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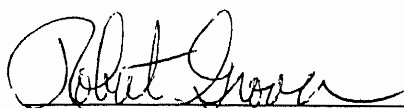

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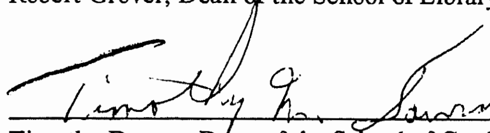

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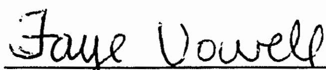

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to discover the experience of graduate students who read fiction as part or all of the curriculum materials for a course in their program. This use of fiction has received attention in recent years as being an effective way to teach the ethical frameworks of individual professions and constructs such as empathy toward customers. While some results of quantitative course evaluations have been reported by professors who have used fiction in the classroom, this study seeks to examine the students' experience more closely.

Phenomenology is a research paradigm where the goal is to discover the essence of a particular experience for those who live it. A phenomenological research and analysis model defined by Clark Moustakas (1994) was used as the methodological basis for this study. Data for the study was generated from five in-depth interviews with students in a graduate library and information management program, and the interviews were transcribed and analyzed according to the steps outlined by Moustakas. These steps provided a very useful structure to the phenomenological research method.

Essences of the experience revealed through the data analysis process include the following six common themes: students identified with characters in the stories and thus learned from those characters' experiences; students made connections from theory to practice through events in fiction; students experienced a heightened emotional response to the material being studied through the use of fiction; students enjoyed reading the fiction; students felt the classroom discussion of the story was very important; and, students felt their learning was enhanced through the use of fiction.

The results of this study support increased use of stories in professional education. Through careful selection of fiction appropriate for the class topics and effective classroom discussion, professional learning can be extended and enhanced with this pedagogy.

THE EXPERIENCE OF READING FICTION FOR GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

by

Katherine Green Marek

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A Dissertation

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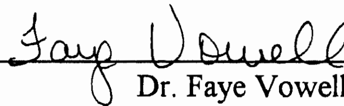

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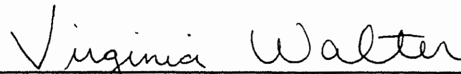

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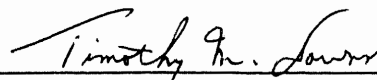

Dean of Graduate Studies and Research

This dissertation is dedicated to

my parents

Katherine Green and J. Richard Green

and to my husband and two children

Joe, Joanna, and Frank Marek

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I am pleased to have this opportunity to express my thanks to some of the many people who have helped me with this research project. I am especially grateful to Dr. Martha Hale, my dissertation committee chair, for her encouragement and support throughout the research process. She has challenged, inspired, encouraged, and supported me all along the way, and I am most grateful.

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I would also like to express my thanks to my peers in the Ph.D. program at the School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University. The collaborative spirit among the Ph.D. students helped to create a successful learning environment, and I treasure the friendships I have made at SLIM.

I am very grateful to the five students who gave their time and energy as research participants in this study. Their enthusiasm and willingness to be involved in the study made a significant contribution to its success.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

There is strength in a story. The power of narrative in culture has been demonstrated through the ages, from ancient storytellers and shamans to today's mass market emphasis on entertainment. Theory from the humanities suggests to us that narrative is a critical and defining component of the human experience. Stories can communicate facts and feelings, values, and cultural norms.

I can say from my own experience that literature has been important to me. Fiction has extended my experience, introduced me to fascinating people, and helped me to glimpse parts of life otherwise unknown to me. I may escape into a story, but a good story will always extend my thinking and return me to real life with greater understanding. In my profession as a librarian and with my personal love of reading, it has been natural for me to want to share my enthusiasm for literature with others.

This desire to share the strength of stories extended to my teaching when working with graduate students entering the field of library and information science. Master's library programs frequently struggle with issues of connecting theory to practice, as do many professional education programs. It was this innate love of literature combined with my ongoing desire to improve my teaching which predisposed me to be influenced by Roberts Coles' (1989a) The Call of Stories. In this book, Coles spoke of his success with using stories to teach in professional programs of law, business, and medicine. I was motivated by this book to learn more about using fiction to teach in higher education.

As I searched for material and became aware of the lack of formal research in this area, I began to ask questions focusing on this topic. A general research study began to take shape in my head as I continued to read and reflect on using stories in graduate education. How did students respond to reading fiction for class? Had this subject been studied and reported in the literature?

Phenomenological Research Method

The desire to understand human experience is what motivates a phenomenological researcher. Creswell (1998) reviews five different qualitative research designs: biography, grounded theory study, ethnography, case study, and phenomenological study. "A phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon" (p. 51).

As my research project developed, I realized that this quest of phenomenology to understand human experience was in keeping with my own desire to understand student response to reading fiction in class. What was the students' experience, from their own point of view? My question indicated a phenomenological study.

Selecting a research paradigm, however, was just one of a series of steps toward developing a research plan and a methodology. I continued to browse literature on phenomenological research. Creswell (1998) cited a book by Clark Moustakas (1994) titled Phenomenological Research Methods, and it was this book that became the basis for the research design and methodology.

Research Question

Moustakas (1994) develops a rationale for a phenomenological study based on a review of the development of phenomenological ideas and writings.

> The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions general or universal meanings are derived, in other words the essences or structures of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13).

In addition to defining more specifically the intention of the phenomenological study, Moustakas proceeded in subsequent chapters of his book to lay out a systematic approach to phenomenological data collection and data analysis, with the goal of the study to discover the essence of the participants' experience.

The description of the method, the specific steps of data gathering and analysis, and Moustakas' suggestions regarding the style of the research report were all elements that attracted me to this model. Phenomenology's emphasis on the human aspect of research, as well as the strong interpersonal nature of the data collection, suggest an autobiographical approach to the description of the research study and to the report (Moustakas, 1994, pp. 104-105, 183). The phenomenological concept of bracketing, or consciously setting aside one's prejudices and preconceptions, is also a definite prelude to an autobiographical component of the research report. "In phenomenological research, the question grows out of an intense interest in a particular problem or topic. The researcher's excitement and curiosity inspire the search. Personal history brings the core of the problem into focus" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 104).Throughout this study I have followed the Moustakas design closely, including his emphasis on the personal connection to the report.

Having defined the general research topic and the methodological model, I clarified my research question: What is the essence of the experience of graduate professional students where fiction is used as part or all of the curriculum material?

Structure of the Report

The first step in the research process was to go back to the literature to investigate what has been published regarding the elements of this question. Chapter 2 will present the results of the literature review for reports of fiction as pedagogy in higher education. Chapter 3 develops a theory base for using literature in education, focusing on three broad areas of information. First, what theory is available from the field of cognitive psychology which supports the use of stories in culture and learning? Second, what does theory say that fiction can provide to the reader, and what kind of thinking and learning can fiction stimulate? And third, in what ways are these things important for professional education? Chapter 4 will describe in detail the methodological framework for the study, from background information on phenomenology to specific steps of the Moustakas (1994) research method. In Chapter 5, I will present and analyze the data from my own study, based on in-depth interviews with five research participants. Chapter 6, the conclusion of this study, will look at the results of the study in terms of theory presented here as well as its applications for practice. Possible future studies which may be suggested by the data will be described.

Personal Comments about the Study

Finding Coles (1989a) and Moustakas (1994) were the key components of building a research question and research design. Though very different in their purpose and style, each of these books resonated clearly with me from my first contact with them. An exciting research topic combined with a methodology which I felt was a true reflection of my own personality provided an excellent foundation for a research study. What indeed could be learned from students in terms of their experience with fiction in

the graduate professional classroom? In this dissertation I will be investigating this question, and I will also be testing a methodology. Bringing the question and the methodology together in this study will provide an unique and productive research opportunity.

The first part of this research report will focus on the idea of fiction as pedagogy in general, and specifically fiction as pedagogy in higher education. The second part of the report will focus on the phenomenological research method in general, and then specifically on the Moustakas method and my own data. It is impossible to say which of the parts of this research project has been more prominent – the research question or the research design. The question and the design have been interconnected from the beginning and established a reciprocal relationship that serves the study well. Results from the study will help define the use of fiction in professional education and will offer an example of one specific phenomenological research design.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

There is a wealth of material which focuses on the use of fiction in the classroom. This chapter will provide an overview of that literature, with a special focus on fiction as pedagogy in higher education. The first section of this chapter will include definitions and processes used for the literature search as suggested by Moustakas (1994). The following section will provide specific reports and descriptions of fiction as pedagogy from within various academic disciplines. Literature which explores theoretical foundations of fiction as knowledge, learning theories, and theories about the benefits of using fiction as pedagogy will be addressed in Chapter 3.

Definitions and Processes

Definitions

This chapter will define terms used in this literature review. Definitions specific to the methodology will be presented in Chapter 4.

Definitions Regarding Fiction and Literature

Fiction. Fiction is "the general term for invented stories" (Baldick, 1990, p. 83), and "an imaginative creation or a pretense that does not represent actuality but has been invented . . . a literary work whose content is produced by the imagination and is not necessarily based on fact" (American Heritage Dictionary, 1982). Literary forms normally include novels, short stories, novellas, romances, fables, and other narrative works in prose (Baldick, 1990, p. 83). McCurdy (1973) expands the definition further,

including "all art forms which utilize imaginative narration, whether written or visual" (p. 52).

Narrative. A narrative is an account of an event told in story form (Baldick, p. 83). It may be spoken or written. Narrative differs from fiction in that it may be a story based on fact, such as the narrative description of events that take place in an organization or in a teaching experience. While information about using narrative is occasionally included in this study, the focus is specifically on using the literary forms of story which are included in the definition of fiction found above.

Emotion. An emotion is "a complex and usually strong subjective response, such as love and fear" (American Heritage Dictionary, 1982, p. 449). Solomon (1991) refers to William James' definition "as the sensation of visceral change, prompted by some unsettling perception" (p. 196).

Pedagogy. Pedagogy is the art, profession, or practice of teaching (American Heritage Dictionary, 1982, p. 914). The pedagogical use of fiction refers to incorporating fiction in the curriculum as a teaching tool.

Definitions Regarding Research Paradigms

Phenomenology. Phenomenology stems from the philosophy of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). As a qualitative research paradigm, phenomenology seeks to reveal the essences of human experience from the perspectives of the individuals who live through that experience or concept (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenology emphasizes the importance of intuition in the perception of reality (McCurdy, 1973).

Positivism. Positivism is a philosophy of perception which professes that reality can be defined in terms of "inviolable laws based in mathematics" (McCurdy, p. 53) and through methods of logic and hierarchical knowledge revealed through scientific method (American Heritage Dictionary, 1982). According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), "an apprehendable reality is assumed to exist, driven by immutable natural laws and mechanisms. Knowledge of the 'way things are' is conventionally summarized in the form of time- and context-free generalizations" (p. 109). The positivist perception of the world is more typical in the technical and natural sciences and is less popular in the social sciences (Knorr-Cetina, 1981).

Qualitative Research. Qualitative research is an orientation of formal inquiry which emphasizes methods such as ethnography, unstructured interviews, historical studies, and textural analysis. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) call qualitative research interdisciplinary, interpretive, and descriptive. "The word qualitative implies an emphasis on processes and meanings that are not rigorously examined, or measured (if measured at all), in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency" (p. 4).

Quantitative Research. This method of inquiry seeks to use a specific method of nonsubjective research procedures to produce statistical data which can be scientifically verified and reproduced. "Quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes. Inquiry is purported to be within a value-free framework" (Denzin & Lincoln, p. 4).

Processes

Traditional and electronic research methods were used to discover publications on the topics for this study. Electronic databases included ArticleFirst, the Carl System's

UnCover web service, Dissertation Abstracts, EBSCOhost, ERIC, FirstSearch, Library Literature, Social SciSearch, World Cat, and automated library catalogs accessed through the Internet. The search terms I used varied slightly from source to source, primarily due to the differences in search mechanisms. Terms included fiction, pedagogy, library, higher education, professional education, literature, and teaching. I also used some key citations as follow-up citation searches, including Coles (1989a, 1989b) and Rosenblatt (1995). On quite a few occasions, I combined the terms "fiction or literature" with medicine, law, business education, library education, or professional education.

Much of the material returned from the searches had to do with K-12 education, despite my efforts to narrow the searches to higher education. These articles were not included in the review. Since I wanted to include all references to using fiction to teach in professional education, I did not limit the searches by date. Still, few articles were more than 20 years old.

I also searched the Internet using various search engines and various search terms. This process yielded magazine articles as well as web pages. In addition, bibliographies of pertinent articles provided a wealth of additional citations which again produced more references. This "manual" aspect of the literature search was very productive and provided the main area where this type of searching took precedence over electronic searching.

Conversations with friends and colleagues also proved fruitful as more discoveries were made and more referrals were suggested. In addition, some standard reference volumes were used to provide definitions and theoretical foundations.

unique ways. This depth of feeling provides an opportunity for students to look inward and examine their own motivations while also learning to better understand others. I will examine Coles' work more closely in Chapter 3.

Shaw (1992) agrees with Coles, citing his work and further explaining his own use of fiction in the business ethics curriculum. Movements within the field have encouraged more classes in business ethics. However, there has been no clear agreement as to how to bring ethics into an already crowded curriculum. Shaw advocates greater and more positive partnerships with the humanities, which he feels will serve to create more genuine and humane leaders. Shaw also advocates fiction for its openness to investigation, interpretation, and analysis. He uses the term "coduction," drawn from the writings of Wayne Booth, to describe the comparing of one's own experiences and beliefs with those of other qualified people. Through fiction, "coduction provides an alternative to arriving at those truths and values that scientific method cannot arrive at either inductively or deductively" (Shaw, 1992, p. 195). Fiction extends one's own experience through this comparison to the experience of others.

Shaw (1992) also highlights the opportunities fiction provides for identification with characters as students struggle with various ethical issues. When discussing the use of case studies in class, Shaw highlights the ability of the cases to give the student enough information to make a "life" decision. Fiction, he says, takes that an additional step further. "Literature extends these principles to include the development of imaginative sympathy. Identification with a protagonist is, of course, one of the most fundamental elements of the literary experience" (Shaw, 1991, p. 197). When chosen well, fiction can make that connection between imaginative sympathy and our ability to

make clear moral judgments. This identification with a protagonist can give readers a true sense of experience beyond our own limits, thus not only offering an opportunity to compare our experience with that of others as in the previously described coduction, but also to allow for imagination to provide new vicarious experience.

Kennedy and Lawton (1992) conducted a study investigating the number of business schools which offer ethics courses. In addition, they worked on an analysis of business ethics texts in order to discover more about business ethics pedagogy. They discovered a heavy reliance on case studies and essays. Having discovered this, Kennedy and Lawton went on to present fiction as an important alternative pedagogical method for business ethics. One of the things fiction can do is to help us experience conflict and opportunities for its resolution.

> Conflict is at the very center of life. We have a human need to experience conflict to develop a sense of heightened reality, of life felt with drama and intensity. Fiction allows us to vent the emotions surrounding the conflict even more fully than in real life because of the imaginary quality of fiction; in addition, resolution is promised within its pages (p. 188).

These authors also see fiction as a way to connect theory and practice. "Stories arouse attention and create a clear focus on the dilemma. It is at this point of engagement that theories can be introduced to provide a framework for wrestling with the dilemmas" (p. 189-190). This ability of stories to arouse our emotions provides areas of learning for the reader which help us better understand the complexities of life.

Solomon (1991) also highlights the importance of emotion in education. He sees education of the emotions as a critical aspect of teaching ethics. Cultivation of emotion can lead to such culturally appropriate responses as moral indignation over injustice. "Every emotion is a way of constructing the world" (p. 197).

Building on the work of Ezra Bowen, Solomon defines three kinds of literacy: functional literacy, intellectual literacy, and cultural or ethical literacy. Functional literacy for Solomon has to do with the ability to read, write, and understand a simple contract. It enables one to participate in society at a basic level. Intellectual literacy takes that a step further and indicates a person who is well-read and educated in what could be termed the traditional liberal arts sense. Solomon then attempts to define the next area of literacy, where ethics and personality are more highly developed.

> Between the "functional" and the "highfalutin" is a third kind of literacy, which is what concerns me here. To call it either "cultural" or "ethical" is much too narrow, for what it serves is nothing less than the education of the whole personality, the visualization and delineation of the world one lives in. . . . It has to do with participating in certain basic or even essential experiences, knowing, if only vicariously, how a form of life touches on our own, "living through" tragic or horrible or joyful situations that are central to human experience, even if we may never go through them "actually" ourselves (Solomon, 1991, p. 192).

Solomon makes a point of defending the use of fiction against those who would call it "escapism." Literature is essential to the education of the emotions and has a unique ability to create emotive experiences. Among those in a culture who share this type of literacy, there is the important element of shared emotions, views, and values. "Emotions are not just reactions; they are social imaginative constructions" (p. 195).

Judgment. Shaw and Locke (1993) go a slightly different direction in addressing the issue of managerial judgment. Again, the authors advocate stronger partnerships with humanities departments and the active use of literature and film in the business curriculum. Shaw and Locke make reference to "two cultures" in the business environment, science and humanities, and argue for less division. Bringing literature and film into the business classroom not only helps to overcome the divisions but also offers students broadened experiences and enhanced learning. Shaw and Locke look at the term

"judgment" as the function of the mind whereby we arrive at a definite opinion about a situation or a person. The "lessons" of great fiction, they argue, can help students gain further insights into cultures, people and situations. Shaw and Locke provide examples of specific works of fiction and how the stories illustrate fundamental life issues. For example, Arthur Miller's play "All My Sons" is able to portray in dramatic terms "the conflict between the American dream of individual fulfillment through economic growth and the notion of connectedness between all of us, the spiritual and moral strand of ethical responsibility that creates moral substance" (Shaw & Locke, 1993, p. 190).

Interdisciplinary courses. This recent emphasis on expanding interdisciplinary efforts in higher education has met with some encouraging response. An example of a course that was developed with an interdisciplinary focus is described by Gailey and Carroll (1993). The authors describe the planning of the new course as well as its format. In this example, instructors from the English department and the Business department developed a course which used literature to investigate social and administrative topics. Students read work from theorists Max Weber, Philip Selznick, Robert Merton, and Alvin Gouldner. Discussions of theory used illustrations from students' readings from literature, which included novels, poetry, and short stories. "Our goal is to help students construct knowledge rather than using the more traditional process of imparting knowledge" (Gailey & Carroll, 1993, p. 38). The authors explore the benefits and frustrations of collaborative teaching as well as the strengths of the curriculum. Although there is no report of systematic data collection, the authors do report that student response to the course was especially favorable. "Students love the course" (p. 38).

Increased literacy. Three articles (DeMott, 1989; Shaw, 1992; Strassburger, 1988) specifically address the need for increased literacy among business students and the desire to incorporate more reading and writing assignments for their students. This particular emphasis is similar to Shaw's (1992) reference to the important connection between business and communications departments. Expectations in the work world require that business students be prepared for a wide variety of professional activities which require a well rounded, liberal arts education (Strassburger, 1988). Including literature in the business curriculum is another way to bring this aspect of education to business students. This position also concurs with the previous description of Solomon's (1991) three levels of literacy and the importance of literature in reaching levels two (intellectual) and three (cultural and ethical).

DeMott (1989) extends this idea of shared knowledge and describes the usefulness of literature as a way to expand students' understanding of previous business cultures and situations, such as stories from the time of the Great Depression. DeMott stresses the interdependency of art, literature, and business, with the strongest business students conversant in all of these areas.

Shaw (1992), also cited earlier in this section, agrees with this emphasis on interdisciplinary study. He sees a need to expand business communications courses to go beyond technical instruction to include broader issues of shared language and common knowledge. Literature is a key way to facilitate this agenda.

Enhanced learning. Waldo's (1968) essay in support of using fiction to teach organizational studies and administration focuses on ways that fiction as pedagogy enhances learning. Waldo's six reasons for using fiction in higher education, which focus

on learning through vicarious experience and enhanced emotional connections to the class material, are representative of the rationales of other advocates of this pedagogy. Chapter 3 of this study includes Waldo's complete list.

Phillips (1995) makes a strong case for using fiction in the study of organizations.

> Why narrative fiction? The importance of narrative fiction lies in the fact that it tells a story, and in telling a story it creates a space for representation of the life-world within which individuals find themselves. . . . Much more room remains for doubt, uncertainty, contradiction, and paradox, aspects of organization that necessarily disappear under "rigorous" analysis. Clearly then, the discursive practices and products of narrative fiction provide an alternative method of thinking and talking about organizations that reveals new and interesting aspects of organizational phenomena. . . Narrative fiction provides a set of techniques for dealing with the affective aspects of organization; it allows us to experience and discuss the fear, humour, lust, envy, and ambition that drives so much of organizational behaviour. In doing so, it provides a vehicle to develop an aesthetics of organizations (p. 628-629).

This sense of learning an organizational culture through stories is similar to the case that Solomon (1992) makes about learning the broader culture of an entire society.

Leadership. Clemens and Mayer (1987) gathered material from classic literature which provides lessons for good leadership practice. "Problems that are central to effective leadership – motivation, inspiration, sensitivity, and communication – have changed little in the past 3,000 years" (p. xiii). The literature these authors draw on ranges from Plutarch's Lives to Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls.

> Leading, it turns out, is much more than formulas and techniques, accounting and computers. Leaders work in a world where contradiction is commonplace . . . What is needed is a broader view of leadership grounded in literature that focuses, not on specialized techniques, but rather on the vast human side of the leadership equation (Clemens & Mayer, p. xiv).

This connection of technique and human artistry is an important element in the writing of Chris Argyris and Donald Schon (1974), who propose ideas for increasing professional

effectiveness. A discussion of methods to improve education for professional effectiveness will be included in Chapter 3. Kennedy and Lawton's (1992) interest of theory and practice connections complement Clemens and Mayer as well.

General management. Another recent monograph describing specific ways to use fiction in teaching is Good Novels, Better Management (Czarniawska-Joerges & Guillet de Monthoux, 1994). The book includes an introduction and various chapters which describe specific works of fiction and their pedagogical applications. In their introduction, Guillet de Monthoux and Czarniawska-Joerges describe the benefits of using fiction to teach organizational studies. In keeping with much of what has been mentioned so far, Czarniawska-Joerges and Guillet de Monthoux state ". . . novels are rich in narrative knowledge, as the one which depicts the world in terms of human actions and motives, in contrast to the logo-scientific one, which depicts the world in terms of causal laws and abstract models" (p. 9). Czarniawska-Joerges and Guillet de Monthoux continue the emphasis demonstrated in this chapter on the effectiveness of stories to illustrate management theory and to extend understanding.

Psychology

A number of articles have been published in professional psychology journals which report the results of research regarding the effectiveness of fiction as pedagogy (Boyatzis, 1992; Fernald, 1987; Gorman, 1984; Grant, 1987; Levine, 1983; Marlowe, Maycock, Palmer, & Morrison, 1997; Williams & Kolupke, 1986). On a related topic, Simons (1984) demonstrates the effectiveness of analogies in instruction.

Research reports. Marlowe, Maycock, Palmer and Morrison (1997) examined the effects of a course which used fiction to sensitize students to the needs of emotionally

and behaviorally disordered children. Based on the perceived limitations of professional texts in this area, the authors sought material which would improve attitudes of teacher education students toward these children. Citing Coles (1989a) and Bruner (1985), both of whose ideas are explored in this study in Chapter 3, the authors used stories in a class with preservice teachers. The authors hoped that the preservice teachers could view the characters in the stories from the inside, thereby increasing the teachers' understanding of the disturbed children. "Literature provides an intimacy where we can learn how a child with EBD views himself or herself, and what he or she has in common with all of us can become more clear" (Marlowe, Maycock, Palmer, & Morrison, 1997, p. 152). The authors describe the results of a quantitative study where a scale measured attitudes before and after the reading and discussion of selected novels with troubled children as main characters; these novels served as the primary sources for lecture, discussion, and student assignments.

> The use of literary texts in the introductory course appears to have had a significant effect on changing students' attitudes in a positive direction toward children with EDB. Overall, the group instructed using literary texts had positive changes that were significant on 11 of the 20 scales, including five of the eight evaluative scales . . . and four of the seven activity scales (Marlowe, Maycock, Palmer, & Morrison, 1997, p. 155).

A more complete study, according to the authors, would measure knowledge as well as attitudes.

Boyatzis (1992) charted student responses to the use of Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings for primary course material in a Developmental Psychology class. He uses Angelou's autobiographical novel to illustrate the human development theories presented in class, and incorporates several class sessions for discussion of the book. "Year after year, students claim that this book is one of the most valuable

educational and personal experiences in the course . . . the book makes the course topics seem 'real'" (p. 221). Boyatzis' numerical rating scale from the student evaluation responses regarding educational value of the book indicate a high rating (4.4 on a scale of 5) from students.

