Intimate Scholarship in Research: An Example From Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices Methodology

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ABSTRACT

Using self-study of teaching and teacher education practices (S-STEP) research as an example, we explore intimate scholarship and the ways it captures particular lives and experiences within the educational world. To do that we define, explore, and consider how teachers and teacher educators can use this personal and vulnerable scholarship. We provide an example as evidence of ways that intimate scholarship in the form of S-STEP supports learning from experience. We assert that positioning researchers to examine what we know about teaching and being a teacher educator is profitable for the larger research conversation.

*I*n this article we take up Maxine Greene's (1995) call for seeing the particularities and intricacies in the lives of students, teachers, and teacher educators as valued issues to be studied. We make this turn toward what we see as intimate scholarship (Hamilton, 1995) because only a subjective, relational, and close look can expose those aspects of our lives. Intimate scholarship takes up ontological stance where recognition of the individual/collective relation has value, uncovers embodied knowing through autobiography and action, and explores the coming-to-know process based in dialogue (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2014) that captures particularities to document the ways we navigate lives and experiences in the educational world. When engaged in intimate scholarship teacher educators reveal the vulnerabilities and passions that most often remain hidden in talk about experience.

Although there are several methodologies that fit within the description of intimate scholarship, like life-history, narrative inquiry, and autoethnography, for the purpose of addressing the theme of this issue—Teacher Education: Learning From Experiences—we look at self-study of teaching and teacher education practices (S-STEP) research and how this methodology fosters thoughtful work of teachers and teacher educators as they examine their practices and context. As these studies build toward a compilation that echoes in the lived experiences of teachers and teacher educators, we see the potential for it to fundamentally inform research.

In reviews of research on teacher education published in the last decade, authors point to a need for research to guide teacher education (e.g., Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Such reviews usually promote quantitative research models with randomized trials, controlled experimentation, large data sets, and hierarchical linear modeling as the approach to be taken. Seemingly each year, researchers develop new forms of statistical analyses to collect more data to test more students to regulate more teachers in order to control, perhaps even more than strengthen, educational systems. Cochran-Smith (2005), Ball and Forzani (2011), and others have insisted on identifying specific, generalizable practices that can be most productively and efficiently applied across contexts so that systems can be uniformly monitored to create the desired kinds of teaching and teacher education. Whether in the Netherlands (Koster & Dengerink, 2008), or Europe generally (ATEE, 2006) or Australia (Ingvarson & Rowe, 2008) or China (Xudong Zhu & Xue Han, 2006), extant data sets serve as the basis for uncovering best practices as researchers argue for the best ways to improve students' learning and teachers' teaching. Greene's (1995) observation made long ago still seems apropos today, that the, "vision that sees things small looks at schooling through the lenses of a system – a vantage point of power or existing ideologies – taking a primarily technical point of view" (p. 11). She points out that,

> …seeing schooling small is preoccupied with test scores, "time on task," management procedures, ethnic and racial percentages, and accountability measures, while it screens out the faces and gestures of individuals, of actual living persons. And indeed, it seems more equitable to many of those who take a general view to do their surveys and their measurements without consciousness of names and histories. (p. 11)

We seem unable to see the trees for the forest. If teachers, teacher educators, and teacher education programs were a generally homogeneous group, taking a "small view" might make sense.

But, we are not. Rather, we are a wonderful collection of similar differences or different similarities that shift any assumed sense of certainty that research based in such data sets might suggest. From this view, scholars (see Bullough, 2008) argue that research on teaching and teacher education will be more helpful in the preparation of new teachers if it emerges from more focused exploration. For example, Putnam (2004) asserts that in careful study of the particular and the local, insights to guide our responses to recurring difficulties are more likely to emerge.

To release the imaginations of teachers and teacher educators, Greene (1995) recommends that we remember their integrity and particularity, where we must, "see from the point of view of the participant in the midst of what is happening if one is to be privy to the plans…the initiatives…the uncertainties they face" (p. 11). Here, from our perspective of intimate scholarship, she privileges individual knowing to make sense of the practical and social milieu where it exists as statistics and numbers mask these particularities. "Seeing large" allows us to see individual events, persons, or contexts more clearly and develop practical (Schwab, 1970) responses to the difficulties of our time and place.

