v. Murray*, 1936) because he was denied entrance to the university’s law school based on his race (actually, nine individuals had similar experiences with the university prior to this case, including Thurgood Marshall). University administrators were willing to pay for Mr. Murray’s education at any law school that would accept him, but the court found this offer to be inadequate. Represented by Thurgood Marshall, who had recently set up practice in the

state, the court ruled in favor of the plaintiff because he would still have to pay the expenses of living out-of-state even if provided a scholarship, and he would not receive the training he needed in order to practice law in Maryland. The Maryland Supreme Court concluded that the university's treatment violated the equal protection clause, and thus Mr. Murray was eventually allowed to matriculate at the University of Maryland's Law School (Blaustein & Ferguson, 1957).

Lloyd Gaines was similarly denied entrance to the University of Missouri's state-funded law school in 1935 and was offered an out-of-state scholarship. The state's Supreme Court decided in 1937 that the university did not violate the plaintiff's rights as the law schools' curricula in Missouri and in the neighboring states taught essentially the same courses in American law, rather than focusing on specific state laws (Stevenson 1973). With the assistance of NAACP lawyers Gaines appealed his case to the U.S. Supreme Court (*Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada*), which overturned the state's verdict in 1938. The ruling declared that transferring Mr. Gaines to an out-of-state institution violated his rights because his own state had an obligation to provide an equal education (Cottrol, Diamond & Ware, 2003). During the years in which the courts re-argued the case, however, Mr. Gaines earned a masters degree from the University of Chicago and then seems to have disappeared. He thus never enrolled at the school he fought so hard to attend. Soon after the verdict was rendered a law school and journalism school were established at Lincoln (the state's graduate school for African Americans) in an effort to prevent other African Americans from attempting to enroll at the University of Missouri campus (Teddlie & Freeman, 1996).

At the end of World War II, thousands of African American veterans returned home to the South anticipating that GI Bill benefits would allow them to obtain college educations. The reality was that there were not enough spaces in the colleges and universities accepting African Americans to serve all those who sought admittance. Lawyers at the NAACP realized that Southern states would either have to construct additional colleges for African Americans (at a time when these states were still financially reeling from the effects of the Depression), or change their admissions policies.

Another law school case reached the U.S. Supreme Court in 1948. The *Sipuel v. Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma* suit was filed by Ada Sipuel, whom sought admission to the only law school in the state and was denied entrance. At the state Supreme Court level, it had been decided that Miss Sipuel's rights would not be violated if the Oklahoma State College for Negroes established a law school, but until there was sufficient demand for such a school the state was under no obligation to provide one (Kluger, 1976). At this point the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal. It took the court only days to decide the case, and the court declared that the state had an obligation to provide the plaintiff with an equal education. However, the court also remanded the case back to the lower court. An ad hoc, segregated law school (Langston College) was hastily thrown together in Oklahoma City over the course of two days (Teddle & Freeman, 1996). The plaintiff declined to attend what was clearly an inferior institution. The Langston school only served one student, and closed its doors in 1949. At that point Ada Sipuel Fisher (now married) was admitted to the University of Oklahoma.

In another law school case in the southwest, mail carrier Heman Sweatt was denied admission to the University of Texas law school in 1946 on racial grounds. In that instance, the state court declared that the state of Texas needed to establish a law school for African Americans within six months. The supposed school turned out to be two rented rooms in Houston, Texas (although affiliated with Prairie View University, located about 40 miles away), with a faculty of two part-time instructors and no library. Fearing difficulties should the program be found unequal in an appellate court, the state legislature approved \$100,000 for an improved segregated law school to be established in Houston (Meyers, 1989). During construction, a semblance of a law school was quickly created in a building in Austin, Texas. This version of a law school had a few more faculty and provided access to a real library, but the NAACP wanted to use the case to argue that segregated facilities were inherently unequal.

The case made its way up to the Supreme Court (*Sweatt v. Painter*, 1950), and both sides presented Friends of the Court opinions. On the side of the plaintiff were briefs filed by law school professors and by the United States government (Blaustein & Ferguson, 1957). Siding with the university, attorney generals from eleven Southern states urged that the court make a clear statement in support of the “separate but equal” doctrine. In their verdict, the justices unanimously ruled that a separate law school for a African American applicant to the University of Texas law school failed to live up to the regents’ promise of being an equal facility. Significantly, the court considered not only material components such as the number of faculty and quantity of books available, but also took into account “those qualities which are incapable of objective measurement” such as reputation of the faculty, the prestige of the school and the ability of law students

to participate in the sort realistic exchanges of ideas that would prepare them to be practicing lawyers (339 U.S. 629, 1950).

On the same day that the *Sweatt* case was decided, the Supreme Court also ruled on *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Board of Regents* (1950). In 1948, at the age of sixty-eight George McLaurin had applied to the University of Oklahoma's Ph.D. program in education but was barred because he was African American. A state court ruled that the plaintiff was entitled to an education, and the Negro college did not offer the degree he sought. Perhaps learning from their experiences in the *Sipuel* case, the regents decided not to waste money in establishing an impromptu, separate school that might not stand up to scrutiny. The state admitted Mr. McLaurin to the University of Oklahoma (Bartholomew, 1974). However, he was compelled to sit in a designated "colored" seat in all of his classes, to use only a specific table in the law library and to eat in a segregated section of the university's cafeteria. The Supreme Court eventually ruled that internal segregation at the University of Oklahoma constituted unequal opportunity (Hill & Greenberg, 1955).

The importance of the NAACP's legal assaults on discrimination in higher education lays in the fact that the Supreme Court was forced to consider the idea of "equality" in terms other than merely financial ones (Berman, 1966). Legal precedents were established regarding the negative impact of segregation on students. However, in none of the cases did the court make a stand regarding the legality or morality of segregation itself. It was not until the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* ruling (1954) that separate facilities including educational institutions were deemed

inherently unequal by the Supreme Court, and thus in violation of the Fourteenth and Fifth Amendments (Franklin & McNeil, 1995).

Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas

The legal team for the NAACP repeatedly argued cases in which the lawyers attempted to demonstrate that schools for African American children were inferior to those for Whites, stressing the “equal” half of the separate but equal doctrine (Johnson, 1954). In 1950, NAACP attorney (and future justice of the Supreme Court) Thurgood Marshall promised an outright attack on the entire Jim Crow system in American schools, from the kindergarten to graduate levels (Kellar, 1999). At the time, the District of Columbia and 17 states still mandated racially segregated schools and another four states allowed them (Dentler, 1991). Richard Kluger (1976) illuminates the social conditions of the time. Some states even required that schools for the blind be segregated by race. In the country as a whole, 11,173 school districts were segregated. Of the 15 million African American school-aged children in the United States, 11.5 million of them attended segregated schools.

Lawyers for the NAACP had been pursuing myriad desegregation cases and wisely reasoned that a successful suit encompassing multiple states might result in widespread systematic change. Although named for a plaintiff residing in Topeka, Kansas, the *Brown* case was actually a composite of cases from that state as well as from South Carolina, Delaware, Virginia and the District of Columbia in which African American parents either sought to admit their children into White schools or to challenge the inadequacies of the segregated schools (Harris & Jackson, 1975).

The South Carolina case of *Briggs v. Elliott* centered on efforts to raise teacher salaries, improve facilities and acquire bus transportation to the segregated school in Clarendon County. The suit was initiated in 1947 (Ogletree, 2004a). In the Washington D.C. litigation, *Bolling v. Sharpe*, parents argued that overcrowding in the district's African American schools constituted a violation of the Fifteenth Amendment (Kluger, 1976). In Prince Edward County, Virginia the *Davis v. County School Board* suit was lead by high school students fed up with inferior schools. And in New Castle County Delaware, the *Gebhart v. Belton* case protested inferior school conditions and a lack of transportation for the long commute (18 miles) to the segregated school.

Cheryl Brown Henderson is the daughter of Oliver Brown, the man who was listed as the lead plaintiff in the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* suit, as the combined cases came to be known. She serves as director of the Brown Foundation and has worked hard to honor her father's memory. Part of this entails exploding myths that have developed around *Brown*. For example, it is commonly related that the litigants in the Topeka case were attempting to register their children in the town's White schools because the segregated schools were inferior. In actual fact all of the elementary schools in the area had been built by the same architect at around the same time. The segregated schools were modern, brick structures identical to the White schools. (Brown Henderson, personal communication, 2003). According to both Kluger (1976) and Futrell (2004), at half of Topeka's four segregated schools the number of teachers with masters degrees exceeded the number of teachers holding that degree at the city's White schools. At issue was not so much the physical condition of the school structures or the expertise of the

teachers, but the underlying philosophy of race-based education and its impact on children of color.

At the state level, Kansas courts had upheld segregated schools in Topeka but did note that segregation itself “has a tendency to retard the education and mental development of Negro children” (cited in Lefler, 1957, p. 3). In Topeka, 13 families participated as litigants in *Brown* (and 11 previous segregation cases had been argued in Topeka, Kansas – the only district in the state which was segregated). In the other state courts’ verdicts, inequality among schools was admitted but remediations were promised in order to “fix” the African American schools. In Delaware it was determined that the plaintiff could attend the local White school until such improvements were completed. However, Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP team wanted to directly challenge the constitutionality of dual school systems. Merely improving the African American schools would not do (McDearman, 1989). The NAACP lawyers asked each of the plaintiffs to attempt to enroll their children in the schools closest to their homes, knowing full well that they would not be allowed to do so. These denials would serve as the evidence needed to form a class action suit (Brown Henderson & Rivers, 1997).

In 1952 the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear appeals from the cases originating in the four states and the District of Columbia. The justices invited the U.S. Attorney General and other interested parties to file briefs (Kluger, 1976). According to Irons (2002), the submitted briefs formed a pile nearly two feet high. The most powerfully worded among these was a friend of the court brief written by Philip Elman at the encouragement of the Acting Solicitor General of the United States, Robert Stern. Elman had penned the government’s briefs in the *McLaurin* and *Sweatt* rulings. Elman not only

attacked segregation in the school systems, but spoke of widespread racism in the capitol and throughout the nation. He connected discrimination with the Cold War, saying that such intolerance provided “grist for the Communist propaganda mills” (cited in Irons, 2002, p. 136). Secretary of State Dean Acheson likewise stated that segregated schools made a mockery of the principles of democracy and allowed Soviet officials to condemn the hypocrisy of American social practices.

The NAACP legal team referred to compelling testimony that had been provided by an expert witness in the state-level arguments of the *Briggs* case in South Carolina. Social psychologist Kenneth Clark (Clark & Clark, 1939) had presented the results from studies that he and his wife Mamie had conducted throughout the nation, including in Clarendon County. For over twenty years the Clark’s had been administering two tests to African American children of various ages. Each test was designed to ascertain whether African American children were cognizant of skin color, at what age such awareness manifested itself, and if African American children exhibited preferences for particular skin colors. One test asked children to color in pictures of boys and girls, using their choice of crayon colors, after responding to prompts such as “color the girl to look like you.”

The more famous of the Clarks’ studies has come to be known as the Doll Study. In this experiment, African American children were asked to identify which of two dolls was Black and which was White. The majority of children could readily do so, and could also indicate which of the dolls most closely resembled themselves. What was shocking was that when asked questions such as “which is the pretty doll?” or “which is the good doll?” the majority of African American children, even very young ones, showed a

preference for the White doll, and they selected the dark-toned doll as the “bad” doll. This pattern held true throughout various research sites and had been consistently observed for decades. The Doll Study pointed to the damage that racial bias and segregation had inflicted on African American children’s senses of self esteem (Morgan, 1995). Lawyers for the defense attempted to shun the results of the Clarks’ research, but additional testimony from sociologists, educators, anthropologists and other expert witnesses made the NAACP’s argument clear and compelling – segregated schools harmed African American children. The legal counsel for the school districts, on the other hand, offered only specious claims that desegregation would be harmful (Masters, 1980).

Two days after closing arguments, on December 13, 1952, the justices met to discuss the cases. All nine of the men had previously joined in the unanimous opinions of the *Sweatt* and *McLaurin* cases, but these decisions had merely dented, not overthrown, *Plessy*. The present case would be more far-reaching, as it would affect all public schools in the nation (Lefler, 1957). Notes of these conference sessions penned by two of the justices survive, and they seem to indicate that Chief Justice Vinson and several others planned to uphold *Plessy* (Morgan, 1995) and that the justices were about equally split in their opinions. It was decided that the court would hear another round of arguments in October of 1953. Justice Frankfurter, hoping for a unanimous verdict, asked lawyers to respond in new briefs to five questions. These included their opinions regarding the intent of the authors of the Fourteenth Amendment (if they meant for schools to be unitary) and what steps would be suggested to implement desegregation should the court rule it necessary.

In an odd twist of fate, Chief Justice Vinson died suddenly of a heart attack at the age of sixty-one while the court was in recess. Because the Senate also was not in session, newly elected President Eisenhower was free to appoint a new Chief Justice without going through Senate confirmation hearings. In a surprise move Eisenhower appointed Earl Warren, the Republican Governor of California (whom he owed a favor). The October re-arguments were postponed until December, and after those closing arguments the justices took five months to deliberate (Kluger, 1976). Not only was the case immensely important and controversial, but the new Chief Justice was adamant that the court's ruling be unanimous. In this way a clear message would be sent to the country (Fife, 1997).

On May 17, 1954 Chief Justice Earl Warren reconvened the court. He began with a commentary on the importance of education in a democratic society as a foundation of citizenship and as the means to advancement. He then turned to the critical issue of the debate; "Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other tangible factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities?" Warren declared that the Court had decided in the affirmative, concluding that "In the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal" (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 1954, cited in Kluger, 1976).

Reactions To and Impact of the *Brown* Decision

Although the unanimous decision in favor of the plaintiffs represented a major victory, Mr. Marshall did not accomplish all that he had hoped for. The 1954 case

supposedly eliminated inequality in education. Legal rulings, however, do not necessarily result in rapid social action (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997). When the *Brown* verdict was read, Marshall had tried to get the Court to declare that states begin immediate desegregation, and that they each file compliance reports by a specified date (Morgan, 1995). However, Chief Justice Warren cited the variations in local conditions and the need for wide-scale compliance to be problematic issues, and “He therefore invited parties to the suits, the Attorney General of the United States, and the Attorneys Generals of the states requiring or permitting segregation in public education to offer suggestions during the next term of court regarding the manner in which relief should be granted’ (Franklin & Moss, 1988, p.367).

Subsequently in 1955, in what came to be known as the *Brown II* decision, the Supreme Court essentially left the implementation of desegregation efforts in the hands of district level courts. The opinion of the court was:

...school authorities have the burden of establishing that a grant of additional time for transition is necessary in public interest and is consistent with good faith compliance at earliest practicable date. School desegregation must proceed with all deliberate speed (349 U.S. 497, 1955)

The “all deliberate speed” mandate in the *Brown II* (349 U.S. 294, 1955) ruling was so ambiguously phrased that the Court’s opinion was open to interpretation. This lack of a clearly spelled out course of action essentially gave individual states license to drag their feet (Ogletree, 2004b).

A number of critical race theorists have argued that these events should come as no surprise. For example, Derek Bell has applied his idea of the “interest convergence

principle” to the *Brown* decision (1995; 2004). This principle states that members of a dominant group will allow or even work towards the interests of oppressed groups so long as two conditions are met. First, the outcome cannot negatively affect the dominant group nor reduce their power. And secondly, the outcome must work in their best interests. These two factors are often met on an unconscious level. In the case of *Brown*, we must consider the era in which the case was argued. Large numbers of African American World War II veterans returned home expecting to find themselves honored and respected for their service to country. Instead, America continued to treat them as second-class citizens. African Americans across the country were increasingly agitating for the rights supposedly guaranteed them in the Constitutional amendments (but not in the Constitution itself, Bell would argue). The United State’s mistreatment of its own citizens was observed by foreign nations, during the height of anti-Communist sentiment. This made for very bad propaganda possibilities.

Recall that members of the U.S. Justice Department filed an amicus brief for the *Brown* case. The brief stated, “The United States is trying to prove to the people of the world, of every nationality, race and color, that a free democracy is the most civilized and secure form of government yet devised by man” (Brief for the United States as Amicus Curiae at 6, 347 U.S. 483, 1954). A ruling outlawing segregation would prove to outside observers that the United States lived up to its promised ideals. According to Dudziak, “Anticommunist ideology was so pervasive that it set the terms of the debate on all sides of the civil rights issue” (1995, p. 111). Taylor (1999) reveals that within an hour of the verdict, translators had simplified the legal language of the ruling and translated it into

Chinese and Russian for broadcast to radio satellites known to receive the Voice of America.

Tate, Ladson-Billings and Grant (1996) criticize the fact that the *Brown II* ruling did not explicitly define equality, much less offer any clue as to how desegregation could be realistically achieved. The Supreme Court recognized only the magnitude of the undertaking without addressing remedies. By placing the task of implementation efforts in the hands of state and local authorities, power has handed back to those very groups whose self-interests would be enhanced by non-compliance. Gewirtz (1983) went so far as to state that *Brown II* was a deliberate appeal to White segregationists: The “all deliberate speed” clause granted school systems the time to develop resistance strategies.

Most likely it is the case that different individuals involved in the case had differing expectations of how the dismantling of *Plessy* would unfold. People expecting wholesale changes were disappointed by the lack of adherence to the law. For example, “Educators completely miscalculated the strength of opposition to desegregated schooling that would come from White communities around the nation” (Morgan, 1995 p. 135). Segregationists either ignored or openly violated the new federal policy.

One response was the issuance of the Southern Manifesto, a document drafted by state governors and signed by numerous representatives from eleven states to signal their intention to maintain segregation on the grounds of interposition. A rarely used legal concept, interposition argued that states could ignore federal decrees which they felt contradicted the Constitution, unless an amendment to the Constitution was passed (Reid, 1956; Wilson & Segall, 2001). The Manifesto was circulated in newspapers throughout the country and presented to the Supreme Court. The Manifesto declared the Supreme

Court's ruling in the *Brown* decision to be in violation of states' rights and contrary to the Constitution (Southern Manifesto, 1956).

Stalling tactics included repealing compulsory attendance laws, funding private White academies and stemming the flow of state funds to desegregated schools. Some states outlawed the NAACP, and some districts initiated school building and improvement campaigns in an attempt to give the appearance of African American schools meeting the criteria of the "separate but equal" doctrine (Kluger, 1976).

Governors in South Carolina, Mississippi and Georgia threatened to abolish all public schools rather than desegregate (Dentler, 1991). Indeed, in Prince Edward County Virginia the entire public school system was shut down from 1956 to 1959 (Wolters, 1984). In some cases White resistance manifested itself in physical attacks on African American children attempting to attend formerly all-White institutions (e.g. Beals, 1994). In 1957 Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus, in defiance of a federal district court order, literally blocked the door of Central High School in Little Rock in an effort to prevent nine African American students from attending the school. He called out the state's National Guard, declared a state of emergency, and exhibited fits of rage and vehemence captured on film and broadcast throughout the country.

Images of the Arkansas Governor and other hate-spewing Whites have become indelibly etched in the consciousnesses of generations of Americans. In 1958 Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP successfully argued the case of *Cooper v. Aaron*, which rejected the Little Rock school board's delaying tactics. The NAACP continued to argue for justice in the ensuing years, both in the educational system and in other capacities (Ogletree, 2004b). The fact that such efforts continued to be necessary illuminates the

degree to which racism remained embedded in society. According to Jones, “Progress toward school desegregation was extremely slow; there was only three percent desegregation during the decade ending in 1964” (1978, p. 7). Rist (1979) states that the 1964-65 school year marked the first time that even private efforts were made to collect data on enrollment patterns in the eleven (former Confederate) Southern states.

In 1964 the Civil Rights Act was also passed by Congress. It required, among other things, that schools make realistic efforts to desegregate or they would face the forfeiture of federal funds. Section 407 authorized the U.S. Attorney General to implement desegregation actions where deemed necessary, and Section 401 defined desegregation, “Desegregation means the assignment of students to public schools and within such schools without regard to their race, color, religion, or national origin, but desegregation shall not mean the assignment of students to public schools in order to overcome racial imbalance” (Cited in Wolters, 1984, p. 7). The Act also provided for an expansion of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), and marked increasing federal supervision over state and local level actions. Nonetheless, the statement that students should not be transferred to achieve racial balance provided segregationists with ammunition in their cause.

In the decades following *Brown*, desegregation efforts in the South typically consisted of court-approved “choice” plans. These plans took three forms; pupil-placement laws, Freedom of Choice plans, and incremental desegregation plans. Pupil-placement laws assigned students to race-based schools, but allowed students to request transfers. Requests were weighed by school boards on an individual basis, and took into account the “psychological qualifications” of the students making the requests, the

likelihood of their adjusting to the curriculum and the possibilities of community backlashes. In light of the fact that these are subjective factors, it is not surprising that little integration resulted from such plans.

Freedom of Choice was conceived by Leon Dure, a journalist from Virginia (Messiah, 2000). The plan allowed students' parents to select the school of their choice at the beginning of the school year, thereby supposedly eliminating the automatic initial assignment of students to segregated schools and thereby putting the schools in compliance with the required desegregation edicts. Since the schools had no attendance boundaries, anyone was supposedly free to attend any school in a given district. However, a 1965 report by the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (cited by Orfield, 1969) found that many students' Freedom of Choice applications were rejected on the grounds that paperwork was improperly filed or because of the claim that White schools were over-enrolled. In addition, the report noted that a common tactic was to encourage a few African Americans to enroll at White schools so that the schools seemed to be at least somewhat integrated, and then subsequently pressure the students to withdraw.

In 1965 the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) found that approximately 94 percent of African American children in the South continued to attend segregated schools. Consequently the OCR worked with the United States Justice Department in an attempt to remedy the problem. For example, instead of sending children home with applications for their parents to sign and return to the school, applications were handled via the mail in an effort to avoid student harassment. Nonetheless, Freedom of Choice plans proved ineffective. Later some districts, when found in non-compliance with the 1964 Civil

Rights Act and facing termination of federal funding, adopted incremental desegregation plans. These called for the integration of one grade level per year, across districts. While incremental plans entailed a more comprehensive form of integration, they allowed the transition to occur as slowly as possible (Bullock, 1970).

To celebrate and reflect upon the impact of the *Brown* decision at its 50th anniversary in 2004, many journals (e.g. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *Negro Educational Review*, *Teachers College Record*) published special theme issues and numerous conferences were devoted to developments in the educational system since the case was rendered. Many scholars (e.g., Lyons & Chesley, 2004; Milner & Howard, 2004; Smith, 2005) have lamented the fact that *Brown* has disappointed: achievement gaps have widened, the percentage of African American educators has steadily decreased, and in many locations in the nation schools are more de facto segregated than they have been in generations (Orfield 2001; Orfield & Eaton, 1997). These issues are beyond the scope of the present project, since the research time frame only extends to the year of 1975. However, a fact pertinent to the study has become evident with the passage of time. While *Brown* set a precedent that worked towards the eventual dismantling of segregation, the ruling did not provide the catalyst many had hoped for. The Supreme Court decision, in many instances, only became truly effective when it was backed by laws passed by Congress that threatened resisters' pocketbooks.

The Impact of *Brown* on African American Teachers

As stated previously, a wealth of information has been published regarding the affects of desegregation on students, particularly on African American students. A large number of documents consist of federal reports focused on such topics as the progress of

desegregation, changes in students' academic performances or the degree to which students had adjusted to new school settings. These reports are typically quantitative in methodology and address the issues on a macro level rather than on an individual level.

Relatively little has been written about the impact of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision on African American educators. The literature addressing the experiences of African American teachers tends to fall into two general categories. The first consists of articles written in the years immediately after the case was rendered, or else on anniversary years (such as the 40th anniversary in 1994). These articles, especially those written in the 1950s, tend to be quite brief and are generally concerned with negative repercussions. They predict or document job loss and demotions among the African American teaching force. Some of the articles offer conflicting numbers, and since the authors don't always attribute the sources for their figures it is difficult to ascertain their validity. Futrell (2004) offers one possible explanation for this confusion, "After the ruling mandating desegregation, all states stopped keeping records identifying the racial composition of the teachers in their districts, and many did not document the number of teachers demoted or dismissed" (p. 86). What does seem clear, however, is that many African American educators became displaced in the wake of *Brown*.

The second category of scholarship is concerned with the experiences of African American educators on a more personal level. For example, Foster (1990, 1997) and Walker (1996a, 1996b) and Walker and Thompkins (2004) conducted interviews with African American teachers that gave consideration to participants' voices. In these cases the focus of the researchers was primarily on occurrences in segregated schools or on teacher life histories. The same is true of a crop of dissertations which began to appear in

the last decade (e.g. Dismuke, 2004; Duren, 2002; Kibbe, 2004; McKinzey, 1999). Robinson (1978) documented her career as an educator working in segregated schools in Texas. Foster (1993) and Cozart (2003) are among the few authors whom provide information regarding African American teachers' experiences not only in segregated educational settings but in desegregated schools. Where relevant, the information presented by such authors will be related to the findings of this study in the analysis of the data.

Desegregation's Impact on African American Teachers' Jobs

In the summer 1954 issue of *The Journal of Negro Education*, Fisk University President Charles S. Johnson iterated anticipated repercussions of the *Brown* decision. He was quite prescient in suspecting that the removal of legal impediments would not immediately result in the social acceptance of African Americans, in schools or elsewhere. Regarding the decision's impact on African American teachers Johnson projected some job losses, particularly among those who were poorly trained or those who lived in small communities which would be closing schools. He also suggested some teachers might be summarily dismissed as a backlash against desegregation. Yet overall, Johnson painted a fairly sunny portrait of times to come:

With a present need for more than 60,000 elementary school teachers, and the rapidly-mounting school population, and the inadequate numbers of teachers now preparing for the elementary schools, it does not appear that there will be any serious displacement of Negro teachers at this level" (1954, p. 367).

Johnson felt that some high school level teachers and administrators might be subject to demotions, but again projected these cases would be relatively rare. He attributed this to

the fact that many African American educators, especially in the South, had training that made them equally or more qualified than their White counterparts.

The following year, the editor of *The Journal of Negro Education* stated that it was expected from the onset that student desegregation would precede teacher desegregation, but he expressed that “it is very important that periodic checks be made in order to assess the progress made in this crucial arena” (Thompson, 1955, p. 405).

Thompson gave an accounting of the numbers of African American teachers in several Southern states who had found new positions, but also noted that in West Virginia 19 African American schools closed, leaving 15 teachers unemployed. Educators in Missouri and Kentucky were being told that their contracts would not be renewed. The editor predicted that African American teachers in city or large school districts would be covered by tenure laws, but those working in smaller communities faced an uncertain future.

Indeed, a survey conducted by *Southern School News* (cited by Robinson, 1957) in 1956 found that approximately 300 African American teachers in Oklahoma had been displaced due to desegregation of the schools, and the majority of them were unable to find employment elsewhere in the state. The same situation afflicted a reported 60 educators in Kentucky, 58 in West Virginia and 20 each in the states of Texas and Missouri. The problem was particularly pronounced among teachers who had worked in one or two-teacher schools, as these small schools were simply shut down following desegregation and the students absorbed into the local White schools.

Another particularly worrisome development addressed by Thompson (1955) was a resolution brought before the Georgia State Board of Education that called for the

permanent revocation of the teaching licenses of any teachers who held membership in the NAACP or whom favored integration. Fortunately, the NAACP immediately threatened to sue the state on the grounds that the resolutions were unconstitutional. The state Attorney General withdrew his resolutions, but boldly claimed that, “existing state laws go much further in accomplishing this purpose than any resolution you now have before you” (cited in Thompson, 1955, p. 407). This statement was made in reference to the Georgia state law that required teachers to take an annual oath swearing to uphold the Constitution of Georgia. A portion of the oath mandated that teachers refrain from teaching any theory of social relations, economics or other theories that conflicted with the “fundamental principles of patriotism and high ideals of Americanism.” Based on Georgia’s official belief that state segregation laws were legitimate (state’s rights), it would be easy to find African American teachers in violation of the oath.

A study conducted in 1955 sheds light on some of the mixed feelings African American teachers held in the year immediately following the *Brown* verdict. The researchers (Doddy & Edwards, 1955) developed a questionnaire designed to identify the apprehensions of African American teachers regarding desegregation and the degree to which they held particular concerns. Focusing on 150 teachers who were also enrolled in a graduate school of education in South Carolina, the authors concluded that the most pressing worries of the teachers were; 1) they might be required to acquire more teacher training, 2) segregation might result in the splitting up of spouses who currently worked at the same schools, and 3) new school administrators would find ways to under-pay them. Findings suggested that anxieties fell into two broad categories – those dealing

with pay and other employment issues, and those related to interpersonal relationships with Whites.

The former category seemed to be the more serious concern, regardless of the teachers' ages, gender or years of experience. Interestingly, the respondents were split equally in their preference for future teaching assignments if given a choice of teaching in a segregated or a desegregated school. When asked how they suspected other African American teachers would respond to the question, 75% predicted that others would prefer to remain in a segregated school. The authors of the study drew a tentative conclusion that such a preference might be linked to perceived hostility on the parts of Whites.

In 1956 John Davis, who worked with the Department of Teacher Information and Security of the NAACP's Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDEF) division, published an article informing African American teachers of efforts that the organization was making on their behalf. The article seems to serve as a reminder of the fact that help was available should it be needed. Among the services offered by the division were the rendering of free legal aid to those who could not afford it and whom wanted to file discrimination suits. The LDEF also published state-specific pamphlets outlining teachers' rights. It seems that the division had been conducting field cases and test suits in several states since 1950, where early desegregation edicts had resulted in job losses for African American educators. Mr. Davis advised that with the help of the LDEF it was likely that teachers who were dismissed could fight to get their jobs back. The author noted that an effort was underway to merge the Negro and White teachers' unions, "because experience shows that maximum security is more likely where there are integrated professional teachers' organizations" (1956, p. 184).

Several additional articles appeared in 1956 which addressed the status of desegregation in several states. Of these, three described the impact of desegregation on African American teachers. Two discuss educational developments in Missouri, while one provides information related to Oklahoma. Within the year immediately following *Brown v. Board of Education*, 21 of the 96 separate schools in Oklahoma had been discontinued (Perry & Hughes, 1956). This entailed job loss for approximately 65 African American educators. The state legislature anticipated that the future would bring more dismissals, but stated they would ameliorate the situation by notifying teachers by April 10 of each year if their contracts would not be renewed. The Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers union had been checking into the situation, and a recent merging with the state's White teachers' union promised to bring more assistance.

Brantley (1956) reported that five African American teachers in St. Charles, Missouri had lost their jobs, and the entire teaching staffs of the segregated schools in Hannibal and Moberly were let go. In all cases, the teachers' contracts simply weren't renewed. In the later two locations, the African American educators found out after they were dismissed that they had higher qualifications than did the White schools' teachers, and yet they had been receiving less pay. According to the author, "Missouri Negro teachers generally are concerned over their futures" (p. 308). Marshall (1956) found the situation to be especially pronounced in medium and small communities in the state, where entire teaching forces were let go. Some superintendents stated that Whites were not ready for Negro teachers, but the author found that dismissal could be used as a retaliatory measure for supporting integration, "Moberly is an outstanding example of this type of action. The teachers were polled on their opinions of integration... as a result

13 Negro teachers were discharged” (p. 295-296). At the time of publication, the NAACP was seeking restoration of the teacher’s jobs with back pay.

The above literature was all published within one year of the *Brown* verdict. Clearly there was an effort by both individuals and organizations from the onset to compile figures on the employment status of African American teachers, and clearly these efforts were driven by the recognition that African American educators’ jobs were in peril. Valien (1956) stated that the situation was exacerbated by the fact that desegregation was working unilaterally. In other words while African American students were transferring to White schools, no White students were leaving their schools. Faced with the loss of their students segregated schools, particularly in small communities, were simply being abandoned. Cecelski (1994) noted the same pattern in the North Carolina school system he studied.

Haney (1978) provides a view of the situation after more than twenty years had passed, with newly available statistical data. He claimed that after passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, massive resistance to desegregation dissipated. Yet at the same time, the acceleration of desegregation meant that even larger numbers of African American educators lost their jobs. The methods used to arbitrarily dismiss the teachers became more blatant. For example, some supervisors interpreted scores on the National Teachers Examination differently according to the race of the test-taker.

According to Ethridge (1979), the impact of the *Brown* decision on African American educators in the years 1954 to 1965 was “absolutely devastating” (p. 217). He attributed the fall-out to several factors. The first was linked the Supreme Court’s phrasing in the verdict, that separate facilities were inherently unequal. These words

connoted to most people that African American schools were universally poor, and by extension White parents and decision-makers wanted nothing to do with them. Since no one would want to send their child to such a school, the schools folded. Another factor was related to a legal case in Moberly, Missouri. In 1954 the school board there dismissed all 13 African American educators without cause. All were certified, and one held a doctorate degree. At the same time, all 125 White educators there kept their jobs despite the fact that some only had provisional certifications. The Moberly case was used as a legal precedent for ten years by those who resisted desegregation.

Many African American educators were disappointed and concerned when the *1966 Desegregation Guidelines* published by the Health, Education and Welfare Department (HEW) failed to address policies for teacher retention or promotion. The effect of this oversight was exacerbated when a lawyer for the HEW was quoted in the *Washington Post* as saying, “In a war there must be some casualties, and perhaps Black teachers will be the casualties in the fight for equal education of Black students” (cited in Futrell, 2004, p. 79). Ethridge discovered that the Departments of Education in 17 states had ceased keeping records on African American faculty member dismissals when they desegregated.

Concerned that a lack of data would prevent anyone from knowing the actual extent of the problem, Ethridge began work in 1972 with the NEA, HEW and a team of field researchers to document the loss of teaching jobs among African Americans. The team “developed comparative losses based on the *projected number of teaching positions that would have been available to Black teachers had the schools remained segregated*” (1979, p. 222, italics added). They estimated that by 1970, in seventeen southern states,

31,584 teaching positions had been lost. It is important to note that projected losses of anticipated jobs are not the same as outright job losses. Nonetheless, Ethridge's figure has been repeated as fact in subsequent publications (e.g. Holmes, 1990; Hudson, 1994). Hudson actually cited Ethridge's 1979 work but inflated the figure to 38,000 job losses while at the same time condensing the time period to cover only the years of 1954 to 1964. Hawkins (1994) then repeated Hudson's erroneous figure and dates. Ethridge's estimate may be true, but more information is needed to back up his claim. If his extrapolation is accurate, his figure represents a loss of nearly 47% of African American teaching positions in the South (out of 81,000 in 1954).

Unfortunately, the fact remains that Southern school boards deliberately chose not to record figures regarding teacher dismissals. Cozart stated (2003), "One of the more negative, perhaps hidden, outcomes of desegregation was the often quiet dismissal of Black teachers" (p. 21). An article in a Raleigh, North Carolina newspaper (Davis, 1973) referred to data collected by the Civil Rights Commission. That organization found that in 20 North Carolina school districts surveyed, there were 145 less African American teachers employed in 1970 than there were in 1968, despite the fact that 22 new teaching positions had been added. Generett (2003) reported that across that state, 3,051 African American teachers lost their jobs following desegregation. This translated to 21% of the African American teaching force in North Carolina. Although she does not provide further information, Generett stated that "North Carolina was second only to Texas in the number of jobs lost by Black teachers..." (2003, p. 97).

A lack of comprehensive data on African American teacher displacement underscores the need to engage with African American educators living today who

worked during this time in history. The personal impact of desegregation legislation on African American teachers has thus far been neglected. In listening to the stories of those who were in the classrooms we can add to the conversation and perhaps learn valuable lessons.

Theoretical Frameworks Guiding the Research

The Interpretive Paradigm

In deciding upon a research project and developing this study, I was influenced by the interpretive paradigm, and by critical theory and critical race theory. Interpretivism as a method of inquiry began in the 1970s as a reaction to positivism. Prior to that time, positivism had dominated American educational research. Positivist research attempts to discover general principles or universal laws that supposedly govern reality. It is based on empirical observations and deductive reasoning, and both the researcher and the instruments used are assumed to be objective (Bredo & Feinberg, 1982). Positivists are typically concerned with description, prediction, causal explanations, and confirming or disconfirming hypotheses (Habermas, 1971).

In contrast, the interpretive paradigm is concerned with interpretations of experience. Based on inductive reasoning, interpretivist scholars attempt to understand the meaning of actions or situations from the perspectives of the research participants (Carr & Kremmis, 1986). Interpretivism recognizes that reality is not a universal truth awaiting discovery, but that individuals construct their own versions of reality. People and their views of the world are dynamic, and thus an interest in the social construction of reality is a hallmark of interpretivism (Deshler & Hagen, 1989). Interpretivists do not conduct experiments, but rather they seek to understand existing conditions. Instead of

claiming to be objective, interpretivist scholars deliberately seek out individuals' subjective, personal views. Individuals and research participants are considered to be authorities regarding their experiences.

Sources of data include observations, analysis of documents, interviews and narrative analysis (Gubrium & Holstein, 1995; Merriam, 1991). Based on these sources, interpretivists use grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in order to understand situations or people at an in-depth level. Key to the paradigm is a dialogue between researcher and participants as they work together to clarify meanings and generate understandings. Ideally, the researcher takes measures to check the accuracy of his or her understandings by getting feedback from participants, and subsequently refines the interpretations. Working in tandem with participants, the resultant findings represent a combination of the researcher's and the participants' views.

Critical Theory

Critical theorists are likewise concerned with discovering the meanings individuals construct regarding their experiences, but they go a step further by advocating change (Greene, 1986). Critical theorists argue that reality is constructed based on issues of power. When individuals critically reflect on how they have been positioned by society or mis-educated (Young, 1992) the opportunity for changing the system is made possible (Beck, 2000). A major goal is to raise awareness of how the prevailing system works to disempower some individuals, because knowledge is considered emancipatory (Calhoun, 1995).

Critical theory owes its intellectual roots to the Frankfurt school of thought, which was influenced by Kant's views regarding ethics, reason and beauty and by Marxist

theories regarding the structure of industrialized societies (Leonardo, 2004). An effort was made to problematize or critique the tensions between authoritarian rule and enlightenment (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1976). Critical theorists argue that people are positioned by historical and social circumstances. These assigned locations (Young, 1992) warrant scrutiny, because it is when individuals critically reflect on how they have been positioned by society that the opportunity for positively altering conditions is made possible (Beck, 2000). Critical theorists eschew notions of determinism by allowing for the possibility of transformation (Apple, 1993; Comstock, 1982). According to Sipe and Constable (1996), a major goal is to "...discover what is just and take action. Since knowledge is a form of sharing power, it can be used to change the world into a more just and equitable place for all groups" (p. 158-159).

Critical theory began to influence American educational researchers beginning in the late 1970s (Morrow & Brown, 1994) and is associated with scholars such as Giroux (1982, 1992), McCarthy (1990), Apple (1985; 1993) and Friere (1986). Critical theory provides a means of thinking about the relationships between school practices and social outcomes with an eye towards increasing opportunities (McLaren, 1988, 1998). According to McLaren, "Critical pedagogy asks how and why knowledge gets constructed the way it does, and how and why some constructions of reality are legitimated and celebrated by the dominant culture while others clearly are not" (1998, p. 169).

Critical theory is inherently political, as it identifies structural forces that inhibit students and seeks to amend practices or ideologies that maintain the status quo (Kincheloe, 1993; Shor, 2000). Critical theory and critical pedagogy challenge us to

question the damaging messages that students internalize during their schooling. Initially primarily concerned with issues of social class (e.g. Bowles & Gintis, 1976), critical theory has expanded to considerations of race, gender and other socially constructed categories (e.g. Foucault, 1977; Hopson, 2003; Lather, 1990).

Critical Race Theory

Also pertinent to this study is critical race theory. Critical race theory is principally associated with African American scholarship (Taylor, 1998). The field began in the 1970s as an extension of critical legal studies, a discipline that sought to explicate how legislation in the United States has functioned to limit opportunities for African Americans (Gotanda, 1995; Roithmayer, 1999). Critical race theorists argue that even laws supposedly enacted in an effort to ensure equality have been ineffectual or contradictory to their stated purposes. Too often such laws are either not enforced, or in actual practice they perpetuate a hierarchical society in which certain groups are subordinated (Delgado, 1995; Tate, 1996). Such scholars (e.g. Bell, 1989; Ladson-Billings, 1998) state that African Americans must examine the historic social and political climate of the United States in order to understand how past conditions are implicated in ongoing systems of oppression.

Critical race theory (CRT) rejects three beliefs commonly encountered among individuals in the United States regarding racial injustice. First, such theorists hold that adopting a so-called “colorblind” perspective is not a benevolent practice, even when it is adopted with good intentions (Lawrence, 2002). Many people believe that ignoring race is a means of seeing all people as equals, or that there are no longer any distinctions between various groups. The result of this stance is that the individual and collective

experiences of minorities are masked. That which is hidden from view cannot be investigated or challenged.

Critical race theory, secondly, problematizes the notion that racism consists solely of negative acts or ideas perpetuated by specific individuals. According to critical race theorists, racism is also found in systems and in society as a whole. Each of us operates within these constraints, whether he or she is positioned as subordinate or dominant (Bell, 1995). Thus CRT casts a broad net by considering not just individual but institutionalized forms of prejudice. A final popular belief that critical race theorists discount is that racism can be tackled in isolation, without considering the impacts of gender bias, homophobia, class and other issues (Valdez, Culp & Harris, 2002). CRT argues that multiple forms of oppression operate simultaneously. Attention to the various forms of oppression, and how they intersect, points to the complex nature of identity.

This position is in agreement with that of critical theorists in general (e.g. Friere, 1986; Giroux, 1982). There is a degree of overlap between the two paradigms in that both view the recognition of inequities as a first step in developing a critical consciousness. Notions of normalcy are deconstructed as researchers attend to the voices of those who have traditionally been marginalized (Marvin, 1999). Praxis, or a combination of reflection and action, is the primary goal. Critical race theorists differ from critical theorists in that they are specifically concerned with how social institutions negatively impact people of color.

Critical race theory is well suited to this study, since the research period begins after the *Brown v. Board* ruling. In addition, critical race theorists argue that a master narrative has dominated discourse in this country, and that particular narrative has been

developed by the dominant social class (Marvin, 1999). Critical race scholars deconstruct the master narrative by developing counter-narratives which value the perspectives of individuals whose voices have traditionally been marginalized and silenced. My intent as a researcher and as a multicultural education scholar was to use the interpretive paradigm to analyze how participants viewed their lives during the research period, and to place those constructions within a social milieu by examining their realities through the theoretical lenses of critical theory and critical race theory.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have presented a review of the literature that is germane to the research topic. An overview of the history of African American education in the South was provided in order to highlight the fact that inequality has been the norm and to establish a context for the region of the country considered in the dissertation. The chapter included information about important desegregation cases, with particular emphasis on *Brown v. Board of Education* since it called for a restructuring of the American educational system. The affects of desegregation on African American educators was discussed in an effort to demonstrate the impact of legal mandates on teachers. Finally, I described the theoretical frameworks that influenced me in undertaking the study. Chapter III provides another review of the literature, concentrating on developments in Texas and specifically in the two communities from which participants were drawn.

CHAPTER III

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION: TEXAS AND THE TWO COMMUNITIES

This chapter provides a review of educational programs for African Americans in Texas under the Freedmen's Bureau system in an effort to shed light on the social and political atmosphere in the state following the Civil War. I then discuss conditions in educational facilities for African Americans in Texas in the twentieth century. The chapter continues with a discussion of the establishment of segregated school systems for African Americans in the two communities that are the focus of the dissertation; Bryan and College Station, Texas. In the concluding section I provide information regarding the events that occurred during the time that the two communities were making the transition to desegregated schools. This information is included in order to illuminate the historic events that impacted people living in the research sites, as well as to establish a sense of the contemporary local conditions during the period addressed in the study, 1954 to 1975.

Freedmen's Bureau Schools in Texas

Free At Last, Free At Last

Even though Texas is geographically and culturally a part of the South, it has a unique history in that originally African Americans in Texas were free. This is due to the fact that Texas belonged to Mexico, which had outlawed slavery, so that in its early years African Americans in Texas were legally free. (Barr, 1996). In the early 1800s an increasing number of African Americans migrated from the northern U.S. for greater economic prospects. The situation changed for African Americans in Texas when the Mexican government allowed Americans to establish colonies in Texas. Many of them

brought slaves with them even though they were expressly forbidden from keeping people in bondage in this Mexican territory (Meinig, 1969).

When the Texians seized control of the territory and established the Republic of Texas, slavery became legitimized and firmly entrenched. In 1835 there were a reported 1,835 slaves in Texas (Bracht, 1931). Within just a few years the number of reported slaves grew to 35,073. Bracht noted that six counties in west Texas failed to report, and he estimated a more realistic figure would be that there were 45,384 slaves in the state, equal to about 23% of the population. Over time the country grew increasingly polarized on the issue of slavery, yet the number of slaves had increased to 182,556 by 1860 (Wintz, 1984).

The onset of the Freedmen's Bureau's influence in Texas can be specifically dated to June 19, 1865 when General Gordon Granger proclaimed from the balcony of Ashton Villa in Galveston that all slaves were free (Sance, 1987). Even though President Abraham Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22 of 1862 (to go into effect in the deep South on January 1st of 1863), it was not until General Granger's announcement two years later that African Americans in Texas were released from bondage (Randall & Donald, 1969). Following this news, spontaneous celebrations broke out among freedmen in Texas and neighboring states (Wiggins, 1993, 1996). Soon thereafter, federal troops and administrative agents arrived throughout the state to see to it that United States law was adhered to as well as to seize Confederate property.

Following the Civil War, the Freedmen's Bureau established schools for the children of freed slaves (as well as for African American adults, in the form of night and Sunday schools) in Texas between the years of 1865 to 1870 (Winegarten, 1995). Public

schooling was a new concept in the south during this era, and even few White individuals attended a formalized school. A state-supported educational system had been enacted in Texas in 1854, but the system ceased operations during the Civil War. Elite Whites throughout the South typically hired private tutors for their children, and extended schooling was a rarity (Urban & Wagoner, 1996). The education of slaves had been forbidden during the slave era, although some African Americans managed to learn the fundamentals through covert means (Morgan, 1995). In 1860, approximately 25% of the Texas population was slaves. In addition, census records indicate that 355 free African Americans lived in the state. Of these, only 11 claimed to be literate. This official number is likely lower than the actual number, as the legal prohibition against African American education would have made individuals reluctant to reveal such information.

