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Teachers' Perceptions of the Long-term Influence of Torey Hayden's Teacher Lore on

Their Attitudes and Practices toward Children with Disabilities

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Abstract

This study examined teachers' perceptions of the long-term influence of reading Torey Hayden's teacher lore on their attitudes and practices toward children with disabilities. Participants (N = 132) had enrolled in a preservice university course, "Introduction to Emotional Disturbance," over a ten-year period (1992-2001), where course texts were books by Hayden, first person accounts of teaching children with disabilities. Participants completed a survey, which assessed Hayden's influence on 20 teacher competencies, as well as preparation to teach and teacher attitudes, beliefs, and identity. Participants rated Hayden as highly influential in shaping 11 of the 20 competencies and moderately influential in shaping the other nine. Participants acknowledged Hayden as a strong influence in preparing them to teach and in forming their teacher attitudes, beliefs, and identity. Reasons why participants reported Hayden had a positive and lasting influence on their professional development are offered. Implications for teacher education are discussed.

"Teachers' Perceptions of the Long-term Influence of Torey Hayden's Teacher Lore on

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Teacher lore refers to the knowledge, ideas, perspectives, and

understandings of teachers (Schubert, 1991). It is inquiry into the beliefs, values, and

images that guide teachers' work and constitutes an attempt to learn what teachers learn

from their experience. Teachers are continuously in the midst of a blend of theory (their

evolving ideas and personal belief systems) and practice (their reflective action). To

assume that scholarship can focus productively on what teachers learn recognizes

teachers as important partners in the creation of knowledge about education (Carter,

1993; Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995; Schwarz & Alberts, 1998).

Teacher lore in the field of special education in the form of teachers' own true

stories has much to say to anyone concerned about teaching children with disabilities.

Teacher lore can reveal teachers' work from the inside, holistically, within real life

contexts. Teacher lore lays bare the real stuff of teaching children, not generic

abstractions, not an outside observer's fragmented interpretation, not ungrounded theory.

In teacher lore we can see real kids, classrooms, and everyday problems, the feelings and

thinking of teachers. Florio-Ruane (1991) declares that teachers' stories are a largely

untapped source of information about teaching.

Torey Hayden's teacher lore is in the form of her first person accounts of being a

special education teacher. Hayden has authored seven books, which offer readers a real

world look at the joys, challenges, and struggles of teaching children whose lives are

marked by emotional and behavioral disorders, learning disabilities, autism, mental

retardation, child abuse and trauma, anger and defeat. Her first book, *One Child* (1980),

focuses on Sheila, a silent troubled six-year-old, who has tied a three-year-old boy to a tree and critically burned him. *One Child* was followed by *Somebody Else's Kids* (1982), *Murphy's Boy* (1983), *Just Another Kid* (1986), *Ghost Girl* (1992), *Tiger's Child* (1995), the sequel to *One Child*, and *Beautiful Child* (2002). Her stories reveal what actually happens in the special education classroom, offering rich insights into teacher thinking, student needs and behaviors, curriculum issues, and school climate.

Hayden's teacher lore is remarkable for its emphasis on altruism. Feminist scholars, in particular, have commented on how altruism, the nurturing side of teaching, has been too long ignored (Noddings, 1992). Hayden's narratives focus on the personal relationships and emotional connections involved in working with children with disabilities. Her stories give special voice to the feminine side of human experience – to the power of emotion, intuition, and relationships in human lives (Witherall & Noddings, 1991) – and emphasize the synergistic power of relationships between a teacher and her children. In her prologue to *Tiger Child* (1995), Hayden noted the powerful effect Sheila had: "This little girl had a profound effect on me. Her courage, her resilience, and her inadvertent ability to express that great gaping need to be loved that we all feel – in short, her humanness brought me into contact with my own" (p.8).

A series of recent studies (Marlowe, Maycock, Palmer, & Morrison, 1997; Marlowe & Maycock, 2000; Marlowe & Maycock, 2001) examined the short-term influence of Hayden's teacher lore on preservice teachers' attitudes. These studies documented that reading, discussing, and writing about Hayden resulted in positive attitude changes over the course of a fifteen-week semester. Participants evinced more positive expectations toward children with disabilities (Marlowe & Maycock, 2001),

toward children with emotional and behavioral disorders (Marlowe et al., 1997), and decreased punitiveness toward children in general (Marlowe & Maycock, 2000). Phenomenological analysis of the participants' journal entries in the three studies revealed the structure of reading Hayden was one of identification with Hayden's character leading to emotional learnings (e.g., inspiration, hope) and cognitive learnings (e.g., new understandings, gathering didactic information).