At this moment, then, when so many researchers are seeing teacher education small, we turn our attention toward seeing "large," focusing on the particular to shift understandings of teaching and teacher education as we explore learning from our experiences. When using this form of scholarship the researcher is both the focus and the author of the study and provides an insider's perspective into practice and experience (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009). "Looking large" provides a fruitful way to examine identity, inquiry, and pedagogy.

For the purpose of this article we examine, define, illustrate, and consider the strengths of "seeing large" using intimate scholarship and explore how teachers and teacher educators can use this methodology, with its personal and vulnerable approach, to reveal and illuminate knowing of the particular in ways that connect to the works of others and move our understandings of teacher education forward as we learn from experience.

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Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices Methodology

Within the recent past S-STEP has developed as an intimate methodology that has gained recognition as a genre of educational research (Borko, Liston, & Whitcomb, 2007). We define S-STEP as "a methodology for studying professional practice settings" (LaBoskey, 2004, p. 817; Pinnegar, 1998) and identify its most salient characteristics as: "…self-initiated and focused; …improvement-aimed; …interactive; …[that uses] multiple, mainly qualitative, methods; …[and a]…process based in trustworthiness" (LaBoskey, 2004, p. 817).

S-STEP (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 1998) research methodology allows researchers to examine and improve professional practice through developing assertions for action or understanding wherein professionals who generate and work within that practice setting engage in a systematic reflexive process. As an intimate methodology, it enables researchers to position their research in the ontological space between self and other, where examination of what we know about teaching and being a teacher educator is most profitable for the larger research conversation on teaching and teacher education. This methodology involves attention to both the self and the other and knowledge emerges as teacher educators uncover their knowing in relationship to that of others in the practice under study—there is always tension between the stories of self and the stories of others.

S-STEP methodology attempts to reduce puzzlement as a way to understand the informal logic of actual life (Geertz, 1983). Wolf (1992), as others have after her, suggests that it is in our "willingness to speak and write about experience that results from our serious engagement in discovering what we can about how life is lived in another social/cultural setting" (p. 128) that the deepest understandings and knowledge develop. In her work Wolf explores the "messy stuff of experience" (p. 58) but cautions researchers to be respectful of those people with whom they work. She points out that issues of interpretation depend upon who is writing, thinking, and considering the work. As Wolf struggled to examine how her work expressed experience, so do many who engage in methodologies of intimate scholarship. Like Wolf, we have found that work grounded in S-STEP methodology goes beyond field notes and offers no one truth since researchers, as well as the others involved, will see things differently even as they grapple with similar evidence (Arizona Group, 2004). We agree with Wolf, experience is messy and as researchers we must be both careful with and tolerant of the ambiguity, multiplicity, contradiction, and instability of the messiness. As good researchers engaged in intimate scholarship, when we sit down to work we remind

ourselves that life is "unstable, complex and disorderly" (Wolf, 1992, p. 130) and we must wade through and pluck out the important bits.

As Mason's (2008) work on complexity theory indicates, regardless of our educational practices, what future teachers learn from us will always be filtered through the lenses of their own understanding and experience. They take up the understandings and curricular practices that most resonate with their own vision of what it means to teach and their evolving identity as teachers. Just as we did when we became teachers and then teacher educators (Arizona Group, 1995), this new generation of teachers integrates the understandings and practices they are taught into their own emerging teaching repertoire.

For teacher educators engaged in the design and enactment of practices that support teacher preparation, who simultaneously study teaching and teacher education, an intimate look at their experience allows them to develop understandings and contribute to the research conversation. Indeed, utilizing methodologies and orientations allows teachers and teacher educators to uncover and excavate their tacit (Polanyi, 1967) and personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1985) developed in the present moments (Stern, 2004) of their practice that may remain hidden from those using other forms of research.