Following the South's defeat in the Civil War, Yankee interlopers arrived in 1865 to oversee the implementation of federally mandated changes, including the education of the newly freed slaves, who numbered around 400,000 individuals (Hornsby, 1973). As discussed in Chapter II, the Freedmen's Bureau had oversight of 16 states and the District of Columbia and the Indian Territory. This vast area was divided into ten districts, each of which was to be overseen by an Assistant Commissioner. General E. M. Gregory was posted to Texas and assumed his station in Galveston in September of 1865. As a first order of business, Gregory ordered his officers to travel the state to read and distribute copies of the Emancipation Proclamation. There was considerable fear that race riots might occur at Christmas time due to conflicting rumors that were circulating (Wintz, 1984). Many former slaveholders claimed that the slaves were not to be freed until Christmas. Yet, at the same time many freedmen believed that at Christmas their former

masters' estates would be divided up, they would be given title to individual parcels land (Gregory, 1865), or that the federal government would provide them with land. Gregory called upon all citizens to invalidate both rumors.

Difficulties of the Texas Freedmen's Bureau Schools

Further compounding the new assistant commissioner's problems was the fact that it was difficult to attract teachers to the far away State of Texas (Hoffman, 2003). However, with the aid of Northern missionary groups, ten willing teachers were located with the promise of another 30 to arrive soon. Edwin M. Wheelock served as the first superintendent of the Freedmen's schools in Texas, and by the end of 1865 sixteen Negro schools (including ten night schools) had been established, enrolling 1,041 students including adults (Elliot, 1952). By mid-1866 Texas ranked first in the number of Southern Negro schools, with a total of 90. Yet a report in 1866 noted that of the 74,000 school-aged African American children in the state, only 4,590 were enrolled (Franklin & Anderson, 1978). This low figure should be attributed to factors such as children's contributions to the labor of the family or the distance of schools rather than a lack of desire for an education on the part of African Americans (Du Bois & Dill, 1910).

Of interest is the fact that in the same year of 1866 a revision to the Texas Constitution declared that public school funds were to be used exclusively for the education of White Texans (Eby, 1921). In 1867 (as well as in subsequent revisions), the Texas Constitution upheld segregated schools (Vernon, 1993), stating that African American children and White children would attend separate schools and impartial provisions would be made for both (Angel, 1998). These two developments shed light on the prevailing sentiment of the times: Whites did not intend to change the status quo

(Baer & Jones, 1990). For example, Wintz (1984) noted that in Houston in the 1880s, African American male teachers were paid only 58% of the salary paid to White male teachers. Even in 1918, the state allocated \$9.06 per year for the education of each White student compared to only \$6.90 for the education of each African American student (Peirce, 1971).

After a visit to Texas, the general superintendent of the Freedmen's school system, John W. Alvord, stated, "While there are many warm friends of the Government and of the freedman in Texas, it is the opinion of the state Commissioner there that their schools could not go on at all without the presence of military authority. Especially this would be true in the rural districts" (Freedmen's Bureau, Second Semi-Annual Report on Schools, 1866, cited in Morris, 1980, p. 16). An army officer assigned to Texas was asked to comment on conditions there by the Congressional Joint Committee on Reconstruction, and when asked how Texans viewed the education of African Americans he responded, "They were starting a colored school at San Antonio. I heard no conversation about it, but any proposition about educating the colored people is received by a great portion of the residents there with a sneer" (Morris, 1980, p. 16)

Gregory's successor to the post of assistant commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau in Texas, General J. B. Kiddoo, reported to Alvord that many White Texans resented the presence of northern White teachers. This was due in part to the fact that they were seen as Yankee intruders, and partly due to fears of White women being in the company of African American males (U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, Third Semi-Annual Report on Schools for Freedmen, 1867, in Morris, 1980). Kiddoo attempted to assuage people's concerns by working to find African

American teachers to serve under the Bureau. In 1867 Freedmen school teachers earned \$15 per month in Texas, paid for by the American Missionary Association. In addition, the Bureau relied heavily on the contributions of the freedmen themselves, and in some instances Bureau schools received monetary gifts or donations in kind from local residents. The policy of the Freedmen's Bureau was to supplement the schools' expenses, not support them outright.

During the short duration that the Freedmen's Bureau operated schools in Texas, the number of schools and enrollment figures fluctuated. In the fall of 1866 a cholera epidemic caused major reductions in both categories. In 1867 newly appointed assistant commissioner General Charles Griffin established that tuition be charged. The cost was fifty cents for one child in a family or one dollar for the enrollment of two or more children. Although orphans and the children of widows were exempted, the tuition fee caused some students to withdraw from school. Nonetheless Griffin raised the teacher salary to \$40 per month. In the summer of this year a contagious disease, this time in the form of yellow fever, again resulted in attrition. Many Texans and teachers were among the fatalities, as was Griffin (Fifth Semi-Annual Report on Schools for Freedmen, 1868, in Morris, 1980). The whims of weather patterns affected cotton crops, which in turn hindered freedmen's ability to contribute to schools and to finance tuition. In contrast to the optimism sensed in 1866 Bureau reports, by 1868 the Commission stated that "The freedmen's schools in Texas do not compare favorably to those of many other Southern states" (Sixth Semi-Annual Report on Freedmen's Schools, 1868, cited in Morris, 1980, p. 43). Table 3.1 provides a picture of changing enrollment patterns over the years from

1865 to 1870. As indicated by the figures, a small number of teachers were responsible for a large number of students.

Table 3.1
Freedmen's Bureau School Data for the State of Texas

Year	Number of Schools	Enrollment	Number of Teachers
1865	16	1,041	10
1866	90	4,590	43
1867	34	1,366	34
1868	34	1,133	32
1869	70	Est. 3,000	65
1870	66	3,248	53

Adapted from Elliot (1952).

In addition to crop failures and epidemics, hostility on the part of Whites posed a serious threat to the schools' long-term success. It was the intention of the Freedmen's Bureau to withdraw from the South after a few years rather than to maintain an ongoing presence. In terms of education the premise was that once schools became self-sufficient federal oversight would no longer be necessary, yet resistance to the very idea of African American education made the prognosis for success look dim.

According to Hornsby (1973), reports of violence on the part of the Klu Klux Klan predominated in Texas during 1868 and 1869. Murder was especially common in east Texas. Hostilities were directed to teachers as well. Opposition was manifested in social ostracism, harassment or refusal to rent property to teachers (Heintze, 1985). In Georgetown, Texas a White teacher left her post due to an inability to find a home in which to board. In nearby Circleville, after being taunted and later finding her school

burned down, an African American teacher decided to return home to the North (Hornsby, 1973).

Certainly if adults in Texas could be so flagrantly punished for attempting to teach African American children, African Americans must have been rightfully worried for their own safety. Nonetheless, the value of education was a deeply engrained philosophy among the community at large. Letters written by teachers affiliated with the American Missionary Association to their home constituents reflect an admiration for the efforts of the children. A teacher in Hempstead, Texas, noted, “They love their school as White children do not... They will never go home before school is dismissed unless compelled” (Daggett, 1867, p. 57). An unidentified letter from a teacher in Galveston stated that she had never before seen children make such rapid advances in learning arithmetic (Elliott, 1952).

Freedmen’s Bureau School Efforts in the Brazos Valley

In terms of the Brazos Valley area, Reconstruction began when the 114th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment arrived at the town of Millican, Texas, on June 23rd of 1865 (Scott, 1986). In October of that year the Bureau hired Reverend Richard Sloan to teach a Sabbath School for African Americans in the area, for which he received a salary of \$20 per month (ibid). A Methodist church at Wilson’s Plantation likewise operated as a school from around that date (records are unclear) under the auspices of the Reverend Edward Hammitt. He moved to LaGrange, Texas in 1868, and records show that his replacement was paid \$7.50 per month

By May of 1868, the Freedmen’s Bureau had acquired a building in Bryan, Texas with the intent of operating it as a school for African Americans. However, as the Bureau

lacked a clear title to the property the government would not provide funding and thus the school was never erected. Although the Freedmen's Bureau maintained a presence in the state of Texas until 1870 (Wintz, 1984), in December of 1868 the U.S. government abolished the position of Subassistant Commissioner for the Brazos Valley. At that point the last person to serve in that capacity, James Gillette, indicated that educational issues were to be directed to the Superintendent of Education in the capitol city of Austin (Scott, 1986).

This meant that there would no longer be any federal involvement in Texas education or any insistence upon the existence of schools for African Americans in the entire region. Although no records could be located to document the prevailing opinion regarding the education of African Americans in the Brazos Valley following the withdrawal of federal oversight, it is likely that the region followed the pattern found elsewhere in the state. Even when the watchful eyes of Reconstruction and Freedmen's Bureau agents had been focused on them, Texans resisted the idea of education for African American (Rice, 1971). It can be inferred that members of the dominant White society in the Brazos Valley followed the pattern of being disinclined to spend money on the education of African Americans. Goodwyn (1994) noted that in Navasota, Texas, Democrats complained in the local newspaper that the Negro schoolteachers were being paid too much. It can also be surmised that few Whites would favor educating African Americans because they knew that it was a means for improvement. A school for African Americans in the region would not be established until 1885.

African American Education in the Twentieth Century

Between 1866 and 1900, Texas lawmakers enacted a series of laws restricting the rights of African Americans (Pitre, 1985). The State Constitution of 1866 barred African Americans from marrying Whites, voting, holding public office, or serving as jurors. Later, laws called for segregated public facilities of all types (Heintze, 1985). The U.S. Supreme Court case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, decided in 1896, stated that segregated public facilities were permissible so long as equal accommodations were made for all. This allowed the perpetuation of separate modes of transportation, separate restaurants and places of lodging, and the segregation of all other public arenas. *Plessy* also provided for the continuance of segregated schools if they were deemed equal to White schools. In reality, African American schools were hardly equal (Taylor, 1931). They typically lacked basic supplies and were poorly constructed in comparison to schools for White children.

In her memoirs of being an African American teacher in Texas, Dorothy Robinson recalled conditions at her school in Markham, Texas, in 1929:

Materials, supplies, and equipment for Negro schools were inadequate or nonexistent, the lack justified by declaring insufficient funds. The belief was held by many, and expressed by some, that money spent on the education of Negroes was a waste, or that educated Negroes “got out of their places” and proved to be influences among others (Robinson, 1978, p. 11).

Mrs. Robinson recalled that some of the desks were so damaged that she stowed them in a closet out of fear for her students’ safety. Even though she selected the best desks among those provided, occasionally one would collapse under a student. In addition,

“Like the desks, the textbooks bespoke prior use and abuse. While the number of books was sufficient, missing sections and torn pages presented problems” (1978, p. 12). Such disparities were widely commonplace, according to my participants, throughout the segregation period.

At a 1930 conference addressing the education of African Americans in Texas, Prairie View A&M University President W. R. Banks (1930) noted the following facts to be impediments that typically interfered with the effectiveness of education in the state’s segregated schools:

1. Having to overcome prejudice
2. The temptation to pad the scholastic rolls
3. The temptation to appropriate funds apportioned by the State to the Negroes for other schools than Negro schools.
4. The disposition to allow the Negro teachers to purchase necessary supplies for instructional equipment
5. A tendency to forget that the Negro schools constitute a portion of our State system of schools.
6. The use of churches or very poor houses in which to teach
7. Inadequate equipment
8. Overcrowded rooms
9. Politics (Banks, 1930, p. 23)

As the list makes clear, both children and teachers were treated inequitably. For example, overcrowded conditions at schools must have been uncomfortable for African American students, and would have added extra stress to the teachers’ workloads. In a

report about conditions in African American high schools in Texas during that same year, Walton (1930) noted that across the state there were only three high schools that employed seven teachers, while there were 1,280 that employed a single teacher. These figures suggest that African American high school teachers typically had to instruct multiple grade levels simultaneously.

A Glimpse into Segregated Schools in Bryan and College Station

The passage of the Gilmer-Aikin laws in 1949 was influenced in part by increasing pressure for desegregation. Among other things, it established a formula for teacher base pay (State Department of Education, 1949). Supposedly African American and White teachers were to be paid the same amount of money if they had equal qualifications. This maintained an illusion of separate but equal, because African American teachers could be deemed less qualified and therefore worthy of less pay based on the fact that they had attended a HBCU (Still, 1950). Differential treatment of African American teachers in Bryan was reported by Hill (1998), who found that in the 1946-1947 school-year the average salary for a White teacher in Bryan was \$1,687, while average pay for an African American teacher there was \$1,198. He found discrepancies even among teachers with identical degrees. Disparities in the quality of education provided for African American students in Bryan is suggested by the fact that \$106.31 was spent on instruction of White students in the town, but only \$95.21 was spent on African American students (State Department of Education, 1949).

In her memoirs, African American educator Barbara Searcy Patterson recalled growing up in College Station, Texas. Although she initially set out to become a dietitian, she later became an educator. Even though she attended a separate and unequal

school, her positive experiences at the Lincoln school in the late 1950s influenced her decision. She commented:

I enjoyed my high school days even though our high school was ill-equipped.

Our teachers were very innovative and truly knew how to take a little of nothing and make something from it. They taught us how to improvise - a lesson that has been useful to know throughout my life (Patterson, 2002, p. 63).

Mrs. Patterson added that her science teacher, Mr. Lawrence King, only had one Bunsen burner in the room and had no chemicals. In order to get equipment, he sought donations from professors at Texas A&M University. The Lincoln school instructed students in grades one through twelve at that time, and Mrs. Patterson noted:

Regardless of age, we all had one thing in common, and that was we all received used textbooks. We were taught to overlook the fact that these were hand-me downs. Of course we resented having used books, but there was nothing we could do about it. Our parents taught us that it didn't matter what the books looked like just as long as we got what was on the inside and the lessons to be learned. We learned that education would be our ticket from a life of toil and drudgery. So we worked very hard to get good grades and to learn what was being taught (Patterson, 2002, p. 63).

Hill (1998) noted that a Texas Education Agency inspection of the Lincoln school in 1953 had found inadequacies in the small library, including an insufficient number of books and no system for cataloging them. The inspector noted in his report that the students at Lincoln had little interest in reading. This contradicts the sentiments expressed by Mrs. Robinson, above, and my research participant who taught at the

Lincoln school. It should be noted that at the time, African Americans were restricted from using the local public library (Buford, 1980).

Segregation Continued after *Brown v. Board of Education*

Even when *Brown v. Board of Education* overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson*, foot-dragging was the norm. In the immediate aftermath of *Brown*, in 1955, out of approximately 2,000 school districts in Texas only 60 had begun some sort of desegregation effort (Irons, 2002). According to Bond (1970), during the 1954-1955 school year only three African American children (0.001% of their population) in Texas attended a school with Whites. Jones (1955), however, mentioned that an elementary school in Friona, Texas, had admitted three African American pupils that year, and several parochial schools in El Paso, Marfa, San Antonio, Austin and Corpus Christi had admitted a few “token” African Americans. A survey Jones conducted found nine junior colleges admitting African Americans, and Jones noted that Southern Methodist University and Texas Christian University had enrolled a few African Americans beginning in the 1950s.

Jones painted an optimistic portrait when he stated, “America is on the move against segregation; the spirit of fuller emancipation has taken hold of the minds and hearts of the younger generation, white and Negro, and the entire system of social values is being re-examined” (1955, p. 358). Ironically, Jones wrote that as he was working on his article he had just heard on the radio the announcement that Texas Attorney General John Ben Shepperd had appeared before the US Congress to testify that Texas would take every legal effort to resist the *Brown* mandate. Despite that fact, he believed that Texas Governor Allan Shivers, being a man of “superior intellect and administrative

capabilities” (ibid, p. 359) would nonetheless see to it that Texas schools would soon be desegregated, “The writer predicts that Texas will rise to the challenge and will lead the states of the South in the implementation of desegregation not only in public and private education but in all of the expanding areas of our society” (ibid, p. 359).

In actual fact, the following year Texas representatives signed the Southern Manifesto, a document arguing for ongoing segregation based on interposition - the claim that the Supreme Court and federal government had no right to interfere in states’ sovereignty regarding the educational matters of their citizens. A decade after *Brown*, the number of African American children in the state of Texas who had White classmates had increased to 18,000 (equivalent to 5.250% of the African American school-aged population). Twenty years after *Brown*, in the 1975-1976 school-year, the number had increased to 75,340, which still only represented about 20% of the school-aged population (Bond, 1970). Since the operation of school districts is governed by local authority, the date at which schools in Texas eventually desegregated varied. In the cases of Bryan and College Station, Texas the school systems did not fully desegregate until nearly one hundred years after the withdrawal of the Freedmen’s Bureau.

African American Schools in Bryan and College Station, Texas

African American Schools in Bryan, Texas

The city of Bryan was established in 1871, and in October of 1877 its citizens voted to establish a free public school system. Prior to this, the local schools were primarily supported by student tuitions. The new school was opened in 1880 on a donated parcel of land on E. 30th Street at Texas Avenue, where Fannin Elementary school is located today, an event that was also made possible by the use of Peabody

Funds (Brown, 1985). However, this school was for the exclusive use of White children. The Texas Constitution of 1876 mandated that African American children be afforded an education, but it was perfectly within the parameters of the law for them to be educated in separated facilities, apart from White children. The city purchased seven lots of land in north Bryan for the construction of an African American school in 1885, and in the fall of that year The Bryan Public School for Colored was opened on East 20th Street at Houston Avenue. The first principal was A. H. Colwell, an African American man who was actively involved in local and state politics for the Republican party. The faculty members were Annie Alberson, Mamie Burrows, Beatrice Calhoun, Ada Schott Hall, and Lenora Green (Brundidge, 1986). The facility was a two-story building of wood frame construction. When it burned in 1914, the school was replaced with a brick structure.

As student enrollment in Bryan increased over the years, additional facilities were erected for White students, while for many years Black children continued to attend the same school. However, in 1930, Kemp Junior and Senior High School was established. At this point the Bryan Public School for Colored came to serve only students in the lower grades, and it was renamed Washington Elementary School. In 1956, an addition was added to the Kemp campus. The original building continued to serve high school students when the new facility, named after former R. C. Principal Neal, became the junior high. In 1961 a new building, at a different location, but again called Kemp High School, was erected on West 19th Street for the instruction of high school level African American children. Desegregation occurred in 1971, at which point all high school-aged students began to attend school in a newly constructed building, Bryan High School,

located on Briarcrest Drive at East 29th Street. Information on the erection of the various schools serving African Americans in Bryan, Texas is summarized in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2
Schools in Bryan, Texas Serving African American Students

1885	1930	1956	1961	1971
The Bryan School for Colored (BSFC) established	Kemp Jr. and Senior High opened. At this point the BSFC became Washington Elementary	An addition was added to Kemp, creating Neal Jr. High	A new Kemp Senior High School opened at a new location	Bryan High School opened. The new school enrolled all Bryan students

Today, due largely to the dedicated efforts of former teachers and community members, the location of the Washington Elementary School serves as the site of the recently opened Brazos Valley African American Museum. The Kemp school facility serves elementary students, as does the Neal campus, which features an attached recreation and community center.

African American Schools in College Station, Texas

College Station, Texas was not officially incorporated until 1939, but in 1928 a tax-supported school (through funds designated for the local university) for White pupils in College Station was established (Hughes, 1945) on the campus of Texas A&M University. Largely the brainchild of A&M President D. W. Bizzell, the school provided a facility for the children of faculty members while at the same time granting students in the university's newly established teacher education program a place in which to gain

field experiences. Historically, College Station not only had a smaller population overall but it also had a smaller population of African American citizens than did Bryan.

Whereas Bryan established an African American elementary school in 1885, in College Station a small school and two churches provided an education for African American children at the elementary level beginning in the 1920s. Even in 1965, the midpoint of this study, College Station had an enrollment of only 316 African American students compared to the 1,884 enrolled in Bryan that year (Texas Education Agency, 1966). At the Wellborn Community School, where some African American residents attended school, Katie Tolden and Julia Muckleroy Campbell served as teachers. The faculty at the Washington Chapel Church consisted of Thay Adams Owens and Edna Harris Tarrow, while Ruth Cunningham worked at the Saint Matthews Church. By 1923, there were 127 African American students enrolled in College Station schools (Brundidge, 1986). It is important to note that during the early decades of the twentieth century African American children in College Station seeking a high school level education, as well as those in the rest of Brazos County, needed to travel to Bryan. At that time, Bryan had the only segregated junior and senior high schools in the area.

In 1941, voters in College Station approved bonds to finance the expansion and autonomous (from Texas A&M University) oversight of the White school system. The bond issue also provided funds for the establishment of a separate educational facility for African Americans (Hughes, 1945). In 1942 a publicly funded school for African American children of all grade levels was erected, called the A&M Consolidated Negro School (Hill, 1998). In 1942 the enrollment was 242 students. For the first seven years of its operation, a seven-room building on Eleanor Street educated grades one through

twelve. The first principal was Elbert Cunningham, and the faculty consisted of Mrs. Adams Owens, Mrs. Cunningham, Mrs. Harris Tarrow and her husband W. A. Tarrow, and Mr. A. J. Thompson (Bowen, 1986). In 1943 Mr. Tarrow became the principal, a position he was to hold until 1965. Today in College Station there is both a street and a park named in honor of Principal Tarrow.

In 1946 the school's name was changed from A&M Consolidated Negro School to the Lincoln School. In 1950, with Gilmer-Akins funds, two new classrooms were added. In 1954 a school expansion included the construction of a separate building for the high school on the site, a science building, a gymnasium and additional classrooms. The faculty at that point included ten teachers as well as a Home Economics teacher and a Shop teacher. The school expanded again in 1960. The Lincoln School continued to function as the sole educational facility for African Americans in College Station until the buildings on the campus were either damaged or totally destroyed by fire in 1966. Information on changes over time in the facilities for African American students in College Station is found in Table 3.3 below.

Currently a recreation and community center, which were dedicated in 1980, stand on the site of the former Lincoln School. Today, graduates of Lincoln have an active alumni society and they continue to hold annual high school class reunions. The high level of attendance at these reunions speaks of the former students' strong affiliation with their school.

Table 3.3
Schools in College Station, Texas Serving African American Students

1920s	1942	1946	1966
Wellborn Community School, Washington Chapel and St. Matthews Church held classes for elementary students.	A&M Consolidated Negro School opened	A&M Consolidated Negro School was renamed the Lincoln School	Following partial destruction of the Lincoln School, all College Station students were educated at the town's various formerly all-White schools

The Desegregation Process in Bryan and College Station, Texas

Desegregation in Bryan, Texas

While the city of Bryan was the first in Brazos County to build a school for African American children, it was also the last to fully desegregate (Brundidge, 1986). Bryan had the largest population of students of color in the county and therefore operated the largest number of segregated schools. Both communities were reactive rather than proactive in their approaches to desegregation. In Bryan, a formal petition was filed soon after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in *Brown vs. the Board of Education*, that separate education was inherently unequal. The document, a standard form produced by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), was attached to the September 1955 school board meeting minutes. While the petition called for immediate steps to be taken to reorganize Bryan schools, board members decided that studies needed to be conducted prior to taking any action.

Superintendent Carmichael traveled to Atlanta, Washington, DC and Baltimore in the summer of 1955 to investigate desegregation efforts elsewhere. In Washington he

witnessed what today is known as White flight, as White parents transferred their children (about 10,000 of them in a total school population of 70,000) to schools in the suburbs and White teachers took jobs there as well. Mr. Carmichael's report to the Bryan School Board (Bryan School Board Minutes, 1955) in July expressed his fear that same pattern might manifest locally:

White people do not like for their little children to be taught by Negroes, especially by Negro men. Many doubt that the Negro teachers are as competent as they should be...No tests were given to test whether the Negro pupils could compete with White pupils (ibid, p. 1).

The superintendent related that administrators he spoke with in the North advised testing African American students and teachers, and that African American teachers should be required to work under White supervisors for several years before being given their own classes.

In May of 1957, Texas House Bill 65 mandated the continuance of separate educational facilities for African Americans and Whites until voters in individual districts voted to abolish the dual system. The issue could only be brought up for a vote provided a majority of a district's citizens signed a petition. Although the Texas law violated the Supreme Court ruling, it allowed decision makers in Bryan and elsewhere to ignore federal law with the full backing of the state.

In 1960 the local newspaper published a letter by the Bryan-College Station Citizens' Fellowship Committee, a biracial but primarily African American group, stating that segregation was in violation of Christian principles (Bryan Daily Eagle, 1960). The Committee also wrote to the Bryan City Commissioner, hoping he would apply pressure

to the school board. No action was taken. In March of 1961 three African American men, all members of the Citizens' Fellowship Committee, attended the school board meeting. They asked to know what specific steps were being taken to integrate, and when it would actually happen. School board meeting minutes from this time mention that the topic of desegregation was tabled until further research could be conducted on how other Texas districts had accomplished the task (Hill, 1998).

One cannot, with hindsight, pretend to know what went on in another's mind. Yet it seems that as a Superintendent, Mr. Carmichael would have already been aware of events elsewhere in the state. For example, schools in Abilene (Gallaway, 1994) and Port Arthur (Kibbe, 2004) had desegregated years ago. Desegregation had occurred peacefully in Houston, which had the largest racially segregated public school system in the country when *Brown* was decided (Kellar, 1999). At any rate, Mr. Carmichael submitted his resignation in April of 1961, a month after the gentlemen from the Citizens' Fellowship Committee asked for concrete evidence of an implementation plan.

Throughout the state, it was largely due to the efforts of local community activists that attention was brought to the desegregation issue (Houston, 2004). Kuhlman (1994) noted that national groups such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Congress of Racial Equality had only a limited presence in Texas. However, in September of 1961 the Bryan Independent School District and its supervisor were named in a lawsuit (*Thomas et al. v. Bowen*, 1961) fought with the assistance of NAACP lawyers including Thurgood Marshall, who had successfully argued the *Brown* case before the U.S. Supreme Court and who later became a Supreme Court justice. The suit was named *Thomas v. Bowen* because the name of Lev Thomas appeared first on the list

of complainants. Mr. Thomas desired educational opportunity for his son Clarence, but unfortunately Clarence graduated a year after the suit was filed and since the litigation dragged on he thus never had the chance to attend desegregated schools. The case nonetheless helped put pressure on members of the school board (McKay, Banks & Pruitt, 1986), and they must have realized that change was inevitable.

The Bryan school district hired a prominent legal team based in Houston. Nonetheless, the verdict returned in 1963 stated that Bryan was illegally operating a dual system based on race and ethnicity. The district was required, beginning in the fall with first graders, to desegregate its schools using a Step Plan (Holliday, 1976). As subsequent years passed additional grade levels would be integrated one grade per year, and the entire Bryan school district would be desegregated in 1974.

Desegregation in College Station, Texas

The local newspaper also sheds light on actions taken by community activists regarding the slow pace of desegregation in College Station. In October of 1960 the Citizens' Fellowship Committee presented a letter to the College Station school board (A&M Consolidated School Board Minutes, 1960) and asked what specific steps were being undertaken to bring about integration. The school board convened again the next day to discuss the topic, at which time they stated that state law allowed funds to be allocated to desegregated schools only when the establishment of such schools had been approved by voters. In 1961, the A&M Consolidated School District became the subject of a lawsuit filed in federal court with the assistance of NAACP lawyers (*Washington et al. v. A&M Consolidated School District*, 1961). As in the case of the Bryan litigation, the result was that College Station schools were ordered to begin desegregation according

to a Step Plan beginning with the 1963 school term, culminating with full desegregation by 1974.

During the 1964 school year, among the eleven Southern states historically comprising the Confederacy less than six percent of African American children attended desegregated schools (Franklin & Moss, 1988). The passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act stipulated that funding for segregated schools could be terminated, and it allowed the Department of Justice to sue districts in violation of the law in federal courts (Messiah, 2000). Although both Bryan and College Station school systems had implemented Step Plans beginning in 1963, in 1965 the Justice Department determined that desegregation efforts in both communities had failed. Due to pressure from the federal government, and perhaps based on a fear of losing Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 funds (U.S. Office of Education, 1966), in 1965 Bryan and College Station both adopted a Freedom of Choice Plan (Bryan School Board Meeting minutes, 1965).

This plan allowed African American students to attend the school of their choice, thus putting schools in compliance with the requirements of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and ensuring the continuance of federal funding. However, Freedom of Choice placed all the initiative on the shoulders of African American students: they had to uproot themselves from their familiar settings, and in most cases they had to somehow get themselves to a school in a distant location from their homes. In 1966 the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights noted widespread intimidation and harassment of African American students who opted to attend White schools. In the same year a report by the Southern Regional Council (1966) included letters from African American students and their parents expressing these concerns. The following excerpt from a seventeen year

olds' (whose name was deleted in the report) letter to the Office of Education is quite telling:

I have tried in all respects to encourage more young Negroes my age and under to attend [White schools] but fear has caused them to back out. Most of them because of jobs, they fear their parents will be fired. Will you please investigate this situation? Freedom of Choice will not work in this country as long as there is fear (cited in Southern Regional Council's special report, 1966, p. 53-54)

In Bryan and College Station, Texas and elsewhere, while some African American students transferred to formerly all-White campuses, no White children enrolled at any of the African American schools. Thus most students continued to attend single-race institutions, maintaining de facto segregation (Dillard, 1962). For example, during the 1970 to 1971 academic year, 650 African American students opted to enroll in previously White schools in the research sites, but not a single White student chose to transfer out of his or her school (McKay, Banks & Pruitt, 1986).

Foul Play Hastens Desegregation

Between 1966 and 1971 five schools in the two communities were either damaged or destroyed by fire, possibly due to arson. On January 21st of 1966 the Lincoln school in College Station, the sole African American facility for all grade levels in that community, suffered extensive fire damage (Stewart, 1966). The process of desegregation in College Station was thereby hastened by necessity and occurred shortly after the fire. The two remaining functional classrooms served 38 children for several months while the rest of the students were transferred to other College Station facilities (interview with Mrs.

Valerie Palmer). College Station schools were fully desegregated when the 1966-1967 academic year commenced in the fall.

African American schools in the community of Bryan were plagued with a series of suspicious fires. On September 16, 1970 Washington Elementary School, the first school in Brazos county established for children of color, was burned beyond repair (Robinson, 1970a; Thomas & Mayes, 1970). On Thanksgiving morning of the same year, Neal Junior High School suffered considerable damages. Although the Washington fire was officially deemed due to faulty wiring, arson was never ruled out as a cause of the Neal fire (Mayes, 1970; Robinson, 1970b). Students registered at Neal were shuffled into the remaining functional buildings at the Kemp campus, with children attending school on a split schedule in either the mornings or the afternoons.

The same weekend that Neal burned, a fire at the predominantly-White Fannin Elementary School burned itself out before any considerable damages resulted. In this case, the Fire Marshall determined that the fire was deliberately set (Robinson, 1970c). The all-African American Carver Elementary School was the next target of arson, on December 13th of 1970. Unlike in College Station, the school burnings in Bryan did not in themselves radically transform the demographics of the schools, but they did result in the reassignment of African American students to predominantly White schools.

The final straw for those that opposed desegregation came the following year on July 23rd. Judge James Noel stated that Bryan continued to maintain five schools that were illegally segregated. The Judge ordered that all schools would thereafter be compelled to have an enrollment that was within a ten percent margin of the community's demographics. In addition, citing the earlier *Thomas v. Bowen* case (1961), the Bryan

schools were ordered by Civil Action No 13,850 in June of 1971 to immediately desegregate.

When the new Bryan High School opened in the fall, it served students in grades eleven and twelve in the community during that first year of operation (in 1972 it became the high school for all students enrolled in grades nine through twelve). The same year Bryan established policies across the district, shifting students of all colors into schools based on grade levels (Bowen, 1986). Neal became a kindergarten school, Travis served grades one and two, and Fannin took in grades three through five. Bowie, Crocket, Bonham, Henderson, Milam and Ross each served grades one through five. Carver-Kemp (formerly segregated) became the sixth grade campus, while Jones was for seventh graders. Lamar became the campus for all eighth graders, and Stephen F. Austin educated all ninth and tenth graders. Finally, a full seventeen years after the *Brown* decision, the public schools in Bryan, Texas were officially desegregated (Graves, 1982; McKay, 1983).

Currently Stephen F. Austin (SFA) is one of four middle schools in Bryan, along with Lamar, Jane Long and Sam Rayburn middle schools. Bryan High School presently educates all Bryan students in grades nine through twelve, although an additional high school is slated to open in the fall of 2008. Rudder High School will be located on Old Reliance Road, and will initially serve students in grades nine and ten while undergoing final phases of construction. A new middle school will also open that fall. Reflecting an increase in population over time, Bryan now has 15 public elementary schools (Bonham, Bowen, Branch, Crockett, Fannin, Henderson, Houston, Johnson, Jones, Kemp, Milam, Mitchell, Navarro, Neal and Ross). Generally, elementary level students attend the

campus closest to their homes, and thus residential segregation is a reality despite the schools being officially desegregated.

The large number of schools in Bryan can be contrasted with the number in College Station. Even though the sizes of the populations in the two communities are closely parallel (approximately 65,660 and 67,890 respectively), Bryan has a larger school-age population (Baugh, 2006). In College Station there is one high school (A&M Consolidated), two middle schools (A&M Consolidated Middle School, College Station Middle School), two intermediate schools (Cypress Grove and Oakwood intermediate schools) and there are five elementary campuses (College Hills, Pebble Creek, Rock Prairie, South Knoll, and Southwood Valley).

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a review of information regarding schools for African Americans during the era in which the Freedmen's Bureau operated in the state of Texas. It then described some typical conditions of schooling during the first half of the twentieth century, before the *Brown* case was decided. It then detailed the schools established for African Americans in Bryan and College Station, Texas. Moving chronologically forward, the chapter then discussed the documentary evidence related to desegregation-era events in the two communities. Little has been written on such events in relation to smaller towns, and thus the details contained here can add to the literature.

The overall goal of Chapter III was to provide a socio-political context of the conditions in the state over time and to establish a sense of the atmosphere in which the research participants lived and taught. While written sources were instrumental in attempting to achieve these goals, my primary interest was in the recollections of the

African American former teachers who participated in the interviews. A major goal of this study was to attempt to discover what happened in African American schools during the time Bryan and College Station were segregated, were making the transition to desegregated schools and the period shortly thereafter, focusing on the viewpoints of those who worked in these settings.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to illuminate the experiences of African American educators who worked in two central Texas school districts. The primary data for the study was generated via interviews with African American teachers who worked in College Station and Bryan, Texas schools during the years of 1954 to 1975. These teachers served during a sea change in educational history, and their recollections yielded information regarding historical events and the social atmosphere in the schools in these two communities that had not yet been documented.

In this chapter I discuss why I elected to use a qualitative design for the study. I then describe how participants came to be members of the study and give information pertaining to the research population. I then relate what was learned as a result of conducting a pilot study and continue with a description of the interview instrument and the interview procedures used. The chapter concludes with details on the two types of narrative analysis used to address both the specific and guiding research questions (categorical-content and holistic-content analysis).

Design of the Study

A qualitative design was selected for this study because it was best suited for addressing the guiding research question; What can African American educators share about their teaching experiences in the selected small-town Texas schools during the years 1954 to 1975? A qualitative design also allowed me to also gain detailed information related to the following specific research questions;

- 1) What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in segregated schools?
- 2) What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding how the desegregation process was implemented in their schools and/or communities?
- 3) What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in segregated schools?

Bogdan and Biklen (2003) note five defining characteristics of qualitative studies. First, the research occurs in a natural setting because the setting or context of the research is important. In this case, interviews were held at the locations specified by participants (typically their homes). The participant profiles section of Chapter V details the circumstances under which each of the interviews was conducted. A second characteristic of qualitative studies is that they are descriptive. This research design allowed me the “space” to share the words of participants in detail. Third, qualitative studies are concerned with process rather than with merely outcomes. Qualitative inquiry seeks to understand how individual actors make sense of their situations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Troman, 2002). Fourth, qualitative researchers employ inductive reasoning. Rather than attempting to confirm or disconfirm a pre-established hypothesis, qualitative researchers are instead attentive to emerging ideas (Noblit & Engel, 1999). They note existing conditions and seek to detail particular instances without making claims for universality. Finally, participant perspectives are considered valid and essential to the construction of meaning. In this work, I saw the participants as the authorities over their

own realities. It was these realities that I sought to document, since the stories of African American educators in the research communities had not yet been articulated.

The Impact of My Own Social Location on the Research

In this research I used interpretivism to analyze participants' interview transcriptions, and I then examined the African American teachers' narratives using the lenses of critical theory and critical race theory. In addition, as I formulated the research project, conducted interviews and undertook analysis I attempted to critically reflect on how my own socio-historical location influenced the research process. As a White Ph.D. candidate conducting a cross-cultural study, I needed to be consciously aware of the fact that I belong to the privileged, dominant group in American society while my participants belonged to a group that has historically been marginalized (Alcoff, 1991). No matter how good of a listener I may have attempted to be and despite my best efforts to convey the thoughts of participants in their own words, there was no doubt that I could not achieve a genuinely emic perspective of the participants' experiences. I selected quotations for use in the dissertation, placed them in a particular order, and interpreted what participants told me through my own personal and through specific theoretical lenses.

In a discussion of the complications and ethical considerations of doing qualitative feminist research, Michelle Young noted that, "Increased recognition of the impact of identity and positionality markers beyond gender have led some feminist researchers to question their ability to adequately understand the experiences or to tell the stories of other women participants without sliding into essentialism" (2003, p. 39). Young adds that these same issues complicate the research process whenever the

researcher is attempting to convey the perspectives and experiences of study participants, because all research is cross-cultural. Said (1989) considers speaking for “Others” to be an act of violence because it always entails, “some degree of reduction, decontextualization and miniaturization” (p. 4).

On the other hand Rhodes (1994) argues that banning Whites from undertaking cross-cultural research mistakenly assumes that members of an in-group are homogenous, while in fact within any group there are multiple perspectives. Fine (1992, 1994) believes that cross-cultural researchers who operate from a position of privilege can help illuminate the views of historically marginalized individuals by documenting their perspectives. Anderson (1993) suggested that White scholars working with African American participants can enhance mainstream or academic knowledge, “Moving previously excluded groups to the center of our research and teaching produces more representative accounts of society and culture” (p. 43).

In short, conducting this research necessitated that I consider the “insider/outsider” dilemma (Marcus & Fischer, 1986). I was aware of the ethical and political problems inherent in conducting cross-cultural research and in speaking for individuals whom are socially positioned differently than me. My intent in this project was to provide a platform for participants’ voices to be heard while simultaneously being cognizant of the fact that my interpretations of what I was told represented but one particular understanding of the educators’ experiences. For that reason, follow-up interviews and conversations were conducted in an effort to check the validity of my understandings. Interview transcriptions will also become a part of the public record when they are donated to the Brazos Valley African American Museum in Bryan, Texas.

Identification of the Participants

Since I was interested in the views and experiences of African American educators who served during the years of 1954 to 1975 in College Station and Bryan, Texas, a first order of business was to identify such teachers whom would be willing to participate in the research. Participants also needed to fulfill the criteria outlined in the assumptions of the study. They therefore had to have served in schools established for African Americans at some point during the period under study, have adequate teaching experience during the period in order to be able to provide detailed information, and express both a willingness to accurately relate their recollections and to reflect upon their personal opinions.

My committee chair recommended that I meet with Gloria Hicks to discuss my project. A former teacher who is now the principal of an elementary school, Gloria Hicks met the qualifications for participation herself and was also in a position to recommend other potential interviewees due to her long years of service in the educational field. Since she is well-known and respected among the community, Mrs. Hicks was in an excellent position to serve as a community nominator (Foster, 1997) and as a participant. In November of 2003 we met at her office, at which point Mrs. Hicks provided the names and contact information for 15 retired African American teachers. Each of these individuals was mailed a letter (see Appendix A). The letter served as both an introduction to the researcher and my research interests, and as a request for participation. I made sure to include the name of the community nominator both to indicate to the potential participants how I had learned of their work as an educator and to establish credibility.

The U.S. postal system was the chosen method of communication because I suspected that some or all of the potential participants might not have access to email or fax machines. When asked, the initial community nominator agreed that this would likely be the case. All but two of the individuals who eventually became a part of the population sample are retired, and most of the participants have been retired for a decade or more. Even if I had assumed that potential participants had access to electronic media, I still would have elected to use the postal system because I feel that receiving a letter in the mail is far more personal than receiving yet another unsolicited email.

In the letter the teachers were asked to volunteer approximately one to two hours of their time for an interview at a mutually agreed upon location, with the possibility of an additional interview at a later date in order to address any topics needing clarification and to check my understandings of what they shared with me. After allowing one week for the introductory letter to be received in the mail, phone calls were made to see if the teachers would agree to be interviewed. I discovered that in many cases nominees did not have answering machines. And, as it turned out, some or all of the contact information for potential participants that I had been given or managed to find turned out to be incorrect. In these instances, another round of mailings and phone calls were made. Often repeat mailings were issued, up to the point at which I felt I might be overextending my limits by appearing to be overly pushy in my request for participation. In the end, seven participants were gained via the list of names generated by the first community nominator. Two of these individuals were interviewed during the pilot study phase of the research.

In February of 2004, my committee chair recommended another former teacher who might provide additional information regarding potential participant, Sonia Davis. Mrs. Hicks had likewise suggested that I interview Mrs. Davis and have her serve as second community nominator. She is a highly esteemed person in the community and known for her contributions to education and other causes. I first met Mrs. Davis for lunch at a local sandwich shop. At this preliminary meeting I described my research interests and Mrs. Davis shared with me documents from her personal collection of artifacts relating to African American education in Bryan. She enthusiastically described her work towards creating the Brazos Valley African American Museum, which would soon be breaking ground for the laying of the building foundation. It quickly became clear that Mrs. Davis had a wealth of information that she could share, and that she knew others in the community could serve as resources as well.

Mrs. Davis and I later spoke on the phone in order to generate a list of potential participants. Our conversation yielded the names of 19 individuals and some contact information for locating them. The majority of the people nominated by Mrs. Davis were the same as those nominated by Mrs. Hicks, but the high degree of overlap indicated to me that I had a reasonably comprehensive list of surviving African American teachers who taught in Bryan or College Station during the time period of interest. New potential participants were sent my introductory letter, with the only change being the name of the community nominator. Again, follow-up phone calls were made to request participation.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the participant nomination process. Note that the number of potential participants associated with each community nominator indicates the total number of names she provided. However, since the nominators' candidates overlapped

(each provided the names of some individuals, and each nominator suggested the other nominator) in most instances, the total number of potential participants was not as large as the total of the two numbers suggests. In all, 28 individual African American educators were referred by the two nominators.

In addition, as I conducted interviews I continued to attempt to identify additional African American teachers meeting the research criteria whom I might interview. At the close of each interview participants were asked if they knew of someone else with whom I might speak, in hopes of using the snowball effect (Bernard, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In all cases but one, I had previously been given the name of any suggested teachers and had already attempted to secure their participation. The new suggested person did not respond to my letter for request and phone calls. Thus the few new names provided by participants did not result in successfully finding additional participants.

In many educational studies, for example those conducted in a positivistic vein and typically those with a quantitative design, a large, random sample would be desired. Merriam (1988) refers to this type of participant selection as probability sampling. However, this study used purposeful sampling (Bennett, 2001) in that participants were deliberately selected based on their meeting the research criteria and their likelihood of shedding light on the topic. The total number of potential participants whom were healthy and met the criteria was 16, and of these 11 African American teachers agreed to participate and were interviewed. Of these 11, two were interviewed at their current places of employment, one came to my home, and the remainder were interviewed in their own homes. Each of these locations was the preference of the participant.

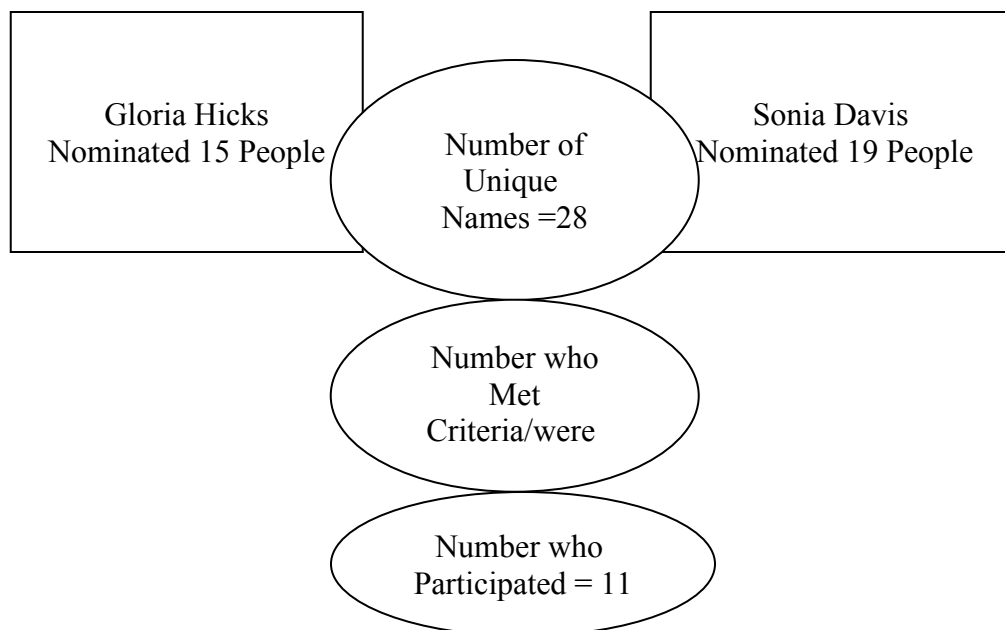


Figure 4.1
The Participant Nomination Process

There were several factors which made securing participation difficult. First, some of the recommended participants do not own answering machines and thus it was impossible to leave a message requesting participation if they were not home when I called. Most of them were eventually reached, though not all agreed to participate. Three of the individuals I phoned had not received my letter even though the mailing was not returned to me from the post office. Thus my phone call must have seemed to come “out of the blue” to these teachers, a situation which I had been hoping to avoid.

Secondly, some nominees were unable to participate. In one case a former teacher was too preoccupied with attending to the health needs of her husband, and in three cases the nominee herself was too ill to grant my request. One individual was suffering from Alzheimer’s (and has since passed away). Another individual had

suffered health problems that caused his wife to feel his memory would not be reliable, but I did interview his wife, a former teacher. Sadly, the population of African American teachers who taught during the time period of interest is dwindling. Several passed away prior to my undertaking the project, and one participant died during the analysis stage of the research.