It remains to be determined whether teachers view Hayden's teacher lore as having a long-term influence on their professional development. Voices in the field of teacher education have promoted teacher lore as a medium for teaching and learning over the last twenty years (Witherell & Noddings, 1991; Schwarz & Alberts, 1998), yet no attempts have been made to ascertain teachers' perceptions of its lasting effects. The purpose of this research is to evaluate teachers' perceptions of the long-term influence of reading Hayden in preservice teacher education on their attitudes and practices toward children with disabilities.

<p style="text-align:center">Method</p>

Participants

The study's survey sample consisted of Appalachian State University teacher education graduates from 1992-2001, who had enrolled in SPE 4571, Introduction to Emotional Disturbance, where Hayden's books were used as course texts. A list of teacher education graduates who fit the criteria and their mailing addresses were obtained from the Appalachian State University registrar (N = 277). Of the 277 potential participants, 33 of the surveys were returned as undeliverable. One hundred and fifty participants returned a completed survey, representing a response rate of 61% for the

accessible population (N = 244). Eighteen surveys were later discarded because the

participants had no experience in teaching children with disabilities. The remaining 132

participants had a mean age of 27.67 years (SD = 4.93) with a range of 22 - 56 years. One

hundred and twenty-one were female, and 11 were male. Participants had a mean of 4.10

years of teaching experience (SD = 2.09). One hundred were special education teachers,

and seven were regular education teachers. The remaining 25 had experience in teaching

students with disabilities but were in other educational/professional settings (e.g., mental

health, administration).

Treatment

SPE 4571, Introduction to Emotional Disturbance, a two-semester credit hour

course, is a prerequisite for all special education majors. The course provides the

conceptual basis for understanding and teaching children with emotional and behavioral

disorders. Course texts were books by Hayden*: One Child, Somebody Else's Kids*,

Murphy's Boy, *Just Another Kid*, and *Ghost Girl*. These texts served as the primary

source for class lectures and discussion. The teacher-student encounters in the texts

served as springboards for inquiry and critique of theory and practice in the education of

children with emotional and behavioral disorders. Additional course readings were

journal articles and book chapters addressing topics in emotional and behavioral

disorders. Information from these readings was discussed in relation to characters and

events in Hayden's book – for example, (a) "Does Sheila meet the IDEA definition of

emotionally/behaviorally handicapped?" and (b) "Larry Brendtro and others describe the

circle of courage needs of troubled children. How does Torey Hayden address these

needs in her classroom?"

Assignments included the writing of response papers, three to five pages in length, on each of the Hayden texts. In these papers, students responded to specific questions – for example, (a) "Fritz Redl listed five strategies for intervening with problem behaviors: changing, managing, preventing, tolerating, and accommodating. Which strategies did Torey Hayden use in handling the goldfish incident with Sheila? Do you agree or disagree with her actions? Explain." (b) "Torey Hayden found herself in a dilemma when Mr. Collins ordered her to witness Sheila's paddling. What was Torey's dilemma and what were her choices? How was the dilemma solved? Do you think the right decision was made? How would you have solved the problem? How could the dilemma be avoided in the future?" Response questions led the students from literal recall of information through interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Instrument

A questionnaire, the Torey Hayden Survey (THS), was developed by the researchers to measure the influence of reading Torey Hayden in preservice teacher education on teachers' attitudes and practices toward children with disabilities. The THS consisted of three sections: close-ended questions, open-ended questions, and demographic data. Guidelines for survey development were followed as outlined by Czaja and Blair (1996), who recommended best practices for making and administering a survey.

The close-ended questions were designed to determine Hayden's influence on teachers' development of specific competencies. Selected competencies were based on a review of the literature on competencies needed by teachers of children with disabilities, in particular, those with emotional/behavioral disorders, since all of Hayden's children

had emotional/behavioral impairments. Sources of competencies included Bullock, Ellis, and Wilson (1994) and Fink and Janssen (1993). Twenty competencies were selected and were grouped into the following categories: building relationships (nine competencies), classroom management (seven competencies), consultation and advocacy (three competencies), and curriculum (one competency).