Aspects of S-STEP

A strong S-STEP study engages elements of good research practice (not always in a linear fashion) that includes the following: *provocation*. This can be a paradox or a puzzle about what we know and how we know it. Perhaps, at this point, something nudges our *ontological stance*, gently or harshly, causing pause and an opening to consider and reconsider our ontological commitments. The next element is *exploration*. At this point we investigate our resources, our ideas, and our knowledge. Here we do general pondering and at this moment in our work, we relate our ideas to the broader research literature. *Refinement* ensues as our background and experience guides us in deciding what is worthy of study, asking what is important to our practice and our students.

This is a decision point where we *identify focus*. Here we ask: is the idea worthy of further study? To *design the study* we use the Framework-for-Inquiry and the Framework-for-Analysis (see example) to forward our research process. With the focus identified, we design an open-ended study where in our internal discussions we bring our background as researchers to the forefront: pondering carefully the "who and how" of our exploration—methodology, strategies, and so on.

Once data collection begins, we engage in a ***reconsideration process*** as we move from the field to our data and back again. Within these processes, we focus on ways to strengthen our understandings as we bring the data collected alongside our ontological stance and experience, next to dialogue with others, in concert (or not) with what we come to see as exemplars. As we do so we ensure that our evidence represents the research undertaken and again we situate our ideas in relation to the theoretical and practical work of others.

Within any form of research, researchers are expected to act with integrity. In S-STEP methodology, with self-in-relation-to-Other as a primary focus, attending to this requires more vigilance because the work as intimate scholarship seems more inextricably connected to the researcher and more vulnerable to such questions. Moreover, S-STEP methodology requires attention to ***ethical action***. How the researcher acts with integrity, trustworthiness, and transparency is connected with readers' decisions to judge the work and the researcher trustworthy. The ***presentation*** of our work is the final element in S-STEP methodology. How we present our work publicly invites colleagues into a shared conversation to strengthen and build professional knowledge. In each step along a study's path we question our process and our progress.

Inquiry and Analytic Frameworks

For us, the intimate scholarship of S-STEP begins with the framework-for-inquiry as a guide (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009), to identify questions and concerns, reveal context, connect to research literature, identify methods, determine the data we would collect as evidence and the appropriate forms of analysis. These are the decisions that support the development of our thinking about practice and experience. When considering study possibilities we dedicate ourselves to the interruption and disruption of strongly held values/views so that we challenge the practices and stances we bring to our classrooms and elsewhere.

As we work, we turn to the framework-for-analysis (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009) to ask ourselves a series of questions about purpose, definitions, location of self, apparent engagement in the work, data collection and analysis choices, connections of the data collected with the assertions made, issues of trustworthiness, and the research literatures we engage with. In analysis we attempt to divine themes and organize ideas to explore our storied and (re)storied experiences in our own idiosyncratic contexts (Clandinin, 1993) and how we resolve the "abiding tensions" of our lives not merely in retelling our lives but in the lives we live. We understand, as both Polkinghorne (1988) and Clandinin and Connelly (2001) point out, that before we can tell a story we must live the story.

Dialogue

Dialogue, as we argue (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009), is an important facet of analysis in S-STEP research with cycles of personal reflection, professional interchanges, and public analysis followed by private analysis (Arizona Group, 2006) and holds a central role in our analytic/interpretive process. In dialogue we put forward an idea, meet it with reflection, critique, supportive anecdote, and analysis, raising questions about insights expressed. A basis for meaning-making emerges (e.g., Arizona Group, 2004) with practice, theory, and experience intertwined. Since we focus on relational interaction, the inquiry exists in an inconclusive state where understandings are solidified in the moment but consideration of the ideas may continue (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2014).

After rigorous interrogation of data meanings, we develop understandings that allow confident action. Indeed, dialogue is the process for coming-to-know as well as the process by which we ensure the authenticity and veracity of claims of S-STEP research. When engaging in dialogue, the ideas we have and their relationships to practice become established as legitimized assertions regarding the ontological context of researchers' practice. In this way, dialogue becomes a crucible in which knowledge is shaped, linked to evidence, and gains authority.

Excerpts as Example

In the next section we offer an example from our own S-STEP to illustrate the systematic consideration of a teacher educator's work that reveals her thinking and how she learns from experience by considering carefully students' oral and written responses and the context within which she practices (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2010).