In addition, some individuals who could have shed light on the research topic have long ago moved away to parts unknown and could therefore not be contacted. This is particularly true in the case of African American teachers who served in the College Station school system. My sole participant from College Station informed me that many teachers moved when desegregation was pending, out of fear that they would lose their jobs if they stayed. They felt that they had no choice but to seek employment elsewhere. The situation in College Station is elaborated on in more detail in Chapter IV.

Finally, some nominees chose not to participate for other reasons. People everywhere, even those who are retired, are busy and some individuals simply may not have wanted to bother with getting involved with a project that would put an additional demand on their time. It is possible that some of the former teachers did not wish to relive painful memories. Others may have been reluctant to discuss segregation/desegregation issues and personal experiences with a person unknown to them. As interviews were conducted, I learned from a number of my participants that some educators had been interviewed in the past and did not see any reason to be interviewed yet again. I also discovered that some African American teachers had had negative experiences with other researchers or local journalists, such as having their

thoughts or words misconstrued, and that they had thus developed a mistrust of interviewers.

In fact, one of my participants told me that she no longer grants interviews, and that she only spoke to me because I mentioned Gloria Hicks in my contact letter. This woman, Christine Green, had had Mrs. Hicks as a student when she taught first grade many years ago, and it was only her fondness for her former pupil that convinced her to participate. In another instance, my request for the participation of a married couple of former teachers was denied, but my committee chair convinced them to grant an interview. My committee chair kindly accompanied me to the initial interview with them to set the couple at ease. Nominator Sonia Davis and her husband Carl Davis both taught for many years in Bryan and granted me a lengthy interview and follow-up interview. I later found out from a graduate student in the History Department at Texas A&M University that only Carl Davis had been willing to speak with her when she conducted a research project, even though we were each working on our respective projects during the same time period.

Whatever their reasons, people had the right to deny participation. It is unfortunate that some teachers who were able were not willing, but I had to respect their feelings. I feel immense gratitude towards the 11 educators who shared their time and perspectives with me. In all cases but one the participants granted permission to have their interview transcriptions donated to the Brazos Valley African American Museum in Bryan, which at the time was undergoing construction (the exception did not want to be recorded at all, and was the same person who agreed to the interview only reluctantly). This body of interview data will be available to museum visitors, thereby preserving the

memories of a dedicated group of teachers. Each participant was asked if he or she would like to use a pseudonym, in either the resulting dissertation or in the donated transcription. No one opted to do so, but for the sake of privacy in this dissertation I have assigned aliases to participants.

The Research Population

The vast majority of nominees formerly worked in the Bryan school system. Of the 28 potential participants suggested to me, only three had worked in College Station. One of these individuals was ill, and another one chose not to participate. This woman worked in College Station only after the schools desegregated. Thus, only one African American teacher from the College Station system was interviewed. However, she provided information regarding her husband's experiences teaching there and in Bryan. She also telephoned the teacher who did not want to be interviewed several times to ask her recollection of events after desegregation. In this way some additional information regarding teaching in College Station was provided indirectly.

I had hoped to have a larger sample from College Station but this was not possible. College Station had but one school for African Americans, whereas Bryan had a junior and senior high school and two elementary schools for African Americans. The African American student population was (and still is) larger in Bryan, and the schools there were established earlier. Therefore there were a greater number of African American educators in Bryan than in College Station. Many African American teachers in the College Station school system took positions elsewhere prior to or with the onset of desegregation there in 1966. Only three former teachers remained in the area. Of these,

one was remanded to a non-teaching position following desegregation. Another did not want to participate in the study.

Four of the 11 participants were male and seven were female. For well over a hundred years, dating back to the Civil War (Spring, 2002), teaching has widely been regarded as “women’s work” (Cannella, 1997) and during the time my participants were entering the work force teaching was one of the few professions truly open to women. Even today women constitute the overwhelming majority of teachers throughout the United States (Marshall, 2002; Toppo, 2003), thus it is not surprising that the same situation is true in the research sites. However, due to societal bias regarding “appropriate” professions for African American males, teaching has also long been one of the few vocations open to African American men (Johnson, 1938). For example, Fairclough (2001) cites U.S. Census figures to point out that in 1910 and 1930 over half of all male African American college graduates became teachers. I was pleased that nearly 40 percent of my research population consisted of males.

The greater number of women than men in my research population might be due to the fact that women have longer life expectancies than men, and thus it was likely that more women who worked during the years of 1954 to 1975 would be alive today and healthy enough to participate. In fact, several male African American former educators in the area whom would have fit the research criteria have unfortunately passed away just recently. It may also be possible that due to differing social conventions regarding communication styles (Tannen, 1990; 1994), that among the surviving potential participants women were more inclined to be participate in the lengthy conversations entailed in an interview.

Table 4.1
Summative Participant Information: Work Locations

Elementary Schools	Middle Schools and Junior High Schools	Senior High Schools
A&M Consolidated = 1	Stephen F. Austin Middle School = 1	Stephen F. Austin High School = 2
*Blackshear Elementary (Hearne, Texas) = 1	Stephen F. Austin Junior High School = 2	Bryan High School = 5
Bonham Elementary = 1	Bremond Junior and Senior High School (Junior High level) = 1	*Kemp High School = 2
*Bremond Elementary (Bremond, Texas) = 1	Anson Jones Junior High School = 2	
Fannin Elementary = 1	*Neal Junior High = 6	
*Fairview Elementary County School = 2	Rayburn Middle School = 1	
Johnson Elementary = 1		
Lamar Elementary = 1		
*Lincoln School (Elementary level) = 1		
*Neal Elementary = 1		
Sul Ross Elementary = 1		
Travis Elementary = 1		
*Washington School (Elementary level) = 2		
Total = 15	Total = 13	Total = 9

Note: Each of the 11 participants taught at multiple locations during his/her career, and thus a single individual will be tallied more than once. Asterisks indicate schools established for African American students.

The participant population represented a wide spectrum of teaching experiences. Table 4.1 above indicates the schools at which the participants were employed and how many participants taught at each school. The educators varied in the locations (schools) at which they served, and they taught a wide variety of grades and subject areas. When the research population is considered as a whole, we can see that every grade level is represented and nearly every campus in the two districts is represented. Two participants (both working in Bryan) were among the early cross-over teachers whom transferred to

formerly-White schools while the community's schools were still de facto segregated. Another (also in Bryan) relocated to a White campus at the cusp of desegregation. Only one participant stayed in place following desegregation, while all other participants were transferred to new campuses. Many of the teachers were assigned to Bryan High School, which was constructed in 1971 as a desegregated facility. In many instances, desegregation resulted in being reassigned to a new grade or subject area.

Table 4.2 below illustrates how many of the participants taught at each grade level. It should be noted that each of the African American educators not only taught at more than one school but also taught more than one grade during his or her lengthy career. The tables are provided in order to give a composite picture of the participants' collective teaching experiences through the years of their service. Each participant had a broad range of experiences, and when the participant population is considered as a whole, it is evident that together they had a wealth of knowledge stemming from their employment at numerous school sites and from their work with students at every grade level.

Another way to describe the participant population is by considering each participant individually. Brief biographical sketches for each of the teachers are provided in Chapter V in an effort to provide the reader with background information on each participant, and to allow the reader to develop a sense of each educator on a personal level. I felt that this was a necessary step in setting the stage, so to speak, prior to launching into the findings related in Chapters VI and VII. For this reason, Table 4.3 below illustrates the participants' work backgrounds on an individual basis. It should be noted that participants are identified in the table and in subsequent discussions by aliases,

but the names of schools have not been changed. Individuals are listed according to the order in which they were interviewed.

Table 4.2
Summative Participant Information: Grades Taught and Positions Held

Elementary Schools	Middle Schools and Junior High Schools	Senior High Schools
First Grade = 4	Fifth Grade = 1	Ninth Grade = 7
Second Grade = 2	Sixth Grade = 1	Tenth Grade = 3
Third Grade = 3	Seventh Grade = 5	Eleventh Grade = 4
Fourth Grade = 1	Eighth Grade = 5	Twelfth Grade = 6
Counselor = 2	Counselor = 1	Counselor = 2
Principal = 1		Coaching = 1
		Assistant Principal = 1
Total = 13	Total = 13	Total = 24

Note: Each participant taught many grades during his/her career, and thus participants maybe counted more than once.

Table 4.3 illustrates that the participants had extensive experience as educators, both in terms of the grades and subjects they taught and in the total number of years that they served. In addition, the table underscores the fact that each of the participants worked in many locations. For the most part changes in both job assignments and work locations were not due to the teachers' requests but were instead directly related to the desegregation process. When the school systems finally made efforts to desegregate, African American educators in both communities typically were reassigned.

An interesting fact is that of the 11 participants, five were individuals whose spouse's were also teachers. In two cases, only one member of the couple was interviewed because health reasons prevented the spouse from participating. In each case the participant (the wife) was asked basic information regarding her husband, such as

Table 4.3**Individual Participant Information: Work Sites, Subjects and Grades Taught, and Total Years of Service**

Name	Work Sites	Subjects and Grades Taught	Years of Service
Gloria Hicks	*Neal Junior High Anson Jones Neal Elementary	Spanish, Grades 7-9 Spanish, Grade 7 Counselor, Principal	35
Michelle Gold	*Bremond Elementary Bremond Jr. & Sr. High Sul Ross Elementary Johnson Elementary	Grades 1, 2, 4 Language Arts, Grades 7-9, P.E. for Grades 10-12 Grade 2 Grade 2	35
Paul Jones	*Neal Junior High S. F. Austin Middle School	History and Geography, Grades 7, 8, 9 History and Geography, Grades 8, 9	12.5
Gordon Smith	*Kemp High School S. F. Austin High School Bryan High School	P.E and Science, Grades 11, 12 History, Grades 11, 12 Coach, Counselor all grades	35
Rose Smith	*Blackshear High (Hearne) *Fairview Elementary (County school) *Neal Junior High	Math and Science, Grades 9- 12 Math and P.E., Grades 1-4 Math, Grades 7-9	30
Geneva Ellis	*Neal Junior High S. F. Austin Junior High School Bryan High School	Math, Grades 7, 8 Math, Grades 9, 10 Math, Grades 9, 10	32
James Ellis	*Neal Junior High Bryan High School Anson Jones Elementary and Sam Rayburn Middle School	P.E. and Biology, Grades 7-9 P.E., Coach and Counselor, Grades 9-12 Counselor	34

Table 4.3, Continued

Sonia Davis	*Kemp High School Bryan High School Fannin, Bonham, and Travis Elementary Schools & Lamar Jr. High (dual appointment)	P.E., Health and Counseling, Grades 8-12 Counselor, Grades 11-12 Counselor, Grades K-5	37
Carl Davis	*Washington Elementary *Neal Junior High S. F. Austin High School Bryan High School	P.E., Science, Grades 4-7 P.E., Science, Grades 7-9 P.E., Grades 9-12, Drivers' Ed. Asst. Principal	38
Christine Green	*Fairview Elementary (County school) *Washington Elementary Travis Elementary	Grades 1-3 Grades 3, 1 Grade 1	35-40 (unable to recall the exact number of years)
Valerie Palmer	*Lincoln School A&M Consolidated Elementary South Knoll Elementary	Grade 1 Grade 1 Transition Grade 1 Transition	32

An asterisk indicates a school established for African American students.

where and what he taught. In the other three instances, both members of the couple were interviewed simultaneously. This often made for lively conversations, as the partners asked each other for help in remembering facts. In one case, the partners sometimes contradicted each other as they struggled to recollect what happened and when! Two of the married couples, not surprisingly, provided among the lengthiest and most detailed interviews.

The Pilot Study

In order to check the likelihood of finding participants who had knowledge about the research topic and to test the validity of the interview instrument, an initial pilot study was conducted between November of 2003 and February, 2004. Four people were interviewed during the pilot study phase of the project. One of these was Gloria Hicks, who served as community nominator as well. Two participants were interviewed at work, and a married couple was interviewed at their home. One of the interviews lasted about an hour, and the others were approximately two and-a-half hours in duration. Each interviewee signed and was given a preliminary copy of an informed consent form, which outlined the conditions of participation. Two people also agreed to be audio-taped and to have interview transcriptions donated to the museum, and signed forms to that effect. The other participant in the pilot study, the first to be interviewed, was not audio-taped because at that time my primary objective in meeting with her was to locate the names of potential participants.

Several things were learned as a result of the pilot study. First, it became clear that it would take a concerted effort to enlist the participation of an adequate sample. It was at this point that my initial letter of introduction was amended to include the name of the person who recommended them and the name of my committee chair, in the hopes that using the name of a person whom they knew and respected and the name of a university professor who is active in the local educational arena would capture their interest. I also learned that due to death and disease, my potential population would be relatively small in comparison to the 28 potential participants who had initially been identified.

At this early stage, I included with the letter of introduction a list of questions which I would like to address during an interview. I subsequently learned from a committee member who is an expert on qualitative research and narrative analysis that in doing so I had made a faux pas. My list of interview questions was too long to share with people in a mailing, she felt, and the number of questions included might have resulted in scaring people off who did not want to invest too much time in the process. In addition, the committee member felt that by sharing specific questions up front I might run the risk of receiving scripted descriptions instead of the more intuitive responses which I sought. I therefore modified my mailings to include merely a cover letter with a much more general description of the types of information being sought, and eliminated the interview questionnaire. In all of the interviews conducted after the pilot study, I provided interviewees with an abbreviated list of topics I'd like to address, but I kept the longer interview questionnaire to myself and used it as a device to jog my own memory in asking more specific, probing questions.

One participant in the pilot study, Michelle Gold, related that she remembered that when schools desegregated in some areas, African American teachers were required to produce their resumes in order to prove their qualifications and to keep their jobs. She did not recall White teachers being subjected to the same requirement. This insight prompted me to amend the interview instrument (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996) to include questions related to such experiences during this transitional period, and to ask more specific questions about any changes in status or job description following integration. In summary, conducting a pilot study enlightened me to the fact that by necessity my sample would be a small but purposeful one, it allowed me to fine tune the interview

questions so that they more clearly elicited responses related to the information being sought, and to test and refresh my proficiency in interview techniques (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Interview Procedures

One member of the pilot study group spoke with me on the telephone in an effort to clarify information, and another met with me again in person for an extended follow-up interview in order to allow me to gain more details on his experiences. The other member of the pilot study population was not interviewed a second time because it seemed that we had covered all the information during the pilot study interview. The eight additional participants in the study were interviewed after the pilot study, at which point the research project had been reviewed and approved by Texas A&M University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Each of the participants was identified and contacted via the procedures outlined above. One individual came to my home, and the others were interviewed at their homes. Initial interviews ranged in duration from one hour to two and-one-half hours. I tried to keep our conversations to approximately one hour in length, knowing that all people are busy and value their time. However, in two cases (both of which involved married couples) the participants had quite a bit to say and I of course appreciated any information they were willing to share, and thus these particular interviews were longer in duration than the average.

In all cases participants were asked to sign and were provided with a copy of the informed consent form (Appendix B), following IRB protocol (Appendix C). In addition, participants who agreed to be tape-recorded and/or to donate interview transcriptions to the Brazos Valley African American Museum signed forms to that effect. A blank copy

of each of these forms is included as Appendices D and E. Correlated to this I brought along forms for participants to sign in the event that they did not wish to be taped or to donate transcriptions, so that the option would be readily available to them. Although only one person elected to not be taped or donate audiotape transcriptions to the museum, blank copies of these forms are likewise included as Appendices F and G.

The interview instrument was designed by me. The research is a case study of a specific events in a particular location, and thus it was necessary to develop an instrument that addressed the concerns of the research topic instead of using an interview instrument developed by another researcher for different purposes. The instrument consisted of four parts (see Appendix H). Part I was designed to gather information on the participants' personal background and teaching position(s). Part II related to their opinions regarding teaching in segregated schools established for African Americans. Part III applied to their recollections of how desegregation plans were implemented in their district. Part IV centered on the educators' perceptions of teaching in desegregated schools, while Part V provided a conclusion by asking volunteers if they had any documents or other supporting evidence that I might see and/or photocopy. Participants were also asked if they knew of other teachers who might be willing to be interviewed, or if they wanted to address any additional topics not covered in the interview (McMillan, 1996). In summary, the instrument was designed to begin the interview with general information and move on to more specific questions as the conversation progressed.

Potentially controversial topics were deliberately embedded into the later parts of the interview instrument (Bernard, 1988) for two reasons. First, it seemed prudent to begin with basic questions to establish a context for the participants. I also felt I needed

some initial time to establish a rapport with the participants by finding out information related to their backgrounds and by sharing some of my own background. In addition, had I begun by asking questions that participants might have felt reluctant to address (e.g., “Did you experience any racism on the part of White teachers at your new school?”) it might have caught the participants off guard, thereby creating a situation in which they felt uncomfortable or sensed that I could not be trusted. Engendering such feelings would have compromised or perhaps even cut off the interview.

As stated above, I used the interview instrument as a means of helping me stay on topic and to ensure that all the questions I wanted to ask indeed got asked (Briggs, 1986). Thus the instrument was used to assist me as an interviewer. However, during the interview I provided participants with an abbreviated list of questions divided into the same four parts described above (see Appendix I). I also left this paper with participants before I left and asked that they contact me should they later remember new information or have comments they wanted to add.

Interviews were thus semi-structured, in that each volunteer was asked to address specific topics but they were also free to and were encouraged to elaborate where they saw fit (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The goal was to gain information from participants regarding the research questions while at the same time allowing them to add to the potential topics under consideration (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Likewise, it was important to not only listen to what was stated, but to how it was said (Briggs, 1986; Vygotsky, 1962). For example, the repeated use of descriptive words such as “very” can indicate that a person has strong feelings, particularly if such words are underscored by voice inflection (Labov, 1972). Also noteworthy are examples of qualifiers. Examples

included “Well, this is just what I remember. Someone else might have had it different,” (Mrs. Gold, line 77) or “I don’t remember too much about that. I wasn’t a political person, so I didn’t pay any attention to that” (Mrs. Green, lines 412-413).

Communicative devices such as these were noted in my field notes so that I would be sure to recollect them when I transcribed the interviews and conducted analysis.

Each time an interview was completed, I tried to jot down in my notes any such occurrences and a description of the interview atmosphere as soon as possible while the session was fresh in my memory (Spindler & Spindler, 2000). I developed a habit of driving my car around the block and parking, so that I could record my thoughts as immediately as possible (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2001). When I transcribed the audiotapes of the interviews hearing the participants’ voices, any notable pauses or episodes of laughter allowed me to vicariously re-live the interview sessions another time. At times I noticed nuances that had previously escaped my attention.

For the sake of facilitating analysis and in order to be able to offer direct quotations in this dissertation, line numbers were incorporated into the transcriptions. When transcriptions had been completed, each participant was mailed or delivered a copy of their transcript to keep. In addition, a cover letter thanked them again for their participation and their time (I always mailed a “real” thank-you card promptly after meeting with each of the participants). As a member check I asked that participants review their interview transcript for any errors on my part. The teachers were asked to contact me if they had any concerns or wished to clarify or add to their comments. They were also told that they could request that any portion of the manuscript be deleted prior to its donation to the museum, when it would become a matter of public record. In most

instances, the cover letter contained a few specific questions to which I sought clarification, such as exact dates for when something occurred.

It is important to be cognizant of the interpretations one is making as a researcher while conducting analysis and reporting findings (Walkerdine, Lucey, & Melody, 2002). Since I considered the participants to be the authorities over their own experiences and lived realities, I wanted to ensure that I understood them correctly. After delivering interview transcriptions I shared my developing interpretations of the interview data with participants when they granted me the opportunity. Such member checks are an important means of obtaining validity in qualitative research (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). However, not all of the teachers were interested in re-visiting their interviews. Many, after having read their transcriptions, stated that my renderings of their words in the transcriptions were accurate and they essentially indicated that they felt their participation in the study had reached a successful conclusion.

In some cases, participants invited me back to their homes to clarify, elaborate, or request that information be deleted from the public record. In three cases (involving five individuals) I spent more than two hours with the participants during these follow-up interviews and we were able to discuss topics in detail. And, in two instances, the conversations digressed a bit from the research agenda to unrelated topics. However, even seemingly unrelated information was deemed valuable as it provided me with more contextual data regarding the teachers' life experiences. I felt honored that these individuals were not only willing but wanted to share their time and their stories with me. These conversations also permitted me to explain my nascent interpretations of their

comments, so that I could check the validity of my understandings in a face-to-face setting.

Methods of Narrative Analysis

The use of narrative analysis has been increasingly applied to educational research in the last several decades (Bogdan & Biklin, 2003). It is a method of qualitative research used to obtain thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973, 1988), or detailed, micro-level information. Narrative researchers recognize that each person and each story is unique (Ganesh, 2005), and they see the story itself as being of primary importance (Ben-Perez, 2002; Polkinghorne, 1995). This method of inquiry is therefore well suited to this case study because it provides a chance to listen to and learn from individuals whose experiences have not yet been documented. Scholars working in this vein honor participants' words, intuitions, and subjective stances and they attempt to understand - on a deep level - what they are being told.

Instead of undertaking a study with preconceived expectations regarding what will be found or what participants might convey, narrative researchers allow the participants to inform *them*. Interpretations are formulated after narratives are told, rather than before. In other words, understandings emerge from the stories themselves using grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Ingersol & Ingersol, 2001). Typically a relatively small sample is used, but nonetheless a large bulk of information is generated. Organizing the data can therefore be complicated and time consuming (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2001). However one of the benefits of narrative analysis is that it allows us to recognize commonalities among diverse stories, thus providing insight into socially shared experiences (Gubrium & Holstein, 1999).

Narrative analysis can take on several forms, but each is concerned with constructing understandings of speakers' or participants' views of the world (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Richardson points out that “narrative is the best way to understand the human experience because it is the way humans understand their own lives” (1990, p. 133). Some researchers focus on the structure of how individuals choose to tell their stories, paying attention to details such as sequencing of events, moments of transition, and attendant results. For example, Labov (1972) asked people to describe a moment of crisis in their life and noted a typical pattern in how such events are related. Mischler (e.g. 1986) uses a method in which he divides narrative transcriptions into paired or related lines of meaning called stanzas and strophes.

Other scholars hone in on the selection of words used by speakers for clues to how they explain events or themselves (e.g. Clark, 2001; Linde, 1993). For example, excellent work has been done by feminist researchers who examine the ways in which women see their identities, as reflected in the words they employ to tell stories (e.g. Bloom, 1998; Grumet, 1988; Josselson, 1990; 1996). The various methods that fall under the broad umbrella of narrative analysis hold great promise for illuminating the “human” aspects of educational issues (or issues related to other fields). Yet to date little research has been done that focuses specifically on the experiences of African American teachers.

As a researcher I used interpretivism, critical theory and critical race theory to frame my guiding and specific research questions and to report on and interpret the findings. Analysis was an ongoing procedure, in which I reviewed my notes and the transcriptions multiple times. Preliminary review was intended to identify any gaps in the information so that I could request clarifications where needed. I also perused the

material to see if new questions were raised (Kelchtermans, 1993). After interviews were completed, I employed two methods of analysis.

These were modeled on approaches advocated by a group of Israeli scholars (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1990). The authors delineated four differing manners of narrative analysis. Essentially, two of them emphasize the form of texts (narratives) and two of them focus on the content of texts. Holistic-form examines structure on a comprehensive level, considering the story as a whole. Attention is paid to the plot, sequencing of events, or the coherence of the story. The categorical-form method likewise attends to such elements of structure, but stresses the use of metaphors and analogies, shifts between active and passive voice, adverbs, emotive words and other linguistic devices. While I did attend to the language participants selected, I chose to use the categorical-content and holistic-content approaches for my study.

The content methods examine how participants explain who, what and why type of questions. In the categorical-content method, narratives are initially dissected into bits of meaning and then a search for patterns across the body of data is conducted. This method is also called the constant comparative method because it entails repeatedly going back and forth between interview or narrative transcriptions to note instances of speech segments that are representative of particular meanings. In this study, I refer to these smallest, individual segments of meaning as “units.” Units are then sorted into similarity groupings and subsumed into larger frames of meaning, called “categories.” The holistic-content method, on the other hand, looks for overriding features across a transcription or across the data set. It seeks to find examples of agreements or patterns of experience in an effort to summarize commonalities. In this study I refer to these elements as

“themes.” Categories are presented as Findings of the Study in Chapter V (relating to the specific research questions), while the overarching themes gleaned from the data are addressed in the Interpretation of the Findings in Chapter VI (related to the guiding research question).

Discerning Units

I initially read each transcription three times and then re-read them again with an eye towards identifying units. I “dissected” the data into what I perceived to be numerous examples of distinctive units by assigning a code number to each unit in the margins of the transcriptions. I then I enlisted the assistance of a peer reviewer, who was familiar with the project and trained in the methods of analysis, as a means of checking the soundness of my interpretations. On her own, she used the same methodological approach to generate her own units. We then met several times for extended sessions to discuss and debate our respective findings. Each unique unit was noted on a three-by-five index card and filed by number (Huberman & Miles, 1998; Reissman, 1993). After allowing some to lapse, we re-visited the transcriptions to see if we had previously overlooked any potential units. When we could no longer pull out unique units of meaning we felt satisfied that we had reached the saturation point. In all, 52 individual units were eventually decided upon. Examples include borrowing athletic equipment in order to equip sports teams (segregated schools) or teaching remedial classes (desegregated schools). I then trimmed narrative passages from the transcriptions and placed them in piles (where there were multiple occurrences in the data set) according to their respective units.

The next step in my analysis involved re-reading intact copies of the transcripts to determine the overall thrust of the conversations with each individual. At that point I wrote the Participant Profiles section included in Chapter V. Doing so allowed me to “step back” from the data and consider the gist of what each individual participant had shared with me. I then returned to the 52 units, and began to compile them into some sort of order. What could all of these individual, interesting comments reveal about the African American educators’ experiences?

Categories

Whereas the search for units entailed looking at the transcripts with a microscopic eye and performing dissection, the creation of categories involved re-assembling the units into similarity groupings or larger umbrellas of meaning. In other words, when numerous participants noted events relating to a particular topic the units denoting the instances were re-sorted and subsumed into the larger signifier of a category. For example, the reference to “having to borrow athletic equipment” noted above could be matched with “having to make your own uniforms” in a category called Making Due.

I had my peer-reviewer go through the same process, and we met to see if we had placed units into the same categories. We explained and debated the reasoning behind our placements of particular conversational segments into particular categories, which resulted in some cases in the shifting of units into different categories or the re-naming of categories. Through repeated comparison and sorting, a large number of categories were reduced to a lesser number as bits of information were shuffled into emerging categories. Again, categories were noted in the transcription margins, assigned numbers, and noted on three-by-five index cards (Huberman & Miles, 1998).

She had fewer categories than did I, but this was probably due to the fact that it was not her personal research project so she likely did spend as much time conducting her analysis. When I justified the reasoning behind my additional categories they made sense to her. We then again shuffled units around until they seemed to “fit” into categories of meanings. In the end, the 52 units were condensed into 14 categories. However, in subsequent analyses I further collapsed categories to encompass more information by expanding the number of sub-categories within categories. Sub-categories can be considered as aspects of a larger frame of reference - categories. Larger than units (snippets of meaning), sub-categories represent groupings (bunches of snippets) that fit within the more general rubric of a category. The findings reported in Chapter V are presented in terms of 11 categories with varying numbers of sub-categories contained in each (see Figure 5.1).

In order to capture the feelings expressed by the participants, I felt I needed to share with the reader direct quotes that illustrated examples of comments related to the findings. I highlighted quotations which seemed to nicely encapsulate participants’ experiences, and copied them onto note cards to create a quote-bank (Kemp, 1997). For each category I created a folder, with each folder housing envelopes containing quotes taken from the transcriptions. Each envelope contained a sub-category fitting within the larger category. For example, in the School Environment category folder for Phase One there were envelopes for the sub-categories of teaching supplies, facilities, and making due with poor supplies. This example comes from the “segregated schools” phase.

Phases

I divided the entire data set into three phases; the educators' experiences teaching in segregated schools, their recollections of the desegregation process, and their experiences teaching in desegregated schools. These phases or time periods are directly correlated to the three specific research questions, as they address the three chronological segments of the study period (1954 to 1975). In the Findings detailed in Chapter V, categories are addresses in relation to these three phases. Data from the first phase yielded four folders, the middle phase resulted in two folders, and the final phase produced three folders. Folders were color coded for ease of data retrieval (Kemp, 1997) using red, yellow and green for the respective time periods.

Themes

Finally, after engaging with the data for an extended period of time, I tried to discern overarching patterns that spanned across the entire body of data. I used holistic content analysis to find patterns of experience, or themes, shared by the participants. The creation of categories entailed re-assembly of the dissected comments (units) by grouping similar information together, and discerning themes necessitated the adoption of a global perspective (Williams, 2002.) Whereas Chapter V relates the findings of the study at a fairly concrete level - by outlining how the information the participants shared with me relates to each of the three specific research questions - Chapter VI discusses my personal interpretation of the findings as related to the broader, more general guiding research question. The generation of themes or interpretations involved considering the narratives in a comprehensive sense, so that circumstances in Bryan and College Station could be

analyzed as a case study. Doing this allowed me to summarize the experiences of African American teachers in these two settings during span of the research period.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I described various facets of the research methodology. First, I explained why a qualitative design was best suited for responding to my particular research interests. I provided information on how the participants were nominated and then described the research population. Conducting a pilot study enabled me to fine-tune the interview instrument, which was used to guide semi-structured interviews. The methods of narrative analysis employed in the study were discussed so that readers can follow my train of thought when reviewing the findings of the study.

CHAPTER V

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

In this chapter I present a synopsis of participants' individual teaching careers for each member of the study. I comment on how I met the participants, the location at which interviews were conducted, and the general atmosphere that prevailed during each interview. In part, my purpose in providing this material was to describe the context in which the data was collected. I also wanted to portray the educators in sufficient detail, so as to allow the reader to develop a sense of familiarity with who the teachers are as individuals, before making comparisons among the narratives in subsequent chapters.

Participants were asked whether they would prefer to use a pseudonym for the written result of the study or for the transcriptions when they were donated to the Brazos Valley African American Museum. Although no one opted to do so, aliases were adopted in the dissertation to allow anonymity. Where quotes are given, citations use the initials of the interviewee's alias and the line numbers from the interview transcriptions.

Meet the Participants

Gloria Hicks (GH)

The first person I interviewed was Gloria Hicks. Mrs. Hicks was recommended by my committee chair as a person who would likely be able to generate a list of African American teachers who taught locally during the research time frame, as she has long been an educator herself and as a child she attended segregated schools in Bryan. She, therefore, knew teachers both as colleagues and from her days as a student. Mrs. Hicks is among the youngest of the participants, and she is the only individual who is currently employed in the educational arena. She is currently approaching 36 years of service.

Due to the many demands on her time as an administrator it proved difficult to schedule a meeting. After finally getting a commitment, we agreed to meet in her office at the elementary school where she acts as Principal. Mrs. Hicks' office is colorfully decorated with certificates of achievement earned by the school, which is rated Exemplary by the Texas Educational Association. Her office also contains a multitude of elephants, in the form of toys, dolls and photographs. Not only were there two chairs facing her desk, but the furnishings included a couch. This gave me the feeling that Mrs. Hicks encouraged informal conversations among those who visited her office. Indeed, we sat on the couch during our interview. I found her to be enthusiastic about this research project, and quite willing to address any questions asked of her.

Mrs. Hicks initially entered the teaching profession as a substitute at R. C. Neal Junior High School in 1970. Neal is now an elementary school but at the time it served students in grades seven through nine. Mrs. Hicks taught Spanish there full-time during the 1971 school year, the year it desegregated and Bryan High School was established. From 1972 to 1977 she taught at Anson Jones Elementary, at which point she got into the field of counseling. That campus desegregated the year she arrived. Both of the schools at which she worked desegregated soon after her employment, thus Mrs. Hicks' recollections of desegregated schooling stem primarily from her experiences as a student in the Bryan school system.

Mrs. Hicks explained to me how the various schools in Bryan were restructured in terms of the grades they served following desegregation. When Bryan High School opened in the fall of 1971, the schools in Bryan made changes in the grade levels of students they served. Some former elementary schools converted to single-grade

campuses, and many of the children in the Bryan district had to be bussed in order to get them to school. The reconfigurations of the schools were outlined in Chapter IV, but I refer to the changes again because Mrs. Hicks provided insight on the impact of school location on students and teachers. She stated that today few teachers live in the immediate vicinity of the schools in which they teach, “The sense of familiarity and trust is lacking today. Although the teachers at [my school] are excellent, the general trend across the country is that many teachers consider teaching merely a job instead of a calling” (GH, lines 72-74). She noted that some teachers are afraid of their students, and do not want to get to know them outside of school. As an example, she cited the fact that some teachers have unlisted phone numbers so that students do not know where they live.

In contrast, when she was attending Bryan schools as a student, teachers lived nearby their schools. This meant that students’ families shopped in the same stores as their teachers, worshipped in the same churches, and generally had a great deal of contact outside of school. This frequent interaction at community events and on the streets translated into a high level of credibility in the capabilities of teachers on the part of parents. In the same vein, students knew full well that due to the close-knit contacts between home and school, “they could not dare to act up in school without their parents already knowing about it by the time they got home” (GH, line 56). She noted that, “Currently too many students, and especially Black students, are allowed to fall through the cracks. A smaller percentage of Black students go on to college” (GH, lines 82-83). Similar expressions of disappointment with current conditions were made by Paul Jones, Gordon Smith, and Geneva Ellis.

Michelle Gold (MG)

After a fact-finding mission and interview with Mrs. Hicks, I next interviewed Michelle Gold. Our conversation occurred during the pilot study phase of my research, with a follow-up phone conversation about a month afterward designed to clarify a few points. Mrs. Gold is also one of the younger participants, but she is now retired from teaching after 35 years of service. Mrs. Gold quickly responded to a message I left on her answering machine after the first round of letters requesting participation. Her name was referred to me by Gloria Hicks.

I met with Mrs. Gold for approximately one hour in her home. As we sat in her living room for the interview, her home was noticeably quiet. Mrs. Gold explained that her husband was taking a nap, so I followed her cue and attempted to speak in a somewhat hushed tone. Mr. Gold suffers from Alzheimer's, and it was evident both on the phone and in person that Mrs. Gold is concerned about his well-being. Perhaps it was due to being concerned with her husband, or it may be that Mrs. Gold is a soft-spoken individual by nature, but I noted at the beginning of our conversation her responses were brief. However, as the interview progressed she became more forthcoming and I used fewer probing statements.

Before the circumstances of Mr. Gold's health were explained to me, I had hoped to interview him as well since he was a teacher in Bryan during the time period framing the research. In fact, he taught in the district for a greater length of time than did Mrs. Gold. Mr. Gold taught biology and was the head football coach at Kemp High School prior to integration, and also functioned as a counselor at Stephen F. Austin and Anson Jones after desegregation. Mrs. Gold was able to convey her understanding of the

desegregation process in Bryan largely through her knowledge of his experiences rather than her own, as she did not teach in Bryan until 1972. She also had a daughter who attended both segregated and desegregated schools in Bryan.

Mrs. Gold did provide, however, facts regarding the segregated schools in Bremond, where she taught before coming to Bryan. Bremond is a very small town (approximate population of 1,000 during her tenure there) about 45 miles northwest of Bryan and the situation there makes for an interesting comparison. Mrs. Gold began teaching in 1962, instructing both first and second graders in the same classroom. Charles Love High School actually served African American students in all of the grades, one through twelve, in two separate buildings on the same campus. Since the community was so small, African Americans and Whites were not residentially segregated but the schools were. When she was a student in Bremond, Mrs. Gold had to walk approximately two miles each way to school, passing a White school on the way.

Mrs. Gold was in the eighth grade when *Brown v. Board of Education* was decided. When I asked her, “Did people think integration would ever really happen?” she responded, “Oh, we didn’t really think about it. We didn’t think it would ever come to Bremond. We didn’t know if it would ever come to Texas or not” (MG, lines 290-291). As it turned out, Bremond schools desegregated in 1965. That was six years before Bryan made the shift.

Unlike Bryan and College Station, Bremond never instituted a Freedom of Choice plan: all schools were rapidly desegregated. When asked why the decision was made, Mrs. Gold stated that she presumed the superintendent felt it would eventually be forced upon them so they might as well do it. For African American teachers there, this resulted

in them essentially having to prove their merits to the school board, “He [the superintendent] said, ‘those of you who are interested in employment need to write a letter expressing why you would be an asset and you have to re-apply’” (MG, line 103). No White teachers had to re-apply, and none of them were transferred to new schools.

Of the ten African American teachers employed in Bremond, only four were re-hired following desegregation. The transition resulted in Mrs. Gold being placed as a fourth grade teacher most years, but she also had to go wherever there was a vacancy. One year she taught high school physical education, and another year she taught junior high Language Arts, even though her preference would have been to remain a first grade teacher.

Mrs. Gold felt that integration did not seem like a big deal to the students since they had routinely played together, but some of the parents were reluctant. White parents would routinely show up in her classroom to monitor her teaching, “We got some observations, some parents would come in and sit in. Like an evaluation of the teachers to see how things were going” (MG, lines 132-133). Following desegregation in Bremond, junior high and senior high school level students attended the high school campus, while grades four through six used the old elementary building. Grades one through three were then taught at a newly constructed facility.

Paul Jones (PJ)

Paul Jones was nominated by both Gloria Hicks and Sonia Davis. He is one of only two participants who are currently employed, but he left the education profession in 1975 after twelve and a half years of teaching seventh through ninth grade History and Geography. I was particularly eager to speak with him, as he had been described by both

nominators as being very outgoing, both verbally and in terms of his activism in the African American community. I was not disappointed. Mr. Jones, like Mrs. Gold, quickly consented to participate in my study. In fact, to my surprise he had not even received my letter requesting participation when I left a message for him on his answering machine. It turned out that I either had an incorrect address on file or the letter got lost in the mail. Nonetheless, the phone message alone must have intrigued him enough to take the initiative to call me back and set up a meeting.

Mr. Jones met with me for two and a half hours during the pilot study phase of the research. We met at his place of employment, and thus he occasionally had to take phone calls or attend briefly to pressing matters. He seemed eager to talk and I felt as though we could continue our conversation forever had I not been concerned with taking up too much of his time.

Mr. Jones attended segregated schools in Alabama and was raised by a grandmother who was a teacher. Several of his aunts were also educators. He witnessed first-hand the value of an education when his grandfather, who had little formal education, was routinely cheated by White people purchasing his peanut and cotton crops. Like every other participant, Mr. Jones stated that African American students in those days were given second-hand books and lacked supplies that White students had. Nevertheless, his school had a classical curriculum that included Algebra, Trigonometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Literature. He remembered being repeatedly told, “Junior, two plus two is four all over the world. If you just know that two plus two is four, I don’t care what they have over there [at the White school]” (PJ, lines 177-178).

Mr. Jones related that beginning in the sixth grade the students in his school were given annual IQ tests. Teachers would put the students' scores on the blackboard for all to see, designating who was classified as being at average, below average, or genius intelligence levels. A student named Lowell was labeled a "moron," and all the way through high school that term stuck as his nickname. I imagined how psychologically damaging this label must have been for Lowell, and was reminded of the harm inflicted upon African Americans over the years by the use and misuse of intelligence tests (e.g. Hernstein & Murray, 1994; Jensen, 1969).

But even for Lowell the teacher cut no slack, despite his low ranking according to the results of the standardized IQ test. A group of boys from Mr. Jones' church studied with Lowell every day because they knew that if he did not pass his tests the whole class would get a "whooping." After a long absence from his home town, Mr. Jones returned about ten years ago. He found that Lowell is now the owner of multiple auto mechanic franchises with employees that go to wealthy peoples' homes to service their Rolls Royce and Lamborghini cars. Another student in his elementary school class deemed a "moron" according to his IQ test results currently has a profitable career shining shoes at convention hotels:

Today, he'd probably be on welfare, so there's a big difference. We didn't have modern equipment, but we had something money can't buy. As a result, it made people successful. Teachers would tell you, "If you learn this, you can compete with anybody." We knew who they meant by "anybody." (PJ, lines 238-241).

Another of Mr. Jones' classmates was John Lewis, who led the historic march across the Edmond Pettis Bridge from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama during the Civil Rights Era and later became a Congressman representing Atlanta, Georgia.

Michael Jones went on to earn his undergraduate degree at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. While there in 1959, he formed a chapter of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). He later earned a Masters Degree from Texas A&M before it officially began admitting African American students. When he matriculated in 1967 African Americans had to enroll at Prairie View A&M University in Prairie View Texas, which he had been attending, or some other Historically Black College or University (HBCU). As seems typical of his style and way of thinking, Mr. Jones expressed, "So why should I drive to Prairie View when A&M is right there?" (PJ, line 121). A Professor Bentley encouraged him to pursue a graduate degree at Texas A&M University. In order to gain entrance, Mr. Jones had to pass the Graduate Record Examination, a stipulation that he believed was not required for White applicants. His exam score, combined with the heavy load of continuing education credits already under his belt, eventually resulted in his acceptance into a special school run by Professor Bentley and one other professor. He stated, "The only other Black people you saw were the janitors" (PJ, line 135).

When Mr. Jones first applied for a teaching position at Neal Junior High in 1963, the Director of Curriculum did not ask him about his teaching qualifications. Instead, noting that Mr. Jones was athletic, he said, "Now you go over there and keep order" (PJ, line 362), the implication being that the ability to discipline students was of paramount importance in the African American schools. The belief that African American students

needed discipline persisted after desegregation. Mr. Jones stated that it seemed as if overnight most African American principals were replaced with White men, “Here there was only one Black principal and that was Mr. Dunn. That was it. You had a few assistants who were put in charge of discipline but that was it” (lines 529-530).

After a series of political and philosophical disputes with school administrators (including his filing of a legal suit), Mr. Jones eventually left teaching to take a job that paid nearly four times as much as his teaching salary. However, he still remembers individual students with fondness and misses being in the classroom, “I loved teaching. I never had a better job than when I was teaching. But you know, political battles and the money situation” (PJ, lines 99-101).

Gordon Smith and Rose Smith (GS and RS)

Gordon Smith and Rose Smith were referred to me by Gloria Hicks. When I met with Sonia Davis, the other community nominator, for our second meeting she made an interesting comment regarding the Smiths. Mrs. Davis stated that it would be great if I could interview the Smiths, but there would be no way that they would consent to participation in my study or any other. It seems that in the past information they provided to media outlets or researchers had been misconstrued, and thus they prefer to keep their memories to themselves. Mrs. Hicks was thus quite surprised when I told her that I had already spoken with the Smiths. I was only able to do so, however, after my committee chair called them personally and stated that she would accompany me to the interview. Thus, it is likely that it was only through the use of this personal connection that I was able to gain their consent for participation. When I had previously spoken to

Mrs. Smith on the telephone, she said she had no comments to make on the issues I was studying.

The Smiths were the final individuals whom I interviewed during the pilot study phase of the research process. Our initial interview took place in their home and lasted approximately 90 minutes. I met with them for a second interview later in the study period, after they had had a chance to review the transcription of the first interview. Again we met at their home, and at the occasion of the follow-up interview my committee chair did not attend. At the second meeting, probably because they had had a chance to get to know me previously, they seemed very at ease in talking with me. In fact, we chatted for three hours. Often both of them discussed recollections which were beyond the realm of my research questions, however I enjoyed learning more about their lives. Sadly, Mrs. Smith suddenly passed away a mere three weeks after the second interview. This unfortunate loss of a dedicated educator underscores the need to capture the views of teachers who lived through the desegregation process before it is too late to do so.

During the first interview, Mr. Smith generally provided more lengthy responses than did Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Smith frequently stated that over time she had become confused about the exact dates at which things occurred, and this led to interesting exchanges as they disagreed over details. However, Mr. Smith often asked his wife when she thought something had happened, or would ask her the name of someone he was trying to describe. For example, Mr. Smith made references to specific football players but would forget their names. He would ask her to fill in the blanks for him, but Mrs. Smith would respond, "I certainly don't know." Based on his astounding recall of sports

statistics, clearly Mr. Smith placed a greater importance on such facts than did Mrs. Smith.

Throughout the interview the Smiths checked each other's facts, and tried to keep each other on task with the interview protocol provided them. As Mr. Smith stated at one point, "Put down what she said. You can't be married for 52 years and argue!" (GS, line 137). The back-and-forth nature of the conversation made for a lively interview. At our second meeting, Mrs. Smith seemed to be more talkative than previously. Both seemed very nostalgic and I allowed them to digress, covering topics ranging from how they enjoyed attending concerts by great jazz artists when they were living in Dallas to how she once worked for a wealthy White woman who had so many clothes she would have to get rid of some before she had even worn them in order to make room in her closet for new purchases. Again, the manner in which the Smiths jointly constructed their recollections of shared events helped me in understanding their stories.

Gordon Smith began teaching in 1951 and served for 35 years before retiring. His first place of employment was at Kemp Senior High when it was located on Commerce Street, where he worked under Principal R. C. Neal. Mr. Smith taught eleventh and twelfth grade social studies and physical education (P.E.). Later he taught history and P.E. at Stephen F. Austin High School, where he was among the first African American cross-over teachers to transfer to the "White" school. He later became a coach and counselor at Bryan High School.

Rose Smith began her career in 1958 teaching mathematics and science at Blackshear High School in Hearne, Texas. Hearne is located 26 miles north of Bryan and has about one-third the population. She taught grades nine through twelve, but indicated

that students then attended up to the twelfth grade only if they intended to go to college, and there were few students in the upper grades. In 1962 Mrs. Smith moved to Fairview Elementary School, a county school on the outskirts of Bryan, where for four years she taught math and P.E. for grade levels one through four. In either 1966 or 1968 (she stated that she had lost track of time) Mrs. Smith started teaching math at Neal Junior High, and following desegregation instructed the Fundamentals of Math (FOM) courses there. She eventually retired after 30 years of service.

Due to their service as teachers at a variety of schools over the course of many years, the Smiths were able to provide details on differences they witnessed over time. For example, they discussed changes in the quality of supplies, facilities and the curricula offered. They were each able to address these topics from the perspectives of subject area specialists and as physical educators. I also learned from them about the experiences of their son during the Freedom of Choice era. This information was valuable because none of the other participants were able to elaborate upon the topic based on direct involvement.