Based on the lead statement ("I read Torey Hayden's books in my undergraduate teacher education program, and as a result, I:"), participants rated Hayden's influence on the 20 competencies on a five-point scale from strongly disagree (one) to strongly agree (five). A total score was obtained by summing the scores on each of the 20 competencies. Total scores could range from 20 (lowest) to 100 (highest). Instructions to participants asked them "to read each competency statement about teaching students with disabilities, choose your personal level of agreement or disagreement, and circle the corresponding number" (1–5 Likert scale).

The four-open ended questions were designed to measure the impact reading Hayden had on participants' professional attitudes and practices:

1. How strong an influence was Hayden compared to other influences, practices, and texts used to prepare you to teach students with disabilities?

2. Did reading Hayden permanently change your attitudes and beliefs about students with disabilities? Why or why not?

3. How did reading Hayden help you to develop your self-identity as a teacher?

4. What adjectives would you use to describe the qualities you see in yourself that remind you of Hayden?

Czaja and Blair (1996) maintain that a survey must be a valid measure of the factors of interest. The THS met this criteria for validity as it used established teacher competencies to measure the influence of Hayden on teachers' development. Reliability of the THS was established through a pretest-posttest of the instrument. Gay and Airasian (2000) suggest that as few as three or four individuals can complete this process. The THS was administered and readministered three-weeks later to three students who had read Hayden's books as texts in graduate coursework at Appalachian State University. Pretest-posttest differences ranged from zero to five points for the total score for the 20 teacher competencies, and similar responses and themes emerged in response to the open-ended questions, thereby indicating the THS was reliable.

Procedure

Participants were mailed a cover letter inviting them to participate in the study. The cover letter was co-authored by the researcher and professor who had taught the Hayden text based course. Participation was voluntary with all responses kept confidential. The data collection phase of the study was on an eleven-week timeline. The first round of survey packages was mailed in mid-October 2002, a postcard reminder was mailed in mid-November, and the last round of surveys was mailed in mid-December.

Data Analysis

Participants' self-ratings on the 20 teacher competencies and demographic data on the participants' age, years of teaching experience, and years since graduation, were analyzed for descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (George & Mallery, 2002). Demographic data were examined in relation to total score on the 20 teacher competencies .

Responses to open-ended questions were transcribed into a word processing program in order to be coded for themes and classified into corresponding categories. An adaptation of the Colaizzi (1978) phenomenological method was used to analyze responses. This method consists of six steps: dwelling with the data, extracting significant statements, formulating meanings, organizing the meanings into clusters or themes, creating an exhaustive description of the phenomenon, and reducing the description to a fundamental statement of the phenomenon.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the criteria for rigor in qualitative research are to be expressed as trustworthiness and are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Conclusions of the researcher are credible if they reflect the realities expressed by the participants. In lieu of generalizability, the reader of qualitative research looks to see if results are in any way transferable to a similar context, or if he or she can identify with findings. Dependability implies relative replicability, because a basic assumption of qualitative research is that a particular reality is true at one point in time, for one particular set of participants. Confirmability refers to whether another researcher would arrive at a similar understanding or conclusion from the data.

Techniques used to meet criteria for trustworthiness were (a) peer debriefing (coding schemes were examined by a professor of teacher education), (b) search for negative cases (data were examined for information that did not fit emerging patterns), and (c) audit by a professor of teacher education to check for adherence to criteria for trustworthiness.

Results

The response rate for the THS mail survey was 61%. A response rate of at least 50% is generally considered adequate . . . [and a] response rate of 70% or more is very good (Babbie, 1990, p.182). Lindner, Murphy, and Briers (2001) suggested that procedures for handling nonresponse issues be implemented when less than an 85% response rate is achieved. To further reduce the threat of nonresponse error, it is recommended that a minimum response rate of 50% be achieved (Babbie, 1990; Fowler, 2001).