With MLH (Mary Lynn Hamilton) as researcher and SP (Stefinee Pinnegar) as critical friend, we began a study of practice (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2010). (You will note an I/we usage dependent upon our roles as a researcher or as writers-together.) The intention for this study centered on a search for evidence in students'/my conversations/writings regarding my curricular plan to facilitate the development of our understandings of professional knowledge. S-STEP offered an excellent methodology to research my experience as I attempted to introduce social justice and reflection into the professional lives of my students. I wondered how I might bring reflective inquiry and self-study together in my curriculum. Most clearly they seemed to link through my students' and my own desires to improve our practice and contribute to the lives of others. As we progressed through our study, we attempted to unravel aspects of experiences that arose while engaged in practice.

To begin I/MLH imagined ways to explore ways to draw culture and cognition together for my students to fit with my desire to promotion reflection and introduce them to S-STEP methodology. In this way, I thought I could facilitate the exploration of their identity and development as teachers as I explored my identity as teacher educator and developed my own professional knowledge.

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

As the study began MLH identified questions and concerns, context, literature, strategies, and the data to collect as evidence using the Pinnegar and Hamilton (2009) framework-for-inquiry as a guide.

FRAMEWORK-FOR-INQUIRY

Questions: Initially, I looked for a way to best prepare my students for the challenges of 21st century schooling and inspire them toward creativity and the use of critical thinking skills. How could I offer my students ways to incorporate cultural responsiveness, reflection, and dialogue to serve as tools in their teaching?

Context: my classroom.
Literature: To support my work, I drew upon the variety of sources and the support of my critical friend.

Strategies: To work within the context, I looked for ways to best explore these issues including the use of class dialogue, particular assigned readings and presentations, plus I thought that writing assignments would enhance possibilities for revealing the development of their language and thinking around these issues.

Data used as evidence: I explored the spaces between my students' accounts and my own accounts in the classroom. From the students, with their permission and that of the IRB, I collected a series of writings and other materials as they engaged in their first professional course; after they made an explicit declaration of their commitment to teaching as a profession.

Next, using the Hamilton and Pinnegar (2009) framework-for-analysis, I asked the questions to ensure (as much as possible) that I stayed true to my methodology and I used my journal, student documents, and dialogue records to provide answers. The study centered my desire to draw together social justice (SJ), reflection, and cultural responsiveness to prepare my students for the 21st century schools. I cannot speak for my students as my study focused on my own experience. Given that, I looked for: evidence of critical thinking as evidenced by their use of

language that elaborated—or did not—on the issues we addressed in class. We provide detail elsewhere (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2010), but to offer a glimpse into the intimate aspects of our work:

Students

Students within our university elementary program are typically white, female, and middle class; excellent students who say they seek academic challenges. For this research, while I looked at data collected from all students, I randomly selected six students whose work I highlighted for detailed examination.

Teacher Educator

I am a white, middle-class academic woman who has been a teacher educator for more than 20 years and a teacher longer than that. I bring a commitment to integrity, trustworthiness, and compassion to the work I do. I find myself guided by the strength of my beliefs in the relation of *I*-to-*Other*, in SJ and in community.

Classroom

My students and I came together in a course entitled *Curriculum and the Learner in Elementary School*, an initial course for future teachers where I support them as they begin to find their identities and develop their professional knowledge as teachers.

In the classroom, I engaged in face-to-face and email conversations with my students; I documented dialogue and conversations with students. I collected class documents including life-history assignments, midterms, their course notes, and final essays. I wanted to see the ways students' work echoed—or did not— the issues we addressed in class. In turn, I kept a journal where I asked myself questions about my students, queried my ideas, and interrogated issues that emerged in student stories and about the ideas presented in class.

In an attempt to reveal aspects of classroom life and explore how my students incorporated ideas presented in class into their thinking—if they did—I selected examples of what I said in class during presentations, **what students said in class** during discussions, and **what students remembered** about ideas as evidenced in their writing assignments and **what I wrote about** class sessions. Specifically I looked for elaboration and creative use of those ideas to capture development.