Geneva Ellis and James Ellis (GE and JE)

Geneva and James Ellis were recommended as potential participants by Gloria Hicks and Mrs. Smith. Both Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Ellis taught math courses and they knew each other as teachers. During initial contacts the Ellis's seemed reluctant to participate, citing their busy schedules at the time. After deliberately allowing some time to lapse, they later agreed to be interviewed at their home. Our interview lasted about 70 minutes. Approximately one month after our initial interview, after the Ellis' had had

some time to look over the interview transcription, I spoke with Mr. Ellis on the telephone to conduct a member check.

Geneva Ellis taught in the Bryan schools during a 32 year time period, from 1966 to 1998, but twice during that period (1972 and 1976) she took time off for maternity leave. Her first assignment was at Neal Junior High School, where she taught seventh and eighth grade mathematics. For the 1971-1972 academic year Mrs. Ellis taught grades nine and ten at Stephen F. Austin Middle School, and she again taught math to the same grades at Bryan High School from 1973 to 1975 and from 1977 until retirement. Mr. and Mrs. Ellis both grew up in Bryan and attended the same schools there, but they did not meet each other until years later when they were teachers at Neal Junior High.

Mr. Ellis taught P.E. and biology at Neal Junior High School from 1964 to 1971. In 1972 he became a Physical Education instructor, counselor and coach at Bryan High School, where he worked through 1979. In 1980 Mr. Ellis began serving as a school counselor for all grades at Anson Jones Elementary School and Sam Rayburn Middle School. At his retirement in 1998, Mr. Ellis had served 34 years.

During the interview Mrs. Ellis did the majority of the talking. Mr. Ellis's responses tended to be brief, sticking to basic replies to questions asked without a high degree of elaboration. Although both seemed to warm up as the interview progressed, I felt that the Ellis's wanted to avoid saying anything that could possibly be offensive. For example, when discussing some discipline issues that occurred after desegregation Mr. Ellis softened his statement by saying, "You know, kids are just kids all over. That's what I found" (JE, line 282) even though he later stated that in the African American

schools kids did not dare act up. In a similar vein, Mrs. Ellis said, “To me students are students, so I didn’t notice any difference” (GE, line 266).

My interest in the series of fires that damaged African American schools was probably the most controversial topic in the protocol, as arson was never directly implicated in most of the fires. Mrs. Ellis described the damage she witnessed first-hand in detail, but Mr. Ellis interjected, “When you say they burned it [Neal Junior High School], that’s speculation that the school burned” (JE, line 176). Mrs. Ellis countered:

Oh, they burned it alright. I mean, there’s no way it could have gotten on fire like that without somebody doing it. And actually the fire department even determined that there was some kind of accelerant in there. You could tell. It came right up [the walls]. Like the rows on the end, ‘cause I had a room on the end, and my stuff got totally burned up. You know there was water damage too, but the fire came right up through the middle of the building. So you knew it had to be deliberate (GE, lines 177-184).

However, when I asked who she felt was responsible for setting the fires Mrs. Ellis quickly answered, “I don’t know. It wasn’t us. Ok, question three...” (GE, line 197), signaling to me that she wanted to move on to a new topic.

When asked about interactions between students, parents and teachers following desegregation, Mrs. Ellis remembered, “I think that went real well, I would say. I think we interacted in both situations real well with each other” (GE, lines 225-226). Mr. Ellis added, “I think the transition from segregated to integrated schools went very smoothly. I never heard of any commotion” (JE, lines 235-236). Mrs. Ellis qualified, “Now there

could have been some, but it wasn't anything big, where one community was totally against something" (GE, lines 237-238). She added:

It may very well be true that there were problems but I was not aware of them. At that time I wasn't even into reading the newspaper, and all that kind of stuff. I was a very young person so I wasn't thinking a whole lot about that. I was probably 25 years old, so that really wasn't on my mind (GE, lines 247-251).

Statements such as these gave me the feeling that the Ellis' wanted to avoid making any blanket remarks that could be taken out of context or sensationalized. Given the fact that some colleagues have been misquoted by or have had other negative experiences with members of the press, such concerns were understandable. At the onset of each interview I of course explained to participants my belief that they held unique and valuable information. I told them that I wanted to hear of their experiences in their own words, especially since the opinions of African American educators are so seldom included in published discourses. I believe that the interviewees found me to be sincere, yet I am also aware that the interview process is by nature a rather artificial form of conversation and the presence of a tape recorder can produce stage fright. These facts may help explain why the Ellis', as well as some other participants, carefully attended to their choice of words.

Sonia Davis and Carl Davis (SD and CD)

Sonia Davis was recommended as a community nominator by my committee chair. Before I began the pilot study of my research Mrs. Davis had met with me and provided the names of potential participants. However, due to surgery and subsequent recuperation it was quite some time before I was able to interview her. As I conducted

interviews, nearly every person I spoke with said that I should talk to Sonia and Carl Davis. Both individuals are highly respected by teachers in Bryan, and each worked in the town's school systems for decades. After hearing repeated praise of them, I was eager to finally have a sustained conversation with the Davis'.

As fate would have it, Mr. Davis was walking towards his front door to get their mail one day at the very moment I was placing a contribution for the Brazos Valley African American Museum project in their mailbox. Seizing hold of this serendipitous occasion, I asked Mr. Davis if he had been receiving my letters. I was invited inside to speak with Mrs. Davis about setting up a meeting. Mrs. Davis was in the process of organizing materials to take with them to a talk they were giving at Texas A&M University that evening, and she quickly put me to work sorting through the artifacts in their spare bedroom/archive. She was happy to enlist my organizational skills, and in fact she even called me the next day to thank me. I felt, however, that it was I who truly benefited from this twist of fate. I was able to see first-hand numerous documents related to African American schools in Bryan while the Davis's shared with me stories of their family and their lives as teachers. Moreover, I left their house with a firm commitment for an interview!

The following week I met with the Davis' at their home for approximately two hours. Both of them have been interviewed numerous times over the years, and it is clear that they are comfortable with the process. Probably based on these experiences, they seemed to select their words purposefully and made efforts to ensure that I understood them correctly. For example, Mrs. Davis spelled out her name even though I had always addressed letters to their home correctly. Mrs. Davis revealed that in the past some of

their colleagues have been misquoted in the newspapers and are understandably wary of being interviewed. Mr. Davis asked twice if they would be allowed to see the interview transcription before I compiled my research. Within a few weeks I delivered the transcription to their home. When I phoned to request a follow-up appointment to check if the transcription met with their satisfaction, I was told to bring a floppy disc. During our second meeting I took the opportunity to discuss my emerging interpretations of their words, and found them to be happy with my findings.

Quite interesting to me, however, was the Davis' request that prior to donating any transcriptions to the Brazos Valley African American Museum I should change the phrasing of all interviewees (not just themselves) to reflect "proper English." The Davis's stated that a previous researcher had given them a verbatim interview transcription for an un-named person that used "broken English." They felt this made the interviewee appear uneducated. When I asked for general examples of such speech, they provided instances within their own transcript and suggested the corrections. It became clear to me that the examples cited were speech patterns typical of African American Vernacular English (AAVE). Although there is indeed, unfortunately, a social stigma attached to AAVE, it has been recognized by linguists (e.g. Lippi-Green, 1997; Perry & Delpit, 1998; Smitherman, 1977, 1998; Stewart, 1969; Wolfram & Fasold, 1974) for decades as a legitimate, rule-governed dialect. The three of us nonetheless spent several hours going through the transcription line by line, using their computer to strike minor portions from the record, but the bulk of their attention was directed at catching examples of "broken English" and deciding upon improved reiterations for what they had previously said.

I politely explained to the Davis' that one learns in ethnographic research methods courses (I had received a masters degree in cultural anthropology) to be as accurate as possible, using exact phrasing and even including nuances such as pauses in the record. However, they were quite firm in their belief that any donated records, since they become permanent and public, should reflect only Standard English conventions. I expressed concern about putting words in other peoples' mouths and asked if they could speak for the other participants on this issue, and the Davis' stated that they were positive others would feel the same way. Naturally I will honor their request in the donated transcriptions.

Carl Davis came to Bryan in 1952 to teach health and P.E. to grades four through seven at Washington Elementary School. He also coached basketball, track and softball. He later taught health and P.E. to middle school children at Neal Junior High School from 1961 to 1964. In 1965 he went to San Marcos, Texas to work at the Job Corps center (then under the auspices of the Texas Education Agency), instructing students aged 16 to 21 in various vocations. In 1969 he returned to Bryan, again teaching at Neal Junior High. After two years he transferred to Stephen F. Austin High School, when it was still predominantly White but Freedom of Choice was in operation. He later became the Assistant Principal of Bryan High School in 1972, working there until retirement in 1990 after having served as an educator for 38 years.

Sonia Davis taught at Kemp High School from 1952 to 1971. From 1952 to 1964 she taught health and P.E. while during the latter years she got into the field of counseling. For the 1971-1972 school year she was a counselor at Bryan High School. This was the first year that the school operated, and it served all children in Bryan in

grades eleven and twelve only. After one year she was re-assigned, taking up a dual appointment as a counselor at three elementary schools (Fannin, Bonham and Travis) as well as at Lamar Junior High School. She held this position until retirement in 1989, after 37 years of service.

Mrs. Davis pointed out that she was reluctant to leave Bryan High School after only one year:

I did not leave Bryan High School by choice. I left because they needed someone to discipline the Blacks, and they felt that my husband could do a good job, which he did. So they hired him to come to Bryan High School for Assistant Principal and they moved me to elementary schools. If I had a dime above breakfast I would have quit. I thought the kids at Bryan High needed me, and no one could do for them what I thought I could do, and I loved them. (SD, lines 227-233).

Mrs. Davis went on to explain that her re-assignment turned out to be a blessing:

When I got there, after two or three days I realized that God has sent me there. It was the best job that I've ever had in my life. I could have kicked myself for not having gone there 20 years earlier. Those kids hugged me every day, they made nice comments, told me I was pretty. Something my mother never told me in my life. They made me feel so, so wanted (SD, lines 239-243).

This love of teaching is tangibly evident in the Davis home in the display of photographs of former teachers and the massive accumulation of artifacts they have preserved from their careers. In fact, Mr. Davis joked that the inspiration for the Brazos Valley African American Museum partly lay in his disdain upon discovering that he could no longer park his car in their garage because the garage was filled with such

paraphernalia. In part due to her successful efforts to create the museum, Mrs. Davis was awarded the Jefferson Award in 2005. This award is given by a local television network to one individual per year for outstanding service to the community.

Christine Green (CG)

Christine Green was recommended as a potential participant by Gloria Hicks. However, Sonia Davis told me that while it would be informative to speak with Mrs. Green she absolutely does not grant interviews. Nonetheless Mrs. Green did consent to participate, much to my delight. On the telephone Mrs. Green informed me that she had been “tricked” by a newspaper reporter once and she told me that she was only agreeing because I had mentioned Gloria Hicks in my letter requesting a meeting. Mrs. Hicks was a student of hers many years ago, and clearly she remembered her with fondness, “I couldn’t say no to Gloria” (phone communication). Mrs. Green was the only participant who did not consent to be audio-taped, and thus my transcription of our conversation is based on the copious notes I took during the interview and a subsequent member check. The transcription will not be shared with the museum out of respect for Mrs. Green’s privacy.

We had agreed to meet at Mrs. Green’s house, and as was typical I had driven by her house in advance to ensure that I knew its location. But about 20 minutes before I was planning to leave my apartment, Mrs. Green phoned to say she would be over in 15 minutes and needed directions. She stated it would be more convenient for her to come to my house since she would be doing errands later anyway. I told Mrs. Green that it was easy to find my apartment complex, but finding my specific unit once inside the complex

would be confusing. We agreed that she would phone me from her car once she was in the parking lot across the street, and I would walk over to meet her.

I hung up the phone and in a panic I rapidly tried to transform my over-stuffed apartment into a presentable state, and cranked up the air conditioning! When the phone rang a short while later, I began walking with it to our meeting spot thinking it was Mrs. Green. It turned out to be her daughter, who started the conversation with “Who is this? My mother said she was going to your house and I don’t know who you are.” I thought, “Uh oh, this is off to a rocky start. I’ve already offended Mrs. Green’s family and I have not even met her yet.” I tried to politely assuage the daughter by telling her my intents, and promised that I would have her mother call her the moment she arrived.

Despite these dubious beginnings, Mrs. Green and I had a lovely conversation that lasted about two hours. Several times she claimed that she felt she did not have much information worth sharing, and wondered aloud if she was being any help at all to me. In fact she reiterated this sentiment in two of the many friendly emails she subsequently sent me. She was in fact a great help. Mrs. Green is among the oldest of the participants and could therefore relate stories going back to the Washington Elementary School days, and she provided details about life in a county school (Mrs. Smith taught at the same county school but had only limited information about those early years of her career). Mrs. Green did seem to skirt over political issues, saying “she never got much into politics” (CG, line 212). She had no recollection of any legal suits being filed or of details of the desegregation process.

Christine Green began teaching elementary grades at Fairview Elementary School, which was located on Highway 21 near Farm-to-Market Road 2118. Today, the

school is gone and Fairview Church stands in its place. She taught there from 1941 to 1943, and the school enrolled African American students from throughout the county. From 1943 to 1949 she stayed home to raise her daughter. In 1949 at age 30 she returned to elementary teaching at Washington Elementary School and taught there until it burned in 1970. At that point Mrs. Green was transferred to Travis Elementary School, from which she retired in 1980. At some points in her career Mrs. Green stopped teaching, as she followed her husband in his travels with the Navy. In total she estimated that she taught for between 35 and 40 years.

At Fairview Elementary, Mrs. Green taught grades one through three, with all three grades in the same classroom. The school had two teachers and a principal. Due to economic need, the school received government relief funds to sponsor meals for the students. In addition to teaching, Mrs. Green cooked meals and served them to students until a cook was hired. She recalled that “students would file in with plates, be served, then take their meals back to their desks to eat” (CG, lines 41-42). The principal at Fairview also wore several hats. He hand-built a log cabin style structure for use as the kitchen, and taught shop in another building that he personally constructed.

At Washington Elementary, Mrs. Green initially taught third grade in 1949, and the next year commenced teaching first grade. As noted, Gloria Hicks was one of Mrs. Green’s first grade students. Mrs. Green recalled her clearly, “She was extremely bright. She knew everything. I didn’t have to teach her a thing” (CG, lines 83-84). Mrs. Green is still in contact with Mrs. Hicks and other former pupils, despite the fact that she retired 26 years ago. Her fondness for her students seems to be reciprocated, as she related, “Two weeks ago I was at the drive-in bank and a White student recognized me and

reminded me of the song I taught on the first day of school to help learn the children's names" (CG, lines 158-160). I was very impressed that a student would remember this experience as a first grade student in Mrs. Green's class decades ago.

Valerie Palmer (VP)

Valerie Palmer and Albert Palmer were recommended as potential participants by Gloria Hicks. For some time I was unable to contact them because I had an incorrect mailing address. Then one day when I was reviewing my list of potential participants with my committee chair, the name Valerie Palmer rang a bell with her. She remembered that they knew each other. A phone number was tracked down from another professor in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture and a connection was made. Mrs. Palmer readily agreed to meet with the two of us, but she explained that her husband suffered from memory loss and she felt that an interview might prove too taxing for him.

We set up a date to meet at Mrs. Palmer's house, and my committee chair and I planned to drive there together from her home. On the morning of the meeting I drove to my chairperson's home but when I tried to start my car again a short time later, it was dead. Deciding to deal with that little dilemma later, off we went in my chair's car. Mrs. Palmer was the only participant in my sample to teach in the College Station school system. Reasons for the dearth of potential participants in College Station have been outlined previously. Considering the circumstances in that district, I considered myself blessed to have secured even this single interview. Mrs. Palmer met with me and my committee chair for about three hours, and was very cordial, forthcoming and eager to talk.

The Lincoln School was the sole educational facility for African American children in College Station from 1941 until 1965. The school served students in grades one through twelve, with one teacher for each grade. In addition the school employed a music teacher, a shop teacher several athletic coaches and a home economics teacher. Valerie Palmer entered the teaching profession as a substitute at the Lincoln School in 1957, and began teaching sixth grade full-time sixth in 1958. After two years she switched to the fifth grade classroom. In 1962 the decision was made that she would be especially well-suited to teaching younger students, and she became a first grade teacher. She continued as a first grade teacher, in various locations, accumulating a total of 32 years of service at her retirement in 1990.

Mr. Palmer also worked at Lincoln, as a history teacher and football coach, beginning in 1949. The majority of the teachers at Lincoln received their degrees at Prairie View A&M University, although Mr. Palmer attended Wiley College in Marshall, Texas. In 1963 he took a position teaching for the Job Corps in San Marcos, Texas. When he came back to College Station in 1966, returning to Lincoln was no longer an option since it had closed after being damaged by fire during the holiday break in December of 1965. He applied for positions at other campuses in the College Station system but was unsuccessful, even though he had a masters degree and counseling certification. He found employment in Bryan as a counselor at Kemp High School and later at Ben Milam Elementary School where he discovered that because was a school counselor, he was ineligible for merit pay even though classroom teachers were granted these occasional salary increases. After a few years of counseling he was assigned to be a truant officer. This necessitated that he take courses at Sam Houston State University

for that additional certification. Mr. Palmer eventually retired in 1985 after teaching for 36 years.

Mrs. Palmer was also directly affected by the closing of Lincoln. In the aftermath of the fire, Mrs. Palmer was assigned to be a team-teacher of the first graders at A&M Consolidated Elementary School. This school no longer exists, but she explained that it was located in the vicinity of the modern-day Oakwood Elementary School near the Texas A&M University campus. Mrs. Palmer recollected that she received the same pay at A&M Consolidated as she had at Lincoln, and that she signed as a teacher of record on report cards. However, the job was something of a demotion in terms of status, since she essentially functioned as a teacher's aide. She did not have her own classroom or the independence of a regular classroom teacher.

The following year, in 1967, she was transferred to the newly constructed South Knoll Elementary School and put in charge of first grade Transition. Transition courses were newly created at the time, and were seen as a way to get students lacking in essential skills up to par academically. They were offered in grades one through three, and in today's parlance they would be called remedial classes, "It was called Lift Off to Reading. So it gave them a deeper, basic understanding of reading skills using phonetics. It was not regular first grade material" (VP, lines 451-452). In our conversation it became clear that Mrs. Palmer was not terribly fond of teaching Transition classes, and that she missed the atmosphere of the Lincoln School. At Lincoln, the faculty was a close-knit group who strived to create a sense of community among the students and their parents. However, since the majority of African American teachers in College Station

lost their jobs at the time she was reassigned, Mrs. Palmer felt grateful to be able to stay in College Station at all.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I set the context of the interviews and described the overall gist of what each participant spoke with me about during initial interviews. The participant profiles were presented in the order in which the educators were interviewed, beginning with those interviewed during the pilot study phase of the project. The stage is now set to explore what the participants shared, as a group, related to their experiences teaching in segregated schools, their recollections of the desegregation process in Bryan and College Station, Texas, and their experiences teaching in desegregated schools in those two communities.

CHAPTER VI
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, PART ONE:
CATEGORICAL-CONTENT ANALYSIS

This chapter relates the findings of the study based on the first of two methods of analysis I utilized in this project. A review of the categorical-content method is provided to contextualize the findings. The findings are related in terms of three phases, each of which responds to one of the specific research questions. These are followed by a discussion of the findings.

Explanation of Phases, Categories and Sub-categories

Narrative inquiry is a method of qualitative research in which stories serve as the primary source of data (Ganesh, 2005). Narrative inquiry pays attention to signs and symbols in spoken language, and values narrators' constructions of meaning (Graham, 1995; Grumet, 1988). How individuals express themselves provides a glimpse into how they make coherence of their experiences (Linde, 1993; McEwan & Egan, 1995). Narrative researchers in the field of education recognize that stories provide insight into how individuals interact with and make sense of their worlds, and that in attending to peoples' words we can gain a humanistic understanding of educational issues. This study employed two of the narrative methods described by Lieblich, et al. (1990). These were detailed in Chapter IV, but a brief review is provided here in order to reiterate and clarify how the findings of the study are presented.

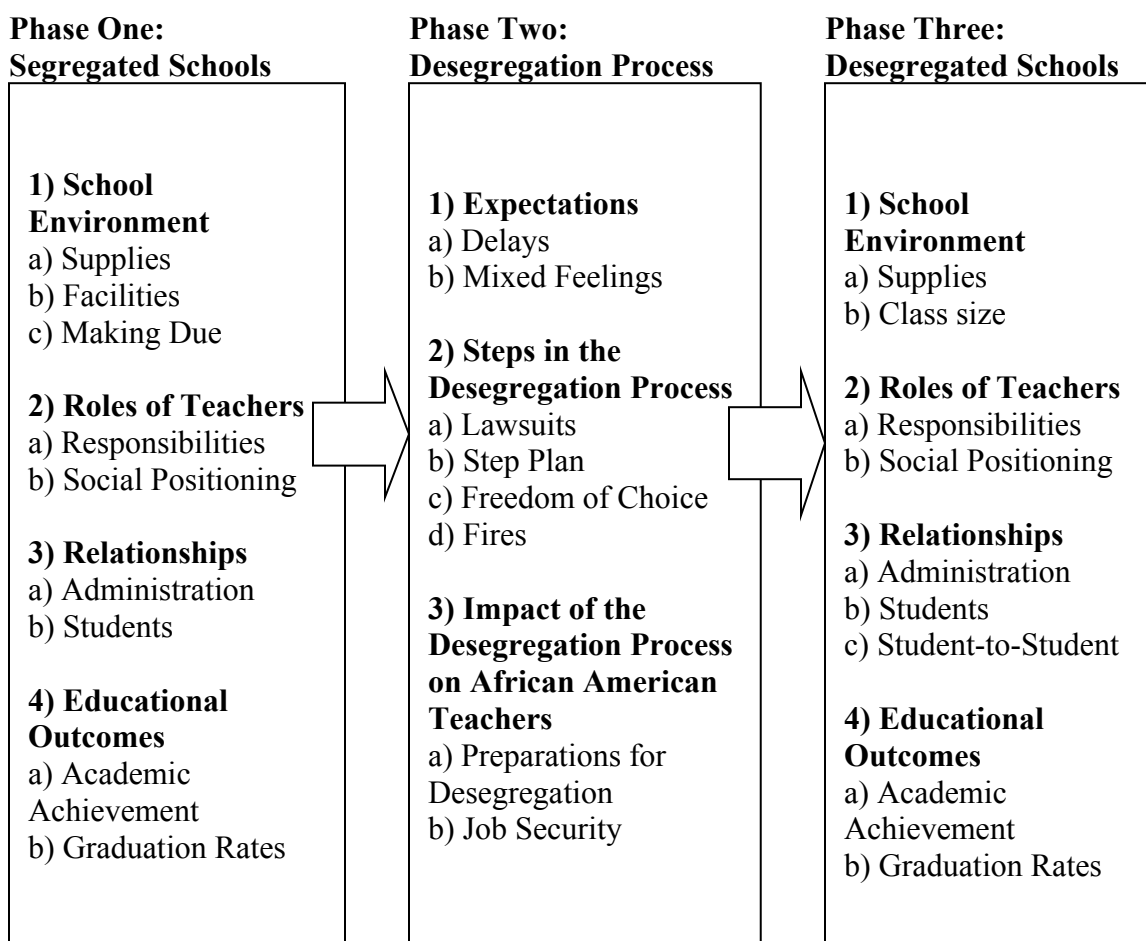
This chapter relates the findings of the study as related to the specific research questions. The findings were generated from the data using the categorical-content method. In categorical-content analysis, narratives are dissected into snippets of meaning

and then “played with” to see how the individual snippets might relate to larger frames of meaning. In this study, I refer to the smallest segments of information as “units.” After reading each interview transcription multiple times, I dissected the data into what I perceived to be unique units. My peer-reviewer used the same approach to discern her own units. As a result of several brainstorming sessions, 52 individual units were eventually decided upon.

Next, I wrote the brief biographical sketches contained in Chapter V. Doing this forced me to summarize the overall gist of what each individual discussed with me. I then re-read intact copies of the transcripts to determine larger frames of meaning across the 11 transcriptions. The next step in the analysis involved arranging and re-arranging the units, collapsing them into similarity groupings so that they could be described in a comprehensible fashion. These groupings are called “categories,” and are presented as the findings of the study in this chapter. In all, 11 categories were discerned.

As analysis was ongoing, it became clear that the categories should be described in terms of their relation to the time periods addressed in the specific research questions. Phase One represents what participants related about teaching in segregated schools, Phase Two addresses what the participants recalled regarding how the desegregation process was implemented, and Phase Three centers on the participants’ descriptions of teaching in desegregated schools. In dealing with the large quantity of data generated, it also became evident that a coherent discussion of the findings would be enhanced if the categories were detailed in terms of components within categories, which I call “sub-categories.” Each of the categories contains two or more sub-categories. For the ease of

the reader, Figure 6.1 below itemizes the Phases, categories and sub-categories used to relate the findings of the study in this chapter.



Phase One begins with the earliest years of the teachers' careers. Phase Two varies according to community; in College Station the phase spans the years 1961 to 1965, while in Bryan Phase Two concerns the years 1961 to 1971. Most participants stayed in place during these years, but the phase represents the years during which the school districts grappled with the desegregation issue. Phase Three encompasses the years 1966 to 1975 in College Station and the years 1971 to 1975 in Bryan.

Figure 6.1
An Overview of the Phases, Categories and Sub-categories

Findings: Categorical-Content Analysis

This study investigated the experiences of African American educators in two Texas communities during the segregation era, during the period when their school districts began to implement desegregation policies, and their experiences teaching after the local schools desegregated. The three specific research questions relate to particular time periods, and thus each is treated in the findings as a phase in a chronological progression.

Phase One focuses on the African American teachers' comments related to teaching in segregated schools during the 1950s and 1960s. At times, information the participants provided about their experiences as students attending segregated public schools and/or colleges is also provided where germane to the topic. Phase Two deals with local occurrences regarding the implementation of desegregation policies. These changes took place over a decade spanning from 1961 to 1971 (1961 to 1966 in College Station, and 1961 to 1971 in Bryan). This decade witnessed efforts on the part of community activists, hired lawyers and the NAACP seeking action on the issue of desegregation since the communities had yet to comply with federal educational policy legislated in *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. During this time most of the teachers continued to work in segregated schools. However, two (Gordon Smith and Carl Davis) became cross-over teachers at the White high school in Bryan during the Freedom of Choice era, and another (Christine Green) began working at a White elementary school just shortly before the Bryan schools desegregated. Phase Three relates to the African American educators' perceptions of their experiences teaching in desegregated settings, and describes events during or after 1965 in College

Station and during or after 1971 in Bryan. In this chapter the findings of the research are presented as categories within these chronological three phases.

Phase One: Segregated Schools

My first specific research question asked; What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in segregated schools? The teachers interviewed began their careers at various points in time, and thus participants' responses were drawn from differing pools of knowledge. Christine Green's career began the furthest back in time, in 1941. Gordon Smith began teaching in early 1951, and Carl and Sonia Davis became educators in 1952. These participants' recollections therefore stem from many years of experience, including the years prior to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. The other participants were able to reflect upon life in segregated schools even though they began their careers after 1954, as the Bryan and College Station schools did not desegregate for more than a decade after the *Brown* ruling.

School Environment

The School Environment category captures information regarding the conditions under which the teachers worked. In listening to the stories the teachers related one can imagine the atmosphere in their schools, even though they described events of long ago and circumstances that greatly differ from those encountered by most currently employed educators. Within the category are three sub-categories; supplies, facilities and making due. The first involves participants' comments relating to the supplies in segregated schools, which were typically inferior. "Supplies" refers to tangible objects such as books and other curricular materials or teaching equipment, and items such as uniforms. "Facilities" refers to the physical structure of school buildings. This includes classrooms,

gymnasiums and athletic fields. “Making due” describes the pattern described by participants in which teachers compensated for inadequate supplies and facilities through personal efforts.

Supplies. Every person interviewed agreed that African American students attending segregated schools were given old, hand-me-down textbooks. This is in keeping with conditions in segregated schools reported elsewhere (e.g. Anderson, 1988; Ashmore, 1954; Pierce et al., 1955). For example, when asked to describe the books at the Lincoln School in College Station Valerie Palmer stated, “A lot of the books at Lincoln were not new books. They were out of adoption. They would have other people’s names in them. They were not new. We did not get many new books” (VP, lines 853-855). Describing schools in Bremond Michelle Gold concurred, “The books that we had were the books they were all finished with and they didn’t want anymore” (MG, line 189). She elaborated, “The books were really old. You know where you write your name in the spaces in the front? All those spaces were really filled up” (lines 208-209).

Gordon Smith said the same was true in Bryan, “Oh, all those names, there were a lot of names in there. And you had to use that stuff... what’s that stuff you put over there?” At this point his wife interjected “white-out” referring to the liquid correction solvent, and Mr. Smith continued, “Yes, yes, white-out. We had to cover up all those names with white-out so our kids could put their names down. That’s how many times those books had already been used. All those spaces were used up before we got the books” (GS and MS, lines 23-30). James Ellis said, “The books had names in them. Basically that’s how you could always tell. You got a book with names in it and you

knew it was used- you could tell by the names” (JE, lines 271-273). Geneva Ellis added that sometimes books had broken spines and were falling apart:

I would say that the books were definitely previously used before they were sent to the Black students. We very seldom got new books. And that was a difference after we got to the high school and totally integrated. Our kids weren't used to new books since we seldom had them before (GE, lines 276-279).

Although the teachers (as well as the students) had no experience with conditions in White schools to form a basis of comparison, they still knew that the books they were provided with were outdated and in disrepair. Mrs. Smith sensed that having such old textbooks caused the African American students to miss out on important knowledge. Yet she was unaware of the typical adoption cycle for many years, “I knew that the books were not new, but it was not until we integrated that I found out that you were supposed to get new books every five years. But the point was we didn't get the new books. So that put us behind as far as the materials” (RS, lines 182-184). As the former teachers related these facts, it was easy to see the hurt they felt at constantly receiving cast-off books from the White schools.

Mr. Davis stated that he was unaware of many inequalities in supplies until he transferred to Stephen F. Austin High School, as he had never before taught in a predominantly White school:

So whatever we had at the Black school, we were pretty near satisfied with it because that's all we needed. But we did know this. The books we got, they had the White kids' names in them, you know? They'd been used. And sometimes they'd bring the desks, you know the desks where they sit in the classroom? Well

sometimes they already had kids' names, where they took a knife and carved in them. So you knew you were getting a second-hand desk. So you just took those and were satisfied with what you had (CD, lines 65-72).

He added, "But as time went on, well we found out that it was much different. And especially at that time that you were able to go over to the White school to work" (CD, lines 80-81).

In a similar vein, the African American schools lacked other supplies that the teachers believed were available in the White schools. Christine Green commented, "Some of the Blacks were finding out that things were strictly not coming up to par, educational-wise. We just didn't have equipment like others did. They were trying to get things. We didn't have typing. Just name it, we didn't have it. We just didn't have it. We were a second-rate group" (lines 194-197). Mrs. Smith commented that at Neal Junior High School the curriculum was "very, very limited. It was the basics" (GS, line 203).

Michelle Gold recalled that in Bremond's segregated schools, they used an archaic type of duplicating machine and even that was paid for with teachers' contributions. A lack of funding also limited extracurricular opportunities:

Over at the Black school we didn't have anything like a football team, didn't have a band or anything like that. At first [after desegregation] they didn't get much play time because they hadn't had that experience coming up. Some of them were juniors and seniors and they hadn't played except maybe sand-lot, unorganized games among themselves. (MG, lines 300-304).

Valerie Palmer, whose husband was a coach at the Lincoln School, noted that he always had to scramble to find athletic equipment. A polite and amiable person by nature, she seemed to put a positive spin on the issue, “Some of the football uniforms came from the campus [Texas A&M University]. They were hand-me-downs. And someone at the campus was really nice to him. My husband got some padding and such” (VP, lines 905-906).

Facilities. Rose Smith provided information on teaching in nearby Hearne, Texas during the late 1950s. She stated that the Blackshear Elementary School was some sort of temporary-style shelter made of wood instead of brick, but recalled that the building did have windows. The Blackshear School she described is still in use, and it is actually a former army barracks. The Hearne school district purchased it from the U.S. military when the town’s German Prisoner of War camp closed at the end of World War II. According to oral histories of former Camp Hearne POWs that I have transcribed and analyzed as a member of another research project (Waters et al., 2004), the POWs frequently complained about the size of, temperature within and shoddy construction of the barracks. I am sure they would find it hard to believe that one of their barracks continues to be used more than fifty years after the war ended.

Gordon Smith made the following comment regarding facilities in Bryan, “I guess for a Black school they were fair. We had a shop but we didn’t have everything that is supposed to go in a shop” (GS, lines 201-202). Christine Green told me that at the Fairview County School, the principal constructed the school’s kitchen and woodshop himself. When I asked her what kind of supplies the students had to use in the shop she replied, “I don’t know what he was doing out there. He was very resourceful” (CG, line

44). Mrs. Smith noted that her colleague, Mrs. Lane, taught Chemistry even though she did not have any lab facilities. She was able to do so because she was highly creative and resourceful.

Geneva Ellis noted that at Neal Junior High the gym was a poorly constructed building that she described as “an old tin barn” (GE, line 123). James Ellis added that the gym had to be heated with portable heaters. The heaters were only provided after many complaints were issued, and they were incapable of adequately heating the entire building. Gordon Smith remembered the gym at Kemp High School as being very cold in the winter and terribly hot during some months. He complained to his principal that the school’s football field was on uneven ground, making practice and play difficult, “We had to play on a field that was like this [held up his hand in a slanted position]. It wasn’t level at all. You understand what I’m saying?” (GS, lines 326-328). Eventually an agreement was worked out with Stephen F. Austin High School, the White school, allowing Kemp students to practice and play on Stephen F. Austin’s field during their team’s down-time:

But he [the superintendent] said, “If Kemp is playing on a Friday and Stephen F. Austin is playing on a Friday, you all are going to play on Thursday.” You understand what I’m saying? So one Thursday it rained and we were supposed to be playing. And they told us we couldn’t play on their field ‘cause it would mess it up for their game the next day. What could we say? Hm? (GS, lines 327-333).

Valerie Palmer remembered that her husband likewise worked out a deal with the coaches at A&M Consolidated High School allowing Lincoln High School students the chance to play on that school’s field, “And even the field we played on, that worked out.

Because we had a superintendent that got to like him [Mr. Palmer] and then he started scheduling his games on a Thursday night or something so it wouldn't interfere with the White games. And we played over on their field" (VP, lines 905-910).

Making Due. Although all of the participants agreed that segregated schools lacked supplies and had poor facilities compared to their understanding of conditions in White schools, they all also spoke of teachers summoning resources on their own in order to improve the educational experiences of their students. Gloria Hicks noted, "Supplies were sub-standard, but they made due and excelled. For example, books were used and out of adoption but teachers supplemented the curriculum with other sources" (GH, lines 63-65). Paul Jones stated that African American teachers often improvised by using outside resources such as magazines and newspaper articles. Some students were very vocal about being dissatisfied with having inferior supplies, but he would tell them, "Look, you may not have this and that, but if you learn you can more than make up for it" (PJ, line 468). His philosophy, which seemed to be a common one among the participants, was "If you can get a person to believe in themselves you can't hardly derail him or her" (PJ, line 464).

In the late 1960s Paul Jones and a colleague used outside materials to create a written supplement for Neal Junior High School's eighth grade history classes. The Director of Curriculum at his school was White, as were all the curriculum designers in Bryan. Finding that African American experiences were lacking in his History textbooks, Paul Jones worked with another man during a summer to compile an addendum to the state adopted textbook:

So we would take chapters of the book and start filling them in. You know, like the Battle of Bunker Hill or Lexington and Concord. So we'd tell how there were Blacks there, 'cause they weren't included. Like Crispis Attucks, he's the most prominent one, but there were others all along the way. They weren't recorded because nobody ever put them in the books. And even Crispis Attucks, if he was there and you looked at the picture of him, sometimes you couldn't even tell what he was [he was not clearly discernable as an African American man] (PJ, lines 29-34).

Other examples of teachers making due with substandard materials involves coming up with supplies for extracurricular activities. Valerie Palmer recalled with fondness how teachers at the Lincoln School used found objects to create props and scenery for school plays. She told me that the teachers would go outside and "find beautiful bushes and tree limbs and berries and plants. You could not tell that it was not the way it should have been. It looked great to us" (VP, lines 872-873). She elaborated:

Well, people were very talented. Even if we didn't have the equipment, we made it. We made it. My husband and I were just talking the other day about the school plays that we had. We didn't have stages to do a play on. We didn't have that, it had to be made. And the curtain. And all the scenery. We had teachers who would just do it. Mr. King was the type of man that just had a hand for fixing things. He had some women's qualities! Very creative. And the next person would be our homemaking teacher, she was always our back-up (VP, lines 861-870).

Sonia Davis stated, “You just used it, made the best of it” (line 409) and “We had high self-esteem, and we were interested, and we could bounce back from anything” (SD, line 411). Valerie Palmer explained, “We taught what we thought was essential to the child. And we had the books and all, but there were some things not covered in the books” (VP, lines 848-850). She stated:

As a whole we did quite well with what we did have, because a lot of what we got was already used. You know, you can take a book out of adoption and just go right ahead. And if a child is going to want to learn and do things, they will just go ahead and do it. In spite of that. They needed a push, and we gave them all we had (VP, lines 198-201).

Paul Jones expressed similar ideas when he commented:

Quality of the teachers, now this is just my view, but I think that under the circumstances under which they labored they were superb. Because they were given poor equipment, they were given limited money for supplies. Basic things like the books were old. I think that to even be able to impart enough knowledge to get students into college, under those circumstances, they did a superb job (PJ, lines 382-387).

He elaborated, “We tried to make up for the difference. They tried to compensate for what they lacked. By building up the self-esteem and the belief system of the children” (lines 537-539). Gordon Smith felt that having a hot lunch program at Kemp stimulated the children to study, and that the teachers did the best they could under the circumstances.

Another manner in which the African American teachers made due was by using their own money to purchase supplies. While several participants expressed that they felt they were paid less than White teachers even if they could not prove it, they also related instances in which they personally paid for supplies for their students or for instructional use. Rose Smith recalled, "If we wanted a duplicating machine we had to buy it. And if we put on a talent show we had to raise up the money" (RS, lines 249-250). Michelle Gold stated, "Teachers would spend a lot of money. When my husband was a biology teacher [at Kemp High School] they had them fill out forms every year for the equipment they'd use in those classes, and they'd never get what they asked for" (MG, lines 216-217). Gloria Hicks recalled, "They did not have money for athletic or other uniforms, so fund-raisers were held to raise money on an ad hoc basis" (GH, line 367).

Christine Green recalled that prior to integration it was common for teachers to pay out of pocket for materials not provided. Carl Davis helped purchase school supplies for some of his students who could not afford them. Sonia Davis took a student shopping and bought her a swimming suit, underwear and a suitcase so that she could compete in a state beauty pageant. Paul Jones described the situation at Neal Junior High School as follows:

The teachers took the children's welfare very, very seriously. They had to give their own money, they had to work overtime before school and after school and on weekends. They would do what they had to do to help that child be successful. 'Cause I remember over at Neal there was no money allocated for the band. And the teachers and parents worked together to buy the kids uniforms. Also some books. And in some cases when teachers could not get into music competitions

here in Texas [due to segregation policies], they would charter a van and bring them to Ohio or someplace. They'd raise the money (PJ, lines 391-396).

The fact that the participants willingly gave of their limited incomes to enhance the educational and extracurricular experiences of their students highlights the closeness of the student-teacher relationship in the segregated schools.

The Role of the Teacher

This Category comprises interviewees' comments related to expectations placed on them as educators. They revealed that teaching in segregated schools entailed more than simply being certified to teach, or being willing to work hard. Within this category is the sub-category of "teacher responsibilities." This sub-category refers to tacit or overt pressures the teachers felt. For example, it was expected in many cases that the teachers get ongoing professional development every two years, even for those who had masters degrees. Another sub-category within teacher's roles is their "social positioning" as educators. Comments from this sub-category express how teachers were viewed in the African American community. As the findings will make clear, there were distinctions in the social positioning of the African American teachers at the segregated schools as compared to how they were perceived at the area's desegregated schools.

Teacher Responsibilities. A number of the participants shared that African American teachers were expected to maintain high professional standards. Participants agreed that the majority of the teachers in the segregated schools were certified in their teaching field and held degrees. Christine Green related that in the summer prior to the opening of Bryan High School in 1971, which marked the real beginning of desegregation in the community, the school systems held workshops for teachers. When

attending these meetings she realized that many of the White teachers did not have bachelors degrees. This was an interesting discovery to her, because all the African American teachers she knew held at least a bachelors degree. It is also an important contradiction to the commonly held presumption that African American teachers tended to be less qualified than their White counterparts. A presumed lack of experience and credentials was commonly used to justify salary discrepancies among the two groups. As discussed in Chapter II, following the *Brown* decision many teachers lost their jobs on these grounds.

James Ellis related that many of the African American teachers he knew had masters degrees. For example, among the participants in this study Valerie Palmer, Gloria Hicks, Paul Jones, Sonia and Carl Davis, and Gordon Smith all have masters Degrees, as did the husbands of Valerie Palmer and Michelle Gold. This is all the more impressive when considering the fact that higher educational opportunities for African Americans were limited to colleges and universities that accepted African Americans, and thus these individuals had to travel to enrolling institutions to take their coursework. Christine Green related, “The Black teachers were constantly driving down to Prairie View, passing segregated Texas A&M on the way, to take coursework for their masters” (CG, lines 368-369) Mrs. Green was required to take “improvement courses” every two to three years, so she commuted on weekends and during the summer. She took courses on New Math, science, and one summer she studied phonics at San Francisco State University, which admitted African Americans.

Valerie Palmers’ husband already had a masters degree when he returned to the College Station area following some years away while employed by the Job Corps, but

discovered upon his return that if he wanted to get a job he would have to take a re-assignment. The new position required that he get an additional certification offered only at Sam Houston State University, located nearly 100 miles from his home. Mrs. Palmer noted that the principal at the Lincoln School in College Station, Principal Tarrow, was very visionary. He tried to hire only teachers that were certified in their subject areas, “Yes, he got people with qualifications and training. You know even our segregated colleges were not up to par [laughs]. So he used teachers that were in their fields. And you know so many teachers, years ago, did not even have degrees. But we did” (VP, lines 674-676). Gordon Smith likewise noted that in Bryan the African American teachers he knew were degreed, “At Kemp most of the teachers had a degree, and they were good teachers” (GS, lines 185-186).

Administrators relayed the message that the teachers should go above and beyond the call of duty in terms of professional affiliations as well. One example of this concerns union memberships. Carl and Sonia Davis, Geneva and James Ellis, Gordon and Rose Smith and Paul Jones all related that African American teachers were expected to join national, state and local teachers’ unions. As Paul Jones put it, “Now prior to integration the superintendent and the principal beat you over the head if you didn’t belong to all three professional organizations” (PJ, lines 71-72). Following desegregation the teachers discovered that White teachers were not required to join these organizations. Gordon Smith related, “At the Black school our principal would say, ‘We’re all joining, all of us, 100%.’ And we had kids in college. We couldn’t do all that [refuse to pay union dues]. You understand what I’m saying?” (GS, lines 313-316).

When I asked the Smiths if they felt they benefited from paying all these union dues they laughed and Rose Smith stated, “All we got was a piece of paper! We still get one from the state and the local” (RS, lines 321-322).

Despite likely discrepancies in salaries between White and African American educators in Bryan and College Station, African American teachers were also told to donate a sizeable portion of their salary to the United Way organization. Rose Smith recalled that African American teachers had to give a day’s pay. Sonia Davis stated, “Whatever was tops, we did it. I did not realize till my husband was in the Job Corps that people did not give a day’s pay. But our principal had us do whatever the White man said, that’s what we did” (SD, lines 676-679). Supposedly United Way funds were used to enhance the school systems, but it rarely seemed that the monies made their way back to the African American schools.

While Valerie Palmer did not recall being coerced into joining multiple unions in College Station, she clearly remembered it was typical for teachers at the Lincoln school to give generously to the United Way:

When we got to the integrated setting I think some of the teachers did not give anything. But I was accustomed to giving a handsome amount to the United Way. Although the money was distributed out, we did not get what we were supposed to in terms of community development. And this is what the other teachers started hammering on – they felt they did not want their money going this way and that way. But when we were at Lincoln we paid a handsome amount because we wanted our distribution. We’d only get a little bit, but we were trying to be supportive (VP, lines 818-825).

Another economic hardship centered on African American teachers being held responsible for any lost textbooks. If the number of books returned at the end of the year did not match the number of books checked out by students at the onset of the academic term, teachers had to reimburse the school system. Supposedly this was the duty of the students' parents, but in reality the parents seldom paid and thus the teachers had to come up with the money. Gordon Smith related, "But the pinnacle thing about those books, like if I had 90 kids and checked out 90 books and turned in 85, I had to pay for the other five. They'd say, 'you know the rules of football before you play it,' so we knew the rules" (GS, lines 29-31).

Sonia Davis stated that at Kemp and Neal authorities did not seem to care what books were turned in as long as they were subject-related. This practice implies that in the following school years some students would be given texts that did not match those of the teacher or their classmates, a situation which would have made it difficult to follow instruction. Even with this any-book-will-do policy, Mrs. Davis still had to sacrifice personal funds for lost books, "At the end of the year I would come up ten or 20 books short, and I paid for those books out of pocket" (SD, lines 683-685). Geneva and James Ellis remembered that they took great care to avoid having to pay these fines by making efforts to collect all of their students' textbooks. It is disconcerting that the African American teachers were made to pay for heavily used, out of adoption books and yet the White teachers, who were given newer books, were not held to the same standard.