Lindner et al. (2001) proposed that nonresponse errors can be handled by using "days to respond" as a regression variable. "Days to respond" is coded as a continuous variable and used as an independent variable in regression equations in which primary variables of interest are regressed on the variable "days to respond." If the regression model does not yield statistically significant results it can be assumed that nonrespondents do not differ from respondents. In our data the THS total scale score was regressed on the "days to respond" variable. The regression showed that R = .004 (F = .002, Significance .963) or no relationship between the days surveys were received and the THS total scale score. Thus, it can be assumed that nonrespondents did not differ from respondents in the THS survey.

Means and standard deviations for the 132 participants' self-ratings on the 20 teacher competencies are shown in Table 1. A mean of 3.0 was a neutral value. Eleven of the 20 competencies had means of 4.0 or higher, indicating the majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that Hayden was influential in shaping these practices. The remaining nine competencies had means between 3.5 and 4.0, indicating participants

tended to agree that Hayden was influential in shaping these practices. The total score mean for the 20 competencies was 79.86 (SD = 12.45) with a range of 20 – 100.

Eight of the nine relationship building competencies had means above 4.0, and two of these, "have a better understanding of the impact a student with a disability has on a teachers' life" and "better understand the importance of acting as a positive role model," were the highest ranked competencies overall. Two of the three consultation and advocacy competencies and one of the seven classroom management competencies had means above 4.0.

Pearson product moment correlations were computed to examine the associations between age, years of teaching experience, and years since graduation, and total score on the 20 teacher competencies. Age (r. = .06), years of teaching experience (r = .10), and years since graduation (r = .03), did not correlate significantly with total score.

Regarding the open-ended questions, 125 participants answered question one, 123 participants answered question two, 117 participants answered question three, and 115 participants answered question four. Responses to question one ("How strong an influence was Hayden compared to other influences, practices, and texts used to prepare you to teach?") were coded into the following categories: "strong," "neutral," and "not strong." Of the 125 responses, 94 were coded "strong," eight were coded "neutral," and nine were coded "not strong." Responses were coded "strong" when participants used the word "strong" or words/phrases tantamount in meaning: "extremely influential," "crucial in my education," "large impact on my life," "wonderful learning source," "amazing influence," "very moving and inspiring," "opened my eyes to a new world," and "the ultimate tool in preparing me to meet the demands of my classroom." Responses were

coded "neutral" when participants indicated other teacher education experiences were of similar value: "book knowledge gives you a blueprint from which to build; experiences are the actual building blocks;" "all my college preparation was of equal value." Responses were coded "not strong" when participants used the words "not strong" or indicated reading Hayden had not translated into learning effective teaching practices: "I do not feel prepared to meet the challenges of students with behavior disorders . . . the novels are just not enough to prepare future teachers to work with these students;" "Hayden's books had many heart-touching stories but I was unable to draw effective practices that were conducive to my teaching philosophies." Overall, 83% of the respondents to question one indicated reading Hayden was a strong influence in preparing them to teach.

Regarding question two ("Did reading Torey Hayden permanently change your attitudes and beliefs about students with disabilities? Why or why not?"), respondent comments were coded as "yes," "no," or "no with a qualifier." Of the 123 responses, 75 were coded as "yes," 16 were coded as "no," and 25 were coded as "no with a qualifier." Seven responses were ambiguous in meaning making them ineligible for analysis, e.g., "I am not sure. It has been at least four years since I read her books."

Participants who answered "yes" offered a variety of reasons why reading Hayden had changed their attitudes and beliefs. Many participants mentioned new ways of feeling toward children with disabilities: "compassionate," "empathetic," but one central overall emotion emerged – "hope." Hayden's stories were seen as harboring a deep confidence in human potential and the predisposition of children to act wisely given the psychological opportunity to do so. This confidence gave participants hope, a sense that children with

disabilities could experience positive outcomes and grounds for positive feelings about their own teaching situations: "Absolutely – Hayden's philosophy was based on 'yes, you can,' and after learning about her progress with students it makes me eager to live the same philosophy;" "Hayden's books made me believe I could really make a difference in the lives of my students;" "Yes. Hayden offered creative solutions to seemingly impossible cases and situations with her kids. She permanently instilled the mindset that I can solve a problem with the right thought processes."