> Angelou's childhood account is such a powerful psychological journey for the reader that I am confident students remember much about development because of this book. The potency of the assignment is captured in students' comments. One wrote "I will remember the book and assignment for a very long time," and another said the assignment was "the most rewarding and beneficial I've had in college" (Boyatzis, 1992, p. 222).

This report from Boyztzis is especially valuable since there are very few reports of systematic data collection from student responses regarding the use of fiction in higher education.

Gorman (1984) also measured student responses, this time to the use of a narrative account of a schizophrenic breakdown in an introductory psychology class. This particular study asked the students also to rank their enjoyment of the book and a related written assignment on a numerical scale. Gorman's study demonstrated positive student opinions (mean rating 4.22 on a scale of 5) regarding the use of the book, Mark Vonnegut's The Eden Express, in the class. The students were also asked to comment on their rankings. Comments indicated that the students found reading the book very enjoyable, and that it led to a greater interest in the models of schizophrenia presented in class. The report includes some specific quotations from students but does not indicate what exact percentage of the comments were positive or negative.

Fernald's (1987) study included a question about motivation for the students along with scores for enjoyment of narrative material used in an introductory psychology course. He compared student preferences in regard to course material on a numerical

ranking scale and included a component which identified student ability in class. "The results support the use of narrative structures in the introductory textbook for students with different abilities. Students consider the narrative presentation to increase enjoyment and to be useful for learning" (p. 216).

Levine (1983) and Williams and Kolupke (1986) report on interdisciplinary classes where psychology and English professors collaborated. These authors draw support for the concept of their courses from professional literature regarding the usefulness of stories to illustrate theory. Psychology is an especially fertile ground for the use of stories, where good writers can so vividly illustrate characters' mental turmoil. Results of evaluation responses on numerical scales were positive in both of these studies.

Medicine

Articles also illustrate the use of fiction in the education of physicians and nurses. Charon, Banks, Connelly, Hawkins, Hunter, Jones, and Poirer (1995) outline five broad goals which are met through the use of fiction in medical education:

> 1) Literary accounts of illness can teach physicians concrete and powerful lessons about the lives of sick people; 2) great works of fiction about medicine enable physicians to recognize the power and implications of what they do; 3) through the study of narrative, the physician can better understand patients' stories of sickness and his or her own personal stake in medical practice; 4) literary study contributes to physicians' expertise in narrative ethics; and 5) literary theory offers new perspectives on the work and the genres of medicine (p. 599).

The authors offer further explanation of the use of fiction in physician education and give specific examples of the application of this pedagogy. They cite examples of positive student responses and enthusiastic faculty assessments.

Coles (1989a, 1989b), himself a physician, focuses a great deal of his attention in his writings on using fiction with medical students. His teacher and mentor, William Carlos Williams, was a physician-author and was instrumental in leading Coles to this pedagogy. Coles' work is described in more depth in Chapter 3.

Scott (1997) uses Coles' term "moral imagination" (1989a, 1989b). She makes the point that the development of one's moral imagination is necessary in the education of all health care professionals. An emphasis on clinical education should be expanded to include sensitivity toward patients' feelings and emotions while under medical care. Scott advocates the use of literature to stimulate and nurture the moral imagination.

Cassidy (1996) uses literature as an alternative to case material in nursing education where ethical issues are being studied. The positive aspects of literature over case material are reviewed: 1) case materials may lack confidentiality; 2) case materials may lack sufficient detail for expanded study; and 3) case materials often lack generalizability. Cassidy argues that if confidentiality in case materials is a concern, details of the case may have been altered beyond its original situation. Also, the effort to ensure confidentiality may be a reason to omit detail. If the case is defined too narrowly, generalizability is affected. Cassidy also cites Coles in support of her arguments of the benefits of literature for enhanced moral development of medical and nursing students.

Law

Gillers (1993) and Davis (1997) both discuss using fiction in teaching law. Davis is especially expressive in her accounts of successful teaching experiences, both in law and in bioethics courses.

> . . . there remains a void best filled by fiction. When discussing fiction, we can probe, criticize, and express ourselves freely without the constraints we feel when

> discussing real people. Good fiction lays bare the innermost thoughts and experiences of its characters, perhaps even their dreams and nightmares, in a way that would be intrusive, uncomfortable, or impossible, even in autobiography. When the entire class reads a short story, it provides a pool of shared experience, a fixed point for discussion (p. 241).

Davis gives a detailed account of her pedagogical use of a short story where the main character is facing a hysterectomy. Encounters with a high pressure doctor, emotional responses to the surgery, and subsequent drug dependency are all elements for discussion with the students, along with theoretical applications of legal issues such as informed consent.

Glaberson (1998) describes the growing trend in the education of lawyers away from what he calls the "Paper Chase" paradigm of case law memorization toward a more holistic approach. The hope is that lawyers can be educated to appreciate the law from the people's point of view rather than strictly from a flat, legalistic paradigm. "It is putting flesh and bones of what practicing law is all about: the people in cases" (Glaberson, 1998, p. A12). To achieve this goal, professors are including fiction and literature in the curriculum. For example, the novel A Civil Action is being used very effectively to bring to life a lawsuit involving big business and residents of a town whose water supply was dangerously polluted by those companies. "Some legal educators say Mr. Harr's vivid portrait of the innards of a lawsuit is providing a model of how to teach legal principles through narratives that show students the effect of the law on people, like the anguished Woburn families of A Civil Action" (p. A12).

Social Science

Brooker-Gross (1991) reports of the use of fiction in an undergraduate geography course. She gives some philosophical justifications for using fiction and then develops a report of a specific classroom example.

> Fiction, especially novels, is used in geography teaching for diverse reasons: motivating students, providing information, fostering cross-cultural comparisons and contrasts and creating empathy with different peoples. The simplest and most explicit use is focused on content and linked to the students' pleasure, interest and engagement in the material (p. 36).

Booker-Gross reports that using fiction can expand understanding of the subject material while providing vicarious experience through the characters' actions.

Conclusion

Numerous authors have pointed toward the successful use of fiction as pedagogy in higher education in a variety of disciplines. Interestingly, there are no reports in the literature of using fiction to teach library science students. In a profession so oriented to literature and preserving the value of a culture's ideas, there are certainly many areas of application for fiction in the library science classroom. The successful reports from practice in other fields also indicate potential success in library and information science education. Professors have described successful teaching experiences in various disciplines, and some (especially in psychology) have reported positive results from quantitative data.

The suggestions from the literature have common themes. Fiction has a unique quality to communicate with the reader, providing connections to characters and vicarious experience through those characters. Shaw (1992) speaks not only of that vicarious experience but also of coduction, where we can compare our own experience with those of the characters in literature. We can see characters in stories at an intimate

level that would be virtually impossible in other kinds of course material. The ability of literature to illustrate theory is important, creating a connection between theory and practice that is very positive. In addition, the emotional component of fiction is important for learning and can be used to great advantage in certain aspects of education. The human qualities that need to be developed are distinguished in the literature in this review from the more scientific aspects of the whole person. The discussion regarding the various levels of literacy and how literature extends cultural and emotional literacy is in a similar vein. Recent emphases on interdisciplinary courses generated numerous courses, some of which are applicable to this study and reported in this chapter. Reports from those studies and others in this chapter show that as a rule students enjoy reading literature to illustrate theory. Where student responses were reported, they were very positive in nature. Literature is being used to teach ethics, depth of feeling, introspection, empathy, and cultural values, whether "cultural" is organizationally or societally defined.

While these reports, the quantitative studies, and the accompanying positive comments from student questionnaires are supportive of the use of fiction, it is evident from the literature that more research should be done to discover student experiences in these classrooms. The research question for this study is reinforced: What is the essence of the experience of graduate professional students where fiction is used as part or all of the curriculum material? As stated above, Chapter 3 of this research report will investigate established theories and concepts which provide the foundation for the various elements of this question. Chapter 4 will provide a methodology for examining this question, with Chapter 5 a presentation of the data. Chapter 6 will review the findings within the context of the material in this chapter and in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

Introduction

It is evident from the many reports from practice highlighted in Chapter 2 that fiction is being used successfully in a number of different disciplines in higher education. Further, the enthusiastic reports from practice indicate that there is support for expanding this pedagogy. At this point, a return to theory will help provide a more complete foundation for the study.

In this chapter, I will look at three specific questions which provide the theoretical framework for the dissertation. First, I will look at theory from the field of cognitive psychology, specifically the work of Jerome Bruner (1985, 1990) and David Kolb (1984). Bruner's discussion of the role of narrative in culture and his work on the dual nature of cognition are complementary to Kolb's theories of cognition and experiential learning. The information from this aspect of theory will set the scene for a closer look at what fiction can provide to the reader and will lead to the second question: What kind of thinking and learning does theory tell us can be stimulated with literature? I will focus special attention in this section on the work of Robert Coles (1989a, 1989b) and Louise Rosenblatt (1995), authors who have developed responses from both theory and practice to these questions. The third and last question I will address in this chapter is: In what way are these things important for professional education? I will define professional education, look at current issues for educating professionals, and will highlight theories applicable to this discussion.

This section does not attempt to make a thorough study of theories of learning or the concept of knowledge. Rather, it focuses specifically on the questions outlined above as they relate to preparation for this study. I will address the methodological foundations of the study in Chapter 4.

Foundations from Cognitive Psychology

Jerome Bruner: Narrative and Culture and Two Modes of Thought

Cultural Role of Narrative

While the focus of this study is specifically the use of fiction in graduate professional education, Bruner's broader discussion of "narrative" and its cultural importance is very helpful in providing a context for the study. Jerome Bruner, a prominent American cognitive psychologist, is a contemporary author who continues to research the relationship between cultural narrative and an individual's ability to make meaning within his or her environment. In Acts of Meaning (1990), Bruner describes the mid-20th century "revolution" in psychology as an effort to establish meaning as the central concept in the discipline (p. 2).

> It was, we thought, an all-out effort to establish meaning as the central concept of psychology – not stimuli and responses, not overtly observable behavior, not biological drives and their transformation, but meaning. . . . Its aim was to discover and to describe formally the meanings that human beings created out of their encounters with the world, and then to propose hypotheses about what meaning-making processes were implicated. It focused upon the symbolic activities that human beings employed in constructing and in making sense not only of the world, but of themselves. Its aim was to prompt psychology to join forces with its sister interpretive disciplines in the humanities and in the social sciences (Bruner, 1990, p. 2).

Bruner continues to develop his analysis of the trend in psychology away from a "computational" and positivistic orientation toward a more humanistic orientation. It is from this background that Bruner introduces the term "folk psychology" (p. 13). "It deals

with the nature, causes, and consequences of those intentional states – beliefs, desires, intentions, commitments – that most scientific psychology dismisses in its effort to explain human action from a point of view that is outside human subjectivity . . ." (p. 14). Folk psychology dominates human interaction in daily life. Bruner goes on to make the point that in the positivist paradigm where the effort is to eliminate all aspects of the human mental state to prepare for objective study, researchers actually throw out the very phenomena that psychology seeks to explain (p. 14).

> It is in terms of folk-psychological categories that we experience ourselves and others. It is through folk psychology that people anticipate and judge one another, draw conclusions about the worth-whileness of their lives, and so on. Its power over human mental functioning and human life is that it provides the very means by which culture shapes human beings to its requirements (Bruner, 1990, p. 14-15).

The organizing principle of folk psychology is narrative rather than conceptual, according to Bruner. But what exactly is narrative? Phillips (1995, p. 629) cites The Oxford Companion to the English Language definition, which defines narrative as "The general or inclusive term for a story or account of events or experiences, fact or fiction, long or short, detailed or plain." Bruner (1985) distinguishes between the narrative mode of thought and the logico-scientific mode of thought. This distinction is an important aspect of his theory.

Jerome Bruner's Two Modes of Thought

Bruner's (1985, 1990) dual nature of thinking, or modes of thought (1985), are at the heart of his theory of cognitive psychology and his effort to focus the discipline on meaning rather than physiology. His two modes of thought are logico-scientific and narrative (1985). I will look briefly at Bruner's description of the two modes of thought as further preparation for understanding the role of fiction in teaching.

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The logico-scientific mode of thought, or "paradigmatic" as Bruner normally refers to it, is centered on mathematical and scientific systems.

> At a gross level, the [paradigmatic mode] deals in general causes, and in their establishment, and makes use by constraining principles to assure verifiable reference and to test for empirical truth. Its language is regulated by requirements of consistency and noncontradiction. Its domain is defined not only by observables to which its basic statements relate, but also by the set of possible worlds that can be logically generated and tested against observables, that is, it is driven by principled hypotheses (Bruner, 1984, p. 98).

Tools for this mode of thinking include logic, mathematics, and the scientific method of hypothesis setting and experimentation. Bruner notes that the "imaginative application" of this mode of thinking leads to "good theory, tight analysis, logical proof, and empirical discovery guided by reasoned hypothesis" (1984, p. 98).

However, our preoccupation with science and indeed our infatuation with this mode of thought denys the rightful significance of another mode of thought, Bruner's "narrative mode" (1990, 1984).

> The imaginative application of the narrative mode leads . . . to good stories, gripping drama, believable historical accounts. It deals in human or human-like intention and action and the vicissitudes and consequences that mark their course. . . . It operates by constructing two landscapes simultaneously. One is the landscape of action, where the constituents are the arguments of action: agent, intention or goal, situation, instrument. Its other landscape is the landscape of consciousness: what those involved in the action know, think, or feel (1984, p. 98-99).

It is this arena of thinking (what we know, think, or feel) where narrative, and specifically for this study fictional narrative, can extend learning into greater depth and dimension. Fictional narrative is appropriate for the narrative mode of thought, since fact and fiction have different roles in the logico-scientific mode and the narrative mode. Representation of "truth" in the two modes of thought is very different. In the paradigmatic mode, the

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goal is to explain a phenomena and to establish proof based on scientific testing. Truth in the narrative mode is problematic and fuzzy.

In Acts of Meaning (1990), Bruner describes the essential function of narrative in representing human reflective thought and in the construction of meaning. The constitutive role of culture, particularly for example in the construction of meaning through language, is an important element of his argument.

> By virtue of participation in culture, meaning is rendered public and shared. Our culturally adapted way of life depends upon shared meanings and shared concepts and depends as well upon shared modes of discourse for negotiating differences in meaning and interpretation (1990, p. 13).

As a psychologist, Bruner argues the importance to a healthy life of the ability to generate and to use narrative in order to make meaning of one's place in culture. "We hear increasingly from psychoanalytic theorists that human adaptation to life itself depends upon the success of the patient (or Everyman) in generating a believable narrative, one that in some robust fashion weaves in but does not necessarily mirror the historical truth" (1984, p. 99).

Ultimately, Bruner argues, the tools of interpretation and narrative are essential to the task of meaning making. There is no one single interpretation of the world, whether we look for it through biology or otherwise. In order to make sense of the world around us, we must rely on symbols generated by the structure of a powerful narrative culture, including myths, stories, poetry, song, and literature (1990, p. 138). And, while the logico-scientific mode of thinking seeks to represent truth within a narrow, positivistic view, the narrative mode of thinking seeks to understand the broader question of the meaning of experience.

It is this broader question of the meaning of experience as represented through fictional narrative which prepares us for investigating the pedagogical uses of fiction in professional education. First, it will be helpful to look at the theory of experiential learning as presented by educational psychologist David Kolb as it extends the foundation of fiction as pedagogy.

David Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning

David Kolb (1984) has developed a theory of experiential learning which is relevant to this discussion for a variety of reasons. First, in the development of his theory Kolb reviewed the work of theorists John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Kurt Lewin. Kolb's resulting theory has elements of each of these philosophers while extending and modifying their ideas into an exciting new theory of learning. Another reason Kolb's theory is interesting for this study is the similarity in some aspects of his thinking to what has just been described by Bruner (1985, 1990). Finally, Kolb's theory of experiential learning can be adapted directly to the use of fiction in the classroom. These ideas will be presented here and will be supported in the remaining parts of this chapter.

Roots of Kolb's Theory

Kolb (1984) returns to the work of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget in the opening chapter of his book Experiential Learning. Kolb clearly points to these theorists as providing the intellectual origins of experiential learning. Interestingly, at one point (p. 13) Kolb makes note of Jerome Bruner's work as being concurrent to that of Piaget's, especially in the area of instructional design based on cognitive development. The intellectual heritage of experiential learning is important to Kolb as he argues the significance of his model.

> [Experiential learning theory] offers the foundation for an approach to education and learning as a lifelong process that is soundly based in intellectual traditions of social psychology, philosophy, and cognitive psychology. The experiential learning model pursues a framework for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work, and personal development. It offers a system of competencies for describing job demands and corresponding educational objectives and emphasizes the critical linkages that can be developed between the classroom and the "real world" with experiential learning methods (Kolb, 1984, p. 4).

Kolb's diagram of experiential learning is presented here as Figure 1. The model demonstrates the interaction between the individual's personal development, education, and work. This interaction, shown in the model as a circle moving between the three points of personal experience, creates experiential learning.

From Dewey, Kolb was most interested in his 1938 publication Experience and Education. In that publication, Dewey was attempting to clarify his position on the growing conflict between his theories of "progressive" education and more traditional educational methods. Dewey's emphasis on pragmatism in education was a shift away from the rational traditions which had dominated educational thinking since the Middle Ages (Kolb, 1984, p. 12). In addition, there was a strong emphasis in Dewey's work on the concept of experience in education.

> The key concept in Dewey's philosophy is experience. Although there is a development from an idealistic to a naturalistic analysis of experience and different emphases in his many discussions of experience, a nevertheless coherent view of experience does emerge (Bernstein, 1967, p. 381).

Kolb is wary of some of the interpretations in higher education today of Dewey's theories on experience in education, especially the trend toward "anti-intellectualism" he sees in the movement toward vocationalism (Kolb, 1984, p. 6). Nevertheless Kolb continues to emphasize the validity of experience as a method for learning and to celebrate John Dewey's contribution to this direction for teaching.

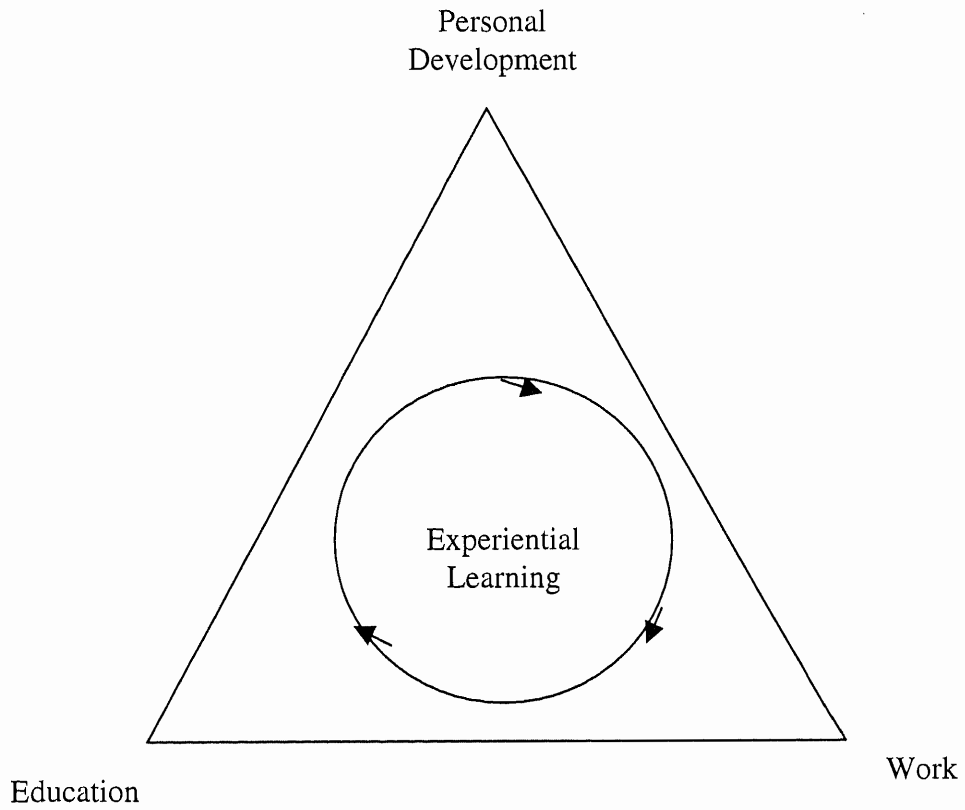

Figure 1. Kolb's Experiential Learning Process

Kurt Lewin's influence on the fields of social psychology and organizational behavior further contribute to Kolb's theory of experiential learning. Kolb (1984) specifically highlights Lewin's work in the development of group dynamics, action research, and laboratory training methods such as T-groups (T=training). "[Lewin's] best known quotation, 'There is nothing so practical as good theory,' symbolizes his commitment to the integration of scientific inquiry and social problem solving" (Kolb, 1984, p. 8-9). Lewin's experimental work with organizations and training situations led to his belief that the most effective learning takes place where there is interactive tension and conflict between immediate, concrete experience and analytic detachment.

> By bringing together the immediate experiences of the trainees and the conceptual models of the staff in an open atmosphere where inputs from each perspective could challenge and stimulate the other, a learning environment occurred with remarkable vitality and creativity (Kolb, 1984, p. 10).

Later work by Lewin's followers sought to create personal experiences for learners that would stimulate the individual's own process of inquiry and understanding.

Jean Piaget, a French developmental psychologist who has been a strong influence in the field of education, focused his attention on the nature of intelligence and how it develops. Piaget's interest on the stages of development led him to the theory that intelligence was directly linked to experience. "Stated most simply, Piaget's theory describes how intelligence is shaped by experience. Intelligence is not an innate internal characteristic of the individual but arises as a product of the interaction between the person and his or her environment" (Kolb, 1984, p.12). Piaget's research led to his theories of stages of cognitive development. These stages for Piaget ended with adolescence, but subsequent researchers have extended the idea into adult learning for

lifelong development. This contributes to Kolb's use of experiential learning in higher education.

Kolb's Dual Nature of Knowledge

Kolb's dual-knowledge theory makes a distinction between apprehension and comprehension. Parallels can be seen with Bruner's (1985, 1990) two modes of thinking. "Experiential learning is based on a dual-knowledge theory: the empiricists' concrete experience, grasping reality by the process of direct apprehension, and the rationalists' abstract conceptualization, grasping reality via the mediating process of abstract conceptualization" (Kolb, 1984, p. 101). Kolb places knowledge gained through apprehension on an equal level as knowledge gained through comprehension, a distinction which separates him from the rationalist orientation where knowing through comprehension is more prominent.

> The dynamic relation between apprehension and comprehension lies at the core of knowledge creation . . . Immediate apprehended experience is the ultimate source of the validity of comprehensions in both fact and value. The factual basis of a comprehension is ultimately judged in terms of its connection with sense experience. Its value is similarly judged ultimately by its immediate affective utility" (Kolb, 1984, p. 106).

This description of Kolb's dual nature of knowledge, combined with the intellectual background described in the previous section, provides an introduction for the explanation of his theory of experiential learning.

Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning

Kolb defines learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). By combining two forms of prehension (apprehension and comprehension) and two methods of transforming that

prehension (extension and intention), Kolb reveals four different forms of knowledge. Figure 2 shows these four forms of knowledge from Kolb's description.

It is helpful to refer to Kolb's diagram when moving toward understanding the model. Two terms from the diagram need to be defined: intention and extension. Intention for Kolb refers to internal reflection, and extension refers to active external manipulation of the external world (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). Thus, Kolb's four elementary forms of knowledge:

> Experience grasped through apprehension and transformed through intention results in what will be called divergent knowledge. Experience grasped through comprehension and transformed through intention results in assimilative knowledge. When experience is grasped through comprehension and transformed through extension, the result is convergent knowledge. And finally, when experience is grasped by apprehension and transformed by extension, accommodative knowledge is the result. These elementary forms of knowledge . . . become the building blocks for developmentally higher levels of knowing (Kolb, 1984, p. 42).

Kolb reiterates that learning requires both a grasp or a representation of experience as well as some transformation of that representation. Figurative grasp alone or operative transformation alone are not sufficient. Thus, it is this interactive process that produces learning.