Social Positioning. All of the participants noted that education was highly valued in the African American community. Since school provided a route toward upward mobility, students learned from their parents to take their educations seriously. As

instructors, teachers were a crucial link in the chain of knowledge and were therefore admired for their wisdom by both parents and students. Mrs. Ellis expressed that teaching was an esteemed line of work, “In the Black community a teacher was well respected. I mean, if you were a teacher you were a unique person. Whereas in the White community it was more like being at the bottom of the totem pole” (GE, lines 343-345). When asked if her move to an desegregated setting resulted in a lack of status, Mrs. Ellis stated that she always personally continued to hold teaching to be an important job. However she found that the general feeling was that any teacher, regardless of color, was not an elite on the same level, “That’s just the way it was. Teaching is not the high thing in the non-Black community. Cause if you’re a really good person you’re doing something else... So they figure you’re teaching cause you can’t do anything else” (GE, lines 353-357).

Gloria Hicks remembered that as a student she not only wanted to do well in her classes for personal benefit but in order to please her teachers. It was important to her that she made a good impression on them because she admired them. She felt this was the typical attitude of students in segregated schools. The desire to be seen in a positive light extended out of the classroom when teachers were encountered in the local stores or at church. Rose Smith and Christine Green recalled that in their early days of teaching, students would practically compete to see who would be the one to eat lunch with the teacher each day.

Paul Jones related that students would often consult him about his opinion or seek advice about non-academic issues. He thus felt very involved in the student’s lives. As a volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club, he interacted with students who were not his

classroom pupils. Even though he was not their personal teacher, many of the students looked up to him simply because he was a teacher and was therefore deserving of respect.

Relationships

The category of Relationships consists of comments participants made related to interactions between various people at segregated schools. These include sub-categories pertaining to interactions with administrators and with students. Looking at relationships between individuals helps illuminate the atmosphere in the segregated schools on a personal level. In Phase Three the same sub-categories are addressed to note changes that occurred over time.

Relationships with Administrators. Valerie Palmer said that Principal Tarrow of the Lincoln School was very forward-thinking. As noted above, she told me that he hired only outstanding teachers. In addition, she admired his hands-on philosophy of administration. In a telephone follow-up interview she explained that Mr. Tarrow sometimes functioned as a substitute teacher as needed. He was readily able to fill in for ill teachers due to his knowledge of what was going on in the teachers' classrooms on a daily basis. Mrs. Palmer also found him to be very approachable should she need to consult with him. Mr. Tarrow promoted parental involvement with the school by inviting parents to student plays, fashion shows, operettas and recitals. In addition, parents and the community at large were invited to occasional dinners and movie viewings at the school. All of these events helped parents feel as though they were valued by the school administration, "These were gatherings for closeness, for families" (VP, line 882).

As discussed in the Roles of the Teachers category, teachers from Bryan commented that principals of the segregated schools there had high expectations for their

teachers. Gordon Smith described principals the following way, “The principals, they were tough on us. I mean they were tough” (GS, line 279). He said this in an admiring manner, and contrasted this stance to what he later encountered when teaching at desegregated schools. We have seen that teachers at segregated schools carried a financial burden due to the administration’s requirement of mandatory participation in professional affiliations and donations to charity.

Paul Jones related a story that described how African American teachers’ incomes could be manipulated even outside of the classroom. At one point in the late 1960s, the chairman of the Bryan School Board owned a Dodge automobile dealership. Apparently it was an un-written rule that all teachers purchase their cars from his business, but Mr. Jones had his eye on a Chevy SS model car. He explained, “Somebody told me that it would affect my contract. One of the other teachers had to find a job somewhere else ‘cause he said ‘I don’t want no Dodge. I want a Chevy.’ But anyway, there were a lot of things like that” (PJ, lines 354-357). Mr. Jones stated that his teaching contract included a moral turpitude clause as well. Bryan had a population of only about 16,000 people at the time and Mr. Jones felt that due to the small size of the community it was easy to keep tabs on teachers’ actions outside of school, “You’ve got to realize there were places that, as a Black man, I could not go. But they were kind of after me cause I had violated the thing about buying a Dodge” (PJ, lines 336-338).

Relationships with Students. Participants described positive relationships with their students. The subject of discipline, for example, was only brought up in discussions of teaching in desegregated schools when several interviewees noted that African American students seemed to change when they attended new schools. Prior to

desegregation, it seems, discipline was not an issue. Student behaved well and took their assignments seriously. Paul Jones commented, “Unlike today, every teacher knew your parents, and they would come by your house. And unlike today, you saw them at church and downtown and you saw them at the county fair. They would keep an eye on you” (PJ, lines 152-154). He elaborated, “They were a part of your whole life rather than just doing academics” (PJ, line 157).

Mrs. Hicks stated that teachers acted almost as second parents to their students. Paul Jones concurred, “I think to a large extent they felt a part of something. They felt a part of a family” (PJ, line 556). In the schools, a large part of the teachers’ nurturing role took the form of having high expectations for the students. Supplies in segregated schools may have been sub-standard, but inequalities were no excuse for a lack of effort and only 100 percent effort was deemed acceptable. Paul Jones stated that at Neal Junior High School, the predominant idea was that a student could do anything, “You had teachers who wouldn’t let a child say that he couldn’t. You could compete with anybody” (lines 252-253).

High teacher expectations were cited as a benefit to attending African American schools by Gloria Hicks as well. As a student she knew that her teachers would accept only her best efforts, and as a teacher she accepted no less from her students. Sonia Davis stressed, “The quality of teaching was excellent. Most were excellent, most were excellent. Excellent in the way of expectations, teaching ability and support. High expectations for all students and a love for children. You’ve got to have expectations to be successful” (SD, lines 373-377).

When asked if there were benefits to attending segregated schools, Sonia Davis responded, “Life in a segregated school, for me now that I look back over it, was one of the most enriching, loving experiences I’ve had. The teachers cared for you, they supported you, and they tried to bring out the best in you” (SD, lines 266-268). She stated that a good teacher is not in the profession for the money, but because he or she cares about children. These comments show that there were strong bonds between teachers and students during the segregation era in Bryan and College Station schools. Teachers genuinely wanted to improve the lives of their students, and the students were aware of this fact.

Educational Outcomes

The category of Educational Outcomes refers to the effects that attending a segregated school had on African American students. These effects are described in the sub-categories of academic achievement and graduation rates. Overall, participants had positive comments to make about both, attributed to the nurturing, familial atmosphere of the schools.

Academic Achievement. As evidenced in descriptions of the relations between students and teachers, the African American teachers had their students’ best interests at heart. They had high expectations for their students because they knew that education was a means of advancement in a stratified society. As Paul Jones described it, “If you’re Black, no one is going to leave you a fortune. You might have a little land, but the best thing you can do is get an education. And that is something that was taught in the homes and schools” (PJ, lines 308-310). One way in which this educational philosophy manifested itself was in the fact that in the segregated schools teachers avoided labeling

students' ability levels. While some students were more academically advanced than others, the teachers uniformly expressed the sentiment that all of the children were capable of succeeding if they applied themselves.

Michelle Gold agreed, "They made you believe in yourself. You may not be able to do all of the math problems, but you could do some of them. And you'd work on that particular thing that you're good at and you'd become successful" (MG, lines 224-225). Carl Davis said, "Over at Kemp High School, you didn't have all these watered down classes. If you were taking English, you took regular English. If you took Math, you took the regular Math class" (CD, lines 173-175). Paul Jones stated that all students were expected to take Chemistry, Algebra, and conjugate their verbs regardless of their supposed intelligence rating:

And then the other most outstanding thing, I think, going to a segregated school was that students were expected to do well. There was no Special Education. But then they started out [at desegregated schools] with having one English and then another English class for all the so-called slow students. They'd have Algebra and Trigonometry and they'd have some kind of other math, and it wasn't what you should be taking" (PJ, lines 167-172).

Michelle Gold remembered slightly differently, perhaps because she continued to work as a teacher in the years after Mr. Jones had already left the profession. She said at her schools they did have Special Education programs, but it was for students who "were so slow they could not learn their ABCs" (MG, line 254). She estimated that there were perhaps only six to ten of these students on a campus. Valerie Palmer stated that at the Lincoln School in College Station there was a Special Education teacher named Ms.

Jones. She said, “The children that we had in Special Ed. were big children. You know nowadays they put children in Special Ed. in first grade. We didn’t then, at Lincoln. They were children that should have been in the fourth grade or higher” (VP, lines 505-508).

Geneva Ellis elaborated, “We didn’t have Special Ed. and that kind of stuff back in those days, but we had ability grouping even when I went to high school [at Kemp]” (GE, lines 206-207). James Ellis qualified that these groupings and the curriculum were based on which plan students selected to pursue. He recalled that students were not placed into a program, but rather the students and their parents opted into either Plan I, II, or III based on future aspirations. Plan I was for college-track students, Plan II was for those who were undecided, and Plan III was for students who “were definitely not interested in college at all” (JE, line 217).

Graduation Rates. A second sub-category in the Educational Outcomes category concerns participants’ comments related to graduation rates from segregated schools. A number of participants noted that prior to desegregation more African American students went on to college. Mrs. Hicks’ attributed this pattern among her classmates as having its foundations in the fact that teachers instilled a sense of pride in students and consistently expressed a belief in their capabilities. Reflecting on her own years as a student in a segregated school in Denison, Texas, Sonia Davis recalled that more than half of her classmates went on to earn a bachelors degree. James Ellis agreed that since African American teachers in Bryan tried to develop a sense of pride in their students by building up their senses of self-worth, it resulted in a high percentage of high school and college graduates. Valerie Palmer described similar conditions at the Lincoln School in College

Station. High graduation rates were seen as a direct outcome of teacher expectations and teaching excellence.

Gordon Smith said that in Bryan, “You know the thing about before full integration, we were separate but we were not equal. But the thing about before integration, if we had 150 kids in the senior class about 50 or 60 percent of them would go to college. That was the good thing (GS, lines 168-171). Carl Davis stated, “See, before we went over to Bryan High School we had more Black kids going to college than we do now. So something turned around. I don’t know what caused it, but I think there’s not as many going now as there should be. But then integration came” (CD, lines 322-325). Geneva Ellis concurred:

Cause if you look at it right now, if you research the kids who graduated from Kemp High School that are Black and you research the kids who graduated from Bryan High School and you look at the world of work, you’re going to find a terrific graduation rate from Kemp. They continued on to be doctors, lawyers, your teachers, and it was a real professional group of kids (GE, lines 328-333).

James Ellis said, “It was an amazing group of kids. The kids back then in the 60s, the 70s, the Black kids. You had a lot more that became professionals than you do now” (JE, lines 340-341). Mr. Ellis noted that graduates of Kemp High School were more likely to become employed in highly regarded fields later in life than were graduates of Bryan High School. More of them went on to become doctors, lawyers and teachers. This pattern, it was noted by many, seemed to change after the schools desegregated, when fewer African American students went on to earn college degrees.

Phase Two: The Desegregation Process

The second specific research question asked; What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding how the desegregation process was implemented in their schools and/or communities? According to documentary evidence, the NAACP petitioned the Bryan School Board to begin desegregation efforts in 1955 but no actions were taken. In 1957 Texas House Bill 65 stated that in the opinion of the state, schools need not be desegregated unless the majority of voters in a district petitioned for a vote on the issue and the majority of voters then ruled in favor of desegregation. In a pro-segregation state, these occurrences were highly unlikely. Nonetheless, in the early 1960s community activists in both College Station and Bryan wrote letters to the local paper, city officials and the school boards requesting action be taken. In the end, both towns undertook efforts to desegregate only after they were compelled to based on the outcomes of legal suits.

Desegregation lawsuits were brought forth against both towns' school districts in 1961, and verdicts returned in 1963 required the schools to begin implementation plans. The desegregation process began in both towns in 1963, but neither district seemed in a particular hurry to fully desegregate. Token efforts were made via a Step Plan (1963) and a Freedom of Choice (1965) plan. In 1966 College Station's Lincoln School ceased operation when a fire necessitated the transfer of African American students to formerly all-White schools. In Bryan, desegregation did not occur on a wide scale until 1971. Thus the desegregation process unfolded slightly differently in the two locations. Within the Desegregation Process Phase are three categories; Expectations, Steps in the

Desegregation Process and the Impact of the Desegregation Process on African American Teachers.

Expectations

In the expectations category I relate participants' comments regarding their opinions on what desegregation would entail and why it took so long for the schools to take action. These statements are addressed in the "delays" sub-category. In the "mixed feelings" sub-category I provide examples of the teachers' recollections of people's feelings about the pros and cons of desegregation at the time.

Delays. When asked what she recalled thinking when she first heard of the *Brown* decision, Sonia Davis said she felt that it was "just another passing fancy" (SD, line 415), and that despite the ruling the focus on desegregation, "It was just lip service, like a whole lot of things nowadays" (line 423). She felt that in reality desegregation would be slow to come "Because I didn't think anybody else would want to work with our kids like we did... And people with means, financial means, and people who didn't like Blacks would overshadow those who wanted to do what was right" (SD, lines 417, 424-425). When I asked Mr. and Mrs. Ellis why they felt it took so long for any desegregation efforts to be implemented, James Ellis reflected, "That's a hard question to answer. I was under the impression they just didn't want to do it. Yeah, they just didn't want to do it. Either the administration or the school board could have done it at any time, but they didn't" (JE, lines 317-319).

When I asked Paul Jones the same question, he stated that he was still a student in Alabama when *Brown* was decided. But even later, as a teacher in Bryan, he felt it would likely be many years before desegregation actually occurred:

Not for a long time. Not here in Bryan, Texas. Let me put this in the proper context for you. When I came to Bryan, Brazos County, the teachers kept the census roles. And you didn't put a child on your role until October or November. Because they had to bring in those cotton crops. And if you put them on the role, even if he came to school the first day and registered, you'd have all these absentees and the school district would miss all that money. So kids weren't counted until the crops were pulled in, from west Texas. Or out at the bottom down here, around the Brazos River, those cotton fields. They had to get in those crops (PJ, lines 575-587).

Recall that Michelle Gold stated that, "We didn't know if it would ever come to Texas or not" (MG, line 291). She began teaching in nearby Bremond and recalled her interview with the school's superintendent when she first started her career:

One question he asked me was, 'Do you think the schools here will ever be integrated?' And I kind of hesitated to answer. And he said, 'Well, you know that will never happen.' And I kind of looked down, like this [lowered her head]. So I guess it was just a not-wanting-to-rush-into-it kind of thing. But it did happen three years later. It was forced upon them, I am sure that is what it was (MG, lines 93-97).

Although Bremond schools desegregated prior to those in Bryan or College Station, it seems that the belief that desegregation would be years in the making was a common one in Texas.

Geneva Ellis graduated from Kemp High School in 1962. She explained that this placed her in the last graduating class from that African American high school in Bryan.

In the fall of that year, a new African American high school was opened [now Kemp Elementary School], “So things were much nicer once they got into that new building. But then at that point they made the Kemp that was built in 1930 the junior high school, which really hadn’t been updated. Well, they added an annex onto it, but other than that, the gym was still the old tin barn, they made no changes whatsoever” (GE, lines 144-147). Rather than desegregate the schools at this point, which was eight years after *Brown* had been rendered, officials in Bryan instead tried to pacify African Americans by providing them with an improved high school facility. This was a common tactic across the South. It seems that new schools were built by those still operating under *Plessy v. Ferguson*’s “separate but equal” doctrine: they were trying to make buildings for African Americans seem to be up to par with those for Whites so that no one could claim the separate facilities were unequal, yet they were ignoring the gist of the *Brown* decision.

Mixed Feelings. Although segregated schools were inherently unequal and indicative of a widespread societal belief that African Americans were second-class citizens (Bullock, 1970; Margo, 1990), reactions to desegregation were mixed in the African American communities studied. Both Sonia Davis and Christine Green, when asked what they thought would occur when the schools desegregated, promptly responded that they worried how African American students would fare in an desegregated setting.

Regarding the feelings of parents, Christine Green stated that, “Some of the parents were having meetings on the issue, and some were pro-integration and some were not. Some parents felt integration would provide so many opportunities, that students could learn more” (CG, line 306-307). Her own belief was that neighborhoods should be

integrated so that a more genuine and naturally occurring form of desegregation could occur. Michelle Gold said that in Bremond, “They just kind of quietly watched and observed, and kept it among themselves. No outward criticism, just watching to see how things would go” (MG, lines 314-315).

When asked if the people they knew looked forward to desegregation Mrs. Davis commented, “We thought that. Parents thought that. After integration we found out no. The expectations [at desegregated schools] were too low for our students. The help and assistance our students were given was too low, and it was a great disappointment” (SD, lines 393-395). She later stated that many African American parents, upon hearing of impending desegregation, felt that their children would soon be getting the benefit of better schools, “Many parents felt ‘the White man’s ice is colder than the Black man’s ice,’ the White schools were better. Parents thought that when we integrated the students would do better” (SD, lines 481-483). In reality, many African American students were placed in lower level courses.

Carl Davis agreed that sentiments regarding the merits of desegregation varied among the African American community, “We were not sure about integration. Some of us thought integration meant that they were teaching more and better at the White school” (CD, lines 115-116). He felt that in general regardless of one’s skin color the more highly educated a person, the more likely it was that he or she would be in support of desegregation. The following conversation with the Carl and Sonia Davis illuminates their thoughts on the differing opinions of parents at the time:

CD: Our people that had a little education, they were for it. Our people that didn’t have an education, they were a little against it because they didn’t understand.

SD: Some of our people. Ok, let's don't put everybody in there.

CD: Yes, some of our people. When we came here and we had an education, we knew our kids needed to have better equipment, materials and what-not to learn more. But some of our people that didn't have educations, they didn't want it too much. The same thing with Whites, you know? The Whites that had money.

SD: Some of them. Yeah, because some of those people with money have been very, very good to me from day one.

CD: And particularly, and I don't even know you, or if you've got money or not, but if you've got money I can get along with you better than with another White without it because his thinking of the Blacks is way down there. People who have traveled around, you can get along better with them. (CD and SD, lines 431-445).

The Davis' repeated these ideas in an interview with another researcher (Carol Simmons, personal communication). Their comments indicate that even though African Americans were certainly aware of inequities within the dual educational system, some of them were nonetheless wary of potential negative repercussions entailed in desegregating. James Ellis recalled, "I guess the atmosphere was that everyone had some anxieties about integration but generally the atmosphere at the school itself was good" (JE, lines 55-56). Geneva Ellis stated, "Personally, it did not affect me going from a segregated to an integrated school. I probably had some apprehensions, but other than that it did not affect me" (GE, lines 280-281).

Steps in the Desegregation Process

A second category in the Integration Process phase addresses the actual steps involved in desegregation. A description of how the schools in College Station and

Bryan underwent in desegregation was provided in Chapter IV. Those details were based on written sources. There are but few of these sources, and I was interested in knowing what African American teachers experienced first-hand. The category is broken down into sub-categories of events that occurred chronologically. In some cases the participants could not add any information to what I had learned in my review of the literature.

Lawsuits. In 1961 Bryan Superintendent Alton Bowen and the Bryan Independent School District were named in the *Thomas v. Bowen* lawsuit. In response, the Bryan School Board hired a recognized legal team, and the case persisted for two years before a verdict was reached. The Bryan school district lost the suit. Both Geneva and James Ellis recalled the lawsuit filed on behalf of student Clarence Thomas seeking desegregation when I brought it up, but had no further comments on the litigation. Rose Smith remembered that Clarence Thomas never had the chance to attend desegregated schools, since he had already graduated by the time a verdict was rendered. This fact was corroborated by Carl and Sonia Davis and Gloria Hicks. Mrs. Davis said that despite the suit, the school board in Bryan was “kind of foot dragging. And they did that as long as they could” (SD, line 455). Christine Green memory on the subject was fuzzy, but she felt that it was not so much the *Brown* ruling that resulted in change, as it was “something that happened in ’60-something, or was it 1972? I think the federal government said the schools were still not in compliance” (CG, lines 470-471).

In 1961 College Station schools were likewise sued in *Washington v. A&M Consolidated School District*. As was the case with Bryan schools, the lawsuit was tied up in the courts for two years and the school district eventually was found in non-

compliance of *Brown*. During analysis of Valerie Palmer's interview transcription (the sole College Station participant) I realized we had not discussed the lawsuit's impact and so I phoned her for any details she could provide. Mrs. Palmer began teaching at Lincoln in 1957, but she did not remember the lawsuit.

Step Plans. Despite the minimal amount of information regarding the 1961 lawsuits in Bryan and College Station provided by the teachers, the suits did result in both districts being forced to implement Step Plans beginning in the fall of 1963. According to the plans, students would be integrated one grade level per year starting with kindergarten, with full integration of all grades to occur in 1974. Participants recalled that in actual practice the Step Plans had little impact on the schools. In fact, even though a number of participants taught at the elementary level, where initial efforts were focused, only one person recalled their being any changes stemming from the implementation of the Step Plan. Michelle Gold said:

If I'm not mistaken, there were a few, but they were bussed in from rural areas outside of town. Milam. Because I know I have a friend who lives in the Kurten area and her kids were bussed into Milam. It was pretty much like the White kids went to school in the area where they lived and the Black kids were bussed in. And I guess over in the Black areas some White kids were bussed in from rural areas" (MG, lines 262-266).

Freedom of Choice. Memories related to the Freedom of Choice plan were sharper, although again its effect was reported as being minimal. After the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, the federal government threatened to cut funds to districts that maintained a dual educational system. In addition, the Elementary and Secondary

Education Act of 1965 allowed the Department of Education to sue school districts in federal courts. Bryan and College Station were ordered to use a Freedom of Choice plan beginning with the 1965 academic year. Christine Green stated, “Very, very few Black students went to the White Schools (CG, line 93). Geneva Ellis recalled, “After a suit was filed here about schools not being totally integrated, that’s when they started Freedom of Choice. But Black kids chose to go to Lamar and Anson Jones, and none of their kids chose to come over to our schools” (GE, lines 71-74).

Paul Jones made the following comments regarding bussing, “No White kids came here. That’s the same thing I’ve often told people about bussing. The only kids who got bussed were the Black kids. The White kids still went to their community schools” (PJ, lines 483-485). He added, “The Black kids would have to get up at 6:30 in the morning, before the sunlight, to catch the bus. I don’t see White people wanting to ride those busses” (lines 487-489).

Carl Davis explained:

And you might put, Lamar was the White school you might say. And Neal was the Black school. And Anson Jones was the Hispanic one. You can see how those kids kind of went around. But it was still very seldom that a White kid came from the White school, or very seldom a Hispanic kid came to Neal. They knew where they wanted to go, so they were able to do that” (CD, lines 129-133).

Mr. Davis stated that at the high school level, no White students elected to attend Kemp. A few African American students opted to go to Stephen F. Austin High School, primarily those who were ranked high in terms of academic or athletic abilities.

Sonia Davis informed me that Stephen F. Austin was selectively recruiting athletes from Kemp in order to improve their sports teams. When I expressed surprise, she stated, “Oh yes, they were recruited. At that time, athletic-wise, Stephen F. Austin was not winning too many state championships, and Kemp High was not winning too many state championships. So our better Blacks went over to Stephen F. Austin to play athletics” (SD, lines 112-114). She elaborated, “And during that time, our better athletes went over there to that school. And even in the middle school at the time, you had Lamar, they were even recruited” (lines 124-125). Paul Jones likewise recalled that students from Neal Junior High School were recruited to the White junior high based on their athletic skills.

Rose and Gordon Smith noted that during the time Freedom of Choice operated, some courses were not available at the schools serving African American students. In 1968 their oldest son took drivers’ education at Stephen F. Austin and their youngest son later took French classes there. The older son did not have any French classes until he went to college and he failed the subject during his first semester, “We bought records and everything but he was just too far behind. So the next year we found out that our youngest son could take courses over there [at Stephen F. Austin High School], so he did better” (RS, lines 113-114). At that time, the African American high school offered Spanish instruction but French was required for college applicants, and it was only offered at Stephen F. Austin. Other college preparation classes were offered exclusively at the White high school. Students wishing to take the SAT college entrance examination were required to do so at the White school.

It is likely that many African American students who wished to attend Whites schools were prevented from actually doing so due to a lack of transportation. I asked the Smiths, “How was your son supposed to get over there, all the way across town? It’s too far to walk. Was any sort of bus around to pick up students?” (Standish, lines 104-105). To this they simultaneously chimed in, “No!” incredulous that I could image such an option being provided. Mrs. Smith said their son had to borrow their car to drive to the school, and that it worked out alright after they developed a system of sharing the car. But Mr. Smith joked “Oh, and we’re dressing it up for you! (GS, line 110). Sonia Davis concurred that, “Now they almost had to have transportation because they wouldn’t give them transportation over there. The parents had to get them back and forth” (SD, lines 118-119).

Gloria Hicks gave me an idea of what it might have been like to be an African American student attending a formerly all-White school during the Freedom of Choice years. She revealed that as a child, one of the teachers currently working at her elementary school was among the first African American students to transfer to Stephen F. Austin in the 1960s. The girl’s parents sent her to the White school believing it would be superior to Kemp High School. However, the experience was so traumatic for her that to this day, as a grown woman, the scars are still fresh. She becomes emotional and cries when recollecting her days at the White high school. Mrs. Hicks warned me that if should be lucky enough to interview this woman, I should do so in the privacy of her home. Unfortunately, but understandably, the woman did not respond to my repeated requests for participation in this study.

Even though the participants recollected that the number of White students who opted to attend African American schools during Freedom of Choice ranged from very few to zero, there were some White cross-over teachers who worked in the African American schools during the time. Paul Jones recalled that at Neal Junior High School the faculty was totally African American until the late 1960s, at which point several recent graduates of Texas A&M were assigned to Neal, “Those young girls didn’t know what was going on!...Well, there were several that I can think of that were good. But most of them, when they had the culture shock they were gone” (PG, lines 326-327). He stated that one or two were skilled teachers, but most had no idea how to instruct or relate to African American children. Typically these cross-over teachers got re-assigned as soon as they could.

Geneva Ellis remembered, “They did integrate the faculty. We had White faculty at Kemp High and at Neal Junior High, but we had no White students. Our kids were still all totally Black students” (GE, lines 76-77). Christine Green related that at Washington Elementary School, a White writing consultant was added to the staff in the late 1960s. Later two White teachers were added to the school, “Teacher integration occurred prior to student integration. It started with in-services for teachers” (CG, line 89). Sonia Davis agreed that the faculty integrated first. During staff meetings she was met with a surprise regarding certain White teachers:

Teachers came over, and some were very disrespectful. We couldn’t believe it.

One woman sat and knit in the faculty meeting. And I guess this wouldn’t be disrespectful in an integrated setting or at her school. But she would sit there and

knit or something, and we just thought that was showing such disrespect for our principal (SD, lines 361-365).

Mr. Davis recalled that during Freedom of Choice the administrators at the African American schools continued to be African American.

Gordon Smith claimed that he was the first African American teacher in Bryan to transfer to a formerly all-White school during the Freedom of Choice period. He left Kemp High School in 1968 to take a job teaching history at Stephen F. Austin High School, but after a year he was assigned the position of coach. I asked Christine Green how the cross-over process worked. She recalled that, "The principal suggested that those who could handle it should go" (CG, line 485). At the Washington school, the county superintendent observed teachers in practice and then selected a few to be transferred. Sonia Davis said:

There were some Black teachers who went to the White schools before we did. They called it 'coming over' and 'getting some of the best' teachers. This one right here [pointed to a photograph of a teacher on a display stand], Louise Anderson, was one of the first. And she bragged about how she was one of the first people to go (SD, lines 602-605).

She explained that, "They were picked. Sometimes it was because of your family, sometimes it was they heard you got along well with children, sometimes it was because you didn't stir the waters" (lines 607-609).

Fires. The Step Plans and Freedom of Choice Plan produced only limited results. If they had been allowed to proceed according to plan, it would have taken many more years for the communities' schools to fully desegregate. The critical incidents were not

these legal remedies that resulted in only token efforts, but were instead the series of fires inflicted on African American schools. Valerie Palmer worked at the Lincoln School in College Station when it was set on fire in January of 1966. When I asked her what was reported at the time regarding the cause of the fire, she said:

They never, to my knowledge, said. Word of mouth said... but I don't think it was ever printed up how the fire started. Or if they did, it was probably due to it being a poor structure, or a gas heater, something like that with a wooden building and all (VP, lines 179-181).

I asked Mrs. Palmer if it seemed at all plausible to her that such a cause might have created the fire, to which she replied, "I could have thought that, except that others burned. See, there were Bryan schools burning too" (VP, lines 186-188). She commented, "Yes, those were 'convenient accidents' that happened. But we're not saying how it happened. We don't really know. (VP, lines 190-192).

In Bryan, four African American schools were set on fire during the years of 1970 and 1971. Sonia Davis recalled events in there, "Well, they said 'you have to integrate.' And after learning that we had to integrate [due to federal pressure], they burned the schools. If there's no schools, then we won't have to go [White children would not have to go to school with African Americans]." (SD, lines 475-476). When asked about the suspicious fires, Gloria Hicks stated that people had differing opinions. Christine Green brought up the subject of the series of suspicious fires before I had a chance to. She asked whether I had heard about any school burnings, so I indicated that I had but that I wanted her opinion on what happened. Mrs. Green said that although investigations did not result in any charges being pressed or any specific persons being identified as the

culprits, most people knew instinctively that segregationist Whites had set the African American schools on fire. She replied that “The newspaper coverage did not indicate who set the fires, but everyone had their own opinions” (CG, lines 56-57).

Mrs. Green informed me that after the fire at their school, the principal of Washington Elementary then had to split his time between two schools, saying reflectively, “To me, he was displaced. He was floating” (CG, line 88). Other schools already had gainfully employed principals, but this individual was promised an assistant principal position eventually. However, he ended up working in some other capacity within administration. Other participants noted a similar sense of displacement following the re-structuring entailed in desegregation. After the fire at Washington, the teachers were “scattered to other places” (CG, line 60). For the first three days immediately after the school burned, Mrs. Green taught students at her church. She was then moved to Travis Elementary School, which she described as a White school.

When asked if she recalled any charges being brought against the arsonists, Geneva Ellis laughed nervously and made no comment. She did, however, clearly recall the fires themselves:

They were going through and getting them all. When they started, Washington [elementary] was first and they burned it in September [1970]. And they did Neal in November. They were trying to do Carver, but somebody, the principal, lived across the street. He was going over to check on his school and they had just started the fire and he was able to put it out. They were trying to get rid of them all. They were trying to get rid of them (GE, lines 190-195).

Mrs. Ellis recalled the damages at her campus, Neal Junior High:

The fires didn't happen until they started talking about totally integrating. I did my teaching there at the junior high school. And the night before Thanksgiving they torched it. It had a main building and then it had an annex on it that they had put on it. So they had one central building and they had built around it. So that annex part was not burned because it was not part of the main building. So the main building was two stories and somebody went in and put accelerant, and came down the ladder outside. And it was totally engulfed. I saw it. Some of my co-workers called up and we went over there to look at it. It was not a pretty sight (GE, lines 150-162).

Mrs. Ellis explained that for the remainder of 1970, students and teachers at Neal transferred to Kemp High School. Junior high students attended classes in the morning, while senior high students went to school in the afternoons. During the holiday recess the damaged Neal school was cleaned up, and when students returned in January of 1971 they used portable buildings and the school's annex, "So that's how we finished out the school year. And then the next year they totally integrated" (GE, line 168).

Even though no charges were ever brought against specific people for setting the school fires in the two communities, it seems highly improbable that so many fires – all but one of them at African American schools- could have occurred without them being deliberately ignited. Participants felt the fires were the work of White segregationists, a valid conclusion given the social climate. There are likely people living in Bryan and College Station today who know the true facts of the case, either the arsonists themselves or those who were taken into their confidence. It is also equally unlikely that these truths will ever be legally pursued or publicly revealed. Ironically, it seems that the actions of

the arsonists backfired if their goal was to maintain separate schools. The damages to the African American schools resulted in the hastening of desegregation.

Impact of the Desegregation Process on African American Teachers

The final category relates to what happened to the participants as their schools prepared to finally desegregate. One sub-category provides descriptions of preparations in the form of in-service workshops for faculty. These workshops took place in Bryan during the summer of 1971. College Station school had similar workshops in 1965. The second sub-category, “job security,” describes how desegregation impacted the African American teachers’ livelihoods.

Preparations for Desegregation. When the fires made it evident that desegregation must finally become a reality, the administration in both districts undertook efforts to prepare the faculty for teaching in desegregated settings. Valerie Palmer remembered that in College Station they had meetings in which teachers did activities designed to develop their interpersonal skills. In Bryan similar events took place and Rose Smith said:

I think the way they did it was the best way. Kind of get the teachers and everybody together. And then they started programs that both schools would go to. I remember one time we went to some kind of civic program” (RS, lines 395-398).

She stated, “We had lots of meetings and I think every one of them helped us” (RS, line 338). When asked what kind of things were discussed in these meetings during the summer of 1971, she said, “Well, I think discipline, interacting. You know, basically we were different. There were differences. We would go to meetings and we would interact

and the Blacks and Whites would be together in groups” (RS, lines 341-343). She recalled that teachers would discuss the students, interact with each other and do little skits in groups. Mr. Smith said, “We got on with the teachers, it didn’t seem and different as far as the teachers. ‘Cause I guess everybody was nervous. We were nervous and they were too” (GS, lines 346-347).

In the summer of 1971, before the new high school opened, students from Stephen F. Austin and Kemp High Schools were invited to attend meetings to give input on the new school that they would be attending in the fall. Carl Davis remembered that Wesley Summers was the superintendent in Bryan at the time. He described Mr. Summers as being a “super, super superintendent. He was the one who made it possible for the two principals to have the students meet together in the summer, and he agreed to let them try out what they thought worked” (CD, lines 589-591). Participants described the desegregation in Bryan at the high school level as proceeding without difficulties due to the fact that principals Jim Steigel and W. D. Dunn had the foresight to include the students in this planning of the new school. This allowed the students to envision Bryan High School as “their” school. All were newcomers, and the tacit message was that the school would be welcoming to all.

Gordon Smith recalled:

When we integrated we got together with the Black principal. They changed the name of the high school. We had Davis’ son, he was the president of the student body. And a Black cheerleader. The only problem we had that I remember was on the football team. The boys that had been starting over there had to compete with us, and they didn’t like that (GS, lines 399-403).

Geneva Ellis remembered that the students were asked for their input on the new high school's logos:

They got rid of all the names. The only thing that was held over from either school was the Shy-annes [the name of a dance troupe]. That was the only name they kept, everything else they got was new. New colors, a new mascot, a new everything. And the students basically worked that out. They had students from Kemp and they had students from SFA [Stephen F. Austin], along with adult leaders (GE, lines 231-234).

In general participants felt that despite the years of stalling tactics, when the schools in Bryan were desegregated the process proceeded well. Gordon Smith said, "With integration we did it just right" (GS, line 409). At some point during their interviews nine of eleven participants, including the lone participant from College Station, used the word "smooth" to describe the process.

Job Security. Michelle Gold worked in Bremond schools when they desegregated in 1966. In that small town African American teachers had to prove their merits in order to keep their jobs. She related that, "What happened was they closed down the Black school completely and everyone went over to the White school at the same time. They didn't have that Freedom of Choice like in some places" (MG, lines 268-270). She recalled having to write a letter of intent, filling out an application and undergoing an interview and analysis of her teaching. Of the ten African American teachers employed in the Bremond schools, only four kept their jobs following desegregation. Of the four African American teachers who remained employed, all were life-long residents of

Bremond, two of them being the principal and his wife. The principal was demoted to a different administrative job when he was transferred to the White school.

Mrs. Gold also recalled that her husband took a job in Bryan and discovered that White teachers who coached were given extra pay in compensation, “So he asked for a supplement to his salary since he was coaching, and he got a letter back saying, ‘You were hired according to assignment. Your assignment is teacher and coach. If you are uncomfortable with this assignment, we will gladly accept your resignation’” (MG, lines 115-118). Although Mrs. Gold’s story comes from Bremond, it was typical for White teachers to stay in place after desegregation while African American teachers had to move. In order to even maintain employment, African American teachers in Bryan and College Station commonly had to find a vacancy in an established school, or in the case of Bryan High School, relocate to the newly established facility. Of the eleven participants in this study, only Rose Smith continued out her career in formerly all-African American schools.

College Station desegregated rapidly following the fire at the sole facility for African Americans. The district was already under scrutiny by the government, which had imposed a Freedom of Choice plan there. The district could not re-build a school exclusively for use by African Americans, or it would be in clear violation of the Civil Rights Act. Valerie Palmer related that even prior to the fire African American teachers in College Station understood that desegregation was an impending reality, “It was almost like handwriting on the wall. Yes, and I think people had the right feeling, to move on when you could. You could almost see that when integration came, you didn’t have space so what are you going to do? (VP, lines 414-417). According to Valerie

Palmer, many African American teachers seemed to have felt as if the fate of their jobs was in the air.

Mrs. Palmer provided quite a bit of information regarding how the changes that took place after the Lincoln school was damaged impacted the African American teachers in College Station. Students were shifted into existing schools, but those schools already had nearly enough teachers to handle the additional enrollment. In January of 1966, superintendent W. T. Reidel held a meeting and informed the staff of Lincoln that he could not guarantee any jobs even if teachers were willing to transfer campuses. Some of the teachers soon retired even though Mrs. Palmer recollected that most of them were not yet at retirement age, “And there were people this hit real hard and they didn’t have any security. They weren’t ready to retire” (lines 553-554). In other cases, African American teachers were transferred.

Mrs. Palmer described her husband’s situation, “He was sort of floating around.” Mr. Palmer and the homemaking teacher went to Bryan, and another man went to the Fairview county school. Principal Tarrow retired and soon thereafter fell into ill health. Mrs. Palmer pointed out, “To my understanding of Bryan, we could not do some of the things Bryan did. Like requesting to be reassigned. I was just placed where I was placed. I never asked to move to another campus” (VP, lines 779-783). During the years immediately following the fire, there were only two other African Americans employed in College Station besides Mrs. Palmer. One found work as a Special Education teacher at A&M Consolidated High School, “Now that’s one thing that is an open field for Black, is Special Education” (VP, line 692) and later as a Transition teacher at College Hills Elementary. She had been working in Snook, Texas and came to College Station only

after desegregation had taken place. The other African American teacher, who had previously instructed fourth graders at the Lincoln School, was initially assigned the job of selling ice cream at South Knoll, “And that really offended her. And finally she got to the point where she said, ‘I don’t care as long as they don’t cut my pay’” (VP, lines 626-627). However, before the next year this woman was told that she would become the librarian, and thus she had to pay to take courses in library science at Sam Houston State University during the summer.

Every other African American teacher employed at the Lincoln School either lost their jobs or went elsewhere. She commented, “And you know, it just sort of started driving you nutty. The situation and what happened” (line 558). Teachers scattered to parts unknown, “Yes, in a way they just sort of vanished” (VP, line 641). Mrs. Palmer attributed this pattern to two factors. Most of the African American teachers did not grow up in College Station so perhaps they did not consider it their permanent home. In addition, many of them found work elsewhere in the state even prior to desegregation because they sensed “It was in the air. Integration was coming. They were thinking about more of a guaranteed job” (VP, lines 32-33). She commented, “Because they went home it made it easier for the superintendent to just say, ‘they just left’” (VP, line 583).

I tried to imagine what it must have been like for those hard-working teachers to be reassigned, demoted, or to lose their positions altogether. Mrs. Palmer stated, “This is my home and my church and my family, so I was glad to still be there” (VP, line 578). But when asked if the changes made her sad that the close-knit faculty was torn apart, she responded, “We were! We were split up and... [paused to search for the right word] dissected” (VP, line 576). Beautiful words to describe an unfortunate situation.

The situation in College Station following desegregation can be contrasted with that of Bryan. Although in both settings displacement was the norm, in Bryan there was at least a sense of job security. As Carl Davis explained:

Now let me tell you something. When integration came, the Black teachers in Bryan were assured that they would have a job the next year. See everything that happened in Texas didn't happen in Bryan. We were assured we'd have a job when integration came. But in some of the smaller towns, maybe even some of the larger towns, some of the men were not hired the next year because of being a man (CD, lines 567-571).

Mr. Davis communicated with teachers in other Texas towns and found that compared to them, he was lucky. He felt that the administration in Bryan recognized the African American teachers as being on par with the White teachers in terms of their abilities and credentials, so they were all guaranteed employment, "So I give Bryan credit. That was one of the good things that happened" (CD, line 580).

Phase Three: Desegregated Schools

The third specific research question asked; What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in desegregated schools? For Valerie Palmer, these experiences start with the year 1966, while in Bryan the question pertains to events after 1971. Participants had both positive and negative statements to make about this phase of their careers. In analyzing the data related to the third phase four categories emerged; School Environment, the Roles of Teachers, Relationships and Educational Outcomes. These categories parallel those found in Phase One, as do most of the sub-categories, and they thus provide a way to note changes participants witnessed following

desegregation. During this phase, the teachers had less to say about material conditions but quite a bit to say regarding their changed job descriptions. They also provided interesting information related to the impact of desegregation on African American students.

School Environment

Supplies. As previously noted, in the segregated schools the participants had been delegated used, outdated textbooks and there was a general lack of supplies in the African American schools. Moving to desegregated schools meant the teachers were able to use newer books and had access to supplies formerly denied them. Sonia Davis said, “So when we integrated we were far, far better than anyone ever imagined. What they [White teachers] complained about, we laughed about (SD, lines 679-680). Michelle Gold related that when she moved to a formerly all-White school she almost felt like a kid in a candy store having access to books and equipment that were lacking at the African American school. For example, at her new school there was a photocopying machine that was far better than the equipment she had previously used, “At the Black school the only thing we had was one of those old duplicators with black ink. I don’t know if you even know about those. It was like black oily stuff, and you had to type on a type of film and when you typed it left little imprints” (MG, lines 190-193). After integration Mrs. Gold worked in a school that also had overhead transparency projectors, opaque machines, and film projectors. She commented:

And what was so funny was they had it there and it was just sitting there. Most of the teachers had been there a long time and hadn’t gone back for refresher courses or anything, and I was just recently back from college and had taken all these

audiovisual classes. So I really started to use that equipment. It was like a new toy (MG, lines 204-207).

Mrs. Gold also found that students were provided with art supplies that were lacking in the African American school. Whereas formerly the teachers would request instructional materials knowing from experience that their requests would be denied, at the desegregated schools such items were provided without their having to ask. The teachers no longer had to pay from their personal funds for basic classroom materials or for extracurricular supplies or solicit donations of used uniforms.

Another tangible difference concerned pay increases. Gordon Smith stated that he never received merit pay while teaching at Kemp, but began getting a raise every so often once he worked at Bryan High School. After he became a coach there he was given an additional raise. Carl Davis offered another perspective. He stated that even though African American and White teachers at Bryan High School received the same incomes, some White teachers still managed to earn more. This was due to the fact that some of the White teachers were offered to the opportunity to start the year several weeks early or stay on for a while after the term ended, thus making them eligible for additional pay.

Class Size. Valerie Palmer explained that when she and her husband began teaching at the Lincoln School in College Station, all students in a particular grade would be in the same classroom. She estimated the total enrollment at the school as perhaps 200 students, which meant that only one teacher was needed per grade, “We would have maybe 20 children, or 16 or 18 children, in all of the first and second grades, something like that” (VP, lines 237-238). By contrast, when she transferred to South Knoll she had

eight different sessions for the first grade, “And that wasn’t the only elementary school!” (VP, line 229).

Sonia Davis commented that a trend towards bigger classes in the desegregated schools impacted her teaching style. At Bryan High, she said, “The perfect class size, and we had but few, was 30. And physical education, mine were 60. Once I had 90 students in a class” (SD, lines 389-390). Geneva Ellis said, “The average class was 35 or 40. And I don’t think I ever had that situation when I was in a non-integrated situation. Thirty was probably the absolute biggest” (GE, lines 382-383). She explained that few students registered for some classes, but everyone had to take core courses, “Your math, English, biology classes sometimes were extremely big. It was not unusual to teach 175 kids [during the day] for your core courses” (lines 388-389). Given this increased teaching load, it was difficult for the participants to give students the type of individualized attention they were used to providing. It also became harder following desegregation to make a connection with the students on a personal level.

Roles of the Teachers

As in the discussion of Phase One, in Phase Three the Roles of the Teachers category encompasses participants’ comments related to several sub-categories. Regarding “responsibilities,” a shift in the expectations of teachers was evident, with teachers being freed from some of the financial burdens previously placed on them. However, recall that participants agreed that during Phase One teachers were highly esteemed by students, parents and the community at large. In terms of “social positioning” it seems that in desegregated settings teaching was less highly regarded all around, even though the teachers continued to feel they were excellent educators.

Responsibilities. Geneva Ellis said White teachers at Stephen F. Austin (which became the middle school following the opening of Bryan High School) were amazed to hear that teachers at Neal Junior High had to pay out of pocket for any missing textbooks, and she was equally surprised that Stephen F. Austin employees did not have to, “I was just shocked to find out they weren’t doing some of things we were doing, so it was a lot easier teaching” (GE, lines 264-265). Sonia Davis said, “We did not know till then that White teachers did not pay for books” (SD, lines 686). Mrs. Ellis made an interesting observation regarding this aspect of teacher responsibilities following desegregation. She related:

Things were a lot easier on teachers in the integrated situation than they were in the segregated. I mean we were held responsible... we paid for books that were not turned in. And when I got over to SFA, other people said, “Y’all pay for books?! What do you mean you pay for books?” I never had to pay for mine because I made sure to get them all back. But I mean if you were using 40 books you either turned in 40 books [at the end of the year] or you paid the money for the missing ones. And I knew of several people who I worked with that had to pay for books because the students lost them and they couldn’t make them pay for them. Therefore the teachers had to (GE, lines 256-263).

Gordon Smith relayed a sense of dismay at discovering that teachers at Stephen F. Austin did not enlist in teachers’ unions. At the segregated schools, teachers were required to join national, state and local unions, but at the desegregated school union membership was optional, “I became a counselor [in a desegregated school], and I would

go around to collect from the teachers and they'd say, 'I ain't joining. I'm not paying anything to that.' I said 'What?! What's going on?'" (GS, lines 310-313).

Mr. Ellis agreed that in the desegregated schools there were things teachers no longer had to do. He attributed the variances he noticed to the administration, "I think they held the principals to a different standard or concept. I think this came from the administration. Black principals were held to a different standard than White principals" (JE, lines 296-298). Recall that Valerie Palmer said that Lincoln teachers gave generously to the United Way, and Sonia Davis said they donated what they were told to in Bryan. Rose Smith stated that following desegregation she discovered that White teachers would typically donate only five or ten dollars, and some did not support the United Way at all.