Other participants attributed attitude and belief changes to the gaining of new understandings about themselves and about children with disabilities and their situations. The data were rich with references to new knowledge and understandings: "Yes. Hayden taught me to see each student as an individual with different needs, backgrounds, and potential;" "Yes, I have read all her books, and I look at students differently than before. I look at what students offer me, not what I offer them."

Twenty-six respondents answered "no with a qualifier." These respondents felt they already held attitudes and beliefs similar to those of Hayden and commented that reading about her beliefs and attitudes validated their own: "Reading the books did not change my attitudes or beliefs, but confirmed what I had thought all along;" "I cannot say that it changed my attitude as much as reaffirmed it;" "Her books reinforced an attitude of mastery learning and constant love and patience that I already had." The remaining 15 respondents answered "no" without qualification: "I do not feel it was Hayden who formed my attitudes and beliefs about students with disabilities." Overall, 62% of respondents stated Hayden had positively changed their attitudes, 20% stated Hayden had

not changed but rather reaffirmed their existing attitudes, 13% stated Hayden had not

changed their attitudes, and 5% of the responses were too ambiguous to evaluate.

Regarding question three ("How did reading Hayden help you to develop your

self-identity as a teacher?"), 112 of the 117 respondents indicated Hayden's teacher lore

had a positive effect on the development of their teacher identities and provided

explanatory comments. The most salient theme was Hayden's impact as a role model.

Thirty respondents stated they identified with Hayden and/or wanted to be like her: "She

is my survival kit. When in doubt, 'What would Torey have done?' My self-identity as a

teacher is to follow her example and tread in her footsteps if I am worthy enough;" "I use

her values and inspiration as a guide;" Respondents reported taking into themselves the

attributes and personality characteristics of Hayden and felt them to be a part of their

personhood: "She was so empathetic with her students. I wanted and still want to be just

like her;" "Yes, there is a sincerity in her teaching that is rare. I hope to be that kind of

teacher."

Regarding question four ("What adjectives would you use to describe the qualities

you see in yourself that remind you of Hayden?"), of the 115 responses "caring" was the

most frequently used adjective (N = 45), followed by "patient" (N = 36),

"compassionate" (N = 30), "loving" (N = 16), "understanding" (N = 15), determined (N =

15), dedicated (N = 10), and empathetic (N = 8). "Advocate," although not an adjective,

was listed 20 times

Overall, the structure of the experience of reading Hayden that emerged from a

phenomenological analysis of the four open-ended questions was one of identification

with Hayden's character leading to emotional and cognitive learnings. Identification took

the form of admiration, a tendency to imitate, and a sense of loyalty and belonging. Participants reported analyzing their own attitudes and practices against the frameworks of her beliefs and behaviors.

Regarding emotional learnings, participants reported gaining hope ("It made me believe I could reach any child through perseverance"), inspiration ("Inspired me and encouraged me to pursue this field and to base my teaching style on loving relationships, understanding, and patience"), and validation ("Reading her books helped me discover that I could be a compassionate and effective teacher using skills I already had"). Other emotional learnings included shared experience ("It helped me to realize that I was not alone, and that it is okay if I get frustrated when I don't feel like I am making a difference"), comfort ("Hayden thoroughly illustrates the struggles of a teacher of students with special needs. It is comforting to know that she, at times, felt very lonely and unappreciated."), and catharsis ("I remember feeling compassion, rage, happiness, angry [sic], when I read these books. I knew these feelings meant I was in the right field and what kind of teacher I'd be.").

Regarding cognitive learnings, learning took the form of increased understandings of one's own motivations in teaching children ("Reinforced my motivation to show students that a disability should not hold them back from doing well in school and achieving their aspirations. Isn't that the core of teaching special education?"), of one's strengths and limitations ("Helped me realize that I will have moments of success with students and moments of failure. The failed moments will haunt you until there are answers."), and of increased understanding and acceptance of children with disabilities ("Hayden taught me to see each student as an individual. This helped me see the maple,

the oak, and the dogwood instead of just the forest."). Gathering didactic information was also a prominent theme: "I am better able to deescalate students in emotional crisis;" "I use many positive reinforcement techniques borrowed from her books;" "I learned how to challenge students by giving creative lessons."