The use of literature could provide learning experiences which fit the description of various categories of learning according to Kolb, depending on how the story was presented and discussed in the class. It could be argued that reading a story provided a learning experience focused on comprehension, or through reliance on conceptual interpretation and symbolic representation, or that it was a learning experience through apprehension, where experience is through reliance on the tangible, felt qualities of immediate experience. Transformation takes place through intention, or internal

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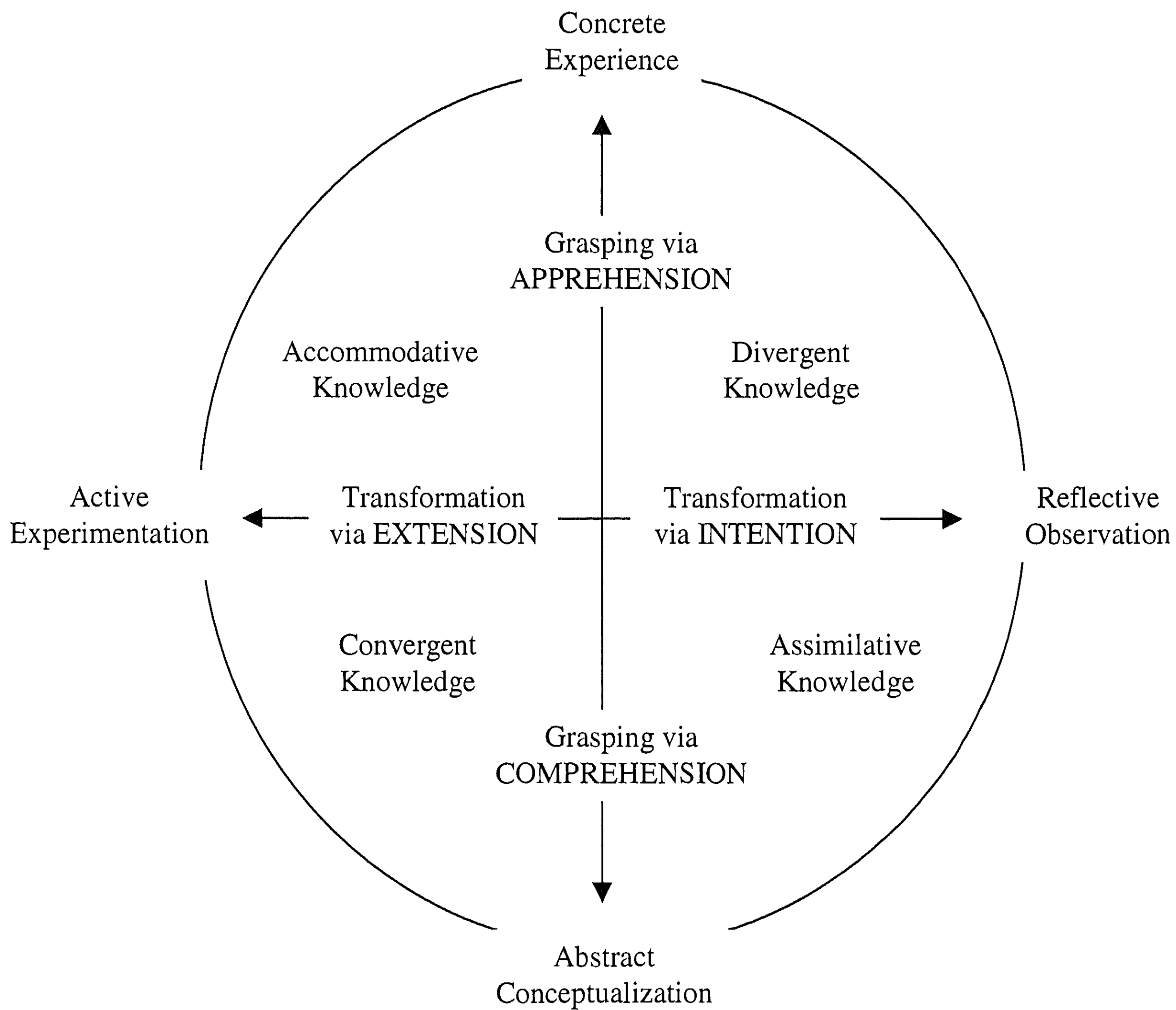

Figure 2. Kolb's Structural Dimensions of Experiential Learning and Resulting Basic Knowledge Forms

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reflection, or extension, or external manipulation of the external world (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). A likely scenario for the use of literature in higher education would include a cycle of individual reading, individual reflection, public discussion with some concrete instruction, and continued individual reflection. At various levels of this cycle, the student would be engaged at all level of Kolb's experiential learning cycle, depending on the level and intensity of the story as well as the amount of informational connections to the content of the class curriculum.

Kolb (1984) goes on to describe the philosophical nuances of his theory and examines additional research at length in support of his theory. For this study, the important aspects of Kolb's work are these three areas I have investigated: the intellectual foundations of his experiential learning theory which provide an additional theory base to this study, the dual nature of knowledge as it extends and supports Bruner's (1985, 1990) work, and the description of the experiential learning theory and its elements.

The examination of Jerome Bruner's and David Kolb's work provides a background into cognitive theory which is pertinent to this study. With this background in mind, I will move to the next question posed in the introduction to this chapter: What kind of thinking and learning opportunities does theory tell us we can stimulate with literature?

Fiction as Pedagogy

There are times in education where it is important to convey facts to the students, and there are times when the goal is to convey meaning. Bruner's two modes of thinking feed directly into two modes of understanding, and thus two modes of teaching.

To begin this discussion I will return briefly to Bruner's description of the two modes of thought. One of the aspects of his description, as described in the previous section, is the notion of believability as opposed to falsifiability. Truth in the logico-scientific mode is based on testability and indeed falsifiability. "Popper proposed that falsifiability is the cornerstone of the scientific method" (Bruner, 1985, p. 99). Fictional narrative, on the other hand, depends on believability rather than scientific proof. "Believability is the hallmark of well-formed narrative. When we apply criteria of falsifiability to a narrative, we replace the narrative by a paradigmatic structure. . . . Moreover, a story can be shown to be false, and still have a compelling believability about it" (p. 99, 113). Martha Hale, Professor of Library and Information Science at Emporia State University, uses stories to teach in particular situations. "When we want students to know the facts of a case, stories don't work; but when we want them to absorb the essence or meaning of an issue, the truth or falsity is less important" (M. Hale, personal communication, January 12, 1999).

So, in what kinds of situations in professional education should we be using fiction? What kinds of thinking and learning opportunities does theory tell us we can stimulate with literature, and in which situations should we seek those opportunities? The next section of this chapter will look at some examples in theory of the kinds of knowledge and understanding generated by literature.

Knowledge and Understanding Through Literature

Hirst and Walsh

Scholars in the humanities field have provided a wealth of literature dealing with theories of knowledge and literature as a way of knowing. I will not attempt to make an

exhaustive review of theories of knowledge or learning theory, but rather highlight two scholars who have addressed this issue: Paul Hirst and Dorothy Walsh.

By reviewing the work of Hirst (1974) and Walsh (1969), Kasprisin (1987) establishes an epistemological justification for literary studies. Kasprisin's overview is helpful in getting a sense of these arguments, which are representative of work in the humanities discipline. Hirst seeks to justify the liberal arts education within a particular definition of knowledge, while Walsh expands the definition of knowledge to include understanding through literature.

Hirst (1974) discards the notion of "reality" as being the only source of knowledge in a similar manner to what Bruner has set forth.

> In his essays on the forms of knowledge and the liberal arts tradition, Paul Hirst offers a view of liberal education which he calls a "reinstatement" of the traditional Greek concept freed from its historical justification in a doctrine of metaphysical and epistemological realism. While rejecting Plato's single paradigm of rationality as the only way to knowing, Hirst shares with Plato the notion that knowing is essentially propositional. But unlike Plato, who concluded that literature must therefore be omitted as a way of knowing, Hirst opens the possibility that literature, as well as other questionable categories like religion, could meet the conditions of knowledge (p. 18).

Hirst (1974) includes in his discussion the necessity of using different methods to study different types of curriculum subjects. The significance of the human dimension of life cannot be understood in the same way that biological sciences are studied, for example, and literature is an important tool for moral understanding. This is consistent with Bruner's (1985, 1990) description of two modes of thought.

Dorothy Walsh (1969) has also tackled the subject of literature as knowledge. Walsh looks at the definitions of knowledge and includes "experience" as an element of that definition. Literature, she says, offers opportunities to expand experience. Walsh

refers to John Dewey's discussion of the difference between "experience" and "having an experience." This particular aspect of Dewey's work (1922, 1934) has been very influential, and will resurface in this study on several occasions (Kolb, 1984; Rosenblatt, 1995).

> For Walsh, the literary text embodies a potential experience that can be realized in the imaginative participation of the reader's experience. For the literary work is seen not as a "vehicle of some warranted empirical claim" that can be asserted separately, but rather is seen as an "illuminating image" that shows forth, exhibits, reveals, displays, or embodies. Thus, the term "literary experience" comes to stand for two events for Walsh – the experience implicit or formalized in the text which she calls, following Susanne Langer, virtual experience and the experience of the reader who must recreate the experience in the act of reading itself (Kasprisin, p. 24).

Other words and phrases that Walsh (1969) uses to describe what literature offers the reader are illumination, realization, epiphany, heightened understanding, and revelatory insight (p. 11). Walsh also addresses the issue of truth, or as she approaches it, "information." It is possible, and perhaps in many cases desirable, to include information in literature. However, the experience literature provides to the reader does not depend on that information.

> Information may be as important as you please, but talent in creative art is not required for the transmission information. When we look to literature for illumination and insight we presumably look for something that literature is distinctively equipped to provide (1969, p. 81).

Bruner's argument regarding the role of narrative is consistent with this description by Walsh, where she celebrates literature's unique ability to convey something more than, something beyond, the actual articulation of information.

Fiction in Use: Coles, Rosenblatt, and Waldo

Two primary works provided the idea base for this study: Robert Coles' The Call of Stories (1989a) and Louise Rosenblatt's Literature as Exploration (1995). Both of these

authors extend this argument of fiction's unique role in teaching. I will begin with an extensive look at both Coles (1989a, 1989b) and Rosenblatt (1995). Next, I will review a classic article written by Dwight Waldo (1968). I will conclude this chapter with a variety of statements from other authors regarding the positive uses of fiction as pedagogy.

Robert Coles: The Call of Stories

Coles, with the publication of The Call of Stories: Teaching and the Moral Imagination (1989a), brought to life this idea of using literature in higher education. While he was certainly not the first author to publish on this topic, his successful book made the topic more accessible and timely.

Coles (1989a) writes about the impact of stories on his own life, through his experiences as a youth, a student, a young professional, and a mature teacher. A strong feature of this work is the influence of physician-author William Carlos Williams on Coles' life and work. Coles, himself a physician, refers frequently to the richness Williams brought to both of his own professions via the influence of the other; i.e. Williams' practice as a doctor was enriched by Williams' stories, which were in turn created by his experiences as a doctor.

> Through storytelling, William Carlos Williams tried to reach the mind, the heart, the soul of his readers – "to affect them deeply, to excite their moral imagination in such a way that they sweat and tremble, toss and turn." He wanted not only the effort of intelligent consideration but also a "moral immersion" – a degree of empathy perhaps – that connects a reader's intellect with his or her personal life (Coles, 1989b, p. 23).

What Coles does in The Call of Stories (1989a) is to eventually make a strong case for using this technique formally with students in higher education and particularly in professional programs such as law and medicine. In an educational environment where so

much effort is spent on the development of the intellect, Coles provides a rationale for also expanding the emotional and humanitarian aspects of the mind. He speaks of the moral aspects of the professions, by which he means the ability to grapple with questions of conscience and responsibility based on an understanding of the human dimensions of life confronted in daily work.

Fiction, Coles argues (1989a, 1989b), brings those moral and emotional issues to life and provides a unique way to learn more about life. A good portion of his book (1989a) describes in depth specific works of fiction and how they were used in the classroom to provide a particular vicarious experience for the students, or to set the stage for a discussion of ethical issues faced by the story's characters. He includes instances of student responses from the classes to more fully describe the learning experience. For example, Coles talks about his use of Tillie Olsen's short story "I Stand Here Ironing" and the discussion of moral introspection generated in his classroom. Coles also discusses his use of Flannery O'Connor's and William Carlos Williams' stories with medical students and using Dickens, Eliot, Fitzgerald and Tolstoy with business and law students. Primarily, Coles is an advocate of extending the students' experiences through literature, offering the complexities of life up for discussion and reflection. The characters met in fiction stay in the mind of the reader, living with him or her in daily experience.

> The whole point of stories is not "solutions" or "resolutions" but a broadening and even a heightening of our struggles – with new protagonists and antagonists introduced, with new sources of concern or apprehension or hope, as one's mental life accommodates itself to a series of arrivals: guests who have a way of staying, but not necessarily staying put (1989a, p. 129).

Stories, Coles says, offer us a unique way to extend our understanding of ourselves and our life experiences, expanding the intellect and the emotions.

There is no evidence in Coles' writing of systematically collected student reactions to his use of fiction in professional education. Coles reports many successes with this pedagogy, but he does not report actual research in this area. Coles' enthusiastic discussion of fiction in professional education would benefit from further systematic collection of student responses or from other methodologies appropriate to the question.

Louise Rosenblatt: Literature as Exploration

Rosenblatt's book (1995) is more focused on a theoretical justification for the use of literature than Coles (1989a). This book was first published in its original form in 1938 and is now in its fifth edition, having become an established text in the humanities field. Her original intent was to broaden the use of literature in the classroom beyond traditional literary criticism and to encourage individual reader response, where each reader is encouraged to gain insights from a particular work of literature based on his or her own experience and thus individual response. Rosenblatt argued that this individual response could create heightened experiences for the learner. Her theories evolved into what is now called the "Reader Response" theory of literary criticism. The purpose of this study is not to critique or even to explore the Reader Response theory. Rather, this study will look at Rosenblatt's justifications for using literature beyond the traditional English course classroom as those justifications contribute to the discussion of fiction as pedagogy for professional education.

Rosenblatt has a great deal to say about the use of literature in education. In the foreword to the fifth edition of Literature as Exploration (1995), Wayne Booth returns to the basic question "What finally is the point of reading literature?" (p. vii). Rosenblatt's work provides answers to this question and adds to the theoretical base of this study.

One of the points Rosenblatt (1995) makes early in her book is that using literature in education helps foster the society needed for a successful democracy. Exposure to other people and other cultures through stories helps American students see parts of the bigger picture. In addition, students need experiences which can help them consider various sides to an issue and make reasoned decisions. Reading literature, Rosenblatt writes, can provide those experiences and develop those skills. The description of what fiction contributes to this particular skill development is particularly useful for this study, actually being applicable to more than just the development of good American citizens. The ability to look at a variety of information sources and make decisions out of ambiguity, emotional issues, and reflection is important for all learners.

When discussing further the potential for vicarious experience through literature, Rosenblatt again emphasizes the connection to this idea of education for democracy. "Literature fosters the kind of imagination needed in a democracy – the ability to participate in the needs and aspirations of other personalities and to envision the effect of our actions on their lives" (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 212). Today there is a great deal of emphasis on creating learners who are comfortable with many types of diversity. Rosenblatt's description of literature and democracy extends well into this wider emphasis.

Not only can reading and discussing literature provide a structure for this type of learning, but literature has potential in many other disciplines beyond the traditional classroom applications. "Literature also embraces matters that are special to the historian, the economist, and the sociologist" (Rosenblatt, p. 17). One way literature provides

insight to social and historical issues is through the portrayal of changing events in history through stories written at that time.

Rosenblatt also proposes that social issues and relationships between people can be better understood through literature. Life as revealed through fiction can be very instructive.

> [The literature teacher] shares with all other teachers the task of providing the student with the proper equipment for making sound social and ethical judgments. Indeed, the English teacher can play an important part in this process, since the student's social adjustments may be more deeply influenced by what he absorbs through literature than by what he learns through the theoretical materials of the usual social science course (Rosenblatt, p. 21).

The conclusion that Rosenblatt draws is that literary materials have their place not only in the English curriculum but also in the social science curriculum, providing students with exposure to new cultures, people, and moral issues.

Rosenblatt's efferent and aesthetic reading

Rosenblatt (1995) describes a range of processes when reading, from the cognitive to the affective. It is useful to look at Rosenblatt's description of two kinds of reading as another example in keeping with Bruner's two modes of thinking.

Both cognitive and affective elements are present in all reading, according to Rosenblatt (1995), with "the differing amounts of attention accorded these aspects [constituting] a continuum ranging from predominately nonliterary to predominately literary" (p. xvii). When reading primarily for specific informational content, such as a medical report or an informational essay, the reader must focus more attention on the impersonal and publicly verifiable aspects of the writing, relegating the affective aspects of the writing to the background. Rosenblatt calls this *efferent* reading, from the Latin *effere* "to carry away" (p. xvii).

On the other hand, *aesthetic* reading requires a broadening of attention to include the personal and emotive aspects of understanding. "The reader must broaden the scope of attention to include the personal, affective aura and associations surrounding the words evoked and must focus on – experience, live through – the moods, scenes, situations being created through the transaction" (p. xvii). Rosenblatt uses the term "transaction" when referring to the relationship between reader and story. "*Transaction* . . . permits emphasis on the to-and-for, spiraling, nonlinear, continuously reciprocal influence of reader and text in the making of meaning" (p. xvi).

One point Rosenblatt is clear to reiterate about the efferent-aesthetic continuum is that both elements exist in all writing. "My purpose is to counteract the tendency toward polarization of art and science and to stress their complementary contributions" (Rosenblatt, p. xix). Bruner (1985, 1990) and Kolb (1984) would agree with Rosenblatt on this point.

Rosenblatt's literature as experience

Rosenblatt (1995) refers to contemporary psychology's assertion that the most important things in education for youth include experiential learning, especially in the arena of emotional and esthetic experiences (p. 173). Literature, writes Rosenblatt, has the greatest potential to achieve those educational goals.

> [The student] comes to know intimately, more intimately perhaps than would be possible in actual life, many personalities. He vicariously shares their struggles and perplexities and achievements . . . And these vicarious experiences have at least something of the warmth and color and immediacy of life. . . . Hence, literature can foster the linkage between intellectual perception and emotional drive that is essential to any vital learning process (Rosenblatt, p. 174).

Not only can students learn through characters who are very different from themselves or who have very different experiences than they have yet encountered, but Rosenblatt

describes how readers also benefit from finding literary characters who are very similar to themselves.

> The vicarious experiences offered by literature can have a particularly significant effect when they are related to problems and conflicts intimately involving the reader. . . . The very fact that the reader's situation is not unique, that it at least parallels what others evidently understand and have lived through, gives him some perspective. Through seeing his problems apart from himself, he is helped to think and feel more clearly about them. This constitutes another phase of the potential influence of literature (Rosenblatt, p. 191).

The helpful nature of reading a story where the characters experience similar situations to one's own is verified by psychology. Rosenblatt (p. 191) quotes psychologist Lawrence K. Frank, who sees stories as having the potential of bringing into consciousness various repressed experiences. Frank's suggested use of fiction is outside the application researched in this study, but it demonstrates once again the potential for human connections between story and individual, and between individual and vicarious experience.

Learning through the actions of characters is another way the student uses fiction to extend experience. "Literature may help [the student] make sound choices through imaginative trial and error or experimentation – through experiencing in the literary work the consequences of alternative actions" (Rosenblatt, p. 212).

John Dewey's influence on Rosenblatt's theories

It is interesting to return to John Dewey on the suggestion of Rosenblatt and to look at his ideas about learning through experience, and particularly about learning through artistic experience. It is not the intent of this study to look in any depth at John Dewey's work, but rather to seek out that part of his writing which was influential in the development of theories presented in this report. Rosenblatt (1995) particularly refers to

two of Dewey's books: Art as Experience (1934), and Human Nature and Conduct (1922).

Dewey (1934) states the "experience occurs continuously, because the interaction of live creature and environing conditions is involved in the very process of living" (p. 35). Experience in general, however, is different than having "*an* experience," which for Dewey implies a completion of action that is separate and distinguishable. Life is then seen not as an uninterrupted series of events, but rather a series of experiences with beginnings and ends. These events in life are important enough to us to stand out in our memory, and thus we are able to reflect on them and call each "*an* experience."

Dewey then goes on to explain that such experiences defy definition and include a wide range of components. An experience may be physical, intellectual, reflective, or emotional, and often is all of these things melded together. Dewey writes that the intellectual experience is not complete without an element of the esthetic (1934). This "esthetic" quality Dewey also refers to as emotional. By using the term emotional, however, Dewey does not simplify the description.

> I have spoken of the esthetic quality that rounds out an experience into completeness and unity as emotional. The reference may cause difficulty. We are given to thinking of emotions as things as simple and compact as are the words by which we name them. Joy, sorrow, hope, fear, anger, and curiosity are treated as if each in itself were a sort of entity that enters full-made upon the scene . . . In fact emotions are qualities, when they are significant, of a complex experience that moves and changes (p. 41).

Dewey goes on to name emotion as a force which brings an experience together and makes it complete.

> Physical things from far ends of the earth are physically transported and physically caused to act and react upon one another in the construction of a new object. The miracle of mind is that something similar takes place in experience without physical transport and assembling. Emotion is the moving and cementing

> force. It selects what is congruous and dyes what is selected with its color, thereby giving qualitative unity to materials externally disparate and dissimilar. It thus provides unity in and through the varied parts of an experience. When the unity is of the sort already described, the experience has esthetic character even though it is not, dominantly, an esthetic experience (Dewey, 1934, p. 42).

When showing that the esthetic quality of an experience is integral to its definition, Dewey (1934) goes on to distinguish "artistic" from "esthetic" (p. 46). "Artistic" refers to the act of production and "esthetic" refers to the acts of perception and enjoyment. An experience can be based on the production of a work of art as well as the enjoyment of a work of art. In the end, Dewey describes experience as an act of consciousness rather than anything strictly physical or even strictly intellectual. There is no strict definition other than the interaction of the organism with the environment.

> Experience is a matter of the interaction of organism with its environment, an environment that is human as well as physical, that includes the materials of tradition and institutions as well as local surroundings . . . There is no experience in which the human contribution is not a factor in determining what actually happens. The organism is a force, not a transparency" (Dewey, 1934, p. 246).

Experience is a process of concurrent elements coming together in the mind to a sense of completeness and closure. Whether this happens while skiing, writing, conversing, or reading does not matter (1922, 1934).

Dwight Waldo: The Novelist on Organization and Administration

Returning to more contemporary examples of rationales for using fiction as pedagogy, Dwight Waldo's (1968) essay advocates fiction as an additional teaching tool for public administration. Waldo offers a lengthy explanation of the benefits of fiction as pedagogy and also includes a substantial section of suggested works for that purpose. "Literature helps to restore what the professional-scientific literature necessarily omits or slights: the concrete, the sensual, the emotional, the subjective, the valuational" (p. 5).

Waldo proposes six "first level" arguments for using fiction to enhance the public administration curriculum (1968). These six arguments are to a great extent representative of the arguments presented in much of the literature in this study, and so are described here. His comments are specific to the study of organizations and administration, but can be applied across disciplines.

"First, one can through literary treatments come to understand what one knows" (p. 5). Waldo explains that there is a difference between types and levels of knowledge. One can find a deeper meaning to one's own personal experiences through reading a good administrative novel. Waldo gives an example of one book which provided this extension of understanding for him and implies that different books will meet the needs of different people.

"Second, through literature dealing with organization we can extend the range of our knowledge" (p. 5). Here Waldo is speaking in favor of living vicariously through fiction and using that vicarious experience to broaden one's knowledge. "One person's life is necessarily limited, but through the knowledge and skill of the artist he participates in many lives. . ." (p. 5).

"Third, through the eyes of the man of letters we can get a view of the administrator, more generally the organization Man, as others view him" (p. 6). This view from the outside is very important according to Waldo.

"Fourth, one can get from the administrative novel a desirable emotional stimulation or release" (p. 7). Again, Waldo writes specifically with administration and organizations in mind, and he relates two areas where administrative novels stimulate emotional responses. One deals with the empathy a reader might feel for a leader in the

midst of a very difficult decision, and another example deals with a reader's empathetic connections to a difficult bureaucratic situation. Waldo states that this emotional response not only extends experience, but also provides relief from tension and thus better emotional balance.

"Fifth, we can get from literacy treatments of administration a better professional balance and humility" (p. 7). Waldo emphasizes the broad scope of literature contrasted with the necessarily limited scope of one individual. Through this exposure, a student can begin to understand the limits of his or her own knowledge and control.

"Sixth, through literary treatments we can come more closely to grips with the psychological and moral aspects of administrative decision-making" (p. 8). Waldo contrasts the clinical treatments of standard social science literature with the real life feel of characters created by literary artists. Again, through getting to know fictional characters from the inside, the reader gains a special understanding of textbook psychological processes.

A pattern has begun to emerge regarding the rationales for using fiction to extend curriculum in higher education. Essentially, the arguments lead to the use of fiction as an opportunity for the reader to extend his or her own individual experience through the experiences of characters in stories. The emotions generated by getting to know these characters and living with them through various experiences also enhance learning and indeed complete the experience. These comments are in keeping with what has been described in this report from Bruner (1985, 1990), Kolb (1984), Hirst (1974), Walsh (1969), Coles (1989a, 1989b), and Rosenblatt (1995). In the next section of this chapter, I

will look at professional education and how these elements of theory can contribute to professional education pedagogy.

Applications in Professional Education

My emphasis in this study on uses of fiction in professional education prompts a review of the meaning of "a profession" as well as elements of education important for a professional. I will begin this section with a discussion of what it means to be a profession, then build on that to investigate the important elements of professional education. Finally, I will connect these findings to the first part of this chapter where I investigated cognitive theory and the theoretical benefits of fiction as pedagogy. Since the purpose of this section is to contribute to the overall foundation of this study, I will not attempt an exhaustive review of literature regarding professional education.