EXTRACTS FROM STUDY

The two extracts below represent examples of the S-STEP in which we engaged as researcher/critical friend. As we looked through the data, we hoped to explore our experience as teacher educators and the ways that vulnerability, relationship,

ontological stance, embodied knowing, and dialogue interact as we consider ways to support students as they build their identity as teachers and ways we experience and build our own identities as teacher educators. We hoped to identify growth in thinking along with evidence of their deepening understandings about reflection and SJ. We tried to distinguish between "thinking about" and reflection as students investigated the ideas presented alongside their own understandings.

EXTRACT ONE

Early in the course, I presented a summary of Dewey and issues of reflection. As this is one of the initial courses in their professional education program, I knew that they had not explicitly addressed reflection in previous classes. I planned to engage students by looking at their prior knowledge and building ideas through dialogue. My plan included a brief introduction to and discussion about experiences with reflection and examples of others' reflections. I decided to introduce reflection—by my definition a tool to facilitate the exploration of SJ—first and then return to it throughout the course.

What I said to my students: Using a short PowerPoint presentation, I introduced information drawn from Dewey, Rodgers, Loughran, and others.

What students said: To begin class, we all offered memories of experiences in our own lives.
"I reflect all the time," said student 1.
"We have to reflect in all of our classes," said student 5.
"Well, what does that look like?" MLH said.
"Thinking"," piped student 5.
"So, thinking is reflecting?" I asked.
"Well…" paused student 8.
"Not according to the PowerPoint…" acknowledged student 9. And so it went.

What I wrote about the class session: Did it make sense to them? Did I provide enough examples? While I think my presentation was adequate, I worry that they considered "having thoughts" to be reflection. If that's true, how can I address that? Back to the event, I think the PowerPoint as a graphic organizer helped students think about teaching, as did my reflections about planning. I want them to connect reflection and openness as well as understand learning from modeling to support their learning-to-teach process.

After class they offered positive comments about the presentation and discussion. While I appreciated their perspective, I worried about sincerity. After years of students talking positively in class and offering stinging rebukes in course evaluations, I felt wary of the smiles and expressions of excitement and understanding.

What students remember (a selection of assignments during the semester): Here's what I found in their writing assignments.

On their midterms: (Students were expected to define terms "in their own words" for the exam and write an essay that applied what they learned about reflection.)

Student 1: Reflection…is a way to develop professional knowledge. Teachers usually reflect when something is puzzling/curious or something… Reflection is important to a teacher because it is a way for him/her to make understanding out of a situation. It opens opportunities to look at situations from different viewpoints.

Student 8: One critical issue to consider is the students' ability levels. I plan to teach lessons in multiple ways so that students of all abilities will learn. As I continue teaching, reflective practice will address students' diverse needs.

Student 9: Reflection is important to ensure that we meet learning objectives. It's important to evaluate oneself and improve/alter ways of teaching to meet the needs of students and teach in ways that enhance learning.

In their final essay: Student 8: Regarding field experience…my experience combined gave me a fairly complete view of the school context. I also learned about reflection through my teacher interview, helping me gain insight into a teachers' thinking.

As we progressed in our study, it seemed that "seeing large" helped reveal knowing on particular experiences but knew we had to keep looking. Not long after the lesson on reflection, I presented information on SJ and the underlying principles related to the care and support of their future students. I used the same format of presentations, dialogue, examples, and reflective writings.

EXTRACT TWO

What I said to my students: We live in an institutionally racist society. Given that elements of racism permeate our institutions, we must be vigilant to address fairness, regardless of our color, our class, our gender, or our

ethnicity. For me this requires more than the use of a multicultural text from time to time, it requires attention to all elements of the curriculum.

What the students said: Student 14 asked, "Don't we all support the notion that all children can learn?"

Another student (3) stated, "I have had little experience with diversity, but I am open to everyone."
MLH asked, "How will you bring that to your own classroom?"

Student 15 said, "I will pay attention to their ability levels."

Another student (3) responded, "I'm not sure I'll teach in a place where there will be much diversity."

MLH stated, "Then your support of issues of SJ will be more crucial and need to be explicit."