Discussion

Results of this study support and expand the work of Marlowe and colleagues (Marlowe et. al., 1997; Marlowe & Maycock, 2000; Marlowe & Maycock, 2001) on the use of Torey Hayden's teacher lore in preservice teacher education. Positive teacher attitude changes attributed to reading Hayden in these earlier short-term fifteen week studies were confirmed as lasting. Teachers, who had read Hayden over a ten-year period, beginning in 1992, rated and acknowledged her influence on their professional development as strong.

The findings also extend previous Hayden research in that teachers reported Hayden not only impacted their teacher attitudes but teacher practices as well. Teachers rated Hayden's influence on all 20 teacher practices as positive. Eight of the nine relationship building competencies achieved means of 4.0 or higher, and "understands the impact a student with a disability has on a teacher's life" was the highest ranked competency, reflecting an appreciation for the central theme of Hayden's stories, the synergistic power of relationships between a teacher and his or her students.

While affective goal setting does not often occur in teacher education (Rogers & Webb, 1991), developing an ethic of caring should be the central activity of teacher education (Noddings, 1992). The key interaction, affect, and attitude variables that are listed as goals for teachers-in-training to acquire first appear as competencies not in

course syllabi but on student teaching checklists. Who has taught these skills that are then to be practiced? Do we count on supervising teachers to teach these critical elements? But what if the supervising teacher him- or herself lacks the skills to reach out to students?

Reading Hayden in teacher education offers students opportunities to expedite caring and to develop the skills of interpersonal relationships. Howard Gardner (1991) suggests there are at least seven intelligences, two of which have a direct bearing on one's capacity to care. One he defines as interpersonal intelligence, the capacity to sense and respond properly to the internal states of others. Participants credited Hayden with developing this empathic ability to take the perspective of another and respond appropriately to the moods and motivations of that other. Hayden was cited as a model for warmth and enthusiasm, for modeling correct behavior, for talking an out-of-control student down or a depressed student up, for responding to lies, for handling anger, anxiety, and sadness, for giving quiet reprimands, for promoting students' sense of belonging, mastery, and independence. The other intelligence having a direct bearing on caring is what Gardner terms intrapersonal intelligence, access and knowledge about one's own feelings to use in guiding one's behavior. Reading Hayden allowed participants to access their own feelings, as well as strengths and weaknesses, and to conduct honest dialogue and engage in Socratic self-examination.

Hayden was also highly influential in shaping consultation and advocacy competencies. Participants commented that reading Hayden had "opened their eyes" to the material stressors (e.g., inadequate survival resources) and psychological stressors (e.g., child abuse and neglect) in their children's lives. Hayden was viewed as

championing the rights of her students and seeking to make their needs known and met. The word "advocate" or words/phrases tantamount in meaning (e.g., "risk-taker for my students," "fighter for children's rights") were cited frequently when participants described qualities they saw in themselves that reminded them of Hayden.

Hayden was less influential in shaping classroom management and curriculum competencies. There are two reasons why this may have occurred. First, many people who work with children with disabilities believe the quality of interpersonal relationships is pivotal to the success of their efforts (Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 1990), and Hayden mirrors this belief. Methodologies, classroom management procedures, and curriculum are less emphasized than relationship building in her teacher stories. These relationships include the adult-child relationship, peer relationships among children, and teamwork relationships among adults.

Second, Hayden's teacher lore encompasses her biography. Teaching events are framed within the context of her life history. As a result, the central themes are often moral and philosophical, having more to do with feelings, purposes, images, aspirations, and personal meanings than with teaching method or curriculum structures in isolation from Hayden's personal experience or biography. It is teaching, some would argue, "up close" rather than "out there" (Carter, 1993).

Identification with Hayden's character was a basic element in the phenomenological structure of the experience of reading Hayden. The depth of identification seemed related to the depth of emotional and cognitive learnings. This finding reinforces Marlowe and Maycock's (2000) finding that preservice teachers' identification with Hayden was the crucial factor in her influence. Griffin (1994) in

discussing the use of story in teacher education explains that the blend of biography and professional practice of an admired teacher may have tremendous power for the teacher candidate who is searching for his or her place in the teaching profession.

Reading Hayden left participants with altered states of consciousness, new perspectives, changed outlooks on life, and more. Participants reported they had been inspired and instructed by becoming acquainted with aspects of children's lives, both inside and outside the classroom, they heretofore had not experienced. By seeing not only the familiar but the different, participants learned about diverse learners, diverse cultures, and new ways of being in the classroom. Hayden's stories built empathy across differences.