Schein's Model of a Profession

Schein (1972) attempts to define the concept of professionalism by presenting a model with 10 different criteria. However, he cautions that each profession fits these criteria at a different levels and in some cases may not actually meet all 10 criteria from the model.

> The problem of definition derives from our attempt to give precision to a social or occupational role that varies as a function of the setting within which it is performed, that is itself evolving, and that is perceived differently by different segments of society (Schein, 1972, p. 8).

Although different weight may be given to these criteria depending on a variety of circumstances, there does exist general agreement on these 10 criteria, presented here from Schein (1972, p. 8-9):

1. The professional is engaged in a full time occupation that comprises his principal source of income.

2. The professional is assumed to have a strong motivation or calling as a basis for his choice of a professional career and is assumed to have a stable lifetime commitment to that career.

3. The professional possesses a specialized body of knowledge and skills that are acquired during a prolonged period of education and training.

4. The professional makes his decisions on behalf of a client in terms of general principles, theories, or propositions, which he applies to the particular case under consideration through universalistic standards.

5. The professional is assumed to have a service orientation, which means that he uses his expertise on behalf of the particular needs of his client. This service implies diagnostic skill, competent application of general knowledge to the special needs of the client, and an absence of self-interest.

6. The professional's service to the client is assumed to be based on the objective needs of the client and independent of the particular sentiments that the professional may have about the client. The professional promises a "detached" diagnosis. . . The professional relationship rests on a kind of mutual trust between the professional and client.

7. The professional is assumed to know better what is good for the client than the client himself. In other words, the professional demands autonomy of judgment of his own performance. Even if the client is not satisfied, the professional will, in principle, permit only his colleagues to judge his performance. Because of this demand for professional autonomy, the client is in a potentially vulnerable position. How does he know whether he has been cheated or harmed? The

profession deals with this potential vulnerability by developing strong ethical and professional standards for its members. Such standards may be expressed as codes of conduct and are usually enforced by colleagues through professional associations or through licensing examinations designed and administered by fellow professionals.

8. Professionals form professional associations which define criteria of admission, educational standards, licensing or other formal entry examinations, career lines within the profession, and areas of jurisdiction for the profession. Ultimately, the professional association's function is to protect the autonomy of the profession; it develops reasonably strong forms of self-government by setting rules or standards for the profession.

9. Professionals have great power and status in the area of their expertise, but their knowledge is assumed to be specific. A professional does not have a license to be a "wiseman" outside the area defined by his training.

10. Professionals make their service available but ordinarily are not allowed to advertise or to seek out clients. Clients are expected to initiate the contact and then accept the advice and service recommended, without appeal to outside authority.

As can be seen, these various criteria fit best the traditional, ancient, or "learned" professions of medicine, law, and divinity (Schein, 1972, p. 8-9).

This model of a profession, as Schein notes, fits various professions at various levels. For example, management may or may not be a full time occupation (Criterion 1) and may not have a service orientation (Criterion 5) or a strong sense of calling (Criterion 2).

Schein refers to a scale of professionalism, where any given occupation can be judged on a "degree of professionalism" depending on how the 10 criteria are met.

Issues in Professional Education

Schein (1972) has also outlined the basic criticisms of professional education that should be addressed by higher education. Schein brings in criticisms from the professions themselves, entering students, and society at large. The criticisms in Schein's model are as follows:

1. The professions are so specialized that they have become unresponsive to certain classes of social problems that require an interdisciplinary or interprofessional point of view – e.g., the urban problem.
2. Educational programs in professional schools, early career paths, and formal or informal licensing procedures have become so rigid and standardized that many young professionals cannot do the kind of work they wish to do.
3. The norms for entry into the professions have become so rigid that certain classes of applicants, such as older people, women, and career switchers are, in effect, discriminated against.
4. The norms of the professions and the growing base of basic and applied knowledge have become so convergent in most professions that it is difficult for innovations to occur in any but the highly specialized content areas at the frontiers of the profession.
5. Professionals have become unresponsive to the needs of many classes of ultimate clients or users of the services, working instead for the organization that employs them.

6. Professional education is almost totally geared to producing autonomous specialists and provides neither training nor experience in how to work as a member of a team, how to collaborate with clients in identifying needs and possible solutions, and how to collaborate with other professionals on complex projects.

7. Professional education provides no training for those graduates who wish to work as members of and become managers of intra- or interprofessional project teams working on complex social problems.

8. Professional education generally underutilizes the applied behavioral sciences, especially in helping professionals to increase their self-insight, their ability to diagnose and manage client relationships and complex social problems, their ability to sort out the ethical and value issues inherent in their professional role, and their ability to continue to learn throughout their career (Schein, 1972, p. 60-61).

Based on the theoretical foundations of learning presented in the first sections of this chapter, there are areas where using fiction could extend learning for professionals. The next section of this chapter will look at Schein's elements of a profession and his problems with professional education, making connections to theory presented in the first sections of the chapter.

Using Fiction in Professional Education

In the first part of this section, I will look specifically at Schein's model for a profession and lift out elements which match theory statements regarding the potential for fiction in teaching. Next, I will look at Schein's description of problems with current

professional education at the time of his writing and look for elements which could be addressed through the use of fiction.

Connections from Theory and Practice to Schein's Elements of a Profession

A review of Schein's model of a profession reveals numerous connections with statements from theory in the first part of this chapter. I will review each criterion and comment on specific areas of connection with theory, giving examples from previous sections in this report.

Criterion 2 assumes a strong motivation or calling to a profession. Coles (1989a, 1989b) uses the medical profession as an example of how stories can further one's commitment to the profession through his references to William Carlos Williams' stories from practice. Criterion 5 assumes professionals will have a service orientation, and Criterion 6 speaks to a relationship of mutual trust between the patient and the client. Coles (1989a, 1989b), Rosenblatt (1995), and Waldo (1968) all speak to the ability of stories to extend readers' understanding of themselves and of others. Coles (1989) speaks specifically of using Flannery O'Connor's short story "The Lame Shall Enter First" with medical students to reveal the potential for egotism and self-centeredness in doctors (pp. 122, 124-125).

> O'Connor's therapist chooses a bright patient to favor with his attention. Before the author is through with that therapist, the moral import of the story is clear: a professional person's vanity is a critical aspect of his life. His desire to give so much of himself to a particular patient has to do with his sense of his own importance (p. 125).

Coles uses this story with medical students to facilitate a discussion on the topic of the relationship of trust between patient and doctor, the conscious and subconscious motivations of professionals, and the potential for harm when things go wrong.

Criterion 7 speaks to the need for strong ethical standards within a profession. For example, in the profession of library and information management, there is a strong ethical commitment to values of intellectual freedom and freedom of access to information. Coles (1989a, 1989b), Rosenblatt (1995), and Waldo (1968) again all speak of fiction's ability to provide the reader with vicarious experience. From the theory base of cognitive psychology, we know learning from experience is effective and indeed vital to complete understanding. To provide library science students with a vicarious experience of what it is like to live in a world with censorship and lack of freedom of expression, an assignment could include Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451. A learning experience such as this could contribute to the students' total comprehension of how important a professional construct such as intellectual freedom is to the library profession in the United States.

Another connection from theory to this issue of Criterion 7's strong ethical standards in a profession refers back to Bruner's (1990) concept of public and shared cultural meanings through narrative. In this sense, the culture would refer to the culture of the profession as a new student learns about its ethical commitments. The use of fiction in professional education provides opportunities for the discourse Bruner describes as so important.

Connections from Theory and Practice to Schein's Criticisms of Professional Education

Several of Schein's criticisms of professional education center on the rigid and insular nature of the professions. Schein speaks to the need for more preparation toward interdisciplinary activities and topics. He also emphasizes the need to create more opportunities to examine complex issues and to foster life long learning. Opportunities

for more training and experience in collaboration, team work, and interprofessional teams are needed, according to Schein.

These criticisms of professional education are addressed in Kolb's theory of experiential learning, which incorporates not only higher education but also lifelong learning. See Figure 1, this time within the context of Schein's criticisms of professional education. With personal development, education, and work at the three points of the triangle, and experiential learning moving in a circular pattern in the midst of the three points of the triangle, we see that experience is the key process that brings all three components together to create learning. Can vicarious experience through fiction provide this learning? Our proponents of fiction say it can indeed contribute to the experiential base of the individual (Coles, 1989a, 1989b; Rosenblatt, 1995; Waldo, 1968; Walsh, 1969). In addition, reports from practice highlighted in Chapter 2 indicate a strong support of the notion of extending experience though fiction. In addition, these authors all speak to the ability of fiction to extend students' understanding of interpersonal relations and sensitivity levels. These elements of concern also appear in Schein's criticisms of professional education.

Can we depend on these assertions that fiction extends experience, increases sensitivity, and exposes students to a variety of complex issues outside of the more narrow presentation of strictly informational material? Can fiction help extend meaning? Our authors say yes, and cite successful teaching experiences and positive reports from students. However, empirical reports from research are limited. What is especially evident in its absence is more information from the student's point of view. It would be

useful in getting a better sense of the usefulness of fiction in the classroom to create opportunities for more in-depth inquiries into student experience.

Redefinition of the Question for this Study

My question, therefore, is supported and refined through the preceding journey through some theoretical foundations. There is evidence from cognitive psychology that two modes of thought, logico scientific and narrative, invite the use of literature in higher education. Cognitive psychology also advocates the importance of experience in education, and describes learning experiences which fit the cycle of reading, reflection, discussion, instruction, and continued reflection. Authors in the humanities field support the theories of knowledge through literature, and specific successful experiences have been recorded and explained.

It is interesting to have begun this journey into a theoretical base with the work of Jerome Bruner, who develops the importance of meaning as the central focus in cognitive psychology. Meaning as revealed through experience is the focus of the phenomenological research method, which I have chosen as the appropriate tool for investigation of student experience with fiction in professional education. What is the essence of students' experience who are involved in graduate professional classes where fiction is used as part or all of the course material? Does that experience support the ideas and theories in this chapter?

I will review the foundations of the phenomenological research method in Chapter 4. Chapter 5, Presentation of Data, will give me an opportunity to demonstrate a specific phenomenological analysis tool created by Clark Moustakas (1994). In Chapter

6, the conclusion of this report, I will return to the ideas in this chapter to seek connections between these authors and the experience of my own research participants.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Phenomenology

Introduction

Phenomenology, simply put, is the study of the essence of lived experience. The phenomenological study attempts to discover and describe the lived experience as explained by the actor, or the person who has lived that phenomenon. This study attempts to discover the essence of the experience of using fiction in graduate professional education, as revealed by the students who have lived that experience.

The scholar with whom the origins of phenomenology are most frequently associated is Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). The term phenomenology was not established by Husserl, however, having been used in philosophy as early as 1765 (Kockelmans, 1967). But Husserl, a German mathematician, pursued these ideas over his entire adult lifetime and his writings have served as the basis for a variety of emphases within the broad context of phenomenology. Husserl "felt that the objectivism of science precluded an adequate apprehension of the world" (Orleans,1992, p. 1457). He advocated a return to scrutiny of a problem outside of any preconceived theoretical constructs, which he felt in many cases actually prohibited clear understanding of the revealed foundational structures of the problem. "Phenomenology is a philosophy which puts essences back into existence, and does not expect to arrive at an understanding of man and the world from any starting point other than that of their 'facticity'" (Merleau-Ponty, 1967, p. 356). Van Kaam (1966) speaks of "object centered rather than method-centered" study through phenomenology (p. 295). Husserl spoke of essential meanings as being

derived from consciousness, making phenomenology essentially a research paradigm at the micro level rather than the macro level (Camara, 1996).

> What appears in consciousness is the phenomenon. The word *phenomenon* comes from the Green *phaenesthai*, to flare up, to show itself, to appear. Constructed from *phaino*, phenomenon means to bring to light, to place in brightness, to show itself in itself, the totality of what lies before us in the light of day (Heidegger, 1977, pp. 74-75). Thus, the maxim of phenomenology, "to the things themselves" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 26).

Therefore, the basic happenings of life serve as the experiences to study in order to generate new knowledge. "Phenomena are the building blocks of human science and the basis for all knowledge" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 26).

As Husserl developed this philosophy, he stressed the importance of looking beyond traditional empirical research methodologies.

> . . . from the very beginning, Husserl characterized his phenomenology as a study of the general essence of consciousness and of its various structures. Phenomenology is not interested in "factual facts" but in the essences of the immediately given phenomena. Husserl uses the term "essence" to indicate that which is the intimate self-being of an individual thing or entity which tells us "what it is" (Kockelmans, 1967, p. 81).

Because of phenomenology's nature, where lived experience serves as the foundational structure under study, it is by definition a study where questions have no definitive answers. The data is not "of the ordinary kind" (Camara, 1996), being obtained from phenomenological rather than empirical methods, and full definitive explication is not a possibility. There will never be closure, since seeking the essence of individuals' lived experience is always an ongoing process. Truths are provisional truths rather than positivist truths (Camara, 1996). "Phenomenology aims to describe experience rather than to define, categorize, explain, or interpret it" (Munhall & Oiler, 1986, p. 81).

The specific branch of phenomenology preferred by Husserl is transcendental phenomenology. This approach includes the researcher's bracketing, or setting aside, his or her own prejudgments of the phenomenon at hand. "It is considered 'transcendental' because it adheres to what can be discovered through reflection on subjective acts and their objective correlates" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 45). Transcendental phenomenology makes use of systematic analysis techniques to arrive at universal structures of the experience under investigation. In addition, imagination and intuitive thinking are employed as tools within the process in an effort to provide an overall picture of the phenomenon.

Phenomenological Applications in Sociology

Despite the emphasis on individual consciousness, one of the fields which has embraced phenomenology within certain elements of the discipline is sociology. "As an approach within sociology, phenomenology seeks to reveal how social action, social situations, and society are products of human awareness" (Orleans, 1992, p. 1457).

Schutz

Alfred Schutz (1899-1959) is largely responsible for the attention to phenomenology within sociology (Creswell, 1998, p. 53). Actually it is Schutz who focused on Husserl's ideas and brought phenomenology to a more visible position within the broad research agenda. Schutz's attention to "lived experiences" as they applied to the social world made phenomenology more prominent. He spent a great deal of energy focusing on the work of Max Weber, especially Weber's "ideal types." The attempt of phenomenology to get to the essence of the life world of others was easily connected to Weber's ideal types (Camara, 1996). In phenomenology, the researcher uses close

encounters with the subjects to reveal the essential characteristics of the problem, the characteristics without which the object would not be what it is. Phenomenologists look for the most fundamental features of the problem. For example, Schutz focused on how individuals construct meaning from the ordinary social interactions of life.

Phenomenological Applications in Psychology

Another discipline where phenomenological ideas have been embraced and applied is psychology. In this field, when the researcher seeks to understand the essence of the lived experience, it is with the hope of not only better understanding the individual but also of better applying that understanding to positive interactions with that individual. The focus of the question shifts from the individual's experience as it demonstrates life in the greater social order to a desire to understand the experience as it reveals more about feelings, emotions, and reactions on a personal level.

The field of nursing is an example where phenomenological psychological research can better prepare nurses to recognize patients' psychological issues and emotional needs. The phenomenological research paradigm is extremely helpful in gaining a better understanding of patients' experiences, thus helping to better educate nurses to care for those patients (Munhall & Oiler, 1986).

Van Kaam

An early example of phenomenology as method for human science inquiry was demonstrated by Adrian van Kaam (1966). "Van Kaam operationalized empirical phenomenological research in psychology. He investigated the experience of really feeling understood" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 12).

Van Kaam (1966) chose this research topic for two reasons. First, he felt it was perceived to be a relatively simple construct appearing regularly in psychotherapy, but one which was only vaguely understood and therefore not performed to its maximum benefit by psychologists. Secondly, he felt it was an appropriate topic for the phenomenological research method. Finding the necessary and sufficient constituents of the feeling could help psychologists better communicate with patients.

Van Kaam's (1966) method involved receiving written responses from participants to open ended questions on a short survey. High school and college students were asked to recall and describe a situation where they felt understood by someone. Van Kaam then analyzed the responses and derived some constituents, or basic elements, of the experience. The next step was to develop a general description of the experience based on an analysis of the revealed constituents.

The goal of van Kaam's study was "an explication of awareness" (van Kaam, 1966, p. 306). In order to do this effectively, the researcher must guard against the tendency to frame the data within a particular school of reasoning.

> [The psychologist] must follow the data of awareness. He must not go beyond the content of his data in his attempt to express it. His explication is valid and reliable only insofar as it is really an "expression," uncolored by the flavor of a typical school" (p. 306).

This admonition to keep one's own preconceived ideas out of the data analysis process is in keeping with the idea of bracketing, or the conscious setting aside of the researcher's prejudices. This bracketing process is also called "epoche." The concept of bracketing will be discussed later in this chapter.

The return to experience of the actors, with the goal of developing a comprehensive description of the phenomenon, provides the material for reflective

analysis of the researcher in the search for the essence of the lived experience. "The human scientist determines the underlying structures of an experience by interpreting the originally given descriptions of the situation in which the experience occurs" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). The human sciences orientation of the phenomenological method fits with the goals of this research study, which seeks to understand an experience unique to individual students in a specific pedagogical environment. The following section will describe that method more fully.

Phenomenological Method

The task of the phenomenological method is to create a structure for this investigation. There exist some general principles of phenomenological research, such as the concept of bracketing and phenomenological reduction. In addition, some researchers have presented detailed and rigorous structures for phenomenological data analysis. First, I will present a description of the general elements and procedures of the phenomenological method. Next, I will offer an explanation of the data analysis method of Clark Moustakas (1994).

General Processes and Procedures of the Phenomenological Method

Moustakas (1994) highlights two major processes in the phenomenological research method: 1) bracketing and phenomenological reduction; and, 2) the use of intuition, imagination, and universal structures. These processes will be described in the following paragraphs. Creswell (1998) talks instead about "procedural issues," and designates them as follows: a) understanding the philosophical perspectives of phenomenology, including epoche; b) choosing questions which focus on the lived experiences of individuals; c) choosing data collection methods appropriate for the

method; d) identifying appropriate data analysis techniques; and, e) developing the essential, invariant structures of the phenomenon (pp.54-55).

Before moving to a specific description of Moustakas' processes and Creswell's procedures, I will present a summary of the Moustakas method. Next, I will include definitions for terms used in the discussion of the phenomenological method. The remainder of the chapter will review processes and procedures of the methodology.

Summary of the Moustakas Phenomenological Methodology

This brief, general summary of the Moustakas data analysis technique will provide a background to the method. A more detailed explanation of the technique will follow this synopsis. To begin, it is important to reiterate that the ultimate goal of the phenomenological process is to reduce the description of the experience being studied to its essential elements, or to its essence.

Moustakas (1994) bases his phenomenological method on the van Kaam (1966) method of analysis discussed earlier. In van Kaam's study, written responses were received to general survey questions regarding the experience of really being understood. Moustakas, however, recommends in-depth interviews as data collection method and suggests an unstructured format for the interviews. Van Kaam's data analysis involved some quantitative work, such as counting numbers of specific responses and figuring averages. Moustakas steers away from any quantitative measurements.

After the preliminary preparation, including "bracketing" the researcher's own preconceived ideas about the research topic, the Moustakas (1994) process begins with in-depth interviews. Working with an individual interview transcript, the researcher examines the participant's responses for each statement regarding the phenomenon. Each

of these statements is listed as a "horizon" of the experience for this participant. The horizons are then examined for duplication and overlap and are tested to ensure that they represent a clear expression of a component of the participant's experience. These expressions become the "invariant constituents." The invariant constituents are grouped into themes, or clusters of meanings.

At this point the researcher writes three documents which express that individual's experience. The first document is the "textural description," which describes what happened in the participant's experience. Next, the researcher writes a "structural description," describing how the phenomenon was experienced. The third document combines these into a "textural-structural description" and serves as a summary statement of the participant's experience.

These steps are completed for each of the interview transcripts. The final step in the Moustakas process is to compose a "composite description" of the experience. This composite description is based on the individual textural-structural descriptions and serves as the study's summary statement of the essence of the experience.

Some definitions of terms will be helpful at this point as I move to a more detailed description of the Moustakas phenomenological data analysis technique. The definitions will be followed by more specific descriptions of the methodology from Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (1998).

Definitions

The following definitions are taken from Creswell (1998, p. 235-237) and may be helpful in further explaining the Moustakas data collection and analysis techniques. The

definitions are organized alphabetically rather than in the sequential order of the analysis process.

Clusters of meanings. As the third step in the phenomenological data analysis process, the researcher groups the statements into clusters of similar meaning units, or themes. Repetitive and overlapping statements are deleted.

Epoche or bracketing. This is the first step in the phenomenological reduction process. The researcher sets aside, or brackets, all preconceived notions about the phenomenon at hand to the greatest extent possible. This allows the researcher to more fully understand the experience from the participant's own point of view.

Essential, invariant structure (or essence). The ultimate goal of the phenomenological researcher is to reduce the meanings of the experience to their essential structure. The researcher uses the textural description to reveal *what* happened and the structural meanings to reveal *how* the phenomenon was experienced. Aspects of the experience which are universal to all the participants are invariant structures and reveal the essence of the experience.

Horizonalization. In the second step of the phenomenological data analysis process, the researcher lists every significant statement which is relevant to the topic. Each statement, or horizon of the experience, is given equal value.

Imaginative variation or structural description. The researcher writes a "structural" description of the experience after the textural description is written. The structural description investigates *how* the phenomenon was experienced, looking at all possible alternate meanings and perspectives. The imaginative variation process is employed here, varying frames of reference and reviewing divergent perspectives.

Intentionality of consciousness. Being conscious of objects is always intentional. When observing a tree, for example, "My intentional experience is a combination of the outward appearance of the tree and the tree as contained in my consciousness based on memory, image, and meaning" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 55).

Lived experiences. Individual experiences of the research participants, who are recognized as conscious human beings, are of critical importance in phenomenological studies.

Phenomenological data analysis. The literature includes several approaches to analyzing phenomenological data. Moustakas (1994) reviews these approaches and then advances his own. Creswell relies on the Moustakas modification that includes personal experiences of the researcher in the study, the recording of significant statements and meanings, and the researcher's development of descriptions toward the final outline of the essences of the experiences (Creswell, 1998).

Phenomenological study. A phenomenological study describes the meaning of experiences of a phenomenon (or topic or concept) for a number of individuals. In this type of study, the researcher follows an analysis technique to reduce the experiences to a central meaning or the "essence" of the experience.

The Phenomenon. This is the central concept being examined by the phenomenological researcher. It is the concept being experienced by subjects in a study. The phenomenon may be a psychological concept such as grief, anger, or love, or it may be more experiential such as the quality of nursing care in a specific hospital situation. This particular study investigates the experience of using fiction in graduate professional education.

Psychological approach. This is the approach to phenomenological research taken by psychologists. These researchers frequently examine psychological themes for meaning, and they may incorporate their own selves into the studies.

Structural description. The structural description, written by the researcher, attempts to describe "how" the phenomenon was experienced by the individuals in the study.

Textural description. The textural description, written by the researcher, attempts to explain "what" was experienced by the research participants.

Transcendental phenomenology. As described earlier in this chapter, this is Husserl's preferred branch of phenomenology. Moustakas also prefers this area of phenomenology. Transcendental phenomenology involves bracketing one's own prejudgments, reflection, systematic analysis techniques, and the use of imagination and intuition in description.

In the next sections of this chapter, I will look more closely at the general processes of Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological data analysis techniques (pp. 84-102) and Creswell's (1998) procedural issues of a phenomenological study (pp. 54-55).

Moustakas' General Processes

Moustakas (1994) emphasizes two broad aspects of the phenomenological method: a) Bracketing and phenomenological reduction, and b) an emphasis on intuition, imagination, and universal structures in analysis. In this section, I will examine these two broad areas of the methodology.

Bracketing and phenomenological reduction

Edmund Husserl saw the activity of bracketing as the critical device of phenomenological understanding (Camara, 1996). This bracketing, also referred to as phenomenological reduction, is a position of researcher preparation which involves reflection and study in an effort to separate oneself from, or "bracket," restrictive aspects of the researcher's own lived experience. The researcher may then proceed, knowing that the personal background is still present but is consciously set aside as much as possible.

> The phenomenological attitude involved a "reduction" to pure consciousness, really carrying out the attempt made by Descartes . . . The world and I as a body and empirical subject are "put out of play," eliminated (*ausgeschaltet*) and bracketed (*eingeklammert*). The pure sphere of transcendental subjectivity can only be attained by means of the phenomenological attitude, which requires the performance of an "epoche" (Farber, 1943, p. 526).

Husserl also developed the concept of Epoche mentioned above. Again, the elimination of presupposed ideas is emphasized, as is the raising of knowledge above every possible doubt (Moustakas, 1994, p. 26). *Epoche* comes from the Greek and means to refrain from judgment, to refrain from ordinary means of assessment and ordinary ways of perceiving (p. 33).