What I wrote about the class session: SJ. In a class where the instructor clearly supports such a perspective, who is going to offer contradictions? Given that wondering, the students seem supportive of SJ and how it fits in their classrooms. They talked about believing in the idea of no child left behind while not supporting the federal translation of it. We attempted to link our readings with their lives and their first experiences with difference. As students from suburban/rural settings, their definitions of diversity are limited, but they have to start somewhere. I don't know what they learned; I have to hope for the best. From an organizational perspective, I think the lesson was organized well and that I achieved the modeling, dialogue, and presentation of information that I wanted to do.

What the students remember: Here's what I found in their writing assignments.

On their midterms: Student 8: SJ—individuals treating each other with dignity, humility, and honesty. It promotes sensitivity to oppression and diversity.

Student 9: SJ ensures equal opportunity for every person with the absence of discrimination of any kind.

In their final essay: Student 8: One of the first concepts we discussed in class was SJ and cultivating humanity. From these concepts I learned that institutional racism exists in the U.S. I also learned that it's important to teach students about oppression and diversity. It is not enough for a teacher

to treat all students equally; teachers must also teach their students how to be sensitive and knowledgeable about the differences and similarities between themselves and their classmates…In order to teach students about these concepts, teachers must incorporate them into many curricular content areas.

Student 9: It's always good to be reminded about issues concerning SJ and specifically to think about how we can bring SJ into the classroom. The most striking information gleaned from this semester concerning SJ came from McIntosh's white privilege article. I hadn't thought about the many ways that my race has set me in a position of privilege in society…These issues have been addressed in almost every teaching class that I have taken and I know that teachers need to be fair to all students, but these articles helped me see that SJ doesn't just concern big issues addressed in the media, but also concerns things in society that go unnoticed…

FRAMEWORK-FOR-ANALYSIS EXAMPLE

At the end of the semester I reviewed data collected, looking for expressions of experience and what might emerge from the pages of our work. With SP we engaged in dialogue about my experience along with her experience and understanding of my experience. We could see that student stories revealed their struggles to understand their perspectives about SJ as they learned to reflect. My experience exposed tensions between my practice and my students. What I hoped to convey did not achieve my desired result. The students expressed an interest and even, sometimes, a commitment to these issues theoretically, but little evidence existed in their work that they deeply understood or acted on them.

In class, students expressed interest related to SJ issues. In conversations before and after class we talked about cultivating humanity and reflection. In class I might ask, "How would you begin to reflect on this issue?" Or "How can you explore these ideas to move beyond your stereotypes," I might query. Sometimes I offered examples of my own related experience or detailed my reflections on classroom preparation. From time to time as we talked, students would tell me that they were glad to address these topics and issues. But, still, I wondered whether or not they were taking ownership of these ideas. I wanted to know whether they incorporated these ideas into their professional knowledge. In an attempt to find out, I decided that the best way to achieve that was by looking at the language they used to express themselves. I figured, and research suggests, that elaboration upon ideas indicates in some way how people build ideas and develop thinking

around concepts. I wondered, "Did my students simply echo the information I presented or did I see evidence of the ways they took ownership of ideas and built upon them?"

Analytic Example regarding reflection

As I read responses and coded writings, I discovered that my students often echoed my words in their writings. Although I encouraged them to devise their own meanings for concepts, when asked to define concepts, they used my words. For example, Extract 1 reveals many echoes. However, I also saw forays into more critical thinking. For example, Students 1 and 9 built upon my ideas and used their own words to define reflection. In her essay, Student 8 added texture to her understanding. In their final essay, students were asked to demonstrate what they learned in class. To do this they needed to synthesize what they have learned, how they learned it and the ways they will use their learning in future teaching, making vivid links between assignments completed and their learning process. Only one of my highlighted students addressed reflection.

Analytic Example regarding SJ

Regarding SJ, I found several levels of response in their writings. When asked for definitions, they most often echoed my words. In her essay, student 8's writing tied reflection as a tool together with SJ. While her response seemed idealistic, she also demonstrated attempts to elaborate on ideas and a willingness to be open-minded. Generally, students seemed to grasp SJ theoretically, but didn't seem to have ownership of it. I believed that an expression of ownership would be threaded throughout their writings. On their final essay, only two focus students recognized SJ and reflection as important parts of their learning and offered an extension of those ideas in their writings.