Participants reported a preference for reading Hayden over textbooks routinely assigned in preservice teacher education. Hayden's "war stories" were seen as more "real" and "true-to-life" than the professional text, providing "real life examples from which to learn classroom techniques." Novice teachers continue to complain about the lack of "reality" in their preparation programs, as teacher educators struggle to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Because teacher lore is personally engaging, concrete, memorable, complex, and open-ended, it can help students make connections between theory and practice, their ways of thinking and others' outlooks, the college classroom and life in the schools.

The opportunities for using Hayden in general and special education teacher education are limited only by the issues addressed in the curriculum itself. In coursework examining classroom management, for example, *One Child, Somebody Else's Kids*, or *Beautiful Child* could be used to portray the enormous complexities influencing teacher-

student relationships and peer culture in school settings. For coursework in consultation and advocacy, *Just Another Kid* explores the role of the teacher in working with parents, while *Ghost Girl* focuses on the teacher as an advocate and change agent for a sexually abused child. And for classes in cultural differences, *Beautiful Child* portrays how poverty and race impact learning, self-concept, peer interactions, and family dynamics.

We must be careful, however, not to imply that Hayden's teacher lore is the new panacea for special education teacher education. Teachers are not privileged authors who somehow have direct access to truth and objectivity. Stories, including those by Hayden, are constructions that give meaning to events and convey a particular sense of reality. Hayden's stories are products of a fundamentally interpretative process that is shaped by her moralistic principles. This holds true regardless of who the author is.

In conclusion, Torey Hayden's teacher lore is not just "heartwarming story." It is a source for learning and teacher reflection. Schubert and Ayres (1992) believe only reflective teachers are able to grow continuously while enabling children and youth to grow and improve the world around them. Nel Noddings (1991) claims that "stories have power to direct and change our lives" (p.157). The data of this study support her position. Participants who read Hayden's teacher lore reported they were changed for the better, and these changes endured over time.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for THS competencies

Competencies 1 – 20 (ranked by mean)	Mean	Std. Deviation
(RB) Have a better understanding of the impact a student with a disability can have on a teacher's life	4.67	0.55
(RB) Better understand the importance of acting as a positive role model	4.50	0.67
(CA) Am better prepared to advocate for students with disabilities in school and community settings	4.36	0.72
(CA) Have a better understanding of the diversity and dynamics of families and schools as related to effective instruction for students with disabilities	4.27	0.70
(RB) Am better able to build positive relationships with students and treat them with respect and caring	4.21	0.69
(RB) Am better able to facilitate the development of positive self-concepts in students	4.20	0.74
(RB) Can create a climate that is conducive to open exchange between and among students and teacher	4.16	0.67
(RB) Can engage in more genuine communication through helpful talking and listening	4.14	0.75
(RB) Can create environments where equity, fairness, and diversity are modeled	4.09	0.80
(CM) Can apply disciplinary methods and behavioral procedures which do not undermine the dignity or human rights of children and youth with disabilities	4.05	0.88
(RB) Am better prepared to meet the physical, cultural, social, and emotional needs of students with disabilities	4.03	0.70
(RB) Can interact more effectively with students, parents, and other professionals in a caring and culturally competent manner	3.98	0.77
(CM) Can recognize when conflict exists and can disengage from the conflict cycle	3.93	0.83
(CA) Am able to interact professionally with other teachers and agencies in the treatment and education of students with disabilities	3.91	0.89
(CM) Am better able to select and employ positive group and individual intervention techniques to manage classroom behavior	3.81	0.90
(CM) Can better manage crisis episodes without using aversive techniques	3.80	0.94
(CR) Am better able to select, design, and modify special curricula to meet the cognitive, affective, and behavioral needs of students with disabilities	3.77	0.87
(CM) Can better develop and implement classroom rules and means for enforcing those rules	3.76	0.90
(CM) Can conduct effective post-crisis interviews and instruction	3.61	0.86
(CM) Can use safe and therapeutic techniques for effectively controlling physically aggressive behaviors	3.54	1.08

Note. **RB** = relationship building; **CM** = classroom management; **CA** = consultation and advocacy; **CR** = curriculum.