Husserl speaks of moving to the "transcendental sphere" (Kockelmans, 1967, p. 30), where we can perceive things better as they are without preconception or prejudice. "We penetrate deeper into things and learn to see the more profound 'layers' behind what we first thought to see" (p. 30). Moustakas (1994) is specific in his particular focus of phenomenological research as being "transcendental phenomenology," a term which Husserl himself used (1931) when describing this branch of philosophy. To transcend is to rise above or pass beyond. Thus, Husserl's description of his term:

> Transcendental experience in its theoretical and, at first, descriptive bearing, becomes available only through a radical alteration of that same dispensation under which an experience of the natural world runs its course, a readjustment of viewpoint which, as the method of approach to the sphere of transcendental phenomenology, is called "phenomenological reduction" (Husserl, 1931, p. 11).

Husserl further distinguishes transcendental phenomenology by making a clear separation between eidetic reduction and transcendental reduction. Eidetic reduction is a function of the scientific method, moving from fact to essence in the positivistic sense. Transcendental reduction, however, involves "irreal" phenomena, which are outside of the narrow fact based reality of science (Farber, 1943, p. 20).

These irreal phenomena are elements of consciousness rather than elements of sensory, or physical, perception. An important aspect of this understanding of consciousness is the notion of intentionality. "Consciousness is . . . said to be intentional in nature or to be characterized by *intentionality*. That is, when speaking of consciousness one is either implicitly or explicitly referring to its *intended object* as well" (Valle & King, 1978, p. 13). Creswell (1998) describes this as experiences which include the outward perception or appearance as well as the inward consciousness from memory, image, and meaning. "The reality of an object is only perceived within the meaning of the experience of an individual" (p. 52-53).

Emphasis on intuition, imagination, and universal structures

Another aspect of the transcendental phenomenological method is the special emphasis placed on the techniques of intuition, imaginative variation, and development of universal structures (Moustakas, 1994, p. 22).

1. Intuition. Intuition as defined in the American Heritage Dictionary is "The act or faculty of knowing without the use of rational processes; immediate cognition" (1982,

p. 674). Husserl would add the component of reflection, however, and present the intuitive-reflective process as a key skill of a successful phenomenological researcher.

> Intuition is the beginning place in deriving knowledge of human experience, free of everyday sense impressions and the natural attitude. . . . The self for Descartes and for Husserl is an intuitive-thinking being, a being who doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wishes for or against, senses, imagines. All things become clear and evident through an intuitive-reflective process, through a transformation of what is seen, first intuitively in the common appearance, in the manner in which something is presented and then in the fullness and clarity of an intuitive-reflective process (Moustakas, 1994, p. 32).

Husserl viewed intuition as being that aspect of consciousness which first perceives the essence of a phenomenon. "Husserl identified a priori knowledge with the intuition of pure essences" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 33). Noddings and Shore (1984) describe the process of gaining familiarity with the subject under study and letting the material have its own voice. "What I must have is a will to try, to risk, to look, to judge, and to stick with the material until it speaks to me" (p. 112). The result will be a greater understanding and a deeper familiarity with the data.

2. Imaginative variation. When doing phenomenological data analysis, imaginative variation is the methodological step which follows bracketing and reduction (Moustakas, 1994, p. 97). The researcher uses his or her imagination to look at the horizons of the data from a variety of perspectives and frames. "Variation is targeted toward meanings and depends on intuition as a way of integrating structures into essences" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 98). Intuition and imagination are integrated in the researcher's mind, which has been freed from preconceptions through phenomenological reduction.

Moustakas' (1994) steps to Imaginative Variation are as follows:

1. A systematic review of the possible structural meanings at the root of the textural meanings;

2. Recognition of the contexts and the themes that account for the emergence of the phenomenon;

3. Recognition and consideration of the pre-existing life situations that affect the participant's relationship to the phenomenon;

4. Searching for vivid examples of invariant structural themes which facilitate the development of the final structural description of the phenomenon (p. 99).

3. Universal structures. The imaginative variation process is employed in the development of textural and structural descriptions of the experience based on data from the research participants. The final step in the phenomenological research is to use these textural and structural descriptions to form a statement revealing the essences of the experience. This statement of synthesis is the culmination of the methodological analysis and reveals the universal structures of the experience under study. These universal structures do not serve as the basis for a definition of the experience, but rather as the essences for that time and place.

> The essences of any experience are never totally exhausted. The fundamental textural-structural synthesis represents the essences at a particular time and place from the vantage point of an individual researcher following an exhaustive imaginative and reflective study of the phenomenon. Husserl (1931) concludes that "every physical property draws us on into infinities of experience; and that every multiplicity of experience, however lengthily drawn out, still leaves the way open to closer and novel thing-determinations; and so on, *in infinitum*" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 100).

Creswell's Procedural Issues in a Phenomenological Study

Creswell (1998) has identified five major procedural issues in using phenomenology (pp. 54-55):

1. It is important for the researcher to have an understanding of the philosophical perspectives behind the phenomenological approach. "The concept of epoche is central, where the researcher brackets his or her own preconceived ideas about the phenomenon to understand it through the voices of the informants."

2. The researcher writes questions which explore the meaning of the experience for participants. Research participants will be asked to describe their everyday lived experiences.

3. Data is collected from participants who have experienced the phenomenon being investigated. This data is typically collected through in-depth interviews. A normal number of interviews is from 5 to 25.

4. Phenomenological data analysis steps are followed. Creswell (1998) describes the steps in this way:

> The original protocols are divided into statements or horizonalization. Then, the units are transformed into clusters of meanings expressed in psychological and phenomenological concepts. Finally, these transformations are tied together to make a general description of the experience, the textural description of what was experienced and the structural description of how it was experienced (p. 55).

Creswell continues by cautioning perspective researchers with some caveats about the method (1998, p. 55). The method may be challenging, he says, for the following reasons:

1. The researcher must have a solid foundation in the philosophical components of phenomenology.

2. The research participants must be carefully chosen, since these individuals must have experienced the phenomenon under study.

3. The process of bracketing may be difficult for the researcher.

4. The researcher must decide how his or her own personal experiences will be included in the study (p. 55).

Moustakas Method of Phenomenological Data Analysis

Elements of the Method

Moustakas (1994) has developed a method of data analysis modified from the van Kaam method of analysis (pp. 120-121). This section will describe the elements of the process, with specific description of the applications for this study to be described in Chapter 5. The elements of the Moustakas method include the following:

1. Listing and preliminary grouping (horizonalization). The researcher uses the verbatim transcripts from each interview and separates out each statement which describes an element, or horizon, of the experience. The researcher names the horizons based on statements from the participants.

2. Reduction and elimination: to determine the invariant constituents. Each horizon of the experience is tested for two requirements: a) does it contain an element of the experience which is necessary to understanding the experience? and b) is it possible to separate it and label it? If the statement does not meet both these criteria, it is eliminated. Horizons that remain from this elimination process are the invariant constituents of the experience.

3. Clustering and thematizing the invariant constituents. The invariant constituents of the experience are grouped into similar themes, which develop from scrutiny of the horizons. These are then the core themes of the experience.

4. Final identification of the invariant constituents and themes by application: Validation. The invariant constituents and their themes are checked against interview transcript to check for discrepancies and inconsistencies. Any horizons or themes which are inconsistent with the participant's description of the experience are then deleted.

5. Construct an Individual Textural Description for each research participant. The Individual Textural Description, defined in the next section of this report, allows for a description of "what" happened in the experience and includes verbatim examples from the transcribed interview.

6. Construct an Individual Structural Description for each research participant. The Individual Structural Description, written by the researcher, develops an explanation for what happened in the participant's experience. This document also may include verbatim examples from the transcript of the interview selected by the researcher. The Individual Structural Description is developed on the basis of the Individual Textural Description along with the imaginative variation process.

7. Construct a Textural-Structural Description of the meaning and essences of the experience for each of the research participants. This Textural-Structural Description relies on the preceding steps to create an individual description of the essences of the experience.

8. Develop a Composite Description of the meanings and essences of the experience which represents the group as a whole. The Composite Description, as the

final step in the data analysis process, provides the culmination of the data analysis in a description of the shared essences of the experience.

Specific Methodological Applications in This Study

This study followed the general processes of a phenomenological study as proposed by Moustakas (1994) as well as his eight step data analysis technique. In all phases of the study, two fundamental priorities were of concern: (a) to represent the essential characteristics of the experience as revealed by the participants, and (b) to keep in close touch with the participants' original characterization and to remain faithful to that original intent (Munhall & Oiler, 1986, p. 105).

In Chapter 5, a complete description of this study and the data analysis using the phenomenological methodology of Clark Moustakas (1994) is presented, based on his modification of the van Kaam method of analysis of phenomenological data.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION OF DATA

Collection of Data

As described in Chapter 4, Moustakas' (1994) recommended methodology for a phenomenological study is the in-depth interview. It is only through this style of information gathering that we can truly hope to arrive at an understanding of the essence of the experience, since "evidence from phenomenological research is derived from first-person reports of life experiences" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 84). Chapter 5 will present in detail the research process for this study, which is based on the phenomenological methodology of Clark Moustakas (1994). In this study, I attempt to understand the essence of the graduate student's experience where fiction was used for part or all of the curriculum materials in a professional program course.

I conducted, transcribed, and analyzed five in-depth interviews according to the Moustakas method. The process, which was described in depth in Chapter 4, includes the following steps:

Epoche. This is the phenomenological process of setting aside prejudgments and opening the research interview with an unbiased, receptive presence (Moustakas, 1994, p. 180).

Bracketing the Question. Bracketing the question involves a specific setting aside of prejudgments for the question of study. Thus, the epoche process sets the open atmosphere for study, and the bracketing process prepares the researcher to look at a specific question with minimal prejudgments.

Phenomenological Reduction. Moustakas (1994) describes two methods of phenomenological data analysis: a) a modification of the van Kaam method of analysis and b) a modification of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method of analysis. I have chosen the first method. The modification of the van Kaam method includes these steps for each set of data (Moustakas, 1994, p. 120-121):

1. Listing and Preliminary Grouping (Horizonalization)
2. Reduction and Elimination: To determine the Invariant Constituents
3. Clustering and Thematizing the Invariant Constituents
4. Final Identification of the Invariant Constituents and Themes by Application: Validation
5. Construction of an Individual Textural Description of the Experience
6. Construction of an Individual Structural Description of the Experience
7. Construction of an Individual Textural-Structural Description of the Experience.
8. From the Individual Textural-Structural Descriptions, develop a Composite Description of the meanings and essences of the experience, representing the group as a whole (p. 121).

<u>Epoche</u>

The first step in a phenomenological study is to reflect on the researcher's own attitude toward the subject at hand. In this case, I needed to acknowledge my prejudice toward the positive effects of using fiction in professional graduate education. My success with this pedagogical technique in previous teaching situations is one of the reasons why I was drawn to the study. I also love to read on a personal basis, and reading

fiction has always been an enjoyable part of my life. This tension between an existing bias within a research topic and the need to bracket my bias is typical in a phenomenological study, since Moustakas (1994) mentions on several occasions the value of studying a subject with which you have a personal connection. However, it is still an important part of the researcher's responsibility to acknowledge and separate bias from the research process in order to uphold the validity of the study.

Bracketing the question is the next, more specific step of preparing for the study. In this case, I reflected on the specific research question, acknowledged to myself my own positive feelings about using fiction in professional graduate education, and realized I would need to approach all aspects of the study in a neutral manner. This realization would be especially important in the early selection of subjects and in the interview process, since the mechanisms of the Moustakas data analysis process do an excellent job of removing the possibility of personal bias by the researcher in that aspect of the study.

Selection of Subjects

I selected five students in the School of Library and Information Management (SLIM) at Emporia [Kansas] State University as research participants. Two of these individuals had been students I had previously taught in an introductory theory class in the SLIM program. Three participants had taken a class called "Management and Fiction," another class in the SLIM program. Both of these courses were held on a weekend-intensive basis, where classes meet in large blocks of time over the weekend rather than with the traditional college schedule of several one hour meetings per week.

Since a phenomenological study seeks to understand the essence of the experience being studied, it is not necessary to do random selection. A more important consideration

is the ability of the participants to truly reflect on and articulate their experience. In addition, the participants must be accessible. When selecting research participants, Mellon (1990) indicates that there are two basic questions to consider: "Who might have the information you need and who is accessible?" (p. 49).

For this reason, I chose students who a) were accessible in terms of proximity to SLIM and also able to give the time for the interview, b) had successfully completed one of the two classes mentioned, and c) who were articulate and could provide a successful interview for the research data. Success in the classes did not necessarily indicate any specific anticipated reaction to the pedagogy or to the class material.

I first contacted all five of the students by email, briefly introducing myself and my research topic and inviting them to participate in an in-depth interview. All five students responded almost immediately in the affirmative. This positive response was very encouraging, especially since I was inexperienced at interviews and had some qualms about the whole process. The students from the two different classes did not know each other, and to the best of my knowledge none of the participants talked about my research.

Researcher's Preparation for the Interviews

As a beginning researcher, it was important to me to be as well prepared as possible for the interviews. I did background reading in order to acquaint myself with necessary interviewing skills (Creswell, 1998; Fontana & Frey, 1994; Mellon, 1990; Moustakas, 1994; Seidman, 1991). I realized as I was reading, however, that learning about all interview styles was excellent background preparation but not necessarily applicable to the phenomenological style.

I noticed at a certain point that I was hesitant to schedule the interviews, since I was struggling with the interview format and preparation of the standard questionnaire. Finally, in one of the moments probably typical to new researchers, I realized that in a phenomenological study the interview should be open ended and unstructured. My anxiety over the process had up to that point prevented me from making the appropriate connections about which interview style to use for my methodology.

Mellon (1990), Creswell (1998), Moustakas (1994), and Seidman (1991) emerged as the most instructive sources for this particular study. These authors were particularly helpful in describing the unstructured interview style and in crediting that style as being not only acceptable but actually necessary for a phenomenological study. Moustakas (1994) describes the phenomenological interview as "an informal, interactive process [which] utilizes open-ended comments and questions" (p. 114). Mellon (1990) distinguishes between the goals of the structured and the unstructured interview. "Interviews are conducted either for discovery or for measurement" (p. 48). One comment from Fontana & Frey (1994) was particularly reinforcing. They state that interviewers in unstructured situations "must necessarily be creative, forget 'how-to' rules, and adapt themselves to the ever-changing situations they face" (p. 368). Seidman (1991) states that "the in-depth interview is designed to ask participants to reconstruct their experience and to explore their meaning" (p. 69). Questions should follow from what the participant has said. Questions constructed before the interview do not allow the participants to reconstruct their experience according to their own sense of what was important. As I continued to read about the interview process and then to focus on the

open-ended, unstructured interview, I reached a comfort level with the process and with my own ability to accomplish the task.

It is interesting for me to reflect on this period of preparation for the interviews. On a number of occasions in the research process, I seem to have hit stumbling blocks that were later moved aside as my own understanding of the methodology increased. While this was frustrating, as the process continued I began to accept my cycles of unproductivity as natural rather than as inherent personal or intellectual deficiencies.

Interviews

The interviews took place over a four week period, with each one being audiotaped and fully transcribed during that time. The verbatim transcripts of the interviews were the basis for the data analysis.

Protocols

Each participant was informed of the process before meeting for the interview, including assurances of confidentiality and information about the use of a tape recorder. I received approval from the Human Subjects Board of Emporia State University and had each participant sign an Informed Consent Document. A copy of the Informed Consent Document is included in the Appendix section. That form included the confidentiality statement along with the consent release, which allows me to use data from the interviews in publication of the dissertation and subsequent related work. This form was based on sample forms from Moustakas (1994) and Emporia State University's Human Subjects Board.

In an effort to establish rapport and the foundations of a congenial relationship, I spent several minutes engaging in small talk with each of the participants (Mellon, 1990).

This proved to be a very positive way to ease into the conversation. Not only did it accomplish the task of establishing rapport, but it also gave me a feel for the personalities of the participants. Two of the interviewees had been my students and three were people I had never met. In all cases it was very helpful to visit for a few minutes about whatever seemed appropriate at the moment – weather, other classes they were taking, their children, jobs, my own background, and so forth. This period of small talk lasted from three to seven minutes. When it seemed to be a good time for transition, I suggested we "get started" and made an obvious point of starting the tape recorder. This transitionary moment served to not only define the formal beginning of the interview but also to once again provide an opportunity to make sure the participant was aware of and comfortable with the tape recorder. Mellon (1994) makes the point that "the process of introducing the tape recorder into the interview situation should be casual and nonthreatening" (p. 52). On several occasions I actually enlisted the participant's help in setting up the tape recorder, once again hoping to increase their own comfort level with the process.

As mentioned earlier, when I invited each student to participate in the study, that invitation included a brief synopsis of the study. I also started each interview by reading a uniform introductory statement to each participant. This statement, included here as Figure 3, served to reorient the participants to the study. It also provided me with an opportunity to start each of the interviews off on a note of standardization. This uniform statement is suggested by Moustakas (1994). It served to start the interviews all off with a common understanding of purpose of our conversations. As I did more interviews, I also sensed that the uniform statement provided a sense of community to the participants.

I will be reading a uniform statement to each of the participants in the study in order to give you a sense of the project and to orient you to the research. For my dissertation, I will be investigating the experience of students in graduate education who have read works of fiction for part of all of the required reading. This will be a qualitative study with a phenomenological orientation. Phenomenology is a research paradigm which seeks to understand the essence of the experience under investigation, from the participant's point of view. I will be conducting a series of interviews, no more than six in number, where I ask general questions of the participants which will seek to reveal the essence of their experience.

Figure 3. Uniform Introductory Statement

Reading the statement gave each of the paticipants an awareness of the study as a whole and of their own individual importance within that whole.

The next stage of the process was to turn the focus of the interview toward the participant, creating a research situation guided by the researcher but directed by the participants as individuals who had experienced the phenomenon under study. After reading the opening uniform statement, I began each interview with the broad invitation: "Tell me about your experience in LI801 [or LI856] with using fiction as part [or all] of the readings for the class." This opening invitation was enough to elicit several general statements about the class and the participant's experience. Subsequent questions were then based on the comments that emerged as the students talked about their experience.

In lieu of a formal interview guide, which I had realized was not desirable for the phenomenological interview style, I had composed a number of informal directional questions which I would be able to draw on if the participants strayed too far from the central issue under study. Some of these questions were generic ("Tell me more about X," or "Talk a little more about how you felt when Y") and some were specific to the topic ("What adjectives would you use to describe your experience in this class?"). Mellon (1990) refers to this technique as probing and describes neutral probes, clarification probes, recapitulation probes, reflective probes, and interpreter probes (p. 57). I drew on these techniques and questions at various times in the individual interviews.

Sites

Creswell (1998) emphasizes the importance of selecting a good place for the interview. "Find, if possible, a quiet location free from distractions. Ascertain that the physical setting lends itself to audiotaping, an essential necessity, I believe, in accurately

recording information" (p. 124). Mellon (1994) also comments on the importance of a place free from distraction. In addition, she points out the benefits of making the participant comfortable as well as including him or her in the process of site selection.

> Whenever possible, allow respondents to select where they prefer to be interviewed. Stress the importance of at least an hour of uninterrupted time and have an office or room available as an alternative, but let the respondent choose. In this way, the researcher shows respondents that they are respected as individuals and that they are important to the study – an excellent attitude with which to approach the interview (p. 51).

Responses and Reactions

In general, I found the interviews to be a very positive experience. Once I was able to overcome my own nervousness about my abilities as an interviewer, I was able to enjoy meeting and visiting with these people. The tension between the desire to be relaxed and the realization of the importance of the interviews remained, however, and I found the experiences emotionally and physically exhausting.

The fact that the research topic is not a particularly sensitive issue helped everyone remained relaxed and open. An interesting aspect of the interview process for me was an increasing awareness of how beneficial it is as an instructor in the graduate school to participate in in-depth interviews with students. While this particular series of interviews focused on a very narrow slice of the graduate school experience, these students were very happy to have an opportunity to discuss their experience at SLIM. The potential benefits of regular opportunities of this type will be explored further in the final chapter of this dissertation.

Transcription of Interviews

I transcribed each of the five interviews using a regular transcription machine. These verbatim transcripts provided the data for the research question. I found it to be

very valuable to have done the transcription myself. Mellon (1990) discusses the advantages and disadvantages of third party transcriptions, but prefers self-transcription (p. 59). It is much more likely that the researcher will be able to understand muddled words and phrases on the tape and may end up still going back to the tape on her own if the transcription is done by a third party. In addition, Mellon notes that researchers are often able to begin to analyze the data when they do their own transcription. Using a specific and technical methodology of analysis such as Moustakas' modified van Kaam method prevented me from actually analyzing data as I was transcribing, but the transcription process reinforced my memory of each interview and gave me a broad sense of the participants' experiences. It was instructive to then separate that aspect of my knowledge of the participants and later compare it with the results of the actual data analysis.

Analysis of Data

The data was analyzed according to Moustakas' (1994) modification of the van Kaam data analysis method, which is explained in-depth in this research report in Chapter 4.

Review of Each Transcript

In order to maintain the anonymity of the participants, I will use a coding method to refer to them in the data analysis. The five participants will be called P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 hereafter in the data analysis and in examples from the interviews. In the following sections, I will describe the individual steps in the Moustakas analysis process. I will provide a sample of each step from the data.

Horizonalizations

Description

The first step in the modified van Kaam data analysis method is to "list every expression relevant to the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 120). Moustakas calls this Horizonalization. This process stems directly from the Epoche process.

> In the Epoche, no position whatsoever is taken; every quality has equal value. Only what enters freshly into consciousness, only what appears as appearance, has any validity at all in contacting truth and reality. Nothing is determined in advance. Everything that appears is marked "with a horizon of undetermined determinability" (Husserl, 1997, p. 30) by the possibility of being seen and known in its essential nature and meaning. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 87)

Horizons of the Experience: P4

I will use data from Participant 4 to illustrate the expressions that are relevant to the experience (horizons). After giving a sample of these, I will illustrate how they are used to create meaning units and the process of clustering the meanings into themes.

The first exercise was to review the transcript and lift out each expression relevant to the experience. In creating these expressions, or horizons, I worked from the interview transcripts and kept the language of the participant intact. Each individual statement was numbered chronologically as the interview progressed. So, from a conversation about the experience, horizons were lifted out and listed. The following listing shows a portion of the horizons from P4's data, with gaps in numerical sequence showing which horizons are included in this sample. (The sample horizons were chosen to give a sense of the process rather than an exhaustive listing.)

1. Of the fiction that we used, some was set forth for us and others were works that we chose.

4. And then of course we had the novel, <u>Fahrenheit 451</u>, which I had not read. I was surprised I hadn't actually. It was very neat.

5. I'm still wrestling with Flannery O'Connor – it still bugs me [laughs] – it probably will until I finally ease it out of my mind.

12. [I like to read about] things that haven't happened to me . . . I'm always thinking where I fit in the book.

14. And so it's <u>fun</u> to read in that respect.

15. And I think it gives you an opportunity to think of what you'd do different in a situation, and that's kind of interesting to me.

38. <u>Fahrenheit 451</u> worked perfectly.

39. It definitely is a book that will make anyone think.

48. I think the advantage of <u>Fahrenheit 451</u> is the sensationalistic writing and the visualization.

49. When I think of any essay, it doesn't have the <u>emotion</u> that Bradbury has.

52. One of the differences is what's going to stay with your students, too. You know a year from now I can still have a discussion about <u>Fahrenheit 451</u>.

59. One of the things that probably gives the book some strength over, you know, just an essay, or a more factual approach, is that there's an element of fear in the book.

65. You can play on your students' emotions – which unleashes some great dialogues in class.

68. When you play to students' emotions, their fears, their hopes, their core values, and call some of those into question, you tend to get students to open up and really start handling some issues.

72. But if you're doing fiction and it's not good, it could be counterproductive.

73. I liked the short story [by Flannery O'Connor] "The Lame Shall Enter First."

74. It pissed me off – because it wouldn't go away!

75. Being disturbing is what makes it go.

83. That story takes some time to digest. A good component would be to hear what other people are thinking.

93. I think it helped me to reflect on where I'm at and what I'm thinking.

94. Literature helped me to define some ideas.

95. I can see myself through reading and thinking about the literature, and especially responding to literature in the journal – I think that's a pretty big component.

98. It's enjoyable. I liked the literature.

99. I would hope anybody going into this field enjoys information and enjoys literature.

102. Outside of graduate work, and SLIM, and library and information management, there's also some personal gain from reading Song of Solomon, and Age of Paradox, and Fahrenheit 451.

104. I liked it!

Meaning Units

Description

The next step is Reduction and Elimination (Moustakas, 1994). In order to determine the horizons of the experience, each expression is tested for two requirements: a) Does it include a moment of the experience necessary for fully understanding that experience? and b) Is it possible to abstract and label it? If an expression meets both of

these requirements, it is included as a horizon of the experience. Each of these is then included on a new list.

