8-2000

Childcare and Experiential Knowledge: Expanding Definitions of Childcare

Lori L. McNeil
Western Michigan University

CHILDCARE AND EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: EXPANDING DEFINITIONS OF CHILDCARE

by

Lori L. McNeil

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Sociology

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 2000

CHILDCARE AND EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: EXPANDING DEFINTIONS OF CHILDCARE

Lori L. McNeil, Ph.D.

Western Michigan University, 2000

Childcare is traditionally defined as care for children while their parents/guardians are in the workforce or attending school. While technically accurate, it is argued that traditional definitions of childcare are partial and consequently do not fully describe childcare based on an experiential dimension. Thus, this research project sought to augment normative definitions of childcare by including the voices of children in childcare, parents using childcare and those caregivers providing childcare.

Several theoretical frameworks were used for this research. First, standpoint theory (Harding, 1987) was presented in order to inform an alternative perspective of childcare based on "experiential" rather than "expert" knowledge. Moreover, role theory (Goffman, 1961) was used to direct this research through an examination of the situated activity of childcare and the role set members connected to that activity. Finally, the acquisition of roles using Chodorow's (1978) work on the reproduction of motherhood was also used to guide this research. These theoretical postulations were examined through a historical analysis of the construction of childcare and those meanings and definitions attached to childcare.

This qualitative study was designed as a case study of childcare using participant observation, intensive interviewing and an analysis of secondary, open-ended, childcare survey data. The research was structured so that children, their parents/guardians and their childcare providers all articulated their own perspective of

childcare based on the identical childcare experience. The main foci included the daily routines and activities of a typical childcare experience, definitions of childcare from each of the three perspectives and how children, caregivers and parents envisioned a utopian childcare experience. An analysis of the data revealed the following.

Childcare tended to be more than a place to "put" a child. Experiential knowledge articulated by children, parents/guardians and childcare providers suggested that the daily doing and receiving of childcare was imbued with myriad activities and feelings. These stakeholders defined childcare as including three dominant dimensions—routinous, emotional and discursive. While childcare was steeped in routine such as naptime and lunchtime, it also involved intensive emotional work for all stakeholders while they transitioned from one routine to the next. A still emerging dimension, the discursive dimension was also evident as children, childcare providers and parents formulated reframed versions of childcare possibilities.

The purpose of this research was to expose definitions of childcare based on experiential knowledge. As such, while not comprehensive in scope, this research is a starting point around which childcare can be examined based on alternative definitions. These differing perspectives present the possibility of childcare policy and programs based on all knowledge surrounding childcare rather than only a single "expert" perspective.

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI®

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work is a compilation of many individual efforts. I wish to acknowledge those efforts.

I first thank the children, caregivers and parents who were observed and interviewed for this research. I appreciate your allowing me into these sometimes intimate settings and articulating your childcare experiences and thoughts. The children offered incredible insight that became a significant portion of this work. Moreover, I found the caregivers to be compassionate nurturers and wise teachers. I thank the parents who made considerable efforts to participate in this study. I am in awe of your commitment to your families and their care. You all have become my heroes.

I also thank Kristie Carambula, Sheila Stahl and DeAnna Young, all of whom have been involved in childcare for many years and helped me to understand childcare through sharing their insider views. I too thank those individuals who produced childcare and feminist research in the past; they provide the "shoulders" on which subsequent childcare research is based.

I gratefully acknowledge my fellow graduate students whose encouragement through this academic process was invaluable. I thank the entire Sociology Department at Western Michigan University for providing me a discursive space in which to explore these childcare themes.