My early readings and thinking about the class and student writings, noted that I labeled my students parrots who lacked critical thinking skills and who provided no evidence of a socially just perspective and reflective nature or a willingness to push beyond superficial conversation. Initially, I felt disheartened and unsuccessful, thinking that worries evidenced in my journal had come true. As I pressed onward, I recognized a desire to delve more deeply into what I thought I saw in my data. Particularly when I looked at the writings of Students 8 and 9, I saw the budding understanding of these ideas in my experience during the semester. The ways that these particular students developed their thinking in their writings suggests a willingness to embrace reflection, SJ, and beyond, and provided clues about ways to develop my practice and my curriculum for future classes.

As a methodology, S-STEP helped us, as researcher and critical friend, navigate through this intimate examination of our practice. From this study we came to realize that trying to support shifts in students' core beliefs or perspectives takes more than one semester of work—perhaps requiring that an entire program commit to the exploration of such perspectives. We also come to understand the powerful connection between modeling these concepts more explicitly while practicing a socially just curriculum. Just as importantly, the presentation of this work makes visible that using tools like the Framework-for-Inquiry and the Framework-for-Analysis supports our research by giving us confidence in the conduct of studies.

Our study of a teacher educator's practice captures the experience of exploring ways to navigate the classroom, explores the professional knowledge held by the teacher educator, and notes the expression of ideas identified as critical to the learning-to-teach process. Studies like ours that take up intimate scholarship make public some of the hidden knowledge or unarticulated practices that might remain as folklore rather than research knowledge it studies by "seeing small." Our example demonstrates how teacher educators can make visible what they learn from experience and serves as a model to begin building a body of work that can "see large" and contribute to the study of professional knowledge and practice.

Conclusions

This article draws attention to S-STEP methodology as an example of intimate scholarship that focuses on the particular to explore practice and experience with laser-like attention on unexplored issues to develop stronger teacher education programs and teaching practices. In turn, attention to the ways in which those using this methodology demonstrate trustworthiness has the potential to ensure standards of quality for those exploring the complexities of teaching through examinations of experience.

Considering this methodological approach to research and its unique nature can move us beyond traditional views of what constitutes valuable research. As Putnam (2004) suggests, close examination of particular problems can help us examine and respond to practical intractable problems. The nested nature of our stories and experiences translated to knowing that can inform the practice of teacher education. Uncovered through research, knowledge of particulars can string together like pearls to form a necklace of understanding. Recognizing the ways local, particular understandings

can enter the realm of the general in teacher education has implications for what counts as knowing in teacher education research. Exploring and re-exploring understandings of methodology and trustworthiness based in these ways of knowing can support us as teacher educators. In our example, we demonstrate that identifying critical ideas for students' consideration, and tracking oral and written student/teacher educator responses in the moment and throughout the course allows a teacher educator to make visible what she comes to understand about her practice, curriculum, and the ways certain learning activities develop professional knowledge of all people involved.

In the current era of teacher education reform and renewed orientation toward performance-based teacher education to produce effective teachers, research on teaching and teacher education situated in the subjective and focused on developing understandings of the particular hold great research promise. We can, as Greene (1995) suggests, "see large"—seeing teachers, teaching, and teacher educators in the midst of experience against the horizon of studies that "sees small" to release our imaginations.

Preparing new teachers to engage in complex classrooms to meet student needs is an ongoing challenge that cannot be met by training teachers to use a specific set of practices with minor adjustments across any context. Rather, taking up intimate scholarship to explore our experiences and our thinking and action as teachers and teacher educators allows us to develop deeper understandings of practices and experience. Such intimate scholarship always begins with and implicates our understandings of ourselves and our experience in relation to those we educate and our imaginings about those they will educate. From this orientation, use of intimate methodology to capture these emergent understandings opens ways to change and facilitates the possibilities for learning from experience. Studying how to meet the challenges or failures we experience in our practice can be an exciting endeavor to support teachers/teacher educators evolve as teachers and thinkers.

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