Next, overlapping or repetitive statements are eliminated. Some expressions are eliminated if they are too vague to express an element of the experience. "The horizons that remain are the invariant constituents of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 121). Table 1 is the list of invariant constituents for P4.

Invariant Constituents: P4

Accomplishing this process for each of the participants proved to be very tedious and somewhat difficult. Translating the horizonalizations to invariant constituents involved reflection as well as close study of the participant's words and meanings. At the end of the process for each of the participants, however, I was pleasantly surprised to see a set of data which I felt was truly representative of the individual interview.

Clustering of Meanings Into Themes

Description

The next step is to cluster the meaning statements into themes. It was at about this stage in the data analysis process that I noticed the striking individual personalities of each of the participants. Obviously each person has a unique voice, but as the data analysis process developed what was remarkable to me was the unique style each of the data sets took. This individuality of style was not a barrier to the data analysis but was striking nonetheless. The unique aspect of the individual interviews came full circle at the end of the process, when composite themes emerged. However, the strong individual voices were most evident at the stage of the data analysis where meaning units are clustered into themes. P4, for example, is a very exuberant and energetic person. His

Horizons of the experience	No. of references
Fiction is complementary to nonfiction/theory	4
Fiction stimulates discussion; discussion is desirable	4/4
Fiction challenges assumptions and ideas toward resolution	2
Fiction stimulates further reading	1
Fiction seems accessible – less threatening – "popular connections"	5
Fiction stays with you	5
Fiction stimulates emotional response	12
Fiction stimulates deeper thinking	4
Fiction stimulates visualization	1
Ambiguity is desirable and effective	2
Fiction stimulates a desire to re-read and re-interpret	1
Story can transcend time	3
Fiction provides specific theory to practice correlation	11
Character identification; projection of outcomes; vicarious experience	13
Personalization of issues through characters	7
Frustration with lack of adequate ability to "get it" or interpret "correctly"	2
Confidence in own ability to interpret story	2
Fiction stimulates desire to share the story	3
Fiction provides an alternative to traditional lecture format	1
Fiction appeals to a wide range of peoplestudents; "everyone can be successful"	2
Fiction is enjoyable / I like to read / "drawn" to fiction / "fun"	9
Easier to do and to stay involved	3
Fiction stimulates reflection	8
Fiction is multidimensional	3
I have a sense of personal gain from reading	1

Table 1. Invariant Constituents: P4

conversation and the emerging horizons were reflective of that personality, and it was a natural development to conceptualize the themes from his experience in the form of action verbs.

Core Themes of the Experience: P4

The core themes for P4 are listed below in Table 2. I chose action words to label the core themes, with definitions for the action verbs following below. Table 2 uses the action verbs and then extends the verb into a variety of meanings. For example, the first item on the list is "Fiction . . . Stimulates – discussion and understanding through discussion." Table 2 uses the action verbs, showing the list of what P4 experienced happening through that verb. Definitions for the following words are modified from The American Heritage Dictionary (1982). The action verbs used are as follows:

Stimulate: To act or serve as a stimulant, or to cause a certain response. For example, in P4's experience fiction stimulated further reading, feelings of accessibility, emotional responses, deeper thinking, visualization, reflection, and so on.

Challenge: To call into question, or to demand the use of one's abilities, energy, and resources. In this study, P4's experience with fiction was that it called into question his assumptions and ideas toward resolution; fiction called into question his flat and linear thinking; and, fiction demanded that he use his resources and energies to satisfy a wide range of interests and abilities.

Complement: To complete. In this case, P4 indicated that in his experience fiction extends, or completes, theory and nonfiction writing. He also made statements toward the use of fiction to complement, or complete, the traditional classroom lecture format.

FICTION:

Stimulates

discussion – understanding through discussion
further reading
feelings of accessibility
memory – memory-making
emotional response
deeper thinking
visualization
reflection
desire to re-read and re-interpret
frustration
confidence
sharing
enjoyment
involvement

Challenges

assumptions and ideas toward resolution
flat, linear thinking
students with a wide range of interests and abilities

Complements

theory; theoretical writing; nonfiction (4)
traditional classroom lecture format (1)

Correlates

theory to practice (11)

Connects

time and space and issues – story transcends time (3)
reader to characters and to events (7)
reader to experience (13)

Table 2. Core Themes of the Experience: P4

Correlate: To put or to bring into causal, complementary, parallel, or reciprocal relation. In this study, P4 experienced a correlation, or reciprocal relation between theory and practice through the use of fiction.

Connect: To join or fasten together; to link; to unite. P4 experienced a connection between time and space and issues through reading fiction, which "transcends time." He also commented on a linkage between characters and events and with reader and experience.

Textural Descriptions

Description

The textural description describes what actually took place for the participant (Creswell, 1998, p. 55). This "what happened" is from the participant's point of view, and the textural description is an attempt to conceptualize that experience. The researcher writes a report which attempts to convey the "textures" (textural description) of the experience. "In the textural description of an experience nothing is omitted; every dimension or phase is granted equal attention and is included" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 78).

This portion of the data analysis produced the lengthiest documents. Textural descriptions in this study ranged from four to eight pages, with three of the five at six pages in length. The sample textural description used here is from Participant 5 (P5).

Textural Description: P5

Research participant 5 (P5) is a young single woman around the age of 25. P5 went directly from her undergraduate degree program in English at the University of Kansas to the Master's in Library Science program at Emporia [Kansas] State University.

The class which formed the basis of the experience analyzed in this research was LI863, Fiction and Management, an upper level graduate elective course at the School of Library and Information Management (SLIM).

P5's description of her experience was very positive. It was evident from her comments that P5 took this class very seriously and was meticulously prepared for the discussions and with her assignments. As an English major in her undergraduate degree, P5 was accustomed to reading literature in college. However, this particular class was her first experience in using fiction in graduate professional education. She was glad to have some direction in her reading: ". . . before we started reading the novels, we had the syllabus, which told us to look at the novels in terms of leadership and authority as they were seen in the novels. . . . It was neat to have a lens or a frame to kind of focus on what I was looking for. It helped me to pick up some things about leadership and authority that I might have overlooked if I was just reading it for the pleasure."

As P5 described the format of the class, she mentioned that each student could choose his or her own project. She chose to reread a favorite book, The Handmaid's Tale, by Margaret Atwood. "Just like reading Antigone, it was interesting rereading it, focusing on the issues of authority and power." So, while P5 had read some of the material for class at previous times in her life, she very much enjoyed rereading the stories with particular issues in mind. Sometimes, she did find the connections more difficult to make, as with Virginia Wolf's A Room of One's Own and Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby. (It should be noted, however, that later in the interview P5 did mention each of these two works in a more positive way.)

P5 was particularly attracted to the characters in the stories, and how the lives of the characters demonstrated various aspects of the themes of the class. "In Antigone, some of the management issues are really complex, and we talked about this, [and] it was really . . . easier for me to see . . . how complex and emotional sometimes management issues can be." It was also helpful for P5 to know that the people she was reading about were not real people (as opposed to case studies, for example). P5 felt this helped the readers avoid preconceived ideas about the people in the stories. In addition, you can go back to the text and reread fiction. "I mean, it's not like it happened once in real life and you couldn't go back to it . . . in fiction you can go back and read it again."

P5 also benefited a great deal from the discussions in class about the readings. "I always like, with fiction, that you can read it once and have your own ideas, and then go to class, and through the discussion with the teachers and with the students, you can learn . . . more things that you wouldn't have found yourself." She referred to the benefits of the group discussion on several occasions and in a variety of ways. Interestingly, P5 herself does not really enjoy talking in class and usually avoids it. Since LI863 was a particularly small class, however, P5 was aware that she would need to participate. "It was ok because I was really comfortable. I had read all the books, and I knew going in that I would have to be really good about talking, so I had note cards prepared; and, since I knew what frame of mind to read the books in, I knew what to look for when I read it – I had notes for myself. But I found that, even though I had tried to prepare for that, that just the way the discussion goes, or what the teacher brought up, wasn't what I had taken notes about ..."

P5 also described the need to actually do the reading in order to be prepared for any direction the discussion might take. With nonfiction writing, P5 mentioned, you can "fake your way" through the class discussion simply by underlining key phrases of the text or reading segments of the material. "I think sometimes, even in graduate school, people don't read the assigned readings. So it's kind of hard to fake your way through a fiction book, but you can kind of fake your way if you don't read the nonfiction assigned reading for a class." When fewer people do the reading, P5 went on to say, the discussion is diminished through the loss of their contribution.

The discussions which are generated from works of literature are very enjoyable for P5, and she described her feelings in the interview. "I've always enjoyed discussing fiction... I love it when I've read a book, and I've read it two times, like Antigone, but some teacher or some student will say something that's totally new to me, and it makes sense, and it's just so much fun to have a new idea – to learn something. I really enjoy the learning – the new ideas – that happen in discussion. It's not like a math class, where you go and you learn this theorem. In fiction it's you go, and it's a new idea, and that's really fun – something you never thought of before."

The emotional component of fiction was very important to P5 as she looked at the advantages of using fiction in graduate education. "With case studies, those are interesting, but they're not as in depth and emotional as fiction, so they're not as complex. You don't get an emotional response ... you can kind of think about things the way the characters in a case study would think, and try to imagine putting yourself in their situation. But it's just not as emotional..." When asked if she thought that emotional aspect was helpful, P5 answered in the affirmative. "I don't know if that's a girl thing

[laughs] or not. I think you remember it more – definitely. Especially in The Handmaid's Tale – that's a pretty emotional book. And, it just stays with you longer, and just seems more important than something intellectual." Later in the interview P5 mentioned again this quality of fiction to stay with you longer. "...that's the thing about theory that's hard – you can't remember it like you can remember what Antigone felt when she had to disobey a certain order. You can't remember exactly what people were talking about in their theory books." She also made reference to an experience of one of the characters in Billy Budd which left an enduring impression on her. Despite taking place over a hundred years ago, the personal feelings of the characters were clearly communicated and transferred to today's reader. "It was just so powerful, and it's still powerful now, and it will be powerful a hundred years from now."

P5 talked a little more at length about the story in The Handmaid's Tale, and how she used the relationships in that book as the basis for her class project. The central character of the story is a woman whose life has been totally changed in recent years after a successful revolution headed by conservative extremists. P5 was very interested in the various aspects of power and powerlessness demonstrated through the characters in the story. Women had suffered greatly with the change in regimes. P5 felt like she was able to glimpse some aspects of what life might be like were such an extremist group to take power in the United States.

P5 mentioned the effectiveness of the teachers in LI863. When asked to reflect on her learning in the class, she remembered the professors' ability to connect theory to some of the events played out in the fiction. "...when we would read the fiction book, like Antigone, and we would see something happen – like a character forced into action –

[the professors] could bring up a theory, a management theory, that would relate to that. ... They could really make or break the class just with the kinds of outside theories and articles they could bring in. That would help us connect the issues we had talked about and discussed in the fiction and read about to management, or whatever the focus of the class was."

When asked about her experience in LI863 in general, P5 made reference to the amount of interaction involved in the class. "It was pretty heavy duty – just to have four people and two teachers, in such discussions – you couldn't just sit back and relax – you had to be on your toes all the time." She found the class to be somewhat exhausting for this reason, and also because of the tendency of discussion about fictional characters and stories to take on a personal nature. However, she enjoyed the class very much. "It was a lot more fun than a normal library science course, and I think the readings are a lot more interesting, just because I like reading fiction." The intensity of the class contributed to the learning as well. "Sometimes, like on Saturday [in the weekend intensive format], I think it would make for a real long day. A real interesting day, but it was a lot more interactive, and you learned so much more, faster, and so much – stronger, I guess, than you would with just a teacher lecture and taking notes from a professor's Power Point presentation. So, it was kind of draining."

Fiction in LI863 was a useful way for P5 to connect theory to practice, according to her comments in the interview. "Through the fiction the author can teach the theory, and he can show how that theory relates to how it was practiced in the plot. Like Antigone's theory about who does she, you know, obey – her king or the national laws. You can see how she put that into practice in her life. And that's how you can think about

how things would be different if she made different decisions, you know – how practically it worked out when she tried to live by certain theories."

In summing up her experience in LI863, P5 used the adjectives "new, exciting, interesting, and fun." She said "the best part was just the discussions." "It was easy to learn and it was personal, and it had a lot of new ideas in it."

Structural Descriptions

After writing the textural description, the next step for the researcher is to compose a structural description. The purpose of this next step is to describe the same report from a different perspective.

Description

Shifting from the "what happened" emphasis of the textural description, the structural description describes how the event took place (Creswell, 1998, p. 55). "The individual structural description provides a vivid account of the underlying dynamics of the experience..." (Moustakas, 1994, p. 135). In this step, the researcher uses reflection and imaginative variation to compose a description from a different point of view.

> The researcher next reflects on his or her own description and uses imaginative variation or structural description, seeking all possible meanings and divergent perspectives, varying the frames of reference about the phenomenon, and constructing a description of how the phenomenon was experienced (Creswell, 1998, p. 150).

Moustakas points out that the textural and structural elements of the description are involved in a continual relationship and cannot be totally separated. Structures underlie textures, and textures cannot be described without implicit notions of structure (Moustakas, 1994, p. 79). This interlocking relationship, as Moustakas refers to it, provides some difficulty in the early stages of composition since the resulting documents

have very subtle differences. However, reflection on the completed documents does demonstrate the effectiveness of the separate approaches in providing a rich total description of the experience.

The following example is from the individual structural description of Participant 1 (P1).

Individual Structural Description: P1

P1 is an articulate and thoughtful graduate student whose interest in using fiction to teach theory stems directly from his own professional teaching experience. As a high school English teacher, P1 is not only familiar with using stories in teaching, but he is also very committed to the concept. P1's own teaching experience in a secondary school classroom with literature as the foundation of his curriculum does, of course, differ from the pedagogy as presented in this research. However, P1 is very much aware of the potential of stories to generate higher order thinking about broad theories such as those presented in graduate library education. In addition, P1 is an avid reader. He mentioned on several occasions in the interview how much he enjoyed fiction, and indeed how that love of reading has influenced his professional choices.

P1's love of reading combined with his background as an English teacher work together to form the basis of his experience with fiction in LI801 as revealed in his interview. P1 was very concerned with maximizing the reader's vicarious experience and talked about different ways to do that. Primarily, he was concerned with a) thinking about the benefits of adequate preparation for the reader in terms of background material, and b) discussing the story in class to expand everyone's understanding. Thus, the teacher part of P1's personality seemed to be describing his experience through evaluative

expressions. As a student, P1 was very positive about his experience because of his love of fiction. His ability to connect his reading to his existing knowledge and his remembrance of stories previously read helped him in a spiral toward increased understanding. P1's responses in the interview reveal his feelings of good fiction as an almost organic substance, providing a stage for inner experimentation. P1 talked about using his own background knowledge (something important to him, as indicated above) as a foundation to understand parts of some works of fiction. The story then feeds his understanding of life, which adds dimension and understanding to life issues. P1 made reference 29 times in the interview to reactions dealing with the personal connections offered through reading fiction: feelings and emotions, putting himself in the place of the characters, fiction as offering a human element, and having inner conversations with the characters.

Textural-Structural Descriptions

Description

Moustakas' (1994) last step for the individual data sets is to create a textural-structural description. "Construct for each research participant a Textural-Structural Description of the meanings and essences of the experience, incorporating the invariant constituents and themes" (p. 121). The textural-structural description combines elements of both the individual textural description and the individual structural description. These individual textural-structural descriptions form the basis for the composite description of the meanings and essences of the experience, which will serve to represent the whole. The example used here is the textural-structural description of Participant 3 (P3).

Review of the Process

Before including this textural-structural description, it will be helpful to briefly review the steps leading up to this final document for the individual participant. First, I transcribed and printed the interview. Then, I examined the transcript to lift out individual statements about the experience. These horizons were listed on a separate piece of paper and numbered. On a separate sheet of paper, I made note of representative statements and the number of the horizon where that statement was made. As I went through the horizons, rather than repeating an overlapping or repetitious statement, I added the number of that statement to the representative horizon. In a column to the right of the statements I made note of the number of times P3 mentioned that aspect of the experience. This particular step is not indicated by Moustakas, but was mentioned by van Kaam and proved to be useful for me as I organized the horizons into themes.

Listing the phrases as horizons and making notations about the number of times they appeared in the interview was a fairly mechanical process and was not terribly difficult. However, staring at two pages of phrases and trying to create narrative documents from them was much more daunting. I had progressed through the interviews in numerical order, so this was the third set of data that I had worked with. For me the pattern was similar with each set of data.

This transition from listing the expressions to creating the documents indicated by Moustakas' analysis process proved to be the time where the greatest levels of reflection, frustration, analysis, intuition, and understanding took place. I attempted to do what Noddings and Shore (1984) suggest and let the material speak to me (p. 112). On each of

the occasions in the process this is exactly what happened. As noted earlier in this report, the individual personalities of the participants emerged at this step.

For P3, what emerged at this stage was the three themes which are reported in the textural-structural description that follows. P3's descriptions of the experience centered on her educational experience, her personal experience, and the professional impact she felt from the experience. These themes are very different, for example, from the action verbs used to convey themes from P4 (see Table 2). Nevertheless, in the final round of analysis from the five different textural-structural descriptions, clear essences of the experience emerged. These will be reported in the section following this example of the textural-structural description.

Textural-Structural Description: P3

Research participant 3 (P3) is a well educated woman between the ages of 35-45. At the time of the interview, she was the director of a small public library in a community which is fairly close to an urban center. P3 spoke of her experience in reading fiction within the context of management theories and issues for a library science Master's class called Fiction and Management (LI863). Both the topic and the format of this class were unusual, so a good bit of P3's description of her experience focused on the classroom experience. In addition, P3 felt that the class had a definite impact on her professional life, and she included that in her comments. A third key area of P3's reflection dealt with her own emotional response to the material – the fiction used in the class.

Themes in P3's description of her experience consist of the following:

1. Classroom experience

2. Professional impact

3. Personal / emotional experience

Classroom experience

P3 returned frequently (36 total references) to the description of the format and style of Fiction and Management. One unusual aspect, according to her comments, was the student to professor ratio. This small class had an enrollment of only four students and was team taught by two faculty members. In addition, the faculty members conducted the class with a very informal atmosphere. These factors of small class size and informal structure combined to make the class very enjoyable for P3. While acknowledging that not everyone would enjoy being "on the spot," P3 was very positive about her experience. "Actually it was like a six-person discussion format . . . you had to say something, you had to give your opinion, and I happen to like that."

P3 used the word "exploratory" at one point to describe the format of the class, indicating the response to the material was directed by the students rather than the professors. She was pleased with the experience of not having to find the one "correct" answer to any particular part of the story.

Another enjoyable aspect of the classroom experience for P3 was the student projects. She chose to write a short story with a management theme, and when reflecting on the experience stated that this process helped her to see some of her own experiences, on which her story was based, as connected to some of the management theories she had studied. "I think it helped me to kind of step back a little bit and to think of those experiences in a different kind of way than I had before – maybe to be able to think how they could relate to some of the management theories that we were talking about." P3's

use of the phrase "opportunity to write" when she described the assignment for the class indicates her positive attitude toward the material.

The last aspect of this theme in P3's description was a frequently stated reference in some way to fiction as a tool within the context of learning. The blending of the real world and the academic world is important to P3, and she felt that fiction was used effectively to accomplish that. Fiction generated an openness to different types of things, she said, it "tied things together," and it illustrates theory. P3 stated that she was glad that the academic world was beginning to realize the importance of fiction for connections to academic theory.

Professional impact

P3 truly felt that the experience in LI863 helped her to grow in her professional life. While she did not mention this a great number of times in comparison to the other two main themes of her experience (10 references), this was a separate and important focus for her and her descriptions in this area were extensive. For example, she related an experience where when planning a budget presentation for the city council she made the decision to include more narrative rather than just numbers, thereby incorporating a human element to an otherwise bland spreadsheet. She also stated her hopes to include fiction in future continuing education experiences with her library board and her staff. P3 also stated her feelings about the importance of librarians specifically being a profession of readers, certainly including fiction. The class material and the discussions helped P3 to look at things differently than she had in the past. "This class had an impact on me."

Personal / Emotional Experience

Woven throughout P3's description of her LI863 experience were numerous references (46) to her own personal relationships with fiction and its characters, the emotional aspect of fiction, and her own enjoyment of reading fiction.

P3 said "[fiction] made me think how my experience related to theories." She also talked about her tendency to relate to strong women characters, how fiction validated her own experience, understanding theory better through story, and feeling a kinship to other women through stories. She felt fiction gave her a broader perspective while it was able at the same time to help her feel more confident in her own feelings. P3 clearly communicated a strong personal connection to the fiction and the characters in the stories both from a personal standpoint and in terms of intellectual improvement.

P3 also discussed the emotional component of fiction, especially in contrast to the "dry" and "boring" nature of academic writing. This was especially important to her within the context of the management class, since dealing with people involves working with emotional creatures. The material, then, is more appropriate for the subject, since much of management theory presents things in terms too simple for real life applications. "When I was first a manager for instance I thought that everything had to be kind of unemotional. I mean you kind of think of that in management. It's just black or white – it's right or wrong. But I think with the introduction of the idea of stories, and the natural emotion that's between people whether they're in an organization or a family or whatever . . . [you can see that] it's ok for us to connect kind of in emotional ways, or to let that be a part of the culture of an organization."

Lastly, P3 mentioned on several occasions the simple fact that she enjoyed reading fiction. That enjoyment led to a greater desire to do the readings and a greater likelihood that she would actually complete them. In addition, it increased her interest in the class and the pleasure she took in it. "I liked it . . . I would recommend it."

Synthesis of Data

Moving from this example of a textural-structural description, the next step in the Moustakas methodology is to bring the data together in a move toward synthesis of the experience. The next section will describe the composite textural description.

Composite Textural Description

Description

The next document in the Moustakas phenomenological data analysis process is to move toward the synthesis of the experience. A composite textural description combines the elements of the textural description from each of the participants. "The invariant meanings and themes of every co-researcher are studied in depicting the experiences of the group as a whole" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 138).

In this step, I reread each of the five separate textural description documents. Again the process included reflection, frustration, imagination, and intuition in creating the composite document. The following composite textural description is based on the sample style as presented in Moustakas (1994) and attempts to present a synopsis of the experience as revealed through the individual textural descriptions.

Composite Textural Description

Reading fiction when preparing for a graduate class creates one response similar to doing any reading for class: the students tend to feel nervous about making sure they

are "getting" what they are supposed to be getting. Aside from that apprehension, reading fiction for graduate professional education is a very positive experience. The student is able to have vicarious experiences through the characters in fiction which enhances learning in a variety of ways.

First of all, getting to know the people in stories is a learning experience in itself. By understanding the characters, their emotions, and their responses, the student can gain a glimpse of life experience which illustrates theories learned in class. In addition, the student is able to see consequences of the characters' actions and the decisions that the characters make. The student can see responses of others to the characters, and can experience a whole interplaying of events and consequences.

Getting to know the characters in stories also helps bring the theories and issues in graduate education closer to the student. Studying censorship in the abstract, for example, is not as meaningful to a student as it is when you introduce a person or persons who live in a society where people are directly affected by censorship. Reading Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury introduces the student to characters who live in a society where the sharing of ideas is restricted to an extreme level. Getting to know the people who live in this situation and seeing what their lives are like as a result of this political environment is an excellent way to illustrate the positive democratic principle of freedom of expression.

Fiction touches the emotions of the reader. Mixing these emotions with the intellectual activity of professional graduate education provides for more multidimensional learning. An illustration of the effectiveness of emotion and learning is the response evoked from reading Antigone. Seeing Antigone's decision-making process and feeling her struggle along the way is a very powerful experience for the student. The

issues of power, leadership, and political ethics are truly brought to life through the story of this classic character. Thus, an essential connection is made between the theory of the classroom and the practice of real life.

The multidimensional aspect of learning helps the student to retain the knowledge longer. Flannery O'Connor is an example of an author who is able to create characters and situations which are impossible to shake. Reading her story "The Lame Shall Enter First" within the context of the Information Service Cycle (Grover, 1993) illustrates to the reader the tragic results of providing misguided service. The strange yet somewhat disturbingly universal characters in this story have an amazing ability to stay in one's consciousness.

Flannery O'Connor's writing, however, is not easily understood by everyone. When using a story such as this, it is helpful for the professor to have structured plenty of time for discussion among students and professor about the relationship between the story and the course content. This discussion gives the student glimpses of other ways of making sense of the story and gives each person access to new ideas from the other students and professor/s.

Reading fiction is often more enjoyable than reading traditional graduate course material, and this element makes it more likely that students will get the reading done. Also, it is harder to pretend that you've read a work of fiction than it is to pretend you've read an essay, since you can quickly skim an essay and make some highlightings in preparation for a discussion. With fiction, however, you must know the nuances of the plot switches and the relationships between characters in order to confidently participate

in a discussion. The fact that more people will have read the material leads to a more complete participation in the discussion, which continues to enhance learning.