Social Positioning. In the African American schools teachers were highly respected by students and parents. When asked if she noticed any changes when she moved from Neal Junior High School to other schools, Geneva Ellis reflected, "Well, I still felt my job was important, I always felt it was important. But what I felt is that as far as the Black community is concerned, when we were teaching at the Black schools the parents respected us. And we didn't get the same respect from the community later" (GE, lines 350-352).

A reduction in teacher status is also suggested in the frequency with which the African American teachers had to accept new teaching positions. These shifts in job descriptions were illustrated in Table 5.1 above. Participants repeatedly related that they would have preferred to continue teaching their former grade levels but that they were given no voice in re-assignment decisions. Sonia Davis explained, "If we check the

placement of Black teachers at Bryan High, where are the majority of them? In Special Education” (SD, lines 788-789). Valerie Palmer, Rose Smith and Geneva Ellis were told to teach remedial courses. On the other hand, James Ellis and Sonia Davis were promoted to the position of counselor (although at lower grade levels than those they had instructed as teachers) and Carl Davis became an assistant principal.

Michelle Gold went from teaching first grade to second, then fourth, then junior high language arts, and then high school physical education before being again placed as first grade teacher. She said she took whatever job was offered because she had to. According to Rose Smith, “After integration, during our meetings, you just received your schedule” (RS, line 535). When I asked if she had any input on the decision process Gordon Smith emphatically answered for her, “No! Not at all, uh huh.” (GS, line 539). Mrs. Smith was suddenly assigned to teach Pre-Algebra and Fundamentals of Math, even though she stayed at Neal Junior High. Likewise, Geneva Ellis was assigned to teach remedial math courses (variously called Related Math or Fundamentals of Math, time dependant) at Bryan High School. Both women had previously taught a range of math classes and did not enjoy their new duties.

Mrs. Smith stated that she disliked teaching Fundamentals of Math (FOM) and disagreed with it in principle, “I just don’t think any ninth grader should have FOM... At first I had two classes, FOM and Algebra. And then the next year I just had one class and they called it Baby Math” (RS, lines 79, 81-82). To clarify Mr. Smith added:

See, what she’s saying is this. In the Bryan public schools you had three schedules. I mean, you had college-bound, which was plan I. And then you had Plan II and Plan III. See, I wound up as a counselor. And that FOM was for non-

college bound students. And they had that in English, Math, and Science (GS, lines 83-87).

When Mrs. Smith was asked later in the interview how she was personally impacted by desegregation, she again brought up the FOM curriculum. She stated that after desegregation, she was given a new schedule, "I remember my first year I just had all those FOM classes. So at the end of the year I told the Principal that it was a bit too much" (RS, lines 525-527). Mrs. Smith was assigned five classes of FOM and asked to have some "regular" math classes as well. Few people spoke up about their wishes, "See, that's the thing you have to understand. She asked for something, but most of us were too scared to ask for something" (GS, lines 551-552). Geneva Ellis also was assigned FOM classes following desegregation, and Valerie Palmer was assigned to Transition English courses in College Station.

Christine Green commented that at Washington Elementary School she had always been given the students who were teachers' children and other similarly studious pupils. But when she was transferred to Travis Elementary, she was automatically given the students deemed to be at the bottom of the academic ladder, "We gave the Metropolitan Readiness Scale, and I always got the lowest scoring kids. I told the principal to mix it up. I said, 'If the White teacher is supposed to be better, send them to her. If she is a better teacher, she can help them best'" (CG, lines 188-191). In response to her wishes, the principal began to implement random assignment of students, and one year she had the principal's grandchild as a student.

Valerie Palmer was positioned as a team-teacher when she was transferred to A&M Consolidated in College Station in the fall of 1966. When I asked what her status

was in relation to the other teacher, she stated that basically she served as a teacher's aide, and that "I was an easy going person and it didn't bother me too much. She was nice to me and I was nice to her. She was a little older than I was. All I require is that somebody will be nice to me" (VP, lines 607-609). The next year Mrs. Palmer was shifted to South Knoll Elementary, where she had her own classroom. However, she was assigned to teach the Lift Off to Reading courses to lower-track students. She lamented the fact that at the first grade level students were already being pegged into categories that carried a stigma. Nonetheless, she considered herself fortunate to have a job at all, given the situation for African American teachers in College Station.

A number of African American male teachers found that desegregation resulted in their roles being shifted from that of classroom teachers to disciplinarians. Valerie Palmer related that her husband had to take whatever job he could get when he returned to College Station from the Job Corps, due to the fact that desegregation of the schools that had occurred in his absence. He thus became a truant officer even though he had a masters degree in his teaching field. Sonia Davis was indirectly affected by this pattern due to the fact that her husband was assigned as the assistant principal at Bryan High School "because they needed someone to discipline the Blacks" (SD, line 228). Because having spouses employed at the same campus was discouraged, this meant that she was repositioned as a counselor serving multiple elementary campuses.

Even prior to desegregation, there were hints that some White authorities construed male African American educators as being "natural" disciplinarians. As noted in his biographical description above, Paul Jones found that when he interviewed for a position at Neal Junior High in 1963, the Director of Curriculum expressed no interest in

his teaching capabilities. Instead, “He told me to go over to Neal and keep some order. He didn’t ask me what I knew about history or economics or geography or social sciences. That’s what our interview basically boiled down to, questions about could I keep order” (PJ, lines 366-368). In terms of administrators, Paul Jones said that some African American principals he knew “were put in charge of discipline, but that was it” (PJ, line 530). He qualified, “I want you to understand that this is what I feel, what I remember” (PJ, line 532). He said that following desegregation it was almost as if overnight all the African American principals disappeared, “It seemed like you looked up one day and all of a sudden everybody was White” (PJ, line 522).

Relationships

A second category in the integration phase is Relationships. This category encompasses sub-categories related to the African American teachers’ relationships with administrators and with students. Information was also provided regarding interactions among students at Bryan High School.

Administration. Regarding the administration, Sonia Davis stated, “Lucky for us, when we integrated we had an excellent superintendent. And of the many things he did, the thing that impressed me the most was Black History Month. He demanded it of each teacher, Black or White, that they do something about Black History” (SD, lines 581-583). Christine Green remembered, “The White teachers were nice. The White principal, if anything, was overly nice. He shared our evaluation results and said that he must have gotten the three very best teachers from the Washington school. This made me feel appreciated” (CG, lines 146-149).

James Ellis noted, “The things that I did different were the things that we had to do as Black teachers that we didn’t have to do once we got into a totally integrated establishment. So the principals were not as hard on us in the integrated situation as they were in the non-integrated settings” (JE, lines 293-296). Gordon Smith claimed “At noon, all the coaches were off” (GS, line 432). Rose Smith countered that he enjoyed this privilege because he was a coach, but teachers had to work the full day. To this he replied, “But over at Kemp I might ask Mr. Dunn, ‘Mr. Dunn, I’m off at 6th period and can I go and attend to a little personal business?’ But over there you didn’t have to do that, you were just off. You were free” (GS, lines 435-438).

Mr. Davis was in agreement that in the desegregated setting it seemed that teachers were able to take off during the school day, “A good example of that was when integration came and I went to a teacher’s meeting, one lady said, ‘I want to get off a little early to get my hair fixed.’ Well, you wouldn’t dare ask one of the Black principals about getting your hair fixed” (CD, lines 383-385).

Despite generally positive recollections, there is also evidence that at least some participants felt distanced from the administration. Mrs. Davis related:

We had one counselor in the office who was always feeling like he had to polish the apple. I didn’t feel like I had to polish the apple. I felt like my work was done so well that I would be asked to stay. I learned eventually that that wasn’t true. If you went against the grain, I don’t care how good you are, they want you out of there. And that was my problem all along (SD, lines 715-719).

Carl Davis remembered that it was between eight and ten years before there was an African American department head at Bryan High. He said, “The kids, you can’t fool

them. I had a kid sit right in front of my desk and say, “Mr. Davis, I’ve seen you’re here fifteen years and you haven’t got promoted yet.” (CD, lines 727-729). He said he was given a position where it appeared that he was valued, but it was a façade. His office was quite visible, as it was the first office one saw when entering the building:

And there’s a reason for that. You’re getting the federal money, supposed to treat everybody equally and fairly. So when the federal people come in and see my office right up there up front, they think I’m way up there on the totem pole, you know? They had reasons to do all that, it was required of them (CD, lines 733-736).

I also found interesting comments related to politics following desegregation. Gordon Smith related that he frequently played golf on the weekends with a certain principal. He described that on one occasion, “We were teeing off one Sunday at the golf course and he said, ‘Your wife sure is doing a good job.’ And I said, ‘That’s right, and she deserves some merit pay.’ Just like that. And he said, ‘I’m gonna take care of that.’ And so she got it. (GS, lines 555-557). This incident seems to indicate that whom one knew could be quite helpful.

Such a connection might have proved helpful for Geneva Ellis in maintaining her position at her school of choice following desegregation, but she did not have this sort of personal relationship with decision-makers. She had been working at Bryan High since 1973, but after a few years went on maternity leave. She recalled:

They don’t hold positions open for you, but if there is one available then you would be first choice. Well, I knew three people from my department were leaving because their husbands were graduating from A&M. In the mean time,

we got a new personnel director and when I went back to apply for my job he told me that he couldn't send me back to Bryan High cause my husband worked over there and they don't put husbands and wives together. Which I was very surprised to hear because I knew of four other couples who worked over there together. They said, "If you want this job, you'll have to go to SFA [Stephen F. Austin]." And I wanted the job, so I went to SFA. And I was very disappointed that I didn't get the position because I knew there were openings (GE, lines 94-108).

This rule against spouses working together is the reason Sonia Davis also had to shift campuses and job duties following desegregation, and one has to wonder why the rule seems to have been unevenly applied.

In another incident smacking of political overtones, Paul Jones asked me if I knew how Neal Elementary School came to exist. He explained that in the early 1970s the school board hoped to pass a bond issue. At the time, Mr. Jones was president of the local chapter of the NAACP and a man named Marion Haines was the vice president. According to Mr. Jones, Mr. Haines said, "I'm tired of our children having to go to the other side of town. They promised us when they built Bryan High School that they would build us a new elementary. Let's kill this bond issue" (lines 497-499). Members of the NAACP decided to lobby against the bond issue, and word of this intent made its way to the school board. He stated, "They didn't take it seriously, but the bond issue was defeated. The next week they came with planks of wood to build a school" (PJ, lines 502-503).

At first the plans were for a simple building, as according to officials there was limited space upon which to build. Mr. Jones knew this to be nonsense. The bond that had supported the construction of Bryan High School was to have included not only the elementary school but a development of the area behind it into a park and a recreational center. The monies for this elementary school project in the African American section of town were instead used to develop Carter Creek Park. Mr. Jones laughed, “And Haines said, ‘And while you’re at it, we want that park that we were supposed to have, and that recreational facility.’ And when they included us in the plans, in the bond issue, that’s when the bond issue passed” (PJ, lines 512-514).

It should be recalled that Paul Jones is a self-described “squeaky wheel” who often agitated for what he felt was right. Although he met with successes he eventually left the teaching profession, during the middle of an academic year, in part due to philosophical differences with the administration. He served as an educator for the shortest duration of any of the participants and his long absence from the constraints of teacher expectations at the time of our interview may explain why he felt at liberty to be so forthcoming. As seen in the stories of others, the teachers often had to accept what was handed out to them.

Students. In terms of the sub-category of teacher interactions with students, some participants expressed statements indicative of a color-blind perspective. This view purports that it is beneficial to view all people as being inherently the same in an effort to foster good relations among diverse people. Although stemming from a position of benevolence, in reality it is physically impossible not to notice obvious phenotypic differences, such as skin color, unless one truly is blind. Moreover, there are differences

between the experiences of African Americans and Whites that cannot be denied. Some scholars (e.g. Larson & Ovando, 2001; McLaren & Munoz, 2002) argue, and I would agree, that a colorblind perspective results in the smoothing over of important aspects of people's lived realities. It also allows for a perpetuation, even if not deliberately, of the view that Whiteness is normal.

Geneva Ellis stated, "In dealing with students I saw no difference. To me students are students, so I didn't notice any difference then" (GE, lines 326-327). She repeated this statement at several points during our interview. James Ellis likewise said, "You know, kids are just kids. That's what I found" (JE, line 282). Mr. Ellis elaborated, "I didn't find the kids to be any different. I mean there were kids who were rude to you in the non-integrated situation, and some who would be rude in the integrated situation. So I had a few problems. But I never had just total rebellion because of my color (JE, lines 285-287). In a similar vein, Valerie Palmer claimed, "Children are all basically the same, right? So there was no real difference" (VP, line 621). Sonia Davis said, "But like any kid, you know kids are kids all over" (SD, line 646). Michelle Gold recalled that the White children she instructed treated her courteously, yet she also noted that some of the White parents dropped in to observe her classes, as if to send the message that they were keeping an eye on her since they didn't have faith in her abilities.

Christine Green stated that when she transferred to Travis Elementary, the students were pleasant and respectful. When I asked how it felt to change locations and be in this new setting, Mrs. Green thought a moment and then responded, "I had mixed emotions. I wasn't happy, but I can't explain it either. I really wondered how our kids would adjust and grow" (CG, lines 104-105). Mrs. Green recalled getting along well

with her students, “I had a good rapport with Blacks, Whites and Hispanics. The parents liked me and the children did too. They recognized me before I recognized them” (CG, lines 157-158).

Even though she personally connected with her students, Mrs. Green worried that the African American children who transferred into the formerly all-White school would become psychologically lost. One way she tried to help them make the adjustment was by putting on a brave front:

My first year at the White school, I had to act brave, be bold and assertive. I don't know the word, but I had to have an atmosphere and attitude to make my children feel comfortable, at ease, safe and happy. Can you imagine what it was like for those kids? Those kids could be traumatized and the teacher was the one person to give them calmness and a safe feeling. To help them not lose what they already had. They were smart, active, and intelligent when they arrived but they needed our help to make the transition to a new environment” (CG, lines 139-145).

Mrs. Green's concern with how African American students would fare in integrated schools echoed the sentiments expressed by Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. Green did relate an incident in which trouble arose with one of her first graders. A boy kept rapping something loudly and quite deliberately on his desk. Mrs. Green told him he was disturbing the class and asked him to stop, but he persisted. So she walked over next to him and saw that the object the boy was tapping on the desk was a spent bullet casing, about four or five inches long. The boy said, “This is what my Daddy said he's gonna use on you” (CG, line 179). Mrs. Green immediately called the

principal to come to her classroom. Without any fuss, the administration placed the student in another teacher's class that very morning. This is probably exactly what the boy hoped to achieve, but Mrs. Green was just glad to be rid of him.

Sonia Davis related that she had been brainwashed to think that White students and Hispanic students would not respect an African American teacher. However, overall she found them to be quite accepting of her:

I quickly learned that the White students were some of the most respectful students we had, and so were the Spanish. My difficulty came with some of the Black students that I had been able to discipline so well at Kemp. But after seeing how some of the White students behaved they thought I couldn't tell them much. So I was really pleased with the White and Spanish students, almost in their entirety, but I was a little disappointed with some of our Black students to the extent that I'd have to haul them over and say, "What's wrong with you? I expected that if anyone would respect me it would be you, and I am disappointed to see you behave like this." After that, no problem (SD, lines 638-645).

As assistant principal at Bryan High School, Carl Davis had his share of discipline issues to deal with. He related that sometimes he had to send boys home because their hair was long and thus in violation of the dress code. In some of these cases the students' parents telephoned him in gratitude, as they had been arguing with their sons about the issue to no avail. This was also the era of the mini-skirt, and the school had regulations regarding skirt length which required that skirts reach to one's knees. Teachers would send violators to his office, and Mr. Davis would instruct the girls to go in the bathroom and look at the length of their skirts in the mirror. Sometimes the girls would play a trick

of pulling their skirts down at the waist to make them appear longer when they emerged from the bathroom. Mr. Davis recalled that one time an angry White mother showed up at the school, demanding to know why her daughter was sent home, “She was coming from upstairs, and it was right when the school bell was ringing. All these kids were going down the stairs and the mother pointed out to me how many kids had short skirts, so why did I send *her* daughter home? So you ran into problems, but it wasn’t just the White kids (CD, lines 309-311).

Mr. Davis was concerned when some of the African American students began acting out at school or breaking the dress codes. He worried because he knew that they would be held to a different standard:

They didn’t understand that White kids could do this because their mothers or fathers had businesses. You see, some of those kids were bankers’ kids, the ones that had long hair. We had to tell the Black kids, “You don’t have anyone at home that can give you a job. All that White boy has to do is cut his hair, get a shave, regardless of what he’s been doing over at the school. And you can go down to the bank or other business and see him running the place.” So they were acting what we used to call “crazy” (CD, lines 316-320).

Mr. Davis also noticed that compared to the segregated schools, corporal punishment was used less often at Bryan High School. There was a feeling on the part of some White parents, he said, that they should not tolerate a “whooping” from a Black person, and some African American parents instructed their children not to accept such punishment from Whites at the school. Likewise, some parents told their children, “Don’t you say ‘yes, sir’ or yes, ma’am’ to them. You just say ‘yes.’ And that’s how

some of them had a problem, they were told at home before they came to the integrated school” (CD, lines 330-332). Sonia Davis related another example from the same school, “Once they got over to Bryan High School and saw what the White kids were doing, which were a lot of things that we would not accept at Kemp, like walking down the hall all huffed up and all. So of course when I tried to correct them, you know, I became a bad name. I was that ‘so and so’” (SD, lines 235-238).

Valerie Palmer remembered having isolated disciplinary problems teaching in College Station, “I can recall a few students when I first started working that were very good students, no problems. But when they transferred over... I won’t say they created a problem, but I guess a problem presented itself to them or something, I don’t know. They could see a big difference and they didn’t like it” (VP, lines 206-209).

Rose Smith recollected, “Our kids seemed to change. We didn’t have much of discipline problem before. But after integration, I don’t know if they felt different or older, but that was when I started to have problems. With Blacks and Whites” (RS, lines 446-449). Gordon Smith remembered that there were some tensions on his football team. At the beginning of the 1971 school year, Merle Green gathered all the coaches in Bryan and said, “If there’s any coach here who thinks he can’t coach a Black kid, you can get up and leave” (GS, line 413). For this Mr. Green took “a lot of heat” from some of the White parents, but Mr. Smith was impressed and thankful. He told him, “Coach, I love you and you just hang in there” (line 419).

On another occasion when the team was practicing, a White parent approached Mr. Smith and demanded to know why his two sons weren’t getting much play time during games. He informed them that he was willing to let them play if they wanted, but

they seemed disinterested and often failed to even come to practice. Mr. Smith instructed the boys to go into a scrimmage and play defense, to which they replied, “What are you going to put us over there for? I don’t want to play that” (GS, line 455). The father knew that his sons had no real interest in sports, but for some reason he wanted them on the team. The father ended up taking his kids off the team and transferring them to a school in the town of Iola, Texas.

Student-to-Student Relationships. The final sub-category is student-to-student relationships as described in relation to Bryan High School. The school opened in the fall of 1971 to serve all students in Bryan. Bryan High School became the only upper level campus, and thus it was more thoroughly integrated than Bryan schools whose enrollments merely reflected residential patterns. Sonia Davis said that because there had been meetings during that summer of 1971 designed to foster school spirit, and because those meetings seemed to go well, the expectation was that the high school students would get along with each other. This was generally true, but there were some disappointments:

They thought that when they walked into school the first day it would be “Hi Johnny! How’s it going?” But then it was just barely “Hello.” And the [African American] kids said, “Can you believe this? These kids who we were with all summer, they were so friendly then.” And I said, “Yes, but they’re with their White peers and if they befriend you too much they’ll be called an N-lover” (SD, lines 764-768).

Tensions rose to the surface later in the fall of 1971. As noted above by Gordon and Rose Smith, during the meetings in the summer the students decided that all names,

songs, school colors and the mascots for the sports teams would be new. According to Mrs. Davis, “This worked well until the first pep rally. They played Stephen F. Austin’s school song. Their excuse was that they didn’t have time to write a new song. Our kids went bonkers” (SD, lines 491-492). Carl Davis related that the administration was then afraid that students would revolt in some way. Since the Davis’ son Carl Jr. was the student body president, they knew from him that indeed some African American students planned to stage a protest, with him as their leader. Authorities in the school also found out.

I joked that since Mrs. Davis was employed as a counselor and Mr. Davis was the assistant principal, this must have been a difficult situation for them, to have their son leading this effort. They laughed and Mrs. Davis related:

I was sitting up there by my counselor co-worker, and as much as I tried to control my body... she said “Sonia, what in the world is wrong with you?” See, the superintendent didn’t say names, he just said, “Now you know if your child is going to be in this march, and you’re supposed to do this and this.” And I thought I was going to have a heart attack! She said, “Girl, what’s wrong?” Well, I knew what was going on, but I don’t think she knew (SD, lines 517-522).

As it happened, their older son returned home from Prairie View A&M University that evening. According to Mrs. Davis, when he learned of his younger brother’s intentions, he told him, “You know why I’m here? I’m here because I did not want to get tied up in that protest going on at Prairie View. You have worked too hard all these years to get solid grades and honors. Don’t you know that if you lead that march they won’t give you a thing? (SD, lines 507-510). This resulted in Carl Jr. changing his mind and

calling off the intended protest. The next morning, the young man walked straight past the group of students who were lined up in the hallway waiting for him to arrive and start the protest. Mrs. Davis remembered that one of the students went directly to the principal's office, asking the man what he had said to Carl Jr.:

I saw her come out of that office. I don't know what Mr. Dunn said to her, but they didn't protest that day. Come six weeks, that girl from Kemp who was the smartest kid in the class, nothing but straight A's, she got a C in English. And I asked English teacher, "Now, how in the world did this girl make a C in English?" And she said, "Sonia, what did you expect? She was in that protest group, wasn't she? It doesn't matter what she made in English. I can make sure she doesn't get an A." (SD, lines 535-541).

After this experience Mrs. Davis "worked religiously to make sure that every kid that I thought could make it in college had the courses that would get them into college" (lines 545-546).

This incident at the beginning of the 1971 academic year at Bryan High School seems to be a rare case of friction between African American students and the school system. Anger was not directed at White students, but rather the African American students were upset that a promise by the administration to create a new, cohesive and welcoming school community was not honored because the school song from the White school was used – implying that the traditions of Stephen F. Austin students held more clout at the school.

As previously noted, students attending segregated schools in Bryan and College Station were made to feel that they were part of an academic community. Moreover,

because of the closeness between students and teachers the schools held familial connotations. Following desegregation, many African American students felt less connected to their new schools. A manifestation of this difference is evidenced in the attendance at high school reunions. Gloria Hicks, who attended segregated schools in Bryan as a child, stated that she still regularly attends class reunions and she remains close to classmates. She noted this general pattern, “Many who attended during the phase-in of integration attend Black school reunions but have no interest whatsoever of attending mixed school reunions. That is not their family” (GH, lines 87-88).

Michelle Gold noticed the same pattern in Bremond:

And I notice now the same situation occurs when they have homecomings and reunions, some of the children who went to the school after it was integrated don't come to the homecomings or participate in these affairs. They kind of stay to their own. And we have a reunion every two years just for the Black school. And a lot of the ones who went to the all-Black school go every time. They started out at the Black school and they finished up at the high school, but they are more likely to come to the Black reunion. I guess they don't really feel like they're a part of it [the integrated school]. Like, “Well, we went to school there but it was just going to school” (MG, lines 154-162).

Similar to Valerie Palmer, the Davis's often attend student reunions even though they were teachers, not students. Sonia Davis told me that in Bryan there are frequent reunions of the “class of color,” meaning those students who graduated from Kemp High School prior to 1971. These are well attended. In contrast, fewer African American graduates choose to attend the 1972 class reunion (or other graduation year reunions) for

Bryan High School. She related what happened at reunions for Lamar Elementary and Bryan High students:

And Blacks went and they stayed about an hour or so and then they left and partied on their own. And oh, this [White] co-worker of mine thought that was awful? She said, "Those White kids went out of their way to make them feel a part of this, and then they didn't appreciate it." And then on the other hand, this same class of '72 had a reunion two or three years ago and invited all of us, all of them, and it was mixed. And these same kids went to the reunion and we left about 11:30 or 12:00, and they [White students] were all still there. And it's like some people say, "Why do all the Blacks sit together in the cafeteria?" Well, when you go in there, how are all the Whites seated? The same way (SD, lines 745-753).

James and Geneva Ellis provided additional evidence of contrasts between school functions at the segregated schools they attended in Bryan compared to events at the schools there today. Mrs. Ellis recalled:

We really worked on our prom because it was a big deal to go. Of course we didn't spend the kind of money they do now. We had ours at the gym at the school, and danced. But we didn't know anything about going out and eating, and taking a limo and all that kind of stuff, you know? We were just real glad to get our little dressy-dresses to put on to come to the junior-senior prom (GE, lines 450-451).

Mr. Ellis told me that at Kemp High School there were separate ceremonies for the baccalaureate and for commencement. The following conversation between Mr. and

Mrs. Ellis reflects their opinions on how students' attitudes towards graduation events have changed over time:

JE: And we practiced. You had to make the right step. You couldn't make a bad step, you had to step together. They took it seriously. Now...

GE: Oh! They would not have put up with any of this foolishness they have now with kids strutting.

JE: No, no, no.

GE: All that clowning and stuff.

JE: No, it was never that way.

Standish: So now when they walk across the stage, they strut and act up?

JE: Oh yeah.

GE: We would never have done that when we were in high school. We might not have gotten our diploma! And college was the same way. We went to a segregated college and the commencement was different than when our kids graduated from college... They weren't required to do all the things we had to do
(GE and JE, lines 458-471, line 477)

Educational Outcomes

A third Category of the desegregation phase relates to the differences in educational philosophies at the desegregated schools compared to the segregated schools. In the African American schools teachers tried to instill in their students the belief that all could achieve, and the students rose to the occasion. In contrast, some of the White teachers seemed not to care if students fell behind. This was evident in classroom

interactions, student placement in lower level classes, and a reduction in the graduation rate for African American students.

Academic Achievement. Some participants felt that White teachers generally had lower expectations of African American students from the outset that precluded them from noticing students' true talents. While Mrs. Green enjoyed good interactions with her principal and White co-workers, she questioned some of the teachers' remarks on student records. For example, one teacher wrote that a boy was effeminate. Mrs. Green felt this was unnecessarily damaging, "That record follows you your whole life" (CG, line 152). She spoke with teachers regarding her concerns on several occasions but had no influence since she was not the students' teacher of record.

Michelle Gold revealed that in desegregated schools some of the White teachers operated under the presumption that African American students were less intelligent than Whites. She described how such teachers' views impacted the students:

Sometimes it seems like after integration the kids weren't pushed as hard as they were in the Black school. It was easier for them to just say, "Well, I don't know how to do this." And the teacher would just go along with it. Whereas in the Black school the teachers said, "You can do it and you are going to do it." And they would perform better. It was expectations and demands the teachers put on them (MG, lines 242-247).

One thing that surprised Mrs. Gold when she came to Bryan in 1972 was the use of ability grouping. In discussing her experience at Johnson Elementary she commented:

When I was at the Black school there was no such thing as reading groups.

Everybody had the same curriculum. And the teachers demanded that they do the

very best they could, and most of the time they did. When I first came to Bryan I was teaching second grade and I had three reading groups. Three reading groups! And all the kids were grouped according to abilities. But in a small school, back then during segregation time, there was no such thing. If you had two groups, it was because you had two grade levels in your room, like first and second grades [laughs]! (MG, lines 225-233).

Mrs. Gold noted that once a student is put into a lower track, it is likely that they will stay there. At Johnson, there were some Whites and some Hispanics in the lower ability groups, but the majority seemed to her to be African American children.

Geneva Ellis was surprised to find that at Bryan High School and Stephen F. Austin, after it had become an integrated middle school, grading students on a bell curve was a common practice. This disturbed her because it entailed ranking students against each other, and assumed that only a select few would receive high grades. Regarding the use of a bell curve she said:

I think that is the stupidest thing. I mean, you could very well have a class where all of them do well. 'Cause I've had classes where the whole class was slow kids and then I've had classes of bright kids. When they came over with something that told me I had to have a bell curve, well I don't think I ever had a bell curve before. You know, where the majority of kids have to make Cs? That just doesn't seem right (GE, lines 416-420).

Carl Davis explained that at Bryan High School, some of the White teachers simply did not have experience educating students of color. To provide a comparison he said:

Over at Kemp High School, you didn't have all these watered down classes. If you were taking English, you took regular English. If you were taking math, you took regular math. But when we got over to Bryan High School, some of the White teachers never taught a Black kid before. And vice versa. And they didn't think we could learn. (CD, lines 173-177).

Mr. Davis related that many of the students placed in remedial classes simply accepted it. Some actually preferred the classes because they were easier and "they could just play" (CD, line 195). Sonia Davis later elaborated on parental reactions to the placing of students in low level courses:

I felt so sorry for parents, cause parents then like now will do just about anything their kids asked them to do. And parents would go over and sign the kids up for Special Ed. Or sign them up for these lower classes, and think they were doing what's best, cause they were told, "If you put them in Special Ed. we can catch them up." Can you imagine? They put them in there and they'd get further and further behind and never get out. (SD, lines 703-708).

Mrs. Davis related a story of some African American students who sought her guidance as a counselor when they ran into conflict with a White teacher who felt the students could not possibly succeed in her class. This incident is worth relating in detail, as it shows how Mrs. Davis tried to instill a sense of self esteem in the students:

He went into this Elementary Analysis class and the teacher said, "Let me tell you something. You have no business in here. You cannot pass this course." I don't know what else she said, but basically that's what she said. When they came out of there all of them came to me, smartest kids in the classroom, "Mrs. Davis, she

said we couldn't pass Elementary Analysis." And I said, "Let me tell you something. It's better for you to stay in that class and make a C or a D and learn more than you can with an A or B in another class." That boy across the street [one of the boys who visited her, now a grown man who happened to be cutting the grass at his parents' house across the street at the time of the interview] got out of the class. The smartest kid, with the highest IQ in the class. They made him go to the library, first period study hall. Every day, first period, he did something to upset them in that library every day. Here they come to me, "Mrs. Davis, what's wrong with him?" I said, "What do you expect? For a kid that smart to sit up for an hour and do nothing? That's your problem you created." So that's what school [at Bryan High School] was like that first year (SD, lines 552-565).

Rather than allowing African American students to accept the status quo, Mrs. Davis encouraged them to work hard to prove and improve themselves. She felt it was a terrible tragedy when any of them allowed themselves to believe negative teacher expectations. Carl Davis commented, "Some of those teachers that were teaching Black kids for the first time, they didn't understand them. They don't interact like White kids" (CD, lines 312-313). He also stated, "They just thought a Black couldn't make an A, you know? The teachers didn't have any experience with the kids" (lines 192-193). Sonia Davis agreed, "The expectations for our students were too low" (SD, line 393). She explained the philosophy of some of the White teachers as following, "They thought all of us were poor in language, and disabled" (SD, line 787). Christine Green noticed a similar pattern even at the elementary level:

White teachers, they couldn't help it but they assumed the Black kids couldn't learn. If they acted up, they got sent into the hallway. How can they learn out there? At least if they were put in the corner of the classroom, mere osmosis might help them learn a little bit! (CG, lines 116-119).

Paul Jones feared how negative teacher expectations would impact his own children:

I was scared of the public schools, for my children. By the elementary grades they put you in a track. And once you get on a track you never get off. And you're doomed to fail. And it doesn't have anything to do with your IQ. It has to do with your attitude. And if you're one of the aggressive type kids you'll get put on a track to nowhere (PJ, lines 265-270).

He related that his daughter was an extremely bright student who was already reading at the age of two. He had witnessed first-hand the damaging affects of tracking students, and he therefore enrolled his daughter at Allen Academy (a local private K-12 school). At Allen, "She was head of the class. And they gave her a different kind of [IQ] test, a test they give in those finishing schools in the East. And she scored off the scale" (lines 272-274). Despite his daughter's success at the private school Mr. Jones felt that the school was disconnecting her from reality, and thus he later transferred her to Sam Rayburn Middle School. He was indignant when he discovered that she was excluded from the Gifted and Talented program:

And I said, "Look. Here's the test they gave over at Allen and it doesn't even compare to that little jive-time TAAS test." I mean, I've been out of education a long time but this is what the educators said, "if she can make it up there in the

99th percentile on this hard test then somebody must have graded the test at Allen wrong (PJ, lines 293-296).

Mr. Jones explained that he had connections to movers and shakers in the community, such as members of the Jaycees and the Chamber of Commerce. He had even entertained Ann Richards in his home when she was governor of Texas. Due to his social clout Mr. Jones managed to convince the authorities at his daughter's new school to reconsider their decision. She eventually entered the Gifted and Talented program at Rayburn and continued on to college, but as he noted, "Now, if they would do that to my child and I'm known in the community and I'm the head of the NAACP, what about the child who doesn't have anybody? What are his or her chances of graduating?" (PJ, lines 297-299).

When asked if she felt African American children were disproportionately placed into lower tracks Michelle Gold laughed and said, "Well, there were in fact more Blacks, more African American kids in those lower groups. Now, I don't know if it was deliberate, but the majority were African Americans" (MG, lines 240-242). Sonia Davis stated, "When we integrated they were scheduling our students in remedial classes. Civics, Related Math. These same students were college material" (SD, lines 689-690). Christine Green explained that "They would put Blacks in a track where they would not have enough grade points accumulated in order to apply for colleges" (CG, line 299). Rose Smith said, "They weren't bad kids, but I don't think they had a lot of self confidence" (RS, line 79).

I asked Valerie Palmer if she felt that the students who were assigned to her remedial first grade classes at A&M Consolidated Elementary School in College Station

would have been placed in a regular class had they been educated at Lincoln, to which she responded without hesitation, “Oh yes” (VP, line 457). Carl Davis agreed, “Now this is just my speculation, but if they’d kept those regular classes instead of having those watered down classes then the kids would have done better. I think it would have been better. But we had to put up with that because of the curriculum” (CD, lines 182-185).

Graduation Rates. Lowered teacher expectations may have resulted in a self-fulfilling prophecy (Good & Brophy, 1994; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). According to this concept, teachers with negative ideas regarding the abilities of certain students instruct those students in ways that reveal their lowered expectations. Students receive these messages, and over time they may come to internalize the belief that they are inherently incapable of achieving. These doubts stunt their senses of self-esteem and derail their motivation. Due to subsequent underperformance by the students, the teachers’ negative predictions come to pass. A number of participants bemoaned the fact that fewer African American students went on to college after the Bryan and College Station schools integrated.

Valerie Palmer described graduates of the Lincoln School in College Station as being excellent students who went on to enjoy success in various careers. She stated that in desegregated settings, by contrast, she could sense that some students were frustrated by their school experiences:

They could see a big difference and they didn’t like it. And there were children who just didn’t do too well. And then we weren’t in their particular classrooms, necessarily, so we do not know the setting. We do not know the treatment, we don’t know how they were ignored. Sometimes they would come out of there

angry, kicking the door, saying things. You know, personal things. And the child can always tell (VP, lines 208-213).

Mrs. Palmer felt that there has been a decline in the graduation rate for African Americans over time.

Michelle Gold, James and Geneva Ellis and Sonia Davis likewise stated that they believed, based on personal observances, that African American graduation rates in Bryan have declined. Rose Smith said that in addition, there has been a trend in which fewer African American students continue on to college. This would be in keeping with statistics reported elsewhere (e.g. Harvey, Harvey, & King, 2004; Larson & Ovando, 2001; Smith, 2005). Gordon Smith expressed dismay over the disinterest in attending college exhibited by many young African American men and women today:

And the thing about it, and I don't understand it now, but we have Blinn right here [a community college with a branch in Bryan] and they don't go. And back then, you couldn't go anywhere but Prairie View and Texas College and Wiley [segregated colleges]. And they went way out there to them. But now they won't go right across the street. Isn't that something? (GS, lines 232-235).

Discussion of the Findings

This study sought to discover what African American educators in Bryan and College Station, Texas experienced working in segregated schools, what they remembered about the period when their districts were making a transition to desegregated schools, and what they experienced working in desegregated settings. The data generated from interviews was therefore divided into three chronological phases. In this section I provide an overview of the findings. The research questions are addressed

in order to illustrate participants' collective experiences during each of the three time phases in the study.

Phase one, the segregated era, yielded the highest number of units ($n = 20$) and four separate categories. Phase Two, the transition period, resulted in only 12 units and three categories. It is not surprising that less information was provided on this phase, since it represents a time frame of limited duration. The final phase, the desegregation era, generated 19 units and four categories. The number of units and categories in Phase Three are similar to those of the first phase, as would be expected since most participants worked for about the same number of years in segregated and desegregated settings.

Phase One

The first specific research question asked:

- What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in segregated schools?

Analysis of the data revealed that Phase One is marked by contradictions. As I read and re-read participants' narratives I kept thinking of Charles Dickens' famous opening line in his novel *A tale of two cities*, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

Teachers related that they worked under difficult conditions. African American schools were often too hot or too cold depending on seasonal temperature fluctuations. Books were outdated and frequently in poor shape, and a lack of supplies often entailed that teachers purchase items with their own money. These findings are widely corroborated in the literature on segregated schools (e.g. Dismuke, 2004; Kellar, 1999; Pitts, 2003). Some of the educators suspected that they were receiving less pay than White teachers in the area. Nonetheless, at the segregated schools African American teachers were compelled to

contribute generously to the United Way organization and to join local, state and national teachers unions - stipulations they later found were not required of White teachers.

Despite these circumstances, the participants all looked back on their experiences working in segregated schools with a sense of fondness. They were good teachers and they knew it. Participants uniformly agreed that the teachers in their schools were certified in their fields and held at minimum a bachelors degree. Many had masters degrees, and some had additional certifications for counseling. All participated in professional development activities. This meant that in theory they should have been receiving pay equal to White educators, since salary disparities could not be justified by any lack of credentials or work experience.

The African American teachers' students, their students' parents and their supervisors all believed in the teachers' capabilities. Teachers were not only highly regarded at segregated schools but the esteem given to the teaching profession garnered them respect in their communities. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's definition of cultural capital (1977) captures the position that the teachers held during this time. Cultural capital refers to the forms of knowledge, skills or education that individuals possess which are recognized as being valuable in a given society or setting. Cultural capital provides people with a sense of worth and respect and is a form of prestige that can be converted into or results in an elevated social status. The prestige of African American teachers resonated in the narratives, and has been documented by other researchers (e.g. Morris & Morris, 2002b; Walker, 1996a) who have published case studies of segregated schools.

Participants reported that during the segregation era African American teachers believed that their students could achieve great things, and that they demanded that students do their very best. The result was that students internalized positive self images. Participants mentioned that segregated schools had high graduation rates, that a large number of students graduated from college, and that many former students have achieved success in their careers and lives. It was clear from their comments, especially when discussing their views about the differences between segregated and desegregated schools, that the participants felt that the segregated schools afforded African American students with essential skills that the desegregated schools did not.

Phase Two

The second specific research question asked:

- What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding how the desegregation process was implemented in their schools and/or communities?

Participants expressed that they were not surprised that it took so long for their school districts to begin the desegregation process. Some attributed this to a desire on the part of powerful members of the communities or the school boards to maintain the status quo. Such suspicions are rationale, given the climate in the South at the time. The decade after *Brown* witnessed litigation against school boards in many states and districts, including in Texas and in the communities studied. Yet in 1964, only about two percent of African American children in the former Confederate states were instructed in desegregated schools. During that year Title VI of the Civil Rights Act stated that any program receiving federal aid would lose funding if found to be denying participation of

individuals on the basis of race. The threat of losing money spurred action. By 1965 the number of African American children enrolled in desegregated schools in the South rose to six percent, and to 20 percent in the state of Texas (Southern Regional Council, 1966). Although these numbers represent an improvement, they also indicate that 80 percent of African Americans in Texas continued to attend race-based institutions.

Some participants reasoned that there simply was no impetus to change. Carl and Sonia Davis, Christine Green and James Ellis stated that within the African American community in Bryan, for example, parents had mixed feelings regarding the merits of desegregating. The African American schools had excellent teachers who cared about students, and there were apprehensions that students would not receive the same level of attention in desegregated schools. A study conducted in South Carolina immediately after Brown (Doddy & Edwards, 1955) found that African American teachers surveyed there had numerous apprehensions about the impact of desegregation. These included job displacement or demotion, a fear of hostility on the part of White teachers, and a lack of respect towards them by White students, among other misgivings. Among the participants in my study who stated that they had reservations about the effects of desegregation, the chief reason cited was that they were concerned with whether African American students would adjust to a new school climate that might not be welcoming or where teachers did not encourage them.

Most participants seemed to have forgotten about the legal suits that were brought forth against the Bryan and College Station school districts by local individuals or groups beginning in the early 1960s until I reminded them, and none had much to say on the topic. The teachers seemed strangely disconnected from these political events despite the

fact that a success in the courts would have had significant repercussions for them as teachers and for their children as students. The teachers recalled the Step Plan, but none reported noticing any changes resulting from it at their schools. No one brought up the Step Plan without a prompting question.

Memories seemed sharper regarding the implementation of the Freedom of Choice plans, although participants were unanimous in their agreement that this effort also failed to desegregate schools. In his multi-generational study of African Americans in the east Texas, Collins' (2003) participants reported a similar lack of the Freedom of Choice's impact there. In another parallel to what I found in my research, it seems a limited number of African American students were purposefully recruited to White schools in the town of Bridge City in order to improve their sports teams, "Mr. Bigsby recounted the strategy his district used during 'Freedom of Choice' to attract Black male student athletes for their prowess, but not Black student scholars, despite their intellectual achievement" (p. 106). All but two of my participants remained at segregated schools during the implementation phase, and participants knew of few other cross-over teachers. Therefore, for the most part, Freedom of Choice did not result in changes that affected the teachers personally.

Regarding the impetus to finally desegregate, recollections were strongest regarding the string of arson attacks committed against African American schools. A number of participants remembered the specific months and years when the fires occurred at particular schools. Having already lost legal suits at the local level and being found in non-compliance of desegregation edicts of the federal government, the fires proved to be a last straw. While the Bryan and College Station districts had managed to

feign compliance with *Brown* during the 1960s with token desegregation efforts, the construction of new, segregated schools to replace burned ones would have been in clear violation of the law.

The fire damages inflicted upon African American schools thus marked a turning point in both communities. Particularly in College Station, job security was a looming concern. Almost all African American teachers at the Lincoln School lost their positions or left shortly before desegregation out of a fear of job loss. In Bryan, African American teachers were told they would continue to have a job, but it might not be the one they desired.

Phase Three

The third specific research question asked:

- What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in desegregated schools?

Participants found that in desegregated schools they did not have to do some of the things required of them at segregated schools. For instance, there was no expectation that they join all three teachers unions, and they no longer had to pay for lost textbooks at the end of the school year. They were provided with a wider range of supplies, including materials they formerly would have had to pay for with their own money. They also reported that principals (who were White) were less demanding of them. For example, once they were at desegregated schools, the teachers realized that principals might allow teachers to attend to personal matters during school hours. This would not have been a possibility at their former work locations.

Participants stated that they got along well with their colleagues. Positive relations among faculty were promoted via teacher workshops, especially for those who moved to Bryan High School. Beginning in the fall of 1971 the school became the sole campus for all high school level students in the town, and thus it represented the most truly integrated campus among the many at which the participants worked. The teachers related that during workshop sessions administrators not only addressed student needs, but they tried to promote a sense of unity among the faculty by having them engage in dialogue or participate in activities designed to develop interpersonal skills.

Despite generally positive experiences with co-workers, participants were concerned by a lack of cultural knowledge or empathy on the part of some of the White teachers. For instance, participants stated that some White teachers harbored damaging preconceived notions regarding the ability levels of African American students. Sonia Davis related that some of the White teachers assumed African American students could not be taught, or that they could not handle advanced level classes. Negative expectations on the part of teachers resulted in some African American students being placed in remedial level or non-college track courses. Another factor involved in such placements may have been that African American students lacked cultural capital in the desegregated schools because their personal knowledge was no longer deemed to be valuable (Lareau, 1987, 2000). Paul Jones believed that course placement stemmed from attitude, not aptitude. He commented, "At Neal we could compete with anybody. And when they first integrated some of the first valedictorians were from the Black schools. Then all of a sudden they got dumb!" (PJ, lines 256-258). The participants expressed emotions ranging from dismay to disgust over the practice of tracking. The practice of

labeling and sorting students in the desegregated schools, even as young as the first grade, stood in stark contrast to the prevailing philosophy at segregated schools where it was believed that all children could excel.

Most of the African American teachers claimed that desegregation had little impact on them, yet they also made comments to the contrary. Having to teach large classes or multiple sections of a class meant that they could not get to know their students on a personal level to the degree they formerly had. A number of interviewees indicated that they saw no difference among White and African American students, but they also noticed that students seemed to change after desegregation. Gloria Hicks, Valerie Palmer, Geneva and James Ellis, and Sonia and Carl Davis all cited instances of disciplinary infractions, apathy, and a disinterest in the educational process among some of the students that stood in contrast to what they experienced in segregated schools. These were particularly disturbing when manifested in African American students. As an assistant principal at Bryan High School, Carl Davis sometimes felt compelled to explain to African American students that he saw in his office that they could not afford to act up like some of the White students did, because society simply would not allow them the same leeway.

A definite result of desegregation was that all of the teachers, with the exception of Rose Smith, were transferred to new campuses. Many of them suddenly had to prepare themselves to teach new grades in these new settings. Four participants were assigned to teach lower-track courses, another felt that she was given a disproportionate number of lower-ability students in her classes, and another was positioned as a team-teacher despite her many years of teaching experience. It is evident that the participants

continued to be dedicated to their profession and to their students, but in the desegregated schools teachers (White or African American) did not possess the same degree of cultural capital as teachers had held in the African American community. This was not an official demotion, but the shift to an desegregated campus nonetheless entailed a loss of status.

Indeed the word “loss” seems to encapsulate the collective experiences of the teachers. When reflecting on their experiences working in desegregated schools, many informants seemed to exhibit a sense of loss for how things used to be. For example, Gloria Hicks said, “We were a real close-knit group then, and I enjoyed it” (GH, line 240). This comment can be contrasted with how Mrs. Hicks described current conditions, “The lack of caring is obvious to students. Many Blacks feel disenfranchised in school and disconnected from the educational process. School for them is not the road to advancement so much as it is a hurdle they must navigate, dreading it every step of the way” (GH, lines 77-80). Thinking about the changes over the years, Christine Green commented, “The schools are different today, and in many ways they’ve changed for the worse. The rules won’t allow you to have any physical contact, and it’s a shame. When I taught at Washington the kids would enter the room with their arms out. We hugged every day” (CG, lines 209-211).

Chapter Summary

Findings in this chapter were presented in terms of the three chronological phases related to the research questions; African American educators’ perceptions regarding teaching in segregated schools, their recollections of the desegregation process, and the educators’ perceptions regarding teaching in desegregated schools. The findings were

detailed in terms of categories and sub-categories, using participants' quotes to illustrate each. These were followed by a summative discussion of the findings.

Chapter VII describes the findings that were discovered when an additional method of narrative analysis was employed. The discussion centers on the over-arching themes that emerged when the transcriptions were analyzed as a group. The importance of the discovery of these themes lies in the fact that the themes not only capture the overall essence of the participants' experiences, but they provide a way to compare this case study to research conducted in other regions.

CHAPTER VII
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, PART TWO:
HOLISTIC-CONTENT ANALYSIS

Chapter VII reports on the findings of the study based on a second method of narrative analysis. Whereas the findings detailed in Chapter VI were presented in terms of categories and subcategories related to each chronological phase of the study period (thereby addressing the specific research questions), the findings described in this chapter return to the guiding research question in order to summarize what was learned in this case study. The guiding research question was: What can African American educators share about their teaching experiences in the selected small-town Texas schools during the years of 1954 to 1975?

My interpretation of the findings was based on the holistic-content method of narrative analysis advocated by Lieblich, et al. (1990), as described in Chapter IV. The findings are presented as three overarching themes that were discovered when the entire dataset was considered as a whole. The three themes are; the notion of a double consciousness, the ethic of caring, and the trait of resiliency.

I employ W. E. B. Du Bois' concept of double consciousness to describe my understanding of the research participants' experiences in facing discrimination. In 1903 Dr. Du Bois developed this concept to describe the internal struggles felt by people of color. In a society in which racism is entrenched and institutionalized, African Americans are expected to assimilate to dominant cultural ideologies while at the same time being denied full membership in "mainstream" America. Therefore, African Americans often negotiate two separate, contradictory realities. For the participants of

this study, schools became sites in which these differing conceptions of self became contested.

The second theme is the ethic of caring. Drawing on the work of Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1984), caring can be described as a process by which devoted educators develop nurturing, trusting relationships with their students. Teachers who care help students understand that they are valued and that they in turn have a responsibility to care for others in the world. The participants in this study took the best interests of their students to heart, often making personal sacrifices in order to ensure their academic and social development.

I base my use of resiliency theory primarily on the works of Benard (1991; 1993; 2004). Benard has argued that children can best be served by capitalizing on their existing strengths or by helping students to develop coping strategies that promote success. I extend these ideas to the participants of the study, illuminating the various ways in which the teachers used social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, and an inner sense of purpose to assist them in creatively meeting the demands placed on them as African American educators in a society that marginalizes people of color. The three themes are explained in greater detail below and situated within a discussion of the literature in order to allow comparisons to be drawn between this study and to conditions documented elsewhere.

Explanation of the Themes

After coding the data for units of meaning and sorting these individual pieces of meaning into categories, I continued to re-read transcriptions with an eye toward identifying “recurring regularities in the data” (Merriam, 1988, p. 135) that could help

organize the mass of information. After focusing on the three specific research questions as they related to three time periods encompassed in the study (Phases One, Two and Three), I tried to step back and view the data from a global perspective. I use the term “themes” to describe patterns that were found repeatedly within the transcriptions. These themes link the individual teachers’ stories, even though each person’s experiences were unique to them.

As analysis continued over the course of many months, I found that I could reduce an initial list of six tentative themes into a more rigorous, shorter list of three themes. These include; the notion of a double-consciousness, the ethic of caring, and the trait of resiliency. Each of these three themes spanned across the research period. In other words, the themes emerged to at least some degree in each of the three phases; while the participants worked in segregated schools, while their districts were considering or began implementing desegregation plans, and after the teachers worked in desegregated schools. In the discussion below I elaborate on each of the themes in relation to each of the three phases of the study in order to highlight how these patterns were manifest across the data. Likewise, the themes are linked to the categories previously discussed in Chapter VI. I used holistic-content analysis to address the general research question, identifying themes in order to allow a portrait to emerge of the essence of the teachers’ experiences by seeing what experiences they held in common. Although the participants in this study related information specific to College Station and Bryan, Texas, synthesizing the teachers’ stories in this manner provides a means for other scholars to compare and contrast events and circumstances in the research sites to what occurred elsewhere.

Findings: Holistic-Content Analysis

Theme One: The Notion of a Double Consciousness

In 1903 W. E. B. Du Bois published a volume of essays entitled *The Souls of Black Folk* that was widely read and proved to be controversial. Although he received criticism for some of the views he expressed, he made a major contribution by giving a name to what many African Americans felt (Marable, 2006). Dr. Du Bois introduced the notion of a veil to suggest several realities of the African American experience as he understood it, especially after he spent time living in the South. The concept of the veil refers in part to the dark skin of African Americans, a phenotype that sets them apart from Whites/dominant members of society. The veil also acts as a barrier that prevents Whites from seeing African Americans as “real” Americans. At the same time the veil obscures the views of African Americans, so that they have difficulty seeing themselves as they really are but instead envision themselves according to what White America prescribes for them (Watts, 2006).

The presence of the veil acts as a dividing wall between African Americans and Whites. Whites, by nature of their dominant position in society, are unfettered by and often oblivious to the veil’s presence but African Americans must negotiate life from under the veil by necessity. Thus, Du Bois stated, African Americans learn to operate in two Americas; one dark and one White. The awareness of this duality creates a phenomena of double consciousness in which African Americans must navigate between self-conceptions (Brodwin, 1972). Du Bois eloquently expressed his position:

It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a

world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness – an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder (1903, p. 45).

Du Bois proposed the notion of a double consciousness over one hundred years ago, but his premise continues to be salient today. It is typical for White Americans to presume that an American equals a White person. Whiteness is deemed “normal.” Evidence of this fact abounds. For example, it is commonly assumed that a person who does not appear to be of European ancestry was not born in the United States. This is particularly true if the person has an accent or does not speak “standard” English. In my work with undergraduate pre-service teachers (who are overwhelmingly White at my institution, as they are elsewhere), I try to address the topic of White privilege in the courses that I teach.

Reactions to the subject range from shock to guilt to denial. At least initially, many White students seem to question what purpose a discussion of White privilege serves in an English as a Second Language or even a Multicultural Education class. They do not see the connection that their own social positioning has on their teaching practices or philosophies. Yet if Whiteness is considered to be normal, this means non-Whites are construed as “Others,” even if subconsciously. For the African American educators involved in this study, the existence of White privilege is obvious and double-consciousness is a fact of life. I argue that evidence of its existence can be seen throughout their teaching careers.

Phase One. Segregated social arrangements, whether ante-Bellum, during the Jim Crow era, or during the 20th century, kept African Americans from interacting with Whites and they denied them opportunities and rights supposedly guaranteed to all Americans. The very nature of a segregated society created a situation in which African Americans were forced to reckon with the two-ness described by Dr. Du Bois. With the full backing of the law, United States “mainstream” culture sent a message (and it still does, I would argue) that African Americans were not truly Americans; they were less worthy, less valued, and lesser citizens. For my participants, this message must have resonated in the walls of their schools.

African American children could not attend schools with White children. African American teachers could not find employment in a White school if they had so desired. Supervisors, curriculum designers, textbook manufacturers, and school board members were White. This meant that the day-to-day operations in the segregated schools were in many ways structured by individuals on the other side of the veil. Every day African American teachers made due with materials relegated to them, and every day they strived for excellence. Operating within a double-consciousness, they knew that society marginalized them, yet they took pride in their roles as teachers.

Recall that Paul Jones and a colleague designed a supplemental reader to accompany their history textbook when they worked at Neal Junior High because they objected to the required text’s omission of African American experiences. James Ellis expressed similar frustration with textbooks that he used there as physical education teacher. He cautioned that one should not assume everything in an approved textbook is accurate:

For example, I always get this one in my First Aid book. That one of the symptoms of shock is that you might become red or pale. But that doesn't apply to everybody. Not if your skin is dark. So you've got to be able to kind of read for yourself and figure out what is fact and what is not. The way it's written, sometimes it's written for a particular group of people (JE, lines 431-436).

McCarthy (1992) has argued that the suppression and marginalization of minorities' experiences from school textbooks is typical. Pointing out that the publishing industry is big business, he problematizes the consumption of curricular materials when he asks, "Who gets to define whom, when and how? Who has control over the production of pictures and images in this society?" (1992, p. 121). These are important questions to ask for several reasons. Numerous studies (e.g. Apple, 1985; Davis, Ponder, Burlbaw, Garza-Lubeck, & Moss, 1986; Wade, 1993) have found that that classroom instructional time is overwhelmingly centered on textbooks, with some teachers structuring 90 percent of their teaching around textbooks. Moreover, most students believe the information in such books to be authoritative (Gordy & Pritchard, 1995). What then for the students whose own lived experiences are absent, or worse, distorted, in the information presented to them? Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (1995) have stated that, "The refusal – sometimes unconscious, sometimes not – to incorporate African American knowledge into the mainstream curriculum is a psychoanalytic as well as political process of repression" (p. 328).

Related to the category of School Environment, recall that Gordon Smith remarked, "I guess for a Black school they [the supplies] were fair" (GS, line 201). Carl Davis made the following comment regarding the fact that the segregated schools had

inferior supplies, “So whatever we had at the Black school, we were pretty near satisfied with it because that’s all we needed... So you just took those and were satisfied with what you had” (CD, lines 65, 72). Obviously, African American teachers *had* to take what was given to them. Sonia Davis stated, “The teachers’ reactions to inequalities most of the time was silence or inner circle complaints” (SD, lines 405-406). Rather than complain about a lack of athletic equipment, Valerie Palmer related that at the Lincoln School they received used equipment from the nearby university, “They were hand-me-downs. And someone was really nice. My husband got padding and such” (VP, line 906). Mrs. Palmer considered the acquisition of used sports equipment to be a stroke of good luck, not an affront. Such comments indicate that participants struggled to be effective teachers in the face of legal and social structural arrangements that devalued them. Inadequate materials must have served as tangible reminders of the notion “you are not one of us,” according to dominant ideologies.

Participants noted that segregated schools had a limited curriculum. Related to elementary level schooling, Christine Green stated, “You just name it, we didn’t have it. We just didn’t have it. We were a second-rate group” (CG, lines 196-197). Geneva Ellis explained, “At the junior high, and at the high school, there were not as many courses available to our students, for the kids to take. And the programs differed” (GE, lines 198-199). African American students who wished to take certain college-track courses, such as French, had to enroll at Stephen F. Austin High School, and could only do so after Freedom of Choice made this an option. The college entrance exam was administered at the White school. Dr. Du Bois argued that for education to truly uplift it must go beyond the basics:

And above all, we hear daily that an education that encourages aspiration, that sets the loftiest of ideals and seeks as an end culture and character rather than bread-winning, is the privilege of white men and the delusion of the black (1903, p. 126).

Even though Du Bois called for an expansion of higher educational opportunities for African Americans over a century ago, as late as the 1960s limited opportunities in the segregated schools in Bryan and College Station meant that schooling served to reproduce social class arrangements (McLaren, 1998; Willis, 1977). African American students were prevented from acquiring the most valued forms of knowledge, setting up a situation in which they would be systematically shuttled into the subservient roles decided upon for them.

Regarding the Roles of Teachers category, it can be seen that the demands placed on African American teachers at segregated schools would have summoned forth a double-consciousness. This was evident in the fact that principals demanded they join unions and participate in ongoing professional development, even though White teachers were given a choice in these matters. Carl Davis remarked that principals made their feelings clear, “The administration wasn’t fiddling around. There weren’t too many questions that you had to ask because the principal told you what he expected and you did it” (CD, lines 381-383). Sonia Davis remarked, “Our principal had us do whatever the White man said, that’s what we did” (SD, line 678). Paul Jones commented, “They [African American teachers in Bryan] had to give their own money, they had to work overtime before school and after school and on weekends” (PJ, lines 391-392).

Participants remarked that they had to go above and beyond the duties expected of White teachers in an effort to prove their worth.

Phase Two. Participants made several comments indicative of a double consciousness related to the “preparations for integration” subcategory. As Bryan prepared to open a new, integrated high school, faculty workshops were conducted in the summer of 1971. A stated goal of the sessions was to develop positive relations among future co-workers. I would argue that an unstated goal was to begin an assimilation process. African American teachers were guaranteed jobs, but were also told that they would have to accept re-assignment. White teachers continued to maintain their previous positions, but African American teachers encountered a “take it or leave it” proposition that they could hardly refuse. African American teachers who were placed in charge of new grades or subjects had to do extra teaching preparations that year, and often in subsequent years as well when they continued to be re-assigned.

As related above, the Bryan schools also held open houses that summer for students enrolling in the fall. At the meetings new school colors and mascots were decided upon, yet at the first pep rally of the year the school song from Stephen F. Austin was played. Many African American students were angry that the promise to create a cohesive community had been violated, and in response the administration stated that there simply had not been time to write a new school song. It is unlikely that the events’ planners deliberately meant to offend the school’s African American students. It probably never occurred to the pep rally’s planners to use the Kemp High School song. Nonetheless, their oversight sent the message that Kemp students were invisible (behind the veil) to the planning committee. Numerous participants (Mr. Jones, Mr. and Mrs.

Ellis, Mr. and Mrs. Davis, and Mr. and Mrs. Smith) recollected this incident and related feeling empathetic toward the students who planned a protest.

Participants' negotiation of the veil of double consciousness is also indicated in comments related to the subcategory of "job security." Michelle Gold worked in Bryan only after schools there had integrated. However, she was employed in Bremond, Texas when its schools integrated in 1966. Mrs. Gold related that she had to go through a process of proving herself to the administration, "What happened at the Black school was all the Black teachers had to re-apply" (MG, line 64). She had to fill out an application, write a letter stating her qualifications and detailing how she would be an asset to the school, and undergo an interview. No White teachers had to make these efforts. This indicates that there was a presumption on the part of the hiring committee that African American teachers might not be capable of instructing White students. They were forced to prove that they were good enough because the administration viewed them with suspicion. Mrs. Gold must have felt the presence of double-consciousness' veil when her superiors had difficulty seeing her for who she truly was - an excellent teacher.

In a similar vein, Christine Green explained to me how African American teachers were selected for assignment at formerly-White Travis Elementary School when the burning of Washington Elementary School necessitated that African American students and faculty be shifted to new campuses. Before they were permanently transferred, students were educated for a time at a church. Mrs. Green recalled that the superintendent of Bryan schools observed her teaching. She was informed that "those who thought they could handle it" (CG, line 101) should apply for positions elsewhere, and she was encouraged to do so based on the superintendent's observations of her work.

At the end of her first year at Travis, the principal told her, "... he must have gotten the three very best teachers from the Washington school" (CG, line 148). Mrs. Green stated that this remark made her feel appreciated. Although the principal's comment was no doubt intended as praise, it suggests an underlying assumption on his part that African American teachers would perform poorly. I don't think Mrs. Green ever considered the principal's words in that light: she was happy that he was pleased with her work. The fact that she did not take the remark as a personal slight suggests that she was accustomed to Whites' viewing African Americans such as herself critically.

Gordon Smith was the first African American teacher to work at Stephen F. Austin High School, where he worked beginning in 1968. It was there that the differences in working conditions became evident to him. Put in charge of soliciting donations for the United Way, he found White teachers apathetic, "And see the thing that made me mad was when I went up there to Stephen F. Austin, I was the only brother there out of all of them others. So everybody knew me. And I found out they didn't join anything if they didn't want to" (GS, lines 306-308). This comment indicates that Mr. Smith felt others to be highly aware of his being African American.

Mr. Smith related a story concerning Tennison Miller, an African American man who worked as a federal officer for the Equity and Civil Rights Office. Even though he had "plenty of money and all that stuff" (GS, line 371), he was basically ignored during a board meeting, "In the meeting all the board was sitting up there and they kept asking their questions to the secretary. The secretary was White like them. She said, 'I'm not the boss. Mr. Miller is the boss. Let's get that straight'" (GS, lines 382-384).

Apparently it was difficult for the school board members at this meeting to see Mr. Miller

as the authority. They deferred their questions to a woman whose work assignment positioned her as Mr. Miller's subordinate, but whose skin color automatically elevated her above Mr. Miller in the eyes of the board.

The phenomenon of double consciousness relates to the subcategory of "job security" most powerfully in participants' comments about African American teachers they knew who lost their jobs or were demoted. Valerie Palmer explained that in College Station very few African American teachers survived desegregation, and all were repositioned, "And you know, it just sort of started driving you nutty. The situation and what happened (VP, lines 558-559). She described co-workers, including her husband, as "just sort of floating around" (VP, line 418). Participants from Bryan schools (e.g. Mrs. Green, Mrs. Hicks) adopted the same term to describe the emotions felt by African American teachers there. The teachers felt in limbo as they awaited word of where, or if, they would be placed. Commenting on how it felt to leave the Lincoln School, Valerie Palmer stated, "We were split up and... [pause] dissected. We were sad. They placed all the others in new situations" (VP, lines 576-577). Mrs. Palmer's description of the tension and internal conflicts teachers felt during the shift to desegregated schools is reminiscent of Du Bois's words, "One ever feels his two-ness... two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body..." (1903, p. 45).

Phase Three. During Phase Three, when participants worked in desegregated schools, there is continued evidence of the double consciousness phenomenon. For example, in relation to the "school supplies" subcategory the teachers all related that it was when they worked in desegregated schools that the inferiority of supplies in segregated schools truly hit home. While they knew they had been receiving cast-off

books at the African American schools, this reality came to the forefront when they learned that the state's textbook adoption cycle supposedly meant new books were to be provided at five year intervals. This policy had not applied to African American schools, and the realization must have reminded them of their second-class status, a status which they had been compelled to accept. Being given teaching materials and supplies that they formerly had gone without or had purchased out of pocket must have caused the teachers to think, "so this is what it's like for the other side."

As teachers at desegregated schools the participants were invited to be members of a group that formerly excluded them, yet they were only offered "junior memberships" so to speak. In terms of the "social positioning" subcategory, it is evident that desegregation meant that the African American teachers had no input on where they would be placed. Most White teachers stayed in place, but African American teachers had to move. White teachers continued to teach their grades and/or subjects of choice, but African American teachers had to take whatever assignment was offered. For those who moved to formerly-White campuses (all participants except those who went to Bryan High School), they found that they must fit into the existing faculty network. In all these ways it can be seen that the task of adapting was placed solely upon the shoulders of African American teachers.

In describing life as a minority on a predominantly White faculty, Kubota (2002) commented, "It is important to note that power and the value of capital are not absolute but relational. The perceived value of capital changes depending on what the participants of social interactions are interested in investing with value" (p. 300). The cultural capital the participants had earned at the segregated schools was in essence devalued, and they

now worked in locations using a different form of currency. In order to keep their jobs, African American teachers had to learn new job duties and how to work with new colleagues and students. It must have been difficult to re-invent themselves for their new roles without losing their sense of self.

Interesting are comments related to participants emotional states following desegregation. Recall that Christine Green stated that even though she had mixed feelings about teaching at Travis Elementary School, she felt she needed to exhibit an air of confidence, “My first year at the White school, I had to act brave, be bold and assertive” (CG, line 139). Mrs. Green felt that having a positive attitude would assist her African American students in feeling at home at the new school. A positive attitude probably helped Mrs. Green in adapting to the new environment as well. We can see the same disposition in Valerie Palmer. When asked how she felt to be placed as a team teacher at A&M Consolidated Elementary School she remarked, “Well, I was an easy-going person and it didn’t bother me that much... All I require is that somebody will be nice to me” (VP, lines 607, 609). Mrs. Palmer made the best of her situation, but it must have hurt to be treated as a novice teacher despite her extensive experience.

Regarding the category of Relationships, double consciousness can be seen in how some of the participants described their interactions with White students and colleagues. As described in Chapter V, some of the African American teachers made comments indicative of a color-blind perspective. They stated that they felt kids were the same regardless of color or ethnicity, and that they personally treated all students the same. They seemed to feel this was a benevolent, humanistic philosophy. Yet these same participants related stories that showed in reality they noticed quite a few

differences between African American and White students, as well as between teachers. For instance, Carl Davis noticed that some African American students began to misbehave after entering desegregated schools, and Rose Smith remarked that White teachers seemed less respectful towards administrators and students than did African American teachers.

Caldwell and Stewart (2001) described how Du Bois linked double consciousness to the idea of psychic duality in his unpublished novel *A Fellow of Harvard* (c. 1892). Dr. Du Bois felt that Americans of African descent were torn by competing cultural dictates. Never fully accepted into White society, they were at the same time expected to conform to White society. When African Americans accept Western values without question, inner conflict results. It is only via an understanding of and an appreciation for African American history and identity that individuals can achieve what Caldwell and Stewart (ibid) have termed “psychic liberation.”

As I noticed a pattern of color-blindness among some of the participants’ responses, the notion of double consciousness helped explain how the teachers reconciled a belief that “all kids are the same” with the racism they experienced throughout their lives. The participants were aware of and lived with discrimination, yet they did not adopt an attitude of confrontation. To dwell on inequalities can become a mental burden, even becoming all-consuming. In order to ensure their psychological well-being, the educators instead developed strong senses of self so that they could function and succeed in a society which often marginalized them. This facet of the participants’ identities is elaborated upon in the discussion of the trait of resiliency discussed below.

Theme Two: An Ethic of Caring

A second theme that recurred in the dataset was the ethic of caring. The ethic of caring in education was developed in the 1980s, when public education reform initiatives focused on accountability. At that time a number of scholars questioned traditional positivistic views of schooling and turned their attention to the quality of teaching and its impact on educational outcomes. Gilligan (1982) proposed that education is morally driven, and moral development in schools has long been predicated on a hierarchical, male-centered perspective. She argued that moral development would be enhanced by fostering caring relationships between students and teachers. Gilligan cautioned that caring in schools should not be confused with caring in its romantic sense or with “touchy feely,” sentimental relationships. In schools teachers manifest caring when they are concerned with the holistic development of children.

Noddings (1984) embedded caring within the qualities of maternal instincts and nurturing, but she pointed out that caring is not restricted to women, “I shall accept the label ‘feminine’ but only if we understand that all of humanity can participate in the feminine as I am describing it” (1984, p. 172). Noddings envisions caring as a basic human capacity, and she stated (1992) that a key goal of education should be to produce competent, ethical individuals who internalize the message that they are valued. Caring teachers develop in students the ability to care for others and for the world at large.

Caring is a process (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994) in which empathetic teachers create a positive school atmosphere where students and teachers develop trusting relationships. Noblit, Rogers and McCadden (1995) state that caring can and should guide classroom interactions, from instructional strategies to the way the school day is

organized. Pang (2001) argues that caring should be at the heart of the educational experience, “Many children are most interested in being accepted and loved. This must occur before they are willing to trust teachers and pour their hearts into the learning process” (2001, p. 86). Geneva Gay (2000) described the positive impact of caring on students:

Teachers who really care about students honor their humanity, hold them in high esteem, expect high performance from them, and use strategies to fulfill their expectations... Students in kind feel obligated to be worthy of being so honored. They rise to the occasion by producing high levels of performance of many different kinds – academic, social, moral, and cultural (p. 46).

A growing body of research documents that one of the notable characteristics of life in segregated schools was that African American teachers modeled an ethic of caring long before the philosophy was promoted in the literature. For example, in their study of a segregated school in Tuscumbia, Alabama, Morris and Morris (2000, 2002b) reported that former students cited caring teachers as the number one reason their school was a good school. This theme has emerged in work conducted on segregated schools in North Carolina (Cecelski, 1994; Walker, 1996b), Georgia (Dismuke, 2004; Pitts, 2003), Washington, DC (Sowell, 1974), and Virginia (Williamson, 2005). The participants of this study likewise modeled an ethic of caring when they taught in segregated schools. Moreover, they continued this practice throughout their careers.

Phase One. Sonia Davis summarized her experiences as a student in a segregated school as follows, “Life in a segregated school, for me now that I look back over it, was one of the most enriching, loving experiences I’ve had. The teachers cared for you, they

supported you, and they tried to bring out the best in you” (SD, lines 266-268). These words of praise for her teachers could be applied to Mrs. Davis herself, or to any of the teachers who participated in this study. Each of them had the interests of their students at heart and each teacher tried to develop students’ full potentials.

Related to the subcategory of “making due,” we have seen that teachers frequently paid for school supplies with their own personal funds. When they saw a need they filled it, even if doing so entailed personal sacrifice. The teachers also solicited donations of athletic equipment and playing fields so that athletes could practice and compete. Paul Jones described co-workers efforts to bring students to out-of-state musical competitions, which necessitated holding fund-raisers. The teachers wanted their students to not only have quality educational experiences but to be able to enjoy the benefits of involvement in extra-curricular activities. Sonia Davis related, “Whenever we wanted to do a project and the kids couldn’t afford it, we teachers would go in together and buy them bathing suits, gowns, whatever they needed” (SD, lines 626-627). She pointed to the photographs in her home of several former teachers, each of whom chipped in to buy an expensive swimming suit for a beauty pageant hopeful, and she informed me with pride that the girl ended up winning the contest.

Carl Davis told me that he and his wife frequently brought students to college campuses to assist them with enrollment procedures. These efforts to promote their students’ continuing success in higher education underscore the fact that the Davis’ saw teaching as a moral commitment. Caring did not stop at the boundaries of the school campus. For example, Mrs. Davis demonstrated how she took caring outside of the classroom in the case of one of her students at Kemp High School. Mrs. Davis arranged

for her to attend Prairie View A&M, but the young lady confided to her, “Mrs. Davis, I can’t go to college. I don’t even have the panties I can wash and hang up in the room” (SD, line 618). Mrs. Davis continued, “I carried that girl to town that evening and spent about 300 dollars of my own personal money on her” (SD, lines 619-620). The student later phoned Mrs. Davis to inform her that she had no luggage, so they went shopping again.

A less tangible manifestation of the ethic of caring relates to the subcategory of “student relationships.” Local law limited African American students and teachers to segregated schools, and social conventions and red-lining limited African Americans’ housing options. During Phase One, teachers lived in the immediate vicinity of the schools at which they taught. Caring, trusting relationships with students extended beyond the school yard and were often long-lasting. Paul Jones stated, “The teachers took a keen interest in their students. Unlike today, every teacher knew your parents. And they would come by your house” (PJ, lines 152-153). He explained that students encountered their teachers frequently outside of school at community events, in stores, and at church. Christine Green related that she instructed successive generations of children in some families. James Ellis taught some of his own brothers. Valerie Palmer taught her nieces and nephews. The Davis’ taught many of their neighbors’ children. African American teachers, due to their frequent encounters with students outside of the classroom, provided children with a model of African American success. Their ability to earn advanced degrees and to gain work in the esteemed profession of teaching provided living proof of the merits of working hard in school. Gloria Hicks stated that, “Teachers were like Gods to the students” (GH, line 345).

Another example of caring beyond the classroom comes from Paul Jones. The story he shared with me is worth relating in detail because it highlights the degree to which he empathized with and mentored children in the community. In addition to teaching, Mr. Jones volunteered at the Bryan Boys and Girls Club and through this work he formed relationships with African American children who were not necessarily his students. As he recalled events, he became visibly emotional, even though the events occurred years ago. He told me, “To me this sums it up, about the business of Black schools. I had a boy who lived in the projects over on the east side and he tried to run with a certain crowd, but they would not let him join their clique” (PJ, lines 402-405). Mr. Jones explained that this boy from the Boys and Girls Club was smart and athletic, but because he lived in a housing project he was socially ostracized. The young man came to Mr. Jones on several occasions, crying. Mr. Jones told him, “Boy, you can be anything you want. Do what you want, and don’t let other people dictate your life” (lines 408-409). Mr. Jones encouraged this individual for many years.

As he continued the story, Mr. Jones began to choke up on tears:

So, years later when I ran for office the first time they gave me a roast, a roast and toast. And he flew in here on his Lear jet... And he got up and said... “I told my staff, I told the people at the hospital, that I had to come here and see Mr. Jones because he was the only one in this town that ever told me I could be anything I wanted to be. And from time to time when I got discouraged in school or in college, he was the only one who told me not to come home. He said, ‘People have done it before you, and you can do it too.’” Now that boy is a heart surgeon. A heart surgeon. A few years back he was in *Life Magazine* (PJ, lines 413-419).

By this point both Mr. Jones and I were choking back tears, unsuccessfully. He continued, “But you know, it makes you feel like you’ve done something. Because he had a bad attitude, and this bad attitude was just a defense mechanism. He wasn’t really a bad kid” (PJ, lines 424-426). The fact that Paul Jones was so touched by this person’s fond words demonstrates the depth of his caring nature.

Caring relates to the subcategory of “academics,” as seen in the participants’ repeated comments that teachers in segregated schools had high expectations of their students. Vanessa Siddle Walker’s work has helped deconstruct the “assumed unilateral inferiority” (2000, p. 254) of segregated schools. She conducted a meta-analysis of the existing literature on segregated schools (dealing with the period between 1935 and 1969) that was informed by the perspectives of students and/or teachers, as opposed to secondary sources. High teacher expectations were a defining theme in 12 of the 19 studies published. In Bryan and College Station, a lack of supplies was no excuse for failure to learn. Gloria Hicks said, “High expectations caused students to feel proud and enabled. Inequalities were no excuse for a lack of 100 percent effort” (GH, lines 68-69). Valerie Palmer explained, “They needed a push, and we gave them all we had” (VP, line 201).

Paul Jones captures this idea as it relates to Bryan schools, “And then the other most outstanding thing I think, going to a segregated school, was that you were expected to do well. There was no Special Ed.” (PJ, lines 167-168). When asked about teacher expectations, Michelle Gold said:

“Oh yeah, they stressed it to the max. When I was teaching at the Black school, there was no such thing as reading groups. Everybody had the same curriculum.

And the teachers just demanded that they [students] do the very best they could, and most of the time they did. Which is different than today” (MG, lines 225-228).

A number of the participants commented that there was no Special Education at the segregated schools, but other participants recalled that Special Education was initiated towards the end of the segregated era. Among those whom recalled it, participants agreed that only those students who were seriously behind were given a different curriculum, and there were but few such students. According to James Ellis, “These were children who were so low they couldn’t learn their ABCs. You’d have maybe six or eight or ten of them in the whole school” (JE, lines 253-254). The high expectations of teachers can be linked to the subcategory of “graduation rates.” As noted in Chapter VI, many of the African American teachers commented that graduation rates for segregated schools exceeded those of desegregated schools.

Phase Two. During Phase Two all but two participants continued to work in segregated schools. Caring in relation to schools is best considered by school experiences in either segregated or desegregated schools rather than during the middle phase, which refers to a process. Nonetheless, we can see evidence of the ethic of caring in relation to the subcategory of “mixed feelings” about the desegregation process. Most participants recalled that desegregation went “smoothly,” but some expressed apprehensions about the outcome of integrating for students. Christine Green stated, “I wondered how our kids would adjust and grow” (CG, line 105). Note Mrs. Green’s use of the term “kids” to describe her students. Participants frequently used this kinship term, and it expresses the familial closeness of the relationships teachers shared with students.

Sonia Davis commented, “I felt skeptical because I did not think the Black students would get the same kind of attention that we gave them in the Black schools. And I quickly learned that it was true” (SD, lines 477-479). Certainly these teachers must have had anxieties about their own futures, but when asked about their anticipations regarding the impact of desegregation they instead expressed concern about how changes would affect their students. They brought up the topics of students on their own, even though the question did not specifically ask about students.

Phase Three. The African American teachers who participated in this study continued to be caring individuals throughout their careers, but the circumstances of desegregated schools worked against the development of close relationships with students. As discussed in Chapter VI’s description of the School Environment, one of the differences African American teachers noticed about teaching in desegregated schools concerned class size. Their classes either enrolled more students or the teachers taught multiple sections of classes. Due to increasing demands on their time, it became difficult for the participants to get to know their students on a personal basis while at school. The shift in work locations for the participants also meant that the African American teachers no longer consistently saw their students both inside and outside their classrooms as they had when they taught at segregated schools. Participants regretted that a result of desegregation has been that schools now feel more cold and institutional.

The teachers recollected with obvious concern that following desegregation many African American students felt less involved in the social fabric of their schools. As Gloria Hicks noted, “The sense of familiarity and trust is lacking today” (GH, line 73). Mrs. Hicks pointed to the fact that few graduates of Bryan High School, as compared to

Kemp High School, attend class reunions. She explained, “That is not their family” (GH, line 88). Paul Jones commented, “For the most part the majority of the Black kids, even in the junior high in Bryan, feel isolated” (PJ, line 558). He explained that since African American children now attend schools that are geographically distributed across a wider area, many of them are bussed out of their neighborhoods. Since the students must rely on a bus to get them home, it is nearly impossible for many of them to participate in after-school activities on campus, “They can’t walk over from here to Bryan High School. Or over by Allen Parkway, it isn’t safe for them to go over the freeway... so they have better facilities but not really the means to use them” (PJ, lines 559-560, 562-563). In a similar vein Christine Green stated, “When we integrated, I missed our annual operettas. And kids didn’t do extracurricular activities as much” (CG, lines 313-314).

Despite such obstacles, the participants modeled an ethic of caring in their ongoing efforts to ensure that students be treated fairly. Related to the subcategory of “academic achievement,” the teachers repeatedly expressed concern over the placement of students in non-college track and remedial courses. Valerie Palmer, Paul Jones, Geneva Ellis and Rose Smith each commented that once placed in lower tracks it was unlikely that students would advance at grade level, and students tended to fall further and further behind. This pattern was especially disturbing given the fact that African American students seemed to be disproportionately placed in lower track classes. Carl Davis remarked that some of the African American students he knew accepted such placements, thinking they would be able to coast through school with little effort. Believing they had “beat the system,” these students unwittingly bought into the schools’ hegemonic practices.

Hegemony in the classical sense refers to the domination of one political group over others, but as Taylor (1996) points out, another definition considers situations in which people follow the lead of others and thereby adhere to expected social practices which serve the interests of the powerful. Antonio Gramsci (1971) developed this second definition while he was held as a political prisoner in fascist Italy during the 1920s and 1930s. Gramsci observed that the political and social elite there gained control by appearing to be natural leaders of the country, so that allegiance was established via compliance rather than by outright coercion. Hegemony is now widely understood as the maintenance of social control not by force, but by more subtle efforts on the part of institutions such as the government, media, churches, and schools. For example, Peter McLaren (1998) has examined schools as institutions where students are often not conscious of the fact that they have given their consent to the dominant group, and where they unknowingly participate in the process of their own subordination.

Sonia Davis related stories that demonstrated her recognition of hegemonic practices at Bryan High School. As described in Chapter VI, a group of African American students informed her that their Elementary Analysis teacher told them up front that she would not give them passing grades. Mrs. Davis advised the students to stay in the class even if it meant receiving low grades, because they would learn more in that class than they would learn in lower level classes. It is interesting to note that Mrs. Davis described these particular students as among the brightest in the school, and yet their White math teacher assumed that they would fail. Mrs. Davis knew it would be difficult for the students to stay in a class where they were not welcome, but she also knew that Elementary Analysis was a required component of the college-bound track. She cared for

the students, and refused to allow them to become accomplices in a system that would have preferred to keep them “in their places.” To disrupt a cycle that would have stunted the students’ educational growth, Mrs. Davis stated, “I worked religiously to make sure that every kid that I thought could make it in college had the courses that would help them get into college” (SD, lines 5445-546).

Geneva Ellis and Paul Jones objected to the use of a bell curve to grade students because it mandated that only a select few students would receive high grades. Christine Green, Valerie Palmer, Michelle Gold, and Rose and Gordon Smith each felt that “watered down” courses disadvantaged African American students in desegregated schools by placing them at the lowest rungs of the educational ladder. As Boykin has pointed out in reference to the sorting function performed by schools, “Children who ostensibly are failing with respect to the reading, writing, and arithmetic curriculum may actually have failed with respect to the hidden curriculum” (2001, p. 193). Boykin notes that African American children are too often relegated to remedial tracks where instruction is centered on the rudiments, and when the children fail to meet educational standards they are blamed for their lack of skills or deemed un-teachable.

Regardless of the grade levels they taught, all of the participants tried to send the message to their students that they viewed them as capable: the teachers anticipated that students would work hard, and that they would be successful. High expectations are a hallmark of caring. When a teacher believes in a student, that student is likely to meet the teacher’s positive expectations. In speaking up to other teachers or to the administration on behalf of students, and by trying to instill in students a belief in their

capabilities, the participants demonstrated that they cared about students' long-term success.

Theme Three: The Trait of Resiliency

The final theme that emerged from the data was that the participants exhibited resiliency throughout their careers. Resiliency theory has been used to understand the successes of African American and other children (e.g. Anderson & Westmoreland, 1999; Barbarin, 1993; Krovetz, 1999), but it also applies to the adult participants in this study. A focus on resiliency theory in recent decades represents a shift from previous educational research perspectives. For example, in the 1960s and 1970s, much of the research on African American education depicted African American students as “deprived” or “disadvantaged.” Lower academic performance, as compared to White or other students, was often described as stemming from a lack of something; lack of parental support, lack of background skills, or lack of cultural knowledge, for instance (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Such research, even when well-intentioned, perpetuated a cultural deficit perspective.

By the 1980s the term “at- risk” came into educational and mainstream parlance, but as Cuban (1989) points out this term continued to place blame on students and/or their families. Huberman (1993) stated that the “at-risk” label has become a sort of shorthand for “problem students” – those who don’t fit in, don’t do well, and in general are a headache for their teachers. Fortunately more recent research has concentrated on identifying the strengths of students. Resiliency theory examines how children who face external obstacles manage to overcome difficulties. Resiliency was described by Werner

(1990) as the ability to overcome the odds and to become competent, confident, caring individuals

Bonnie Benard has made important contributions to the field by arguing that it is inappropriate and ineffective to try to “fix” children, and efforts should instead be focused on creating environments that nurture resiliency. Benard (1991, 1993) envisions resiliency as a set of qualities that promote success. When particular coping mechanisms or protective factors are in place, individuals are better able to face and counter adversities. These factors include social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, and a sense of meaning and purpose.

Social competency includes traits such as a sense of humor, communication skills, an empathetic and caring attitude, flexibility and responsiveness. Possession of these competencies allows children (or others) to build and maintain healthy relationships with others. Problem-solving refers to the ability to recognize the sources of problems and to use flexibility, creativity, insight and planning to tackle the issues. Rather than accept adversity, problem-solvers envision change, muster their resources, and act. This implies critically thinking about the causes of problems. Autonomy describes not only one’s sense of independence, but the ability to be cognizant of negative factors or environments and to distance oneself from them. Autonomy entails having a solid sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy and being able to resist or control the negative. The final factor, a sense of meaning and purpose, encompasses traits such as being goal-directed, motivated, hopeful, and persistent. Often a sense of spirituality is linked to this factor, as individuals’ beliefs in a higher power help them in maintaining coherence in their lives. An important theme in Benard’s work (1997, 2004) is that resiliency both stems from

within and can be learned. Resilient individuals draw on existing strengths to beat the odds, but these traits can be learned and adopted by everyone.

Masten (2001) states that “Resilience does not come from rare and special qualities, but from the everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of children, in the families and relationships in their communities” (p. 237). Relationships are key. In a 40-year longitudinal study, Werner and Smith (1992) reported that the presence of a supportive teacher was second only in importance to a family member in helping children develop resiliency competencies. The presence of a caring teacher was a crucial factor in determining academic and social success for children facing challenges that might otherwise place them at risk of failure. Moreover, teachers who exhibited resiliency themselves provided a model of behaviors for students to emulate in their academic and social lives. I have described how the participants in this study demonstrated an ethic of caring towards their students, and will now turn to an explanation of how the trait of resiliency was manifested in their actions over the course of their careers.

Phase One. The participants in this study were all products of segregated schools. When they were growing up in the South, law and social convention dictated race-based, separate schools for African Americans and Whites. Even though segregated schools had drawbacks, clearly the participants valued education. As adults they chose to become teachers themselves, and they earned their teaching degrees at Historically Black Colleges or Universities because such schools were the only ones that would accept African Americans at the time. Participants had to travel further from home due to this fact, meaning that they had to secure travel funds in addition to their other educational

expenses. The distance also entailed leaving behind family and community support networks. These efforts demonstrate that the participants possessed the “sense of meaning and purpose” resiliency factor. They were goal-directed and driven to succeed. Even when engaged in the teaching profession, many of the participants continued their educations at such distant locations in order to improve themselves. In all cases but one, the participants represent the first generation of college graduates in their families.

In the discussion of the School Environment category in Chapter VI, I described how the participants worked with inadequate or inferior supplies and facilities and how the teachers made the best of the circumstances. Resiliency relates to the subcategory of “making due,” as seen in the teachers’ efforts to compensate for what they lacked in their schools. Drawing on their “problem solving” resiliency factor, the teachers recognized that a lack of current textbooks, for example, would put the students behind academically. Rather than resolve themselves to this fact, teachers supplemented textbook knowledge with their personal knowledge, alternative sources of information, or self-designed curricular materials. Gordon Smith and Valerie Palmer’s husband worked as coaches in Bryan and College Station respectively. Realizing that their schools’ lack of sports equipment would impede athletes, they both arranged to secure donated equipment. In addition, they worked out agreements with local White schools to use their athletic fields for athletic practices and for games.

The teachers used problem solving to improve students’ extra-curricular experiences as well. Valerie Palmer described how at the Lincoln School teachers helped students produce plays by acquiring clothing donations for use as costumes. Props were created from items brought from home or even with materials found outdoors. She

commented, “Well, people were very talented. Even if we didn’t have the equipment, we made it” (VP, line 872). This sort of resourcefulness was described in reference to the production of operettas at the Washington School by Christine Green, and in reference to the planning of prom festivities at Kemp High School by James and Geneva Ellis. Paul Jones recalled that teachers at Neal Junior High brought students to out-of-state music competitions because African Americans were forbidden from participating in competitions in the state of Texas. African American teachers at segregated schools in College Station and Bryan pooled contributions from parents and community members with their personal funds to purchase curricular and extra-curricular supplies. Sonia Davis provided instances when she worked individually to purchase items for specific students. These efforts not only demonstrate the ethic of caring, but indicate creative problem-solving. The participants were resilient, and did not let a lack of money thwart the success of their students.

The teachers’ efforts are also indicative of the “autonomy” resiliency factor. This factor entails having a belief in oneself and a belief that negative circumstances can be overcome. During the segregated era it would have been easy to buy into society’s message that African American students deserved less, but instead of succumbing to this damaging notion the participants believed in their students’ capabilities. Valerie Palmer stated, “They needed a push, and we gave them all we had” (VP, line 201).

Paul Jones said, “You had teachers who wouldn’t let a child say that he couldn’t” (PJ, line 252). The teachers, by having high expectations for their students and by accepting only their best work, taught the students lessons in resiliency. The participants had a high degree of teacher efficacy, and knew that they could positively impact

students. Sonia Davis captured the resiliency of African American teachers at Kemp High School when she commented, “We had high self-esteem, and we were interested, and we could bounce back from anything” (SD, line 411).

Phase Two. The “autonomy” resiliency factor is evident among the participants during the Desegregation Process phase as well. We can see this factor at work in relation to the “job security” subcategory. For instance, during this time of uncertainty many African American teachers in College Station left the area out of well-founded fears of impending job loss. Throughout the country and especially in the South, desegregation resulted in the dismissal of thousands of African American teachers (Messiah, 2000). Since College Station’s school system was small, it was obvious in the late 1960s that integration would have similar consequences there. Valerie Palmer stated, “You could almost see that when integration came, you didn’t have space, so what are you going to do?” (VP, line 417). Rather than wait for what seemed to be inevitable job loss, most of the Lincoln School teachers relocated in order to ensure their employment security. However, Mrs. Palmer grew up in College Station and did not want to leave her home. Mrs. Palmer told me that she felt confident that she would continue to be employed by the system because her work was highly regarded. She did not relate this fact in a boastful manner, but rather her explanation centered on a description of how she felt she could overcome any difficulties a job transfer might present.

The “social competency” resiliency factor involves being able to find humor in or a bright side to negative situations, and being flexible in tackling them. Mrs. Palmer demonstrated such flexibility when she accepted a position as a team-teacher following desegregation. In the subsequent year she was assigned her own classes as the teacher of

record, but she was assigned to teach Transition classes. Later, she had to transfer to a new school. African American teachers in Bryan were told they would be guaranteed a position following desegregation, but that they would have to go where placed. Each of the participants in Bryan found that they had to change work locations, and many of them were assigned to teach grades that they had never formerly taught (see Table 4.3).

Individuals who were less flexible and resilient might not have been able to cope with these changes, or they might have decided to leave the teaching profession. The participants in this study stayed the course. Paul Jones continued to teach for five years following desegregation, and the other teachers stayed in the profession until they retired. For most participants, this meant that they continued to teach for well over a decade after desegregation.

Phase Three. The trait of resiliency is evident in the final phase in relation to the Roles of Teachers category. As noted above, desegregation and its attendant job transfers entailed that the participants reinvent themselves. Many had to learn new subject area content or learn new grade level material. This could not have been easy, especially when given little advance notice. In addition, the participants had to adjust to teaching White students for the first time, and they had to learn how to fit in as a member of a new faculty. Whereas the participants had been surrounded by African American colleagues when they worked at segregated schools, following desegregation the teachers became minority teachers among a sea of White teachers. The ability to withstand and excel amidst all these changes demonstrates an amazing degree of the problem-solving resiliency trait.