Reading fiction in graduate professional education can sometimes feel like "quite a stretch" in that it is not always clear to the student what the teacher has in mind. With an open environment rich with discussion and support for open sharing of ideas, this apprehension can give way to increased student confidence. Sometimes students feel this is an unconventional pedagogy for graduate professional education. Nevertheless, they support the idea and very much enjoy having an opportunity to learn in this way.

Composite Structural Description

Description

In writing the composite structural description, the technique of Imaginative Variation is used to try to construct a description of the essential themes of the experience. "The aim is to arrive at structural descriptions of an experience, the underlying and precipitating factors that account for what is being experienced" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 98).

Again, this document is based on the five individual structural descriptions and is composed in an effort to remain true to the essences of those documents. As is true with the individual textural descriptions and structural descriptions, there is only a subtle difference between the documents and at first they may seem repetitive. Nevertheless there is a different focus, and the composite structural description seeks to convey the essence of "how" the phenomenon was experienced by all the participants. The following section is the composite structural description for this study.

Composite Structural Description

Five students were interviewed in an effort to understand, from their perspective, the experience of reading fiction in a graduate professional education class. Two men and three women were interviewed. Two of the participants were involved in an introductory theory class (LI801) in the Master's program at the School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University. Three of the participants took a class called Fiction and Management (LI863) in the same Master's program.

All of the participants described themselves as avid readers. Reading is a positive experience for them, especially reading fiction. This enjoyment of reading fiction did not prevent them from feeling frustrated in several cases where they could not understand the connection between a particular work selected for the course and the course content. However, these feelings of frustration were short lived, and a minor part of the participants' overall positive experience.

The participants entered the class in three of the situations knowing that fiction would be used as the main readings for the class. In the other two instances, the participants drew some fiction from a list of optional titles and were also assigned several specific short fiction works at the first class meeting. The students reacted positively to the idea of using fiction.

Participants found the discussion aspect of the classroom experience to be extremely valuable. Fiction not only enhanced discussion of the issues, but discussion also made the fiction more clearly understood. In addition, the experience of discussing fiction was enjoyable for the participants. This reliance on discussion was emphasized by all five of the participants.

The participants formed strong connections with the characters in the stories. Interestingly, four of the five participants thought perhaps this was a tendency which was unique to themselves. "Maybe it's just me," "Maybe it's a woman thing," "I don't know if other people do this," and "It might be because I tend to relate to strong women characters – I don't know if other people do this," are all examples of comments made by participants when describing their connections to characters. P4 and P1 both indicated that putting themselves in the roles of different characters helped them to have vicarious experiences, as well as make assessments about the decisions the characters made. P5 talked about how putting herself in Antigone's place helped her to understand the emotions of certain management and ethical decisions. All of the participants felt that this ability to see and understand the emotions of characters was very important to learning, both from and intellectual point of view as well as a more visceral point of view.

This emotional aspect, as a matter of fact, was another unique aspect of the experience. All of the participants made comments about the ability of fiction to communicate to the student on this emotional level. While reading fiction did not exclude intellectual learning and greater intellectual understanding of the theoretical issues, fiction did make it possible to extend the intellectual into the emotional. This extension made for a more complete learning experience.

Connecting theory to practice was enabled by the fiction, both as a result of the previously mentioned aspects of fiction and also as a separate positive quality of the experience. Some of these connections occurred as a result of the discussion of fiction, some as a result of vicarious experience through characters, and some as a result of the emotions evoked from stories.

Participants very much enjoyed reading fiction for class and emphasized how much more pleasurable reading fiction is to them than reading strictly nonfiction works for class. In general, they found that having fiction as assigned readings generated greater commitment to the readings and enabled more complete participation on the part of all the students. Some felt that this was because it is harder "to fake" having read fiction, due to plot twists and turns and also to nuances of character. Some felt that this greater participation in the class assignments was simply because the reading was more fun and more involving.

The process of reading, discussion, and discovery was, in general, a very exciting process to these students and was an important part of their experience. Reading within a certain framework, such as leadership, power, or the philosophies of information services, helped to prepare students for discussion and helped them to read the fiction for the most benefit in that particular context. Elements such as characterization and illustration of theory were pulled together and crystallized during the discussion, and understanding was fused as a result. To use a metaphor, positive elements of fiction were mixed together in the vat of discussion, producing in the mix a product of enhanced learning. The mixing itself helped these elements of the experience bump up against each other and thus mix elements of vicarious experience, for example, with emotions from characterization. The elements of discussion were enhanced by the ability to learn from each other and to hear new and different opinions. This diversity of opinion was another important element of the experience.

Composite Textural-Structural Description: Essences of the Experience

Process

The last step in the phenomenological method data analysis process is to provide a synthesis of the data and expose the essences of the experience. This final step involves "the intuitive integration of the fundamental textural and structural descriptions into a unified statement of the essences of the experience of the phenomenon as a whole." (Moustakas, 1994, p. 100).

Essences

Moustakas (1994) refers to Husserl when he defines essence as "that which is common or universal, the condition or quality without which a thing would not be what it is" (p. 100). By following the phenomenological reduction process as outlined by Moustakas, I have determined the following six core themes of the experience of the research participants to be the essence of their experience. Each of these six themes is a part of every participant's report of his or her experience.

Characters. Each of the participants discussed in some way the significance to them of meeting fictional characters in literature. The students experienced various aspects of life through the decisions and the actions of the characters. Participants spoke of identifying with particular characters within a book or a story. Certainly this is one of the more compelling and dramatic aspects of the students' experience, as evidenced by repeated references to their relationships with the people in stories. Even when the situations and characters in the fiction were very different from the students' own, the connections could be very strong.

- **Characters**
  - The participants established personal relationships with the characters from fiction, which enhanced learning on a variety of levels and extended experience.
- **Connections**
  - The participants experienced connections between fiction and real life, and they expressed the ability of fiction to help make connections between theory and practice.
- **Emotions**
  - Well written fiction is vivid and emotional, which the participants described as being beneficial to their learning experience for a variety of reasons. The fiction touched the minds and hearts of the participants at a depth beyond what purely informational material could reach.
- **Enjoyment**
  - Each of the participants enjoys reading fiction in general, and the experience of reading fiction for class was also very fun. Again, this was a benefit to learning.
- **Discussion**
  - All five participants described the classroom discussion as being very important to the experience of using fiction in graduate professional education.
- **Learning: Deeper / Longer lasting**

  The qualities of the experience described above all contributed to a sense of greater learning. Participants used the term "deeper" learning and "multidimensional" learning to express this feeling. In addition, each participant experienced a sense of greater memory of the learning experience where fiction was used as part or all of the reading. This continuous interplay between the universal aspects of the participants' experience resulted in the final component of the essence of the experience – the multidimensional aspect of learning.

Table 3. Essences of the Experience

Of course not every student was drawn to every fictional character. Just as in real life, some characters were discarded or overlooked by the students reading the stories. What was interesting was that each of the five participants discussed at length this aspect of their experience.

For example, P4 found himself identifying with the black drifter "Milkman" in Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon. His own identification with this character was a pleasant surprise to him. "I'm always thinking where I fit in the book. . . . I started dreaming about going on this great journey, too. And so it's fun to read in that respect. And I think it gives you an opportunity to think of what you'd do different in a situation, and that's kind of interesting to me."

Another student, P1, also cited specific examples of connections with characters that provided personal meaning for him. "I always for one try to put myself in the place of one of the main characters. What would I do in this situation before I get there? How is that like my life? For me, it makes it relevant."

In another interview, P3 talks about feeling a kinship with the characters in literature. "I think [reading a story] can make you understand that you're not the only one I think with certain kinds of feelings that you might have. It might make you feel a kinship to maybe other women in that case, or other managers, or supervisees, or however you're looking at it."

P1 mentioned the opportunity to have vicarious experiences through the lives of characters in fiction. "I take the book, and it gives me the chance to go to India in Orwell's short story; to go to Mars in The Martian Chronicles. You know it gives me to

opportunity to go to places and say, "Wow, I wonder what would happen if I were in this situation – would I react this way?"

Connections. All participants talked about "connections" as provided by literature in class. "Connections" in this context refer to linkages – linkages between theory and practice, between concepts and real life, between characters and events, and between reader and experience. P4, for example, made a total of 23 references of one kind or another that refer to examples of various connections provided by fiction. P3 states "I think fiction was a good way to kind of connect . . . you could understand [the management theories] from a story point of view. I think it makes them easier to understand and to see how they might apply in real life situations."

P1 talks about reading Fahrenheit 451 and how that facilitated connections between theory and practice:

> 451 takes a serious topic and instead of trying to dialogue it or . . . deal with the philosophy of it – it gives you an example. And, by giving an example for me it made it a little nice, because it presented the situation of analogies . . . and you could relate that to your own life. And to me, it made it much easier to see how that theory plays out into a practice. . . It's not really a discourse on, you know, should we have censorship or not; it's an example, a story, of what would happen if we did have a form of censorship.

P5 talked about the classroom discussion and making connections between the story and the theory presented by the teacher in class. "When we would read the fiction book, like Antigone, and we would see something happen – like a character forced into action – [the teacher] could bring up a . . . theory about . . . the characters and how they personified different traits of leadership." These connections between fiction and theory were facilitated by the teacher in the context of classroom presentation and discussion.

Enjoyment. Each of the participants made references to how much they like reading and how much they enjoyed reading fiction for class. The carryover from liking fiction to liking fiction for class was a central theme of each of the interviews. For example, when discussing her experience of learning management theory from the characters in Camelot, P2 said "It was a lot of fun. It was a lot of fun to do the research on that – and just think about different things that they were doing and how they could have done it differently, and maybe if he'd done this differently, how the ending would have changed."

Each of the participants mentioned at some point in the interview – frequently more than once – how much he or she enjoyed reading and books. Several of the participants referred to the idea that for this particular profession, library and information science, most people probably enjoy reading. P4 said "It's enjoyable. I liked the literature. And I would hope anybody going into this field enjoys information and enjoys literature." But even aside from the professional connections, the participants truly liked using stories to get to educational and theoretical issues. The five students' personalities were each unique and different, so that each expressed enjoyment in a slightly different way. Enjoyment of fiction, and specifically fiction for graduate professional education, was a part of each of their experience, however, and is part of the essence of the phenomenon.

Emotions. The participants had a great deal of appreciation for the emotional component of fiction. People tend to get caught up in stories. The developing relationships with the story stimulate a variety of feelings from the readers. P3 stated, "The emotional component I guess you might say . . . is what is left out of academic writing, so I like to have that part. Because that's part of our lives, too . . ." P3 also

mentioned in the interview that when she first started in a management position, she tended to make decisions in very narrow terms.

> When I was first a manager for instance I thought that everything had to be kind of unemotional. I mean you kind of think of that in management. It's just black or white – it's right or wrong. But I think with the introduction of the idea of stories, the natural emotion that's between people whether they're in an organization or a family or whatever comes through. I like the idea that it's ok for us to connect kind of in emotional ways, or to let that be a part of the culture of an organization.

P4, when describing his experience with reading Fahrenheit 451, talks about Ray Bradbury's writing and his ability to stimulate our emotions. "I think the advantage of Fahrenheit 451 is the sensationalistic writing and the visualization. When I think of any essay, it doesn't have the emotion that Bradbury has." P4 goes on to talk about patriotism, core beliefs, and fear as examples of the reactions to this book. P4 described the benefits of this emotional response to the reading within the context of an introductory library and information science theory class. "It gets me all excited – gets me pumped up!" Later, P4 again mentioned the element of fear in Fahrenheit 451.

> One of the things that probably gives the book some strength over, you know, just an essay, or a more factual approach, is that there's an element of fear in the book. You know, you read parts of it, and you go, "God, I do that," and you think "Oooh, my . . . I'm on the way . . . " And again, that thing that comes to that kind of call for action to make some changes.

P5 made a similar point when describing her experience with Margaret Atwood's book The Handmaid's Tale. "That's a pretty emotional book . . . and [it] just seems more important than something intellectual." She felt that reading about a strong female character who experienced dramatic life changes after a conservative political revolution brought out many emotions in her response to the story. The emotion helped her to understand the personal impacts of that kind of political and religious shift in a society.

As a future manager, these personal insights and realizations of the consequences of institutional choices for individuals are important aspects of study.

Discussion. Discussion is not just a tool for initial understanding of a book, but can also serve to extend understanding and provide an arena for sharing of new ideas. As reported earlier, P4 said "I love it when I've read a book, and I've read it two times, like Antigone, but some teacher or some student will say something that's totally new to me, and it makes sense, and it's just so much fun to have a new idea – to learn something. I really enjoy the learning – the new ideas – that happen in discussion."

Each of the participants stressed the benefits of discussion in class to extend learning. Discussing fiction, they felt, is easier for most people since the students are able to relate to the characters and to make connections. This quality of fiction to stimulate discussion serves to set the scene for that particular classroom interaction, and with more people encouraged to participate in the discussion the interaction is subsequently richer and more complete. P1 states

> I would think that fiction discussions would go better because most people are going to enjoy fiction more than the non fiction. . . Fiction is more interpretative, so I think people feel freer to say, "Well, this is what I thought." . . . Depending on the subject matter, [nonfiction] can become very controversial, and something that you really care about, but it is so much dryer. . . . And so I think that carried over into the discussions. . . . I enjoyed the fiction discussions more and I think people enjoy reading fiction more than non fiction, and so that just carries right over to the discussions.

Learning: Enduring quality; "Deeper" learning. P1 talked about the ability to interact with fiction and create a more meaningful experience, one where he learned more and more as he progressed through the relationship with the story. "So I go back and forth. I bring out what I know and put it into the novel to make it make sense, but then I also pull things out of the novel and say, 'hey, this makes sense in my personal life, or

this relates to my personal life,' or you know it talks about a lesson that I have, etc. . . . So I guess [that's] the continuously interactive thing I do . . ."

This ability to extend learning to different levels was also mentioned by P3. She appreciated the quality of stories for learning so much that she spoke of her hopes to include the technique in continuing education opportunities with her library staff. "I thought of ways that I might be able to kind of use that with them as a way to all connect a little better and understand what we're talking about. . ." In addition, P3 appreciated the enduring quality of lessons learned – mainly about people – through fiction. Her frustration with changing management theory fads increased this particular feeling of appreciation for stories.

P4 talked about the capacity for stories to stay in your memory long after the class is over. He specifically mentioned the works of Toni Morrison, Ray Bradbury, and Flannery O'Connor as "sticking with" him, almost to an irritating level!

> One of the differences is what's gong to stay with your students, too. You know year from now I can still have a discussion about Fahrenheit 451. Some of the essays we've read – which were valuable – won't stay with me. In fact I'd already have more trouble recalling them. And so I think you have a lot better chance at a long lasting impression with a book like Fahrenheit 451.

Summary

Moustakas (1994) reminds us that searching for the essences of an experience is never completed. "The fundamental textural-structural synthesis represents the essences at a particular time and place from the vantage point of an individual researcher following an exhaustive imaginative and reflective study of the phenomenon" (p. 100). The experience of these graduate students who are participants in the study was captured in a series of interviews which have been analyzed according to the phenomenological

reduction process. The resulting synthesis is a single expression of a complex event, but one which clearly demonstrates the essence of this experience for these five participants.

In Chapter 6, I will return to the earlier chapters of this report and briefly review those comments in an attempt to compare them to the findings in this study. In addition, I will look at questions raised from this study and resulting opportunities for further research. Finally, I will explore meanings revealed through this study and implications for future practice.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND OUTCOMES

This final chapter gives me an opportunity to do many things: summarize the findings, compare them to the literature review, look at implications for research and the outcomes of the study. In addition, I will review the use of the Moustakas phenomenological research methodology and its effectiveness for this study.

Summary of the Study

At the outset of this project, a review of the literature published regarding the use of fiction in higher education indicated that professors who had used this pedagogy had great success, both in their sense of student learning and in their positive feedback from students. Some research had been published, but it was focused on quantitative course evaluations and informal comments from students. The results from this study confirm the indications from that literature review: using fiction in higher education does enhance student learning and students enjoy reading fiction for classes.

This phenomenological research attempted to reveal the essence of the experience of five students who participated in graduate library science courses where fiction was used as part or all of the curriculum material. The research methodology of Clark Moustakas (1994) was carefully followed and included steps of bracketing, phenomenological data reduction, and imaginative variation. In addition, the presentation format of the report also follows Moustakas' recommendations (p. 183-184).

The Moustakas methodology calls for in-depth interviews which are transcribed and analyzed according to a systematic method of reduction and description. The five interviews were transcribed and the process was completed for each of the data sets. A

critical process in the Moustakas method is the researcher's composition of textural descriptions, structural descriptions, and textural-structural descriptions of the experience of each participant. The final step is to create a composite description for each category and to expose the universal essences of the experience. The six core themes of the experience exposed through this method of analysis are: relationships with characters, connections made through fiction, appreciation for the emotional component of fiction, enjoyment of reading fiction, discussion as enhancing the experience, and a sense of longer lasting / deeper learning through reading fiction.

Findings in Comparison to Literature Review and Theory

It is striking to note the similarities between the essence of the experience of these five research participants and the comments from the literature reviewed in this study. Each of the six core themes revealed in this study are mentioned frequently in illustrations from practice, where professors have reported successful experiences based on what they think is happening, from informal conversations with students, or from quantitative course evaluation results. This study demonstrates that for the participants interviewed here, those indications from practice are proven to be true. In addition, where empirical research did take place as reported in Chapter 2, the findings in this project match the positive results of those studies.

It will be useful to link the findings specifically to statements made in reports from practice and to the theory statements presented here. Each of the six core aspects of the students' experience has been suggested and described by numerous authors. The next section will look at specific links.

Characters

Clemens and Mayer (1987) develop the idea of learning leadership skills through reading classic novels and plays in their book The Classic Touch: Lessons in Leadership from Homer to Hemingway. "Through [the great books], you'll discover insights on such critical leadership tasks as team building, using power and influence, applying intuition, managing the sales force, establishing corporate culture, delegating, and planning succession" (p. xiii). Clemens and Mayer cite specific literary characters, such as Homer's Achilles and Miller's Willy Loman, who have experiences from which readers can learn about leadership.

Robert Coles (1989) relates numerous examples where an identification with a character in a story generated tremendous growth in his students. In one example, Coles describes a student who identifies with the characters in the Tillie Olsen story "I Stand Here Ironing." In this example, the student extends that identification to personal memories and then to the material in class.

> "...Elaine [was] a young woman who was especially drawn to "I Stand Here Ironing." She emphasized with the story's moral introspection: the mother's taking stock of life as it has been lived by herself and her daughter. Elaine shared some of her own family's history with the class. Her grandmother and her mother were poor Irish women who had worked long and hard . . . her personal memories sparked memories in the students . . . (Coles, 1989a, p. 89).

In other situations, identification with a character can give the reader a completely new experience rather than generating important memories. Coles describes a young boy with whom he shared Huckleberry Finn and the boy's response.

> I couldn't get my mind off the book. I forgot about myself – no, I didn't, actually. I joined up with Huck and Jim; we became a trio. They were very nice to me. I explored the Mississippi with them on the boats and on the land" (Coles, 1989, p. 36).

Later, Coles talks of a more mature reader who reflects on his identification with Huck Finn's wanderings as comparable to the reader's own unpredictable life.

> He still thinks of Huck Finn every once in a while, especially when walking along the Charles and wondering what will show up next in his life, even as each bend in the Mississippi had its fateful persons and situations to offer the traveling, searching, sometimes drifting Huck (Coles, 1989a, p. 89).

Davis (1997) makes the point that a character from fiction can share feelings too personal for most persons to share, thus offering a chance to listen to another's innermost thoughts and learn from them. When teaching issues of bioethics, Davis uses fiction. "Good fiction lays bare the innermost thoughts and experiences of its characters, perhaps even their dreams and nightmares, in a way that would be intrusive, uncomfortable, or even impossible, even in autobiography" (p. 241).

Specific examples of learning from characters were also mentioned by each of the research participants in this study, bringing to life this aspect of their experience. P5, for example, mentioned the interaction of the characters in <u>Antigone</u> and wondered how the outcome of the story would have been changed if the characters had made different choices in life. P2 also related to strong women characters and their limitations according to their situation in society. In talking about Virginia Wolf's <u>A Room of One's Own</u>, P2 said:

> Well, certain things really stuck out in my mind. If she had a room of her own and a certain small amount of money, she'd have had the time to write and express herself. But as a woman and with some of the requirements society set for her, that prevented her, she felt – and women in general – from being able to be what they would want to be if they were free to do it. And you know [pause] I've thought that a lot myself, and I think a lot of us have.

Each of the participants gave eloquent examples of how the characters in stories from their class readings had touched their hearts and stimulated reflection on personal

issues. This reflection then extended to professional issues within the context of the course. Data from these graduate students specifically supports claims from theory and practice which profess that getting to know characters in stories can extend learning.

Connections

The next essence of the participants' experience was the ability of fiction to create various kinds of connections for the reader. As stated earlier in this research report, connections refer here to linkages between theory and practice, between concepts and real life, between characters and events, and between reader and experience.

There are numerous examples from the literature which speak to this idea of fiction facilitating connections. Boyatzis (1992) mentions it several times in his article reporting on the use of Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings to teach psychological concepts. "In short, students make connections between the general and the particular: They use the course to explain Angelou's development and use Angelou's experiences to illustrate the course" (p. 221).

Marlowe et al. (1997) refer to the ability of literature to help teacher education students better relate to children with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Through reading stories with EBD characters, the future educators were able to connect theory with real life. These authors researched changes in attitudes where students completed a survey, read and discussed the book, and then completed the survey again. Results of their study indicated that the attitudes of the future educators were indeed changed in favor of EBD children. "In summary, not downplaying or usurping the importance of pedagogy, the literary text can complement, enlarge, and personalize the issues suggested by the professional text" (Marlow et al., 1997, p. 158).

Another aspect of connection the story offers is the ability to overcome the growing segregation between the professional and personal parts of life. Shaw and Locke (1993) develop this idea.

> Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1985) argue that the division of life into functional sectors – for example, work and leisure, private and public – is the most distinctive aspect of 20th century America. Although dividing one's life along functional lines may have suited the needs of bureaucratic organizations, this segregation creates a discontinuity between public and private roles, frequently relegating one's private self to the background in favor of a public, professional, and managerial self in the workplace (Shaw & Locke, 1993, p. 351).

Literature in the graduate management curriculum, according to Shaw and Locke, helps to connect the various selves and to create more integrated learning.

Peloquin (1996) describes the concept of "confluent education," which she takes from G. I. Brown's (1971) Human Teaching for Human Learning. Peloquin quotes from Brown:

> Confluent education is the term for the integration or flowing together of the affective and cognitive elements in individual or group learning. It describes a philosophy and a process of teaching and learning in which the affective domain and the cognitive domain flow together. (Peloquin, 1996, p. 148).

Peloquin emphasizes the importance of helping students to both think and feel, thereby making the connection from the information being studied to real life. The visual and literary arts have the potential to provide this confluent learning, according to Peloquin.

Krukones (1989) suggests that fiction can help make the connection between difficult political concepts and the students' real lives. Beyond that kind of connection, fiction can also bring together learning in a variety of disciplines and thus further connect students' understanding.

> Politics takes on a clearer meaning for many students when it can be studied through a political novel or viewed in a political film. For example, reading about

> the operation of a congressional committee, as in Advise and Consent, or watching a state administration fall into corruption, as in All the King's Men, brings to life these political experiences that may be difficult to convey in regular class discussion. At the same time, students are able to gain a more thorough understanding of literature through the analysis of the political novel (Krukones, 1989, p. 58-59).

Richardson and Adkins (1997) also speak to the value of using fiction to teach political concepts. "Carefully selected works of literature can be used as an interim means of introducing students to important political themes in ways that sustain keen interest without sacrificing any of the fundamental complexities of the subject (p. 202).

This is the same kind of connection to which participants in this study made reference. P2 expressed the concept as a "bridge to the real world" when she is comparing learning to management theory strictly from academic texts as opposed to learning from stories.

> I think the academic writing is sometimes so far from the everyday world . . . and I think fiction is kind of a bridge to the real world – the real person – being able to talk about these theories in a way that's comfortable for them.

P1 described connections he made between his nonfiction reading for class and the fiction he was reading for class. One example of this for him were the themes in Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451 and Neil Postman's The Disappearance of Childhood, where Postman describes the loss of divisions between adults and children in various areas of current life. P1 described the relationship between these two readings for him:

> [Postman points out that] you see the same shows on television through cable and all that; four and five year olds can see the things that never would have been thought of before. And in 451, there's basically the same thing. They were limiting what was available, and so by limiting what was available, everybody had access to what was right there. You know they had to limit books from the very beginning; they couldn't do it later after you'd already had a taste of it so to speak. It was scary to me to see that and see the comments that he made, and how now that it's a few years later how many of those comments are no longer maybe theories but realities.

In P2's case, an additional kind of connection was finding people who had similar kinds of experiences and feelings to her own. "I think [stories] can make you understand that you're not the only one with certain kinds of feelings. It might make you feel a kinship to other women, other managers, or other supervisees."

P5 mentioned connecting theory to practice through her reading of Antigone for LI863.

> Through the fiction, the author can teach the theory, and he can show how that theory relates to how it was practiced in the plot. Like Antigone's theory about who to obey – her king or the national laws. You can see how she put that into practice in her life. And that's how you can think about how things would be different if she made different decisions, you know – how practically it worked out when she tried to live by certain theories.

Emotions

An important aspect of the experience for these participants was the ability of fiction to touch their emotions. This point is made repeatedly in the literature from practice and theory regarding the use of fiction in education.

Literature, for example, has contributed with increasing frequency to the education of physicians and nurses. "Physicians are now beginning to turn to the humanities, to disciplines such as literary studies, to achieve essential progress in comprehending their patients' suffering so that they can accompany patients through illnesses with empathy, respect, and effective care (Charon et al., 1995, p. 599). Not only can future medical workers better understand their patients through the fears and emotions communicated about them in fiction, but they can also understand their own emotions better through the works of physician-writers such as Anton Chekhov and William Carlos Williams.

Gilbert (1997) describes what he calls the "heartstrings" theory of teaching with fiction. Fiction helps students understand management issues through generating and demonstrating emotions such as love, the, anger, hope, jealousy, and laughter (p. 30).

Marlow et al. report on using literature to help future special education teachers develop empathy for their future students.

> Professional texts in special education are predominantly concerned with what is empirical, observable, replicable, and generalizable; literature is concerned with the creation of human empathic identities, grasping at the cognitive emotional insides of readers (Marlowe et al., 1997, p. 155).

An author who has used fiction successfully to teach students about issues of race, gender, and class is Susan Brooker-Gross (1991). She lists a variety of reasons fiction can be useful in the classroom. One interesting report describes the way fictional characters from different ethnic backgrounds than the reader can become new friends as we are drawn into the story. Once we are personally connected to these people in the stories, we feel the hurts and pains of discrimination through them. The reader is also touched by the characters' experiences, and feels their pain and joy.

Rosenblatt (1995) explains the ability of literature to reveal the whole "human experience," and to connect each generation to the next though our emotional identification with characters. These characters and their experiences provide us with a "living through" experience rather than a "knowledge about" experience (p. 38) since we feel the feelings of the characters. Even when the characters are very different from ourselves, we can enter into their emotions as we share their lives through the story. Rosenblatt also highlights the increased learning that takes place when the intellectual meets the emotional.

> That a literary work may bring into play and be related to profoundly personal needs and preoccupations makes it a powerful potential educational force. For it is out of these basic needs and attitudes that behavior springs. Hence, literature can foster the linkage between intellectual perception and emotional drive that is essential to any vital learning process (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 174).

In addition, Rosenblatt makes reference to the "emotional tension" literature can inspire in the reader, where conflicting attitudes about a situation or characters in a story lead to reflection and struggle in the reader. "The emotional character of the student's response to literature offers an opportunity to develop the ability to think rationally within an emotionally colored context [emphasis in original]" (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 217).

The participants in this study truly sensed the emotional quality of reading fiction and expressed the value of that aspect of their experience. One reason they appreciated the emotional quality of fiction was the reminder that in a public service profession such as librarianship, we must deal with and respond to emotional beings. P1 realized that it was the strength of the personal contact that provided value to our profession. "If you don't have the feelings and the emotions, then you might as well just come up with some sort of a program to do a lot of stuff. You know, why even have the reference librarian?" P2 expressed the importance of the experience for her of realizing that the emotional aspect of life is ever present.

> When I was first a manager for instance I thought that everything had to be kind of unemotional. I mean you kind of think that in management. It's just black or white – it's right or wrong. But I think with the introduction of the idea of stories you see the natural emotion that's between people, whether they're in an organization or a family or whatever. I like the idea that it's ok for us to connect in emotional ways, or to let that be a part of the culture of an organization (P2).

P4 described his emotional response to reading Fahrenheit 451 in the introductory library theory course and the importance of that response for a new professional.

> I think the advantage of Fahrenheit 451 is the sensationalistic writing and the visualization. When I think of an essay, it doesn't have the emotion that Bradbury has. And I think that would be the difference. Fahrenheit 451 plays on your emotions on so many levels – your patriotism, your core beliefs.

P4 also talks about Fahrenheit 451 as a "rallying point" for the profession – it "kind of gets you pumped up!"

> I had that feeling, "This is it – somebody has got to do this! If we're not out there fighting – and there are some fights to be had – then we're going to loose, you know, what good things we do have, as far as freedom, and intellectual freedom (P4).

P5 expressed her appreciation for the emotional component of the fiction. "It just seems more important than something strictly intellectual."

Enjoyment

There are examples from the reports from practice where students have expressed to professors or where professors have seen from course evaluations that students enjoy reading fiction for class. Brooker-Gross (1991) speaks to the value of choosing readings which the students enjoy. "The simplest and most explicit use is focused on content and linked to the students' pleasure, interest and engagement with the material" (p. 36). Cassidy's (1996) report of using literary works to teach master's students about the ethics of human experimentation. In class discussion, students discussed their reactions to the class format.

> Personal reactions [to the use of fiction] included expressions of enjoying the assignment and the feeling that reading the two literary works was not a "homework" assignment but rather a relaxing and personally enriching experience (Cassidy, 1996, p. 143).

Boyatzis (1992) conducted a quantitative class evaluation survey with his students in a class using Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings with developmental psychology students. The evaluation instrument also allowed for comments from

students, and Boyatzis reports that students very much enjoy using the book to extend theory in class. Peloquin (1996) also makes specific reference to the positive response from students, and this student enjoyment is a central theme in Coles' (1989a, 1989b) work.

The participants in this study clearly indicated that enjoyment of the material and the process of reading fiction for class was a key aspect of their experience. Each of the participants returned several times to comments such as "I love to read," "I enjoy reading so much," and "It is so much fun!" Clearly the enthusiasm these students felt for reading fiction made their class experience a positive one and contributed directly to their learning.

Discussion

While the introspection generated by stories is valuable, the importance and value of the class discussion was also evident in each participant's experience. The examples from practice speak to this valuable aspect of the experience of reading fiction. Davis, for example, describes the bond between classmates generated from discussing fiction.

> When the entire class reads a short story, it provides a pool of shared experience, a fixed point for discussion. Just as we refer repeatedly to major [legal] cases over the course of a semester, these short stories become part of our "bodied stuff on which to feed" and enrich class discussions in unpredictable ways" (Davis, 1997, p. 241).

Davis also mentions the increased opportunities for discussion which fiction provides. "When discussing fiction, we can probe, criticize, and express ourselves freely without the constraints we feel when discussing real people" (Davis, 1997, p. 241).

Gilbert (1997) makes reference to the importance of class discussion when reading fiction and to the professor's key role in that discussion. In his view, the educator

is responsible for the success of the fiction to meet the expectations of the curriculum by not only carefully selecting the stories to be read but also by leading and guiding the discussion. "When it comes to the practice of management education, we move from private reading to a public exchange led by educators" (p. 31). Coles (1989a) builds his successful graduate courses on a discussion format, where students come to class prepared to discuss the stories they have read within the framework of the class.

An entire college program at St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland is built around an all-required curriculum of reading and discussing great books. St. John's has been successful with this innovative curriculum since 1937, and in the 1960s opened a second campus in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Classic literature includes classic questions of human existence, according to St. John's College, and their program is built around intensive discussions of the great books.

The research participants in this study also found the classroom discussion to be a vital component of the successful experience of reading fiction for class, even though those discussions were frequently challenging. Discussions were challenging in that the participants felt "faking it" was impossible – you had to have actually read the story to participate in the discussion, unlike nonfiction where you could interject comments without having read the whole assignment. The key strength of the discussion in class according to the participants was the chance to hear so many different perspectives on the issues and situations presented in the fiction. Discussing the stories offered the students in this study a chance to reflect on their own response to the material as well as to hear different viewpoints from each of their classmates. Sometimes, discussion helped them to "get" the story, and especially the story within the context of the class.

> I always like that with fiction, you can read it once and have your own ideas, and then go to class, and through the discussion with the teachers and with the students, you can learn more things that you wouldn't have found yourself. I enjoy the learning, the new ideas, that happen in discussion (P5).

It was important to these students also that in the discussion students were not expected to come forward with any preconceived interpretations of the texts. P3 mentioned "I felt totally confident in doing my work, because I was feeling so confident in the class; being able to express my opinion and knowing that it wasn't wrong." Fish (1980) emphasizes this as well, encouraging the point of view that individual students bring individual reactions and understandings to literature.

Learning: Deeper / Longer lasting

Coles (1989a) gives examples throughout his book of the long lasting impact stories have on his students. He eloquently describes how specific stories have become part of students' lifelong memory.

> But Tillie Olsen didn't come to them with her finger wagging or with a list of formulations they could readily ignore. Her stories worked their way into the everyday reality of their young lives: watching their mothers iron, and thinking of a story; watching a certain heavy-drinking friend, relative, neighbor, and thinking of a story; watching children in church, and themselves in school, and thinking of a story (Coles, 1989a, p. 57).

And, in another example:

> The men and women [George] met in those books had become part of his life. He had pictures of them in his mind. Their words came to him at times. He remembered those words; perhaps he would ultimately forget them. But he was not at all sure that the "people" (as he called them) would ever vanish (Coles, 1989a, p. 89).

Participants in this study felt a similar power of literature to stay with them after other material has faded.

> One of the differences is that it's going to stay with your students, too. You know a year from now I can still have a discussion about Fahrenheit 451. Some of the

> essays we've read – which were valuable – won't stay with me. In fact, I'd already have trouble recalling them. And so I think you have a lot better chance at a longer lasting impression with a book like Fahrenheit 451. (P4)

P5 described the intensity of the experience of discussing fiction, especially with an extended class session and a small group. While it was exhausting, the learning experience had a stronger impact. "You learned so much more, faster, and – stronger, I guess, than you would with just a teacher lecture and taking notes from a teacher's PowerPoint presentation." (P5) Another participant made reference to the fact that after leaving the class, and into the subsequent weeks, she found her mind drifting back to the class discussions and the literary works they had read in class. "I came home on Sunday, and I just thought about the class the whole way home. I turned off the radio because I realized I wasn't listening to it at all – I was just thinking about the things that we had talked about in class" (P3).

Implications for Graduate Library Education

The findings in this study can be matched to specific needs expressed in the literature for graduate library education. While these findings do not address the concerns of future curriculum directions of library and information management programs, they do support a pedagogical style which includes the use of stories to illustrate theory and to communicate professional constructs. In addition, with emphasis in the professional literature encouraging interdisciplinary directions in the library curriculum rather than increased specialization (Pemberton & Nugent, 1995, p. 135), fiction can be used to help make that interdisciplinary stretch.

Looking specifically at what employers are seeking in new librarians is a useful way to consider education needs.

> What are the qualities and qualifications of information professionals that information industry employers seek and will continue to seek in the future? Barbara Preschel asserts that enthusiasm, intelligence, education, flexibility, ambition, computer literacy, good judgement, hard work, and an innovative approach to problem solving and a desire to serve top the list and will continue to do so (Lunin & Cooper, 1988, p. 309).

Using stories in the curriculum could help professors to address several of these desired skills. For example, Shaw and Locke (1993) write about using fiction in the curriculum to develop managerial judgement skills in graduate students.

> Literary materials allow students to explore all aspects of a situation that they deem relevant in producing such judgments, including the ready-to-hand personal standards or valuations that guide their perceptual and decision-making processes. Using literature and film, then, offers a sound means of illuminating this background knowledge and highlighting the moral dimensions active in business decisions (Shaw & Locke, 1993, p. 351).

What is distinctive about fiction, according to Shaw and Locke, is that stories will not necessarily present a clear answer to clear questions. "Reading Hamlet for instance, does not produce easily codified managerial insights" (Shaw & Locke, 1993, p. 356). Instead it focuses the reader on problems that the characters face in the midst of an imperfect world. Thus the student focuses on problem solving and real life issues rather than focusing on memorization of specific information. This emphasis on problem solving and developing judgment is precisely what Lunin and Cooper made reference to in the previously cited article.

The role of information in society is important in library education. "I think it is essential that goals [of library education] recognize the increasing importance of information in society" (Hayes, 1988, p. 313). Using a book such as Fahrenheit 451 can stimulate discussion about the value of ideas and information in society, and what the results of the absence of information might be. Again quoting research participant P4,

"Fahrenheit 451 was kind of a rallying book. As a student going into the field, it gives you a little bit of a head of steam."

Another research report which focuses on library education was published by Watson-Boone and Weingand (1996). When ranking graduates' skills which were important to employers, this study showed high results for qualities such as ability of graduates to handle change, problem solving skills, and a mixture of theory and practice in graduate courses. Toben (1997) emphasizes the importance of emotional literacy for library professionals. Again, the use of fiction as demonstrated in this study would help provide those skills to new graduates.

One final point of using fiction in graduate library education relates to an argument from Wayne Wiegand (1997), who laments the lack of emphasis in library schools on what he calls "Reading Studies." Wiegand draws attention to some of the strengths gained in society through reading groups and literary societies, and emphasizes the need to incorporate the knowledge of these cultural institutions into library education. While this research did not focus on the concept of Reading Studies in library schools, it does support Wiegand's argument that we too thoroughly ignore our profession's literary heritage in current library education programs. As stated earlier in this research report, it is amazing and somewhat embarrassing that using fiction in graduate education has been reported from the professions of medicine, law, business, management, public administration, bioethics, special education, and psychology, but not librarianship! The successful use of literature in graduate library science theory courses demonstrated in this study calls us to make greater use of this pedagogy.

Implications for Research Reporting and Academic Writing

Another area where these findings challenge us is in our professional writing and representation of research. Since this project has demonstrated ways in which stories can truly enhance learning, it is exciting to consider creating stories specifically to communicate research results or professional theories.

An outstanding example of fiction written to illustrate theoretical concepts in the social sciences is Jermier's "When the Sleeper Wakes" (1992). This innovative piece of short fiction was written by Jermier in response to his frustration with the limited variety of material available for his own students. The story focuses on the inner life of its main character as contrasted to his outer life as a factory worker, and it serves to illustrate the alienation of the modern worker. It is written in such a way so as also to illustrate Critical Theory and Dialectical Marxism. Jermier's own introduction is helpful in understanding the project.

> This is a short story about the two minds of Mike Armstrong, Dialectical Marxist Theory's romantic "everyman" and Critical Theory's "anti-hero." The story contrasts day and night versions of Armstrong's worklife as a skilled operator in the control room of a large phosphate plant located in Tampa, Florida. The two versions are presented to illustrate theoretical descriptions of psychic processes engaged when human actors confront an alien world and make sense of it. Alternative forms of subjective alienation, reified consciousness (drawn from Critical Theory), and reflective militancy (drawn from Dialectical Marxism) are developed as deep psychic states through which meaning is constructed in the world. It is proposed that subjective alienation is shaped by mythical forces in the broader symbolic environment and that it profoundly conditions actions and attitudes. Its importance in understanding organizational behavior and the practice of humanistic management is discussed in terms of human meaning-making processes (Jermier, 1992, p. 206).

Jermier's work does indeed challenge us to acknowledge the strength in alternate methods of representation for research and education. As unquestioned belief in positivism has

faded over the past several decades, it is interesting that there has been no concurrent shift in academic research reporting styles. "It is important to note that the field's top refereed journals (assessed by citation impacts and prestige ratings) publish few studies grounded in counterpositivist epistemology" (Jermier, 1992, p. 210). Van Maanen (1988) refers to "literary tales" (p. 132) as combining a reporter's sense of what is noteworthy with a novelist's sense of narration when constructing a research report, and he encourages more innovation with reporting. "We need to shop around more and encourage narrative ingenuity and novel interpretation as potentially put forward in any and all of the three genres [his Realist Tales, Confessional Tales, and Impressionist Tales]. We need more, not fewer, ways to tell of culture" (Van Maanen, 1988, p. 140). The findings in this study certainly support the idea of expanding the framework of research reporting styles to encourage innovation and creativity.

Future Studies Indicated

While the six aspects of the experience of reading fiction in graduate education revealed in this study were very informative, there were also some questions raised in the study. For example, more work could be done to try to correlate personality style or learning style with the findings from the interviews. It would also be interesting to seek out research participants who say they definitely do not like fiction and who are negative toward or even skeptical of the general idea. Research involving more students and in a wider variety of classes would broaden the findings. Specific ideas for future studies are as follows:

1. Expand this study. Using the same methodology and the same research question, increase the number of students interviewed. At the same time, seek out

students from a variety of classes in a variety of disciplines. Maintain an awareness of any variance in responses based on the discipline where the pedagogy is used.

2. Expand the methodology. Using the same research question and the same basic phenomenological research method, expand the inquiry by adding some quantitative elements. For instance, the Myers-Briggs personality type indicator could be administered to the research participants in an effort to correlate results with personality type. A learning style inventory (Kolb, 1984, p. 67) could be used as an alternative to the personality type indicator for a different type of comparison opportunity. Could we identify students specifically for whom this pedagogy does not work?

3. Redirect the research question. Using the Moustakas (1994) phenomenological research methodology, investigate other aspects of graduate students' experience. This methodology has proven to be a very successful tool for planning, organizing, and analyzing data toward a greater understanding of individuals' experience. Professional education could benefit greatly from deliberate efforts to structure opportunities for student input.

4. Develop and test a bibliography of suggested literature for library science. Following the design of Czarniawska-Joerges and Monthoux (1994), Egger (1959), and Waldo (1968), develop for library and information science a listing of literature which could be used to extend teaching of professional constructs for this subject area. Develop an evaluation tool which could be used to test the usefulness of the selected works in different situations.

These research questions and suggested projects would continue to add to the knowledge base of how fiction as pedagogy can be effectively used in graduate

professional education. In the next section of this report, I will look specifically at the limitations of the methodology and findings of this study.

Limitations in the Method and the Findings

As indicated in the previous section, the Moustakas phenomenological data analysis process did not reveal information about the students' personality type or learning styles which could be used to further understand the effectiveness of the pedagogy. Also, none of my research participants were resistant to reading fiction. Further understanding about who gets missed with this pedagogy would be very useful.

However, these questions are actually indications of a limitation in the question rather than in the methodology or the findings. The phenomenological research question focuses on finding the essence of the experience. The in-depth interviews and subsequent analysis process based on the Moustakas (1994) design were successful in addressing this foundational question of experience. While more information can be gathered to supplement understanding, this quest for the essence of the experience is very well facilitated by the Moustakas research design. "I may use any methods only provisionally, always being ready to change them when they do not lead me to better understanding of the objective phenomenon under study" (van Kaam, 1966, p. 298).

The original intent of my study was to expand the research regarding the use of fiction in higher education by exploring student reactions. The phenomenological question, which seeks to understand the essence of the experience, was for me a perfect mode of exploration for this question. Within this phenomenological research paradigm, the Moustakas technique proved to be an excellent tool of analysis and presentation. Each step in the process built directly toward revelation of essence toward synthesis.

Given the Moustakas methodology, it is important for me to compare my initial "gut" reactions to the interviews with the results of the formal analysis process from the transcripts. After each interview, I jotted down phrases that I felt were representative of how the students felt about reading fiction for their classes. As I now go back and compare those notes to the essences listed in Table 3, I see much of the same content. However, the conceptualization which appears in the table truly captures that essence of the experience in a way my notes did not. An essence can be said to be "an extract that has the fundamental properties of a substance in concentrated form" (American Heritage Dictionary, 1982, p. 465). Finding the horizons of the experience, creating invariant constituents from the horizons, and using imaginative variation to compose descriptions of the experience all fed directly to my ability to lift out, name, and describe six different universal qualities of my participants' experience.

This method toward an analysis of qualitative data was long and frequently frustrating. When I consider how I might have defined and researched the question differently, it occurs to me that quantitative data from numerical responses would be much easier to tabulate and report. However, approaching human questions with quantitative methods does not allow us to glimpse the depth of human experience. "Qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive methods, always seeking better way to make more understandable the worlds of experience that have been studied" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 12). For the phenomenological research question in this study, the Moustakas (1994) strategy of inquiry has been an excellent fit.

Implications of the Study

There is value in this study on a variety of levels. First, the results of the study itself are worthwhile. Secondly, there is value for researchers in the testing of the Moustakas design of inquiry. Third, there is an indication from this study that students have much to say to higher education planners. And finally, it has been a positive experience for me as a beginning researcher. I will look more closely at each of these areas.

The results of this study demonstrate the unquestioned success of using fiction in graduate professional education. Despite the questions raised for further study, there is evidence in the data to say without qualification that experience supports theory in that fiction can extend and deepen professional learning. Through getting to know the characters, making connections from theory to practice, making use of emotional responses, creating enjoyable learning experiences, and using discussion to build on classroom curriculum goals, students find that they have a high quality learning experience that stays with them longer. This is important for professors seeking to expand curriculum design in innovative directions for professional education. There are opportunities especially in the field of library and information science, where a surprising lack of this kind of pedagogy takes place. The data from this study will support those who seek to justify those new directions.

In addition, the Moustakas (1994) method of inquiry and analysis has proven to be a successful method for phenomenological researchers. This design offers structure to planning, design, organization, analysis, and reporting. Through faithful attention to the

Moustakas process I was able to produce a result which represents the essence of my research participants' experience. There is a great deal of potential for this research methodology in phenomenological research.

A third benefit of the study is in its demonstration that students have much to contribute to professional education design. I had an extremely positive response from my inquiries to students, three of whom I had never met, to participate in this research study. None of the participants hesitated to be involved in in-depth interviews about their experience as students. While our conversations were focused on the research question, it was evident that each of the five students involved would have been pleased to offer additional information about their student experience. Without exception, the participants were candid and forthright in the interview situation. My thought after each of the discussions was how very much we could learn about improving education through structuring more visits with students.

As a researcher, this study has been a very positive experience. Finding the Moustakas research design to match my interest in a phenomenological research question was extremely helpful. This methodology added rigor to the qualitative study by providing a specific structure to the data analysis. The effectiveness of that structure was demonstrated to me on several occasions when I was able to work through frustrating moments on the way to progress in my data analysis.

Using fiction in professional graduate education is an underutilized tool for expanded learning. In the social sciences, we run the risk of loosing the important human elements of our professions by focusing too much on narrow mechanistic skills and theory. Literature has a unique capacity to touch our minds and hearts, and in the words

of Robert Coles, affecting us deeply, exciting our moral imagination in such a way that we sweat and tremble, toss and turn (Coles, 1989b, p. 23). As shown in this study, we can indeed accomplish this in professional education.

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APPENDIX 1

WORKS OF FICTION REQUIRERD IN CLASSES FOR THIS STUDY

Note: Various other works of fiction were selected by individual students for class projects, and the participants also referred to literature they had read at previous times in their lives. This appendix includes only those works specifically required in the two courses taken by the research participants: LI801 and LI863.

Bradbury, R. (1967). Fahrenheit 451. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Fitzgerald, F. S.(1925). The Great Gatsby. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Melville, H. (1948). Billy Budd. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

O'Connor, F. (1971). "The Lame shall enter first." In O'Connor, F. (1971). The complete stories. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

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Sophocles. (1973). Antigone. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wolfe, V. (1929). A Room of One's Own. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

APPENDIX 2

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

The School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research and related activities. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time, and that if you do withdraw from the study, you will not be subjected to reprimand or any other form of reproach.

In this study, researcher Kate Marek will be investigating the experiences of students at the School of Library and information Science where fiction has been used as part or all of the readings for the class. Marek will meet with each participant for up to one hour to gather information about his or her experience in the class. The interview will be audio taped and will be transcribed. Each participant will have an opportunity to review the verbatim transcript of the interview and make additions or corrections if desired.

The researcher does not anticipate any risks to the participant in this study. Marek hopes the study will help gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of using fiction in graduate education from the student's perspective.

I have read the above statement and have been fully advised of the procedures to be used in this project. I have been given sufficient opportunity to ask any questions I had concerning the procedures and possible risks involved. I understand the potential risks involved and I assume them voluntarily. I likewise understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without being subjected to reproach. I grant permission for the data to be used in the process of completing a Ph.D. degree, including a dissertation and any other future publication. I understand that a brief synopsis of each participant, including myself, will be used, but that my name will not be used for publication and my anonymity will be preserved at all stages of the study.

________________________________ ________________

Participant Date

I, Katherine Green Marek, hereby submit this dissertation to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctoral degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available for use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author.

Katherine Green Marek

June 8, 1999

Date

The Experience of Reading Fiction for Graduate Professional Education: A Phenomenological Study

June 10, 1999

Date Received