Gloria Hicks, Geneva Ellis and Michelle Gold each mentioned that good teachers see teaching as a calling, not just a profession. This view is related to the “meaning and purpose” resiliency factor. Often resilient people are able to persevere because they credit a higher power with having an interest in and control over their lives (Benard, 1997, 2004). During interviews I never inquired about individual’s religious beliefs, but participants frequently made reference to their faith in God. For instance, events were described as blessings, or participants recalled praying for assistance or guidance. In commenting on her initial dissatisfaction with being transferred to a new school, Sonia Davis stated, “When I got there, after two or three days I realized that God had sent me there. It was the best job that I’ve ever had in my life” (SD, lines 239-240). Participants also mentioned church in reference to encounters with their students and co-workers. In many cases interior decorations in the teachers’ homes had religious motifs. The participants’ faith in a power above boosted their resiliency as teachers, and continues to help them navigate their lives. For more than a year following our interview, I received periodic emails from Mrs. Green in which she offered blessings and shared comfort-inducing religious sentiments. I felt blessed indeed to be included in her email address book and flattered that she wished to send me good cheer.

The meaning and purpose trait is also manifested in the fact that, for the participants, teaching was the most meaningful work they could have possibly chosen. They worked hard to earn their credentials at the beginnings of their careers, continued to “update” themselves via professional development and often felt they had to prove their qualifications following desegregation. Nonetheless, in comments pertaining the “social positioning” subcategory participants related that the teaching profession was viewed

with less esteem in desegregated settings than it had been at segregated schools. Geneva Ellis commented, “We didn’t get the same respect from the community later” (GE, line 352). Despite this stance, Mrs. Ellis continued to feel that her job was important because it gave her intrinsic satisfaction.

Regarding the subcategory of “academic achievement,” interviewees revealed a strong sense of the “autonomy” resiliency trait. The participants knew that they had the power to positively influence the lives of young people and they used their positions as teachers, coaches and counselors to help students to succeed. For example, Mrs. Green spoke up to her principal about a co-workers’ comments on some students’ records because she did not want negative remarks to impact the students’ futures. Assistant Principal Carl Davis spoke frankly with African American students when he warned them that they needed to exhibit exemplary behavior because they could not get away with acting up in the manner of some of the White students at Bryan High School. In verbalizing this social reality, Mr. Davis was laying out the unspoken “rules of the game” so that the students could have a chance to participate in the game. Sonia Davis “worked religiously” (SD, line 545) to ensure that African American students took the requisite courses for college admissions. In some cases this meant counseling students to stay in classes where the teachers were clearly biased against them. Mrs. Davis was focused on long-term outcomes, and by advising students to take difficult courses she conveyed the message that she expected them to persevere.

Discussion of the Findings

The themes described above were generated from a close reading of interview transcriptions with an eye towards identifying commonalities in the participants’

experiences. The concepts of double consciousness, caring, and resiliency stem from my understandings and interpretations of the teachers' words: the teacher's themselves did not necessarily use these words themselves, although some of them did. In particular, they used terminology evocative of caring and resiliency.

I chose to use Dr. Du Bois' concept of double consciousness to describe the participants' experiences because it precisely describes the feelings the educators related to me during our conversations. It became clear that the teachers led complicated lives, not by choice, but due to the realities of social conditions in Texas. While teaching in segregated schools they had to "do whatever the White man said," according to Sonia Davis. African American principals at their schools wanted to make sure that the teachers' practices would be beyond reproach, knowing full well that they were the objects of scrutiny. During the period when desegregation was pending, the African American teachers had little or no control over where and how they would be employed when changes were made. And once the participants became cross-over teachers, many of them found that administrators assumed they would be best suited as disciplinarians or teachers of fundamental courses, indicative of their preconceived roles and abilities.

After noting the applicability of the notion of double consciousness to the participants of this study, I attempted to see if others had noticed similar instances among African American teachers elsewhere. I found few references in the literature. Lee, Lomotey and Shujaa (1990) reported on the presence of a double consciousness in teachers at a contemporary Afrocentric program. Caldwell and Stewart (2001) described how double consciousness currently impacts faculty of color at institutions of higher education. Obidah (2003) finds that this concept well describes the identity struggles she

and other African Americans face in a society in which members of dominant groups impose their perceptions and expectations on people of color.

The ethic of caring by African American teachers, on the other hand, is well documented in the literature on segregated schools (e.g. Duren, 2002; Pitts, 2003; Walker & Thompkins, 2004). Research on African American students' views of their experiences points to the powerful affect of caring teachers during their years at segregated schools (Morris & Morris, 2002; Williamson, 2005). Therefore the descriptions of caring in this study concur with existing literature about the segregated era. Moreover, I found evidence that the participants demonstrated an ethic of caring regardless of the settings in which they worked.

We have seen that the participants worked long and hard to nurture their students, going above and beyond the call of duty, when they taught in segregated schools. When asked about their memories of how they felt when desegregation was pending, the African American educators repeatedly invoked concern with how their students would adjust. This indicated to me that they put the welfare of the children above that of their own. Once they worked in desegregated schools, the educators continued to look out for the best interests of African American (and other) students by building up their self esteem and helping them to counter hegemonic practices.

The final theme, resiliency, resonates throughout the participants' narratives. It took a strong, goal-oriented person to find the funds for, travel to, and graduate from a college or university that accepted African Americans during the era in which the participants were earning their teaching credentials. Some of the participants returned to their home towns, using their skills to help children in their own neighborhoods. During

the days of segregation, the educators faced various obstacles in their professional lives, but they rose to the occasion. Moreover, they modeled success to the students in their charge. As they awaited word on where they would be placed following desegregation, the participants may have felt ill at ease or anxious, yet they also knew that they would survive any changes. Following desegregation, the teachers continued to use a sense of humor and optimism to face new challenges. Expected to conform to the social and pedagogical practices of White schools, they steadfastly retained their senses of resolve. In looking back on her education in both desegregated schools and at a HBCU, Cozart (2003) commented, “I began to understand how a strong sense of self-worth can allow you to avoid suspicions of inadequacy and how freeing it must be to not see yourself as part of a poorly reputed group” (p. 20).

To my knowledge, resiliency theory has not been applied to studies of African American teachers across the span of their careers in segregated and desegregated schools. There are few such studies to speak of, and the authors of works that provide first-hand accounts of African American teachers’ experiences have focused on other issues. However, a recent dissertation by Ramon-Reuthinger (2005) applied the concept of resiliency to the narratives of Mexican American educators in Texas. In a similar vein, her participants were members of a socially marginalized group, and yet their belief in the power of education led them to pursue teaching as a career and to become exemplars of the profession. The author reported similar findings to those outlined here, in that her participants drew on their inner resources (resiliency traits) to overcome obstacles throughout the duration of their many years of teaching.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I reviewed the essential elements of the holistic-content method of narrative analysis in order to describe how I discerned overarching patterns across the participants' collective transcriptions. I then commented on literature related to each of the themes that I found; the notion of a double consciousness, the ethic of caring, and resiliency theory. The findings of the study section of the chapter detailed examples of how these themes were manifested among the participants' narratives, throughout the duration of their careers, and this was followed by a discussion of the findings. In the final chapter of this study, I address my conclusions regarding the African American educators' overall experiences while teaching in Bryan and College Station, Texas by offering a model for understanding the changes they underwent.

CHAPTER VIII
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The intent of this project was to give voice to African American educators in two central Texas towns by offering thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of their experiences during the years 1954 to 1975. This was accomplished by providing the reader with the verbatim participant comments included in Chapters VI and VII. In addition, the findings detailed in those chapters represent my interpretations of the participants' words based on critical reflections on what I was told.

In this final chapter, I provide a conclusion to the study by considering the collective stories of the African American teachers. I first describe the manner in which participants recalled events, and then offer a model for understanding the participants' experiences. I suggest that the circumstances they lived through can be likened to an inverted version of a rite of passage, in which the educators underwent a shift in their identities. I then relate a story from my own school years in order to link the participants' stories to the educational system as a whole. Finally, the chapter concludes with recommendations for future research. Even though the study is case specific, there are numerous possibilities for tying it to other research or for extending the project.

How Participants Recalled Events

As Teski and Climo (1996) have pointed out, memory is complex and can include recall, forgetting, and reconstruction. When individuals tell their stories they selectively relate information. According to narrative researchers (e.g. Briggs, 1986; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), it is important to not only listen to what people say, but to how they say

it. For example, one should pay attention to repetition, hesitations, or qualifying words as they hint at the feelings attached to words. In conducting the interviews reported on here, I was not merely asking the participants to exercise their senses of recall. Some of the questions posed were deliberately designed to tap into the teachers' opinions about events. Moreover, memory is never strictly removed from emotion since by its very nature memory is embedded in experience. Some participants' emotions seemed fresh, while others seemed to experience them anew during our conversations.

For example, Paul Jones stated during our interview, "I'm trying to be as factual as I can, but by being a part of that period you can't just be totally factual. Because you've got a lot of emotions tied up into it" (PJ, lines 533-534). This statement can be contrasted with a line from my interview with Christine Green. I asked her how she felt about transferring to a new school and she replied, "I haven't thought about that in years. I had mixed emotions" (CG, line 103). Some of the participants have been interviewed about their experiences teaching in segregated and desegregated schools on many occasions, while others have not thought these years in a long time. It is possible that they have not wanted to think about some of these experiences, as they bring up painful memories.

Research Question One

The first specific research question asked; What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in segregated schools? When considering each time period of the study- or phase - as a whole and comparing the phases to each other, I was struck by the fact that even though Phase One (desegregated schools) took place the furthest back in time, participants had the most to say about this period. Their responses

tended to be lengthier, and there was a higher level of detail in their descriptions of events during this time compared to the other phases. It seemed as if the passage of time allowed the participants to let their guards down and to worry less about being politically correct when they spoke of occurrences during this time. In addition, there was a high level of agreement among participants about their experiences. Moreover, it was during Phase One that participants were most likely to describe things in absolute terms. For example, teachers used phrases such as “very, very much so” and “absolutely not.” This is true despite the fact that the teachers worked at different campuses.

As I am about a decade younger than even the youngest of the participants, a large gap exists between my own educational and life experiences and those of the African American teachers I interviewed. I began kindergarten in 1967, at which point most of the interviewees had already been working for decades. My role as a researcher and my social positioning as a White person also separate us. This gap is most obvious in regards to the segregation period. Although I am widely read on the subject, I found that my own experiences gave me little background for understanding what the participants lived and felt during that era. I am also not a native Southerner: I grew up in a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio. It may be due to this obvious lack of personal knowledge on my part that teachers provided rich details when discussing the segregation phase – they were trying to educate me. In addition, when one considers the cumulative years that the participants spent as students in segregated public schools and colleges prior to beginning their careers as teachers in segregated schools, the “scale” of their experiences becomes tipped towards the segregation phase even if they worked in desegregated schools for two decades or more.

Research Question Two

The second specific research question asked; What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding how the desegregation process was implemented in their schools and/or communities? As teachers and as parents, one might expect that local desegregation efforts would have stood out to the participants. I was surprised to find that responses to questions about Phase Two (the desegregation process) tended to be less certain, since the questions still centered on the participants' personal experiences. Participants tended to answer questions more tentatively, and some stated that they could not remember events clearly. Participants seemed less detailed, knowledgeable or even concerned about the middle phase despite having lived through it and being directly affected by the desegregation process. In an effort to prompt participants' recall, I made comments on my understanding of events as garnered from documents. The teachers would either then remember and agree, or state that although they did not remember, what I said seemed likely. I believe this pattern is due to several factors.

Lawsuits may have resulted in Step Plans and Freedom of Choice plans, but these had no significant consequences for the teachers. The demographics of the students at that their schools remained the same, and only a few worked with White cross-over teachers. As teachers the participants would have been aware of lawsuits or other forms of community activism, but they could not be political "agitators" for desegregation themselves without risking unemployment. It likely would not have been prudent to even associate with activists. In addition, throughout the country scores of African American teachers lost their jobs when their school districts integrated (Haney, 1978; Hudson, 1994) and thus contemporary talk of plans to desegregate the schools may have provoked

anxieties in the teachers. It would not be surprising if participants pushed recollections of this conflicted time to the margins of their memories. Recall of the fires that damaged or destroyed African American schools was clearer. I believe this is due to the fact that the fires put a rapid end to the foot-dragging and resulted in changes that immediately impacted the participants.

Research Question Three

The third specific research question asked; What were the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in desegregated schools? In regards to this question, I discovered that participants frequently couched their responses about their experiences during Phase Three (desegregated schools) in terms of how they compared to their memories of working in segregated schools. This might be expected to some degree, as the study and the interview protocol sought to illuminate changes over time. However, many of the comparison statements cannot be attributed to the phrasing of the questions. For example, when asked about how he got along with administrators at Bryan High School, Gordon Smith answered, “It wasn’t like at Kemp. The principals there, they were tough on us. They were tough. I mean they were tough” (GS, lines 279-280). This use of absolute phrasing to describe conditions during Phase One is noticeably absent in responses to questions about Phase Three. Self-generated comparison statements such as these led me to believe that the teachers themselves tended to think of their careers as being divided into “before” and “after” segregation components.

While statements about Phase One provided thick descriptions and comments related to Phase Two were often tenuous, remarks concerning the desegregation phase

could fit both descriptions. For example, when asked about relations with White teachers, a participant stated succinctly that she got along very well with her White co-workers. She later related stories, however, that indicated that she felt that some of the White teachers were disrespectful to their principal, were less qualified to teach, and that they harbored prejudicial feelings towards African American students. In other cases participants remarked that working in a desegregated setting differed little from working in a segregated school, yet they later stated that they were re-positioned in the role of disciplinarian in schools which essentially thwarted them from actually exercising disciplinary actions.

I believe these seeming contradictions can be explained by the tensions participants felt. They knew they were exemplary teachers but sensed that others had suspicions regarding their abilities. In addition, African American teachers had to merge into existing faculties at unfamiliar campuses, becoming “new kids on the block” despite their extensive credentials. They did not place themselves there by choice, but rather were physically placed and socially re-positioned by external circumstances. Social positioning is, indeed, a factor which impacted the participants at several turns during their careers.

The Paradox of an Inverted Rite of Passage

Chapter VII addressed the guiding research question, which asked; What can African American educators share about their teaching experiences in the selected small-town Texas schools during the years 1954 to 1975? I detailed my interpretations of the participants’ narratives in terms of three themes; the notion of a double consciousness, the ethic of caring, and the use of resiliency traits to overcome adversity. In considering

the experiences of the teachers, whose years of service spanned across decades, an additional model for understanding their stories emerged.

I suggest that the circumstances attendant with living and working in segregated, and later, desegregated settings, impacted the participants at a deep, core level. As society changed around them, the African American teachers reacted and adapted to the changes, undergoing a shift in their identities. A comparison can be made to a rite of passage. I will describe rites of passage in their traditional sense below, and then describe how the participants underwent a particular, altered version of this process, which I term an “inverted rite of passage.”

French anthropologist Arnold van Gennep conceptualized a pattern for ritualized life events in his seminal work, *Rites of Passage* (1909). He noted that the life of an individual in any society is a series of passages from one age to another, or from one position to another. These passages are ritually marked in order to express their importance to not only the individuals involved, but to others in the society of which they are a member. Van Gennep’s idea has since been developed by other scholars, whom have applied the concept to various societies and to numerous life events. For instance Victor Turner (1969), who conducted many years of fieldwork in Zambia, wrote detailed accounts of funeral and circumcision rituals among the Ndembu.

Davis-Floyd (1994) describes passage rites as, “a series of rituals through which individuals are conveyed from one social state or status to another, thereby transforming both society’s perception of the individual and the individual’s perception of herself or himself” (p. 148). For instance, she described birth as a rite of passage for three individuals; a baby who is born, a woman who takes on the new role of being a mother,

and a man who is socially transformed into a father. Other examples of passage rites include Native American vision quests, Australian Aborigine walk-about, Christian baptisms, Jewish bar and bat mitzvahs, weddings, boot camp in the armed services and being inducted into a fraternity by ritual hazing. Each involves an evolution in which people undergo changes in social status, such as from childhood to adulthood or from non-member to member.

Rites of passage have three phases; separation, liminality (sometimes called marginality), and incorporation (sometimes called aggregation). Participants begin the first phase with one status or identity, and towards the end of the period they begin to withdraw from their group. This withdrawal may be in the actual physical sense or in a ritual sense, and in either case it marks a process of identity realignment. In the final phase, the individual re-enters their society as a “new” person, with an elevated social standing. During the middle and most interesting phase, liminality, initiates are neither here nor there. They are betwixt and between, as they cannot go back to how things were, but, they have not yet become a new person. The transitional realm has few traits of either the past or of future states. Often liminality involves a test of fortitude in which initiates must prove themselves.

Following this analogy, we can see that the participants underwent an inverted version of a traditional rite of passage. They were involved in transformations of their identities as teachers, yet because they did not undergo this process by choice the outcomes were somewhat ambiguous or paradoxical. During the segregated era or Phase One, the participants were quite secure in their identities as teachers. Their narratives illustrate that they were hard-working, dedicated, and resourceful. They enjoyed positive

relations with their students and were respected in their communities. As the school districts in Bryan and College Station, Texas, became the objects of lawsuits, “desegregation was in the air,” as one participant described the times. When African American schools became the targets of arson, it became obvious that the educational systems would soon change.

During Phase Two, when the districts in which the participants worked in were phasing in desegregation plans, the teachers were unsure of what would happen to them. They were in limbo, and had little control over how they would be positioned in the future. This was especially true in College Station, where the school board made no guarantees that African American teachers would continue to be employed. As it turned out, all of the participants except one were compelled to leave their familiar schools. Valerie Palmer stated that she felt “dissected” when she had to leave the Lincoln school. Several participants (Christine Green, Sonia Davis, Paul Jones and James Ellis) used the word “floating” to describe how African American teachers felt at the time.

An attribute of most rites of passage is that individuals pass from one distinct state or status to another one, and that each condition is well defined (Bohannon, 1992). In contrast to most people who undergo rites of passage, however, the teachers’ period of liminality was not clearly demarcated. They continued to feel elements of social separateness during Phase Three, when they worked in desegregated schools. Rather than emerging from a period of liminality with a heightened status in their group, they were placed in a situation where they were expected to conform to an altogether different group. Yet, importantly, they were never fully “invited” to fully join the new group due to the ongoing, pervasive discrimination which is the reality of U.S. society. Generett

(2003) has noted that when segregated, African American schools closed and their students transferred to White schools, the students lost not only their buildings, but their traditions, mascots, and cultural markers. Students were compelled to assimilate, “As a result, desegregated schools emulated the values, traditions, political ideologies and cultural orientations of former White schools” (p. 96).

Thus far the literature has failed to note that many African American teachers likewise suffered such losses. The participants of this study became African American teachers on overwhelmingly White faculties. In most cases they were placed in schools that formerly excluded African American students and teachers, and where the student and teacher population was majority White. Some of the educators were re-assigned to teach different grade levels than they had taught before, necessitating that they “re-invent” themselves. Several were assigned to teach remedial courses. Some found their qualifications as teachers, which were previously well established, to be questioned. Whereas the teachers had previously been role models, following desegregation they had to work doubly hard to prove themselves in the eyes of others, in settings where even the most respected teachers held less clout than did educators in African American communities. In contrast to most rites of passage, the African American educators suffered a *loss* of status, rather than an elevation of status, after enduring a liminal phase.

These difficulties may explain why participants so often described events during Phase Three in terms of how they contrasted with conditions in Phase One. Despite noted inequalities of conditions in segregated schools, the participants seemed to pine for what was lost. While I am sure that none of the teachers would advocate a return to a dual school system based on race, the teachers concurred that segregated schools offered

students benefits less tangible than but more important than things such as new school supplies. These benefits extended to them as teachers as well, as expressed in Valerie Palmer's statement that teaching at Lincoln constituted "the good old days" (VP, line 927). Christine Green commented, "I could not work in the schools today" (CG, line 212). The fact that the participants (in all cases but one) continued to teach for many years following desegregation is testament to their fortitude and to their devotion to their work and students.

A Personal Story: Critical Reflection on Conformity and Conflict in Schools

In the course of working on this project, I often found myself thinking back to my own life and educational experiences. Groves (2003) has commented, "Critical ethnographers often look to their own lives in the process of trying to create meaning and make sense of what is seen and heard in the field" (p. 113). I discovered that the information I gleaned from conducting the study allowed me to deconstruct an incident that occurred when I was elementary school. I relate my own story in order to demonstrate how a critical lens can be used to illuminate discriminatory practices in the educational system. Smith and Paul have noted that, "In the act of telling our stories, we make dimensions of schooling visible which have long been obscured in our focus on methods rather than meanings" (2000, p. 11). The story below also touches on the themes I discerned among my research participants' narratives.

For years I have harbored negative feelings, and even lingering resentment, towards my second grade teacher. It was during the second grade that I was told I had poor mathematics skills. According to my teacher, whom I shall call Mrs. Rivers (all names have been changed), I needed to be separated from the class for specialized

instruction on the rudiments of fraction concepts. I was therefore sent during part of the day to the school's other second grade teacher's class. In joining Mrs. Noel's class all of a sudden, I felt conspicuous and out of place. I also felt shame. What had I failed to do that merited such distancing from my classmates? Despite my trepidation, Mrs. Noel made me feel welcome in her class. She also explained math in a way that made the proverbial light bulb come on by using pie charts and manipulatives to explain ideas. She repeated concepts until I grasped them, all in a way that did not patronize but rather encouraged. I can't say that I like math today, but due to Mrs. Noel some of the shame melted away. I realized that even if I wasn't so great at that particular subject it did not mean that I was stupid. I was able to realize this due to Mrs. Noel's caring approach. Mrs. Noel was my first African American teacher.

Back in Mrs. River's class, I was again given the message that I was somehow inadequate. Why did I try my shoes the "wrong" way? Why did I occasionally say words with a Yankee accent (I spent formative years in Massachusetts)? Once, we had an assignment in which we were to color in a picture according to written prompts, such as "color the boy's shoes brown." Frankly, I found the worksheet juvenile and I finished it quickly. I decided to use my spare time to produce a really terrific piece of art. Surely Mrs. Rivers would then see my talent, I reasoned. The worksheet instructed me to "color the girl's hair red." My sister has red hair, so I knew that in real life redheads have orange, copper and brown highlights in their hair and I therefore designed my masterpiece accordingly. To this day, I still feel the pain of Mrs. River's rejection when she called me to her desk to scold me for not following directions literally. I learned that day not to try to go against the mold that school authorities had determined for me.

Mrs. Rivers was prone to coughing fits. In hindsight, I realized these occurred when she was agitated. Also in hindsight, I realized that they were brought on especially frequently by Eddie Franklin, one of the few African American students in the class. Eddie was a quiet, even meek little boy who always seemed to do what he was told. He was by far the neatest dressed boy in the class, if not in the whole school. In a day when girls could not wear slacks of any kind, most of the boys in my class came to school in jeans. In contrast, Eddie wore dress pants, a starched white shirt and a tie and dress shoes. I couldn't figure out why, but it was obvious to me even then that Mrs. Rivers did not like Eddie and that he was fearful of her. One day when we were doing individual work at our desks, Mrs. Rivers disappeared into the cloak room. I noticed this since my desk was in the row that was closest to the cloak room. For some reason I went into the cloakroom and I discovered that she had Eddie in her clutches, literally grasping him by the neck and lifting him off the ground as if she intended to strangle him. Mrs. Rivers was coughing to the point that her face was red and tears were in the corners of her eyes. Eddie was suffering silently, and when he saw me he looked embarrassed. Mrs. Rivers yelled at me to return to my desk, and I did. Why did I not help Eddie that day? Would Mrs. Rivers have been punished if I had told on her, or would she change her ways? I will never know because I took the easy way out and remained silent and obedient, an in-action that I regret today.

I related the above story in order to illustrate examples of how the themes and theoretical frameworks of this study relate to my own experiences, despite the fact that I am White and attended public schools in the North. Regarding double-consciousness and resiliency, I believe that Mrs. Noel had to struggle with some of the same issues as did

the teachers I interviewed. She would have attended segregated schools as a child and received the attendant message that African Americans were deemed second-class citizens. She was the sole African American on the faculty of my elementary school, and had to have known that she stood out. The overwhelming majority of her pupils were White. In a school system that had a very high image of itself, she would have had to work hard to gain employment there. In order for Mrs. Noel to overcome these obstacles she must have been quite resilient. Obidah (1998) described her struggle of living in a society which constantly imposes preconceived ideas on African Americans as living in a “realm of ghosts, where the key to survival lies in constant reminders to yourself that you do indeed exist” (2003, p. 45).

Mrs. Noel clearly loved her job and modeled an ethic of caring for her students. She tried to make me feel good about myself and her efforts made a positive impact on my life during that otherwise dreadful school year. For years afterwards Mrs. Noel went out of her way to greet me at church, truly interested in how I was faring, even though I was only in her class for a short time. I wish that Eddie Franklin could have been in her class. How might things have been different for him if he had been placed in a class with a teacher who did not resent him on sight? Instead of being in a situation where he had to adopt submission and silence as survival mechanisms, he would have been embraced by someone who shared aspects of his identity and whom genuinely cared for his well-being. He could have lifted the veil to see his positive self, rather than hide behind it in order to avoid harassment.

Although this story of my own and of Eddie Franklin’s experiences relates to events that took place in the early 1970s (coincidentally, in the same year that Bryan was

preparing to finally desegregate its schools), it would hardly be a stretch of the imagination to suggest that similar scenarios of conformity and conflict continue to play out in contemporary times. It took many legal actions to initiate desegregation in this country, but laws alone cannot change long-standing social conventions. Too often children of color, or others who don't "fit in," are made to feel that something is wrong with them and that they had better learn to adjust to the system. Along the way, they are forced to sacrifice parts of themselves.

Final Comments

Following *Brown v. Board of Education* thousands of African American educators were dismissed from their jobs, and in the intervening decades progressively smaller numbers of African Americans have elected to enter the teaching profession (Irvine, 1990; King, 1993; Larke & Larke, 1995). Reasons for this attrition are beyond the scope of this study, but it is important to note that the limited presence of African American teachers poses a problem. Approximately 87 percent of educators today are White (Marshall, 2002), and many teachers have inadequate background knowledge for understanding their African American students (Ibrahim, 2006). Nor have teacher preparation programs, where 86 percent of the students are White (Ladson-Billings, 2001), achieved the goal of graduating culturally competent individuals (Larke & Webb-Johnson, 1996). In proportion to their numbers in the school-aged population, African American students today have too few teachers who share their cultural backgrounds.

Fortunately, in recent decades researchers (e.g. Beaubouef-Lafontant, 1999; Haynes & Comer, 1990) have focused on identifying effective teaching practices for this group of students. One branch of this scholarship argues that we can learn by listening to

the stories of successful teachers of African American students (e.g. Foster, 1990; Irvine, 2002). For example, teachers' high expectations for students, culturally responsive pedagogical methods and sense of caring, moral support have been credited with fostering academic achievement. These are the very same characteristics exhibited by the participants in this study, and are the same traits that have been noted by other scholars who have interviewed African American teachers who once taught in segregated schools. How is it that, over time, we seem to have forgotten the importance of these factors in promoting success among African American students?

Walker (1996b) states that the "national memory" of segregated schools has focused on their inequalities, such as discrepancies in teacher salaries and a lack of adequate supplies. Such inequalities certainly existed, but this national memory has eclipsed the positive factors associated with segregated schools. During segregation, African American teachers had more autonomy over their classrooms than they do today. Generett shared the following quote from a retired African American teacher, Mrs. Lacewell, "The greatest benefit we had during segregation, and the thing that was taken away, was our freedom to run schools that were best for our children" (2003, p. 95). Pitts (2003) and Cecelski (1994) both document events in towns in which African Americans fought, ultimately unsuccessfully, to maintain their segregated schools because they recognized the superior educational opportunities they offered.

As these authors' research participants explained, it wasn't the quality of supplies in the schools that was important, rather it was what occurred within the schools. Namely, a) teachers viewed students as capable, b) teachers set high standards for their students and provided them with the means to achieve them, and c) teachers cared not

only about students' intellectual development, but also about their personal growth. There is much to be learned by listening to those who encouraged and skillfully instructed students during the days of segregation. If we attend to the voices of educators who helped students to achieve, despite working within an educational and social system that worked against them, perhaps we can recapture the positive elements that seem to have been lost.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study attempted to relate the experiences of African American educators working in schools located in two small communities in central Texas during the years 1954 to 1975. In particular, the study reported on the perceptions of African American educators regarding teaching in segregated schools, their recollections of the desegregation process, and their perceptions of teaching in desegregated schools. There are numerous ways in which scholars could continue the research initiated in this inquiry. Some possible directions are suggested below.

1) Research could be focused on one or more selected participants in this study, using narrative inquiry to explore in-depth the life and educational history of the individuals. The participants are deep sources of knowledge, and much could be learned from their experiences. It would be interesting to compare the narratives of male and female teachers.

2) The information provided in this study could be analyzed using qualitative software such as NVivo, Qualrus, or AtlasTI. I experimented with two of these programs but found that I felt too removed from the data, perhaps because I am a kinesthetic learner and enjoy shuffling scraps of paper and writing my thoughts out in long-hand.

Other researchers, however, might find that a computer program assists them in generating new interpretations of the data.

3) An attempt could be made to find and interview the African American teachers who left College Station shortly before or immediately following desegregation. Such teachers could provide additional information regarding teaching at the Lincoln School to help flesh out the stories told by Mrs. Palmer. It would be interesting to learn of their experiences in the schools to which they transferred.

4) This project was concerned with the perceptions of African American teachers, but White teachers in Bryan and College Station could offer additional perspectives. There were a few White cross-over teachers who worked at Neal Junior High. In addition, one could interview White teachers in an effort to learn their opinions of the desegregation process or the early days of faculty desegregation following student desegregation.

5) Other stakeholders could be located and interviewed. For example, principals and superintendents would likely have different viewpoints than did teachers. The parents of African American students could also shed light on the three phases of the study from a different perspective. Particularly compelling would be studies that explore the experiences of African American students who attended formerly-White schools during the Step Plan and Freedom of Choice programs.

6) Possibilities for longitudinal studies also exist. These might include investigations into the lives of African American students who attended segregated facilities for the duration of their schooling versus students who attended both segregated and desegregated schools. For example, James and Geneva Ellis are the products of

segregated schools in Bryan, but their children attended both segregated and desegregated schools in the community. Most of the participants have children who fit this description.

7) To add to the literature on events in Texas, research could be conducted in other small Texas towns. To date, little has been written on circumstances in the state, and research has focused on urban centers.

8) In a similar vein, interested scholars could conduct case studies of life in both segregated and desegregated schools in smaller communities elsewhere in the nation to help fill the gap in the literature.

The present study represents one account of African American teachers' perceptions regarding working in segregated and desegregated schools, as well as their recollections of the implementation of desegregation plans. The information provided stems from teachers who were employed in a chosen geographic area, and is therefore site-specific. Additional in-depth, case studies would help illuminate what occurred elsewhere so that a greater understanding of events during these periods could be gained. African American teachers have a wealth of wisdom from which much can be learned, but potential research participants are growing fewer in number with each passing year. Those interested in adding to the literature and extending our knowledge must act on their interests not only "with all deliberate speed" but with a sense of urgency.

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APPENDIX A**REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION FORM LETTER**

Hilary Standish
Address
Address
Date

Dear Mr. Or Mrs. XXX,

My name is Hilary Standish and I am working on a doctorate at Texas A&M University in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture. I am a student of Dr. Patricia J. Larke, and I am in the process of gathering data for my dissertation study. Your name was given to me by Mrs. XXX as someone who might be willing to help me by providing information.

I am hoping to interview a number of people who served as teachers in the local area sometime during the period of 1954 to the 1975. I am interested in the experiences of teachers who worked in Bryan or College Station schools during segregation, the time of transition and in desegregated schools. The information I get will serve two purposes: 1) it will be used in my dissertation, and 2) with participants' permission, interview transcripts will become a part of the collection of the future African American Heritage Museum being established by Mrs. XXX.

I would greatly appreciate having your story as a part of this history. The interview would take about an hour, and I have attached a list of questions I plan to explore to give you an idea of what kinds of subjects would come up. Could you please look over the list, and think about whether you would be willing to talk with me? Also, if you know other people who might want to share, kindly let me know. I will be contacting you by phone in the next week. In the meantime, if you have any questions for me, please feel free to call me at home at 846-0180.

Sincerely,

Hilary Standish

Patricia J. Larke

APPENDIX B**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

For participation in research being conducted for a Ph.D. dissertation to be entitled:
“A Case Study of the Voices of African American Teachers in Two Texas Communities
During and After Desegregation, 1954 to 1975.”

I have been asked to participate in a research study about the experiences and perspectives of African American teachers who taught in Bryan or College Station, Texas schools during the period of 1954 to 1975. I understand that approximately ten individuals will be interviewed for this project. I was selected to be a possible participant because I taught in a local school(s) at some point during that time frame. The purpose of this study is to find out what life was like for teachers in the years following the *Brown v. Board of Education* U.S. Supreme Court ruling. I understand that the researcher is interested in understanding the viewpoints of teachers who taught when schools were segregated despite the ruling, which stated that segregated schools were illegal, and teachers who taught in the years after the school systems eventually integrated.

If I agree to be in this study, I will be asked to describe my experiences and feelings about topics such as classroom atmosphere, teacher and student relations, and my opinion of the impact of the *Brown* ruling. I understand that I will be interviewed by the researcher in my home or in a mutually agreeable public location. If I agree, I understand the researcher will tape record our conversation and transcribe the interview tapes. If I agree, the transcriptions will be donated to the future African American National Heritage Society Museum in Bryan, Texas. I can disagree with either of these conditions. My involvement in the study will consist of one to three interview sessions. These would range from thirty minutes to ninety minutes each. There are no risks associated with the study. There are also no benefits or financial compensation for my participation.

I understand that this study will be confidential. The researcher will use an alias name at my request when writing the dissertation. The records of this study will be kept private, unless I consent to the researcher sharing my interview audiotape recordings and/or written interview transcriptions with the Museum on separate consent forms. No identifiers linking me to the study will be included in any sort of published report. Research records will be stored securely and only the principle investigator, Hilary Standish, and her committee chair, Dr. Patricia J. Larke, will have access to the records. My decision of whether or not to participate will not affect my current or future relationships with Texas A&M University. If I decide to participate, I am free to refuse to answer any questions that may make me feel uncomfortable. I can withdraw at any time

CONSENT FORM, CONTINUED

without my relations with the university, job, benefits, or other factors being affected. I can contact Hilary Standish or Dr. Patricia J. Larke with any questions I have regarding this study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board – Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, I can contact the Institutional Review Board through Dr. Michael W. Buckley, Director of Research Compliance, Office of the Vice President for Research at (979) 845-8585 or at mwbuckley@tamu.edu

I have read the above information. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this consent document and any other applicable consent/refusal forms for my records. By signing this document and initialing both pages, I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Any questions or concerns can be directed to the principle investigator or her committee chair at the addresses and numbers listed below:

Hilary Standish
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843
(979) 845-0853
hstandish@neo.tamu.edu

Patricia J. Larke
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843
(979) 845-2171
plarke@neo.tamu.edu

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM



Office of Research Compliance
 Academy for
 Advanced
 Telecommunication
 and Learning
 Technologies
 Center for Information
 Assurance and Security
 Comparative Medicine Program
 Institute for
 Scientific Computation
 Institute for Telecommunications
 and Information Technology
 Integrative Center for
 Homeland Security
 Microscopy Imaging Center
 Office of Business Administration
 Office of Distance Education
 Office of Graduate Studies
 Office of Organizational
 Development and Diversity
 Office of Proposal Development
 Office of Sponsored Projects
 Professional Development Group
 Technology Commercialization
 Center
 Texas A&M University
 Research Park

Date January 31, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Hilary A. Standish
 Dept. of Teaching, Learning & Culture
 MS 4232

FROM: Dr. E. Murl Bailey, CIP, Advisor
 Institutional Review Board
 MS 1112

SUBJECT: IRB Protocol Review

Title: A Case Study of the Voices of African American Teachers in Two Texas Communities During and After Segregation, 1954-1975

Protocol Number: 2004-0053

Review Category: Exempt from Full Review

Approval Date: February 19, 2005 to February 18, 2006

The approval determination was based on the following Code of Federal Regulations
<http://ohrp.osoph.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 46.101(b)(1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 46.101(b)(4)
<input type="checkbox"/> 46.101(b)(2)	<input type="checkbox"/> 46.101(b)(5)
<input type="checkbox"/> 46.101(b)(3)	<input type="checkbox"/> 46.101(b)(6)

Remarks: Approval of Continuing Review.



Texas A&M
 University
 1186 TAMU
 1500 Research Parkway
 Suite B 150
 College Station, Texas
 77843-1186
 979.458.1467
 FAX 979.862.3176

The Institutional Review Board – Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University has reviewed and approved the above referenced protocol. Your study has been approved for one year. As the principal investigator of this study, you assume the following responsibilities:

Renewal: Your protocol must be re-approved each year in order to continue the research. You must also complete the proper renewal forms in order to continue the study after the initial approval period.

Adverse events: Any adverse events or reactions must be reported to the IRB immediately.

Amendments: Any changes to the protocol, such as procedures, consent/assent forms, addition of subjects, or study design must be reported to and approved by the IRB.

Informed Consent/Assent: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent document approved by the IRB for use in your study.

Completion: When the study is complete, you must notify the IRB office and complete the required forms.

APPENDIX D**IRB AUDIOTAPE CONSENT FORM**

CONSENT TO BE AUDIOTAPED

I voluntarily agree to be audiotaped during the research being conducted by Hilary Standish. I understand that the cassette tapes will be used for research related to the dissertation to be entitled, "A Case Study of the Voices of African American Teachers in Two Texas Communities Before, During and After Desegregation, 1954 to 1975." I understand that the tape recordings will be transcribed by the researcher. I understand that at any point during the interview, I can request that the tape recorder be turned off. I understand that only Hilary Standish and her committee chair, Dr. Patricia J. Larke, will have access to the tapes. These tapes will be identified by name and stored at the office of the researcher, room 369 Harrington tower on the campus of Texas A&M University, unless I give my consent on a separate form to donate the tapes to the African American National Heritage Museum.

Signature of the Participant: _____ Date:

Signature of the Investigator: _____ Date:

Any questions or concerns can be directed to the principle investigator or her committee chair at the addresses and numbers listed below:

Hilary Standish
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843
(979) 845-0853
hstandish@neo.tamu.edu

Patricia J. Larke
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843
(979) 845-2171
plarke@neo.tamu.edu

APPENDIX E**IRB TRANSCRIPT DONATION APPROVAL FORM**

I voluntarily agree to share written transcriptions of my interview recordings related to the study being conducted by Hilary Standish. I understand that the recordings would be donated to the African American Heritage Museum for their archives in order to document a period of educational and local history. I understand that at any point during the interview, I can request that the audiotape recordings not be donated.

Signature of the Participant: _____ Date:

Signature of the Investigator: _____ Date:

Any questions or concerns can be directed to the principle investigator or her committee chair at the addresses and numbers listed below:

Hilary Standish
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
Bryan, TX 77843
(979) 845-0853
hstandish@neo.tamu.edu

Patricia J. Larke
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843
(979) 845-2171
plarke@neo.tamu.edu

APPENDIX F**IRB AUDIOTAPE REFUSAL FORM**

REFUSAL TO BE AUDIOTAPED

I do not agree to be audiotaped during this research project being conducted by Hilary Standish. I understand that I will not be given any compensation, regardless of my decision or refusal to be audiotaped. By refusing to be audiotaped, I understand that I may still continue to participate in the study.

Signature of the Participant: _____ Date:

Signature of the Investigator: _____ Date:

Any questions or concerns can be directed to the principle investigator or her committee chair at the addresses and numbers listed below:

Hilary Standish
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
Bryan, TX 77843
(979) 845-0853
hstandish@neo.tamu.edu

Patricia J. Larke
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843
(979) 845-2171
plarke@neo.tamu.edu

APPENDIX G

IRB TRANSCRIPT DONATION REFUSAL FORM

REFUSAL TO SHARE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

I do not agree to share the written transcriptions of audiotape recordings of my interview session related to the research project being conducted by Hilary Standish. I understand that I will not be given any compensation, regardless of my decision or refusal to share the transcriptions. I understand that my relations with Texas A&M University, now or in the future, will not be effected regardless of my decision or refusal to share the transcriptions. I further understand that I may still continue to participate in the study even if I refuse to share the transcriptions.

Signature of the Participant: _____ Date:

Signature of the Investigator: _____ Date:

Any questions or concerns can be directed to the principle investigator or her committee chair at the addresses and numbers listed below:

Hilary Standish
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
Bryan, TX 77843
(979) 845-0853
hstandish@neo.tamu.edu

Patricia J. Larke
MS 4232, Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843
(979) 845-2171
plarke@neo.tamu.edu

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR THE RESEARCHER

PART I. PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Name

Where did you teach during the period of 1954 to 1975? (Identify on prepared map).

Name of school(s), grade level, subjects?

When and where did you start teaching? How many years total did you teach?

Are you still teaching or are you retired? If retired, in what year?

Educational background:

K-12 experiences (try to get stories of life in segregated schools as student)

College/teaching certification

PART II. EXPERIENCES TEACHING IN SEGREGATED SCHOOLS

Describe the demographics of the teachers, administrators.

How would you characterize teacher pay at your school compared to White schools in the area?

Teacher status? Experience level of teachers? Quality of teachers?

In terms of quality, what would you say makes a good teacher? (traits, habits, philosophy, etc.).

Describe relations with your students. Did the teachers at your school(s) tend to live in the same communities as the students? Did they know them outside of school? Know their parents?

What was the average class size?

Would you say that segregated schools were unequal to White schools? If so, how? (materials, funding, curriculum, staff, safety, reputation, etc.).

Were students aware of any inequalities? Reactions?

Teacher reactions to any inequalities? Any compensatory actions?

Did you notice outcomes of inequalities (self-esteem, disinterest, futility, resilience, etc.) for students? For teachers?

Did the students benefit in any way from attending segregated classes? If so, how (be specific).

PART III. THE DESEGREGATION PROCESS

What do you remember thinking would happen when you heard of the *Brown* decision? Emotions?

As time went by, did your feelings change? How about after years went by and the schools continued to be segregated?

What kinds of barriers do you think caused continued segregation? (e.g. state's right argument)

Did your own children attend school at this time? Reaction related to what they would experience in an desegregated setting?

How did the student population change during the 1954 to 1975 period? Slowly or gradually?

Did you ever consider applying for a position in a racially mixed or White school, or was that option closed? Were you at any time offered a transfer to a new school? Pay scale?

Did you think your job security would be affected?

What caused schools to eventually desegregate?

Can you elaborate on the lawsuits that were filed locally? How about federal lawsuits?

What do you remember about the implementation of the Step Plan?

What do you remember about the implementation of the Freedom of Choice Plan?

What can you remember about the fires that damaged African American schools?

How did you feel? How did you react?

Is there anything you'd like to add?

IV. EXPERIENCES AFTER DESEGREGATION

(Even if not teaching, could get views on experiences for students or their own children)

After desegregation finally occurred, did you stay at the same school or transfer?

If you transferred, how did it feel to leave the old school? Students? Co-workers?

Were you uncomfortable? Did you resist?

What was the new school like in terms of student demographics?

Teachers/Administrators?

Was there evidence of racial tension? How did African American students respond?

What were the new facilities like in terms of pay? Status? Teacher experience?

Were your responsibilities the same? Was your teaching assignment the same?

Were there changes in terms of the quality of education students received (could be positive or negative or both)?

How did any changes make you feel?

Did you notice ongoing segregation within the school? Within classrooms? In activities or placement in LD, etc.?

Examples of resistance?

If you did not transfer but stayed on site, what changes occurred? (curriculum, materials, funding, facilities, etc.).

What was your reaction to any changes (emotional, self-efficacy, etc.)?

Student reactions (level of engagement, social adjustment, etc.)?

PART V. CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW

Do you think there are lessons to be learned from the *Brown* decision?

From how it finally came about and how it was slow to be enforced?

Is there anything you would like to add?

Do you have any questions for me?

Is there anyone else you think I should talk to? Contact information?

THANK YOU

APPENDIX I**INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS**

Hilary Standish
979) 846-0180
hstandish@neo.tamu.edu

I.

During what years did you teach in Bryan/College Station schools?

What school(s) did you teach at.

What grade level(s) and subject(s) did you teach?

II.

How would you describe the atmosphere in your school following the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court ruling?

How would you describe the facilities in segregated schools?

How would you describe the curriculum?

The interactions between teachers and students? Between teachers and parents?

III.

What do you remember about the implementation of integration? What events eventually caused changes to occur?

What do you remember feeling about the integration process?

IV.

What changes did you note following integration?

How did the changes impact you personally?

How do you think the changes impacted students?

V.

Do you have any other comments you'd like to add? Any questions?

Do you know of someone else who might be willing to share his or her memories?

VITA

Hilary A. Standish
3902 East 29th Street, #N7
Bryan, Texas 77802

(979) 846-0180 (home)
hstandish@neo.tamu.edu

EDUCATION

Ph.D.	Educational Curriculum and Instruction (Multicultural Ed.)
2006	Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas
M.A.	Cultural Anthropology (Cultural Anthropology and Folklore)
1999	Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas
B.A.	Art History (Minor in Anthropology)
1986	Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts

PUBLICATIONS

Larke, P. J., Larke, A. Jr., Webb-Johnson, G., & Standish, H. (2006). Teachers of color in Texas: A comparative analysis of initial candidates. *Texas Teacher Education Forum*, 29, 15-28.

Ibrahim, E., Larke, P. J., Standish, H., Sullivan, E., Coston, W., Melancon, B., Ruthinger, G., & Saah, L. (in press). The voices of seven doctoral students in their journey of becoming multicultural teacher educators. *The Qualitative Report*.

Waters, M. R., Long, M., Dickens, W., Presley, A. L., Standish, H. et al. (2004). *Lone star stalag: The story of the World War II German prisoner of war camp at Hearne, Texas*. College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS (Of Eleven)

Texas teachers' perspectives of the desegregation process: A case study of two Texas school districts. Paper presented at the 14th Annual International Conference of the National Association for Multicultural Education, Kansas City, Kansas. October, 2004.

Multicultural education and ESL education: Educating teachers for diverse classrooms- a case study of one teacher education program. Panel presentation at the National Conference of the Association of Teacher Educators, Dallas, Texas. February, 2004.

The divergent child: Fraction concepts from their perspective. Gallery Workshop presented at the 81st Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, San Antonio, Texas. April, 2003.