I am honored to have worked with and thank my entire dissertation committee for their participation in this research. Dr. Don Cooney, I thank you for your contagious energy and enthusiasm for this work. I appreciate your incredible commitment to community. I thank Dr. Zoann Snyder for her time, commitment and professionalism during this process. Your patient approach to guiding students

through their academic careers is noteworthy. I also thank Dr. Subhash Sonnad for his commitment to scholarship and to students. We have worked together for almost five years; you were my first graduate professor, served as chair during my first area exam and were my thesis advisor—I could not have gotten to this point without you. Finally, I would like to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. Paula Brush, for her assistance in directing and framing this vision which became my dissertation. Thank you for your belief in the importance of these childcare issues and the method in which they were researched. You have a gift for simplifying complexity and organizing scholarly thought; thanks for sharing that with me.

I must also thank my son, Taylor, whose initial articulations of childcare several years ago made me realize that children needed to be involved in describing this milieu. Thank you Taylor for giving me the time and space in which to perform this work and thank you for your interest in its content. I wish to thank you as well for "bringing me ice cream" while I read and wrote.

Finally, I wish to thank Sherrill Friedman whose unquestioned support during this process enabled me engage in this work. Not only did you proof endless drafts of this work, you also enthusiastically contributed to its content. Thanks for "picking up the slack" in my life when I was too absorbed in this work to do so. Your ongoing assistance in providing me with the "essentials" that sustained me while I worked was incredible. Thanks for tolerating me, sharing in this work and for believing in me.

This research is dedicated in memory of Alicia Hinkley and Lucille Bourgois. Thank you all for taking this journey with me, I am humbled by your contributions.

Lori L. McNeil

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

CHAPTER

Table of Contents—continued

CHAPTER

APPENDICES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"It is 6:45 A. M. ...at a childcare center in the basement of the Baptist church....a tall, awkward looking man peers hesitantly into the room. His son Timmy tromps in behind him. The room is cheerful, clean, half-asleep. Diane walks over, takes Timmy's hand and leads him to the breakfast table. Timmy's dad...hurries toward the door. One wall of the room has four large windows....[I]n front of the second window is a set of small wooden steps children climb to wave goodbye. It is called 'the waving window.' Timmy returns to his cereal, sighs, and declares excitedly, 'My Dad sawed me wave!'" (Hochschild, 1997, pg. 3).

"...[T]he other childcare workers exchange smiles over Timmy's head. As professionals, they aren't suppose to have favorites, but sometimes it's hard not to" (Hochschild, 1997, pg. 3).

"Pleeese, can't you take me with you?" Cassie pleads.

"You know I can't..." her mother replies (Hochschild, 1997, pg. 4).

Cassie is aware of her mother's uneasiness at leaving her for such a long day at the center. So every morning Cassie finagles a fudge bar out of her mother's guilt. Gwen feels that she owes Cassie more time than she can give her. Gwen has a time-debt to her daughter. Over the weekend, many children like Cassie will eagerly cash in their debts from their parents' harried weekday promises (Hochschild, 1997).

From a child's, parent's and childcare provider's perspective, the traditional definition of childcare may not readily correspond with their daily experiences. When defining childcare, the childcare experiences describing emotional aspects like the

waving window, the time debt and the favorite children are neglected and tend to be pushed to the periphery. In the United States, the general definition of childcare is non-custodial care provided for a child when a parent or guardian is either at work or in school (McNeil, 1999; Blank, 1997; Klein, 1992; Hayes, Palmer, Zaslow, 1990; Steinfels, 1973). The age associated with childcare recipients is generally twelve years of age and younger. The origins of this age stipulation comes from governmental guidelines of subsidies and tax credits which only includes ages zero through twelve as qualifiers for such benefits (McNeil, 1999; Hofferth, Brayfield, Deich & Holcomb, 1991). The age qualifier is just an example of what now has become part of the traditional definition of childcare. Extant childcare definitions used today do not include childcare experiences from the perspectives of Timmy and his father, Diane, Cassie and Gwen do not enjoy the privilege of including their voices within the childcare discourse (Galinsky, 1999; Rose, 1999; Steinfels, 1973).

Childcare has traditionally been defined and framed by experts (see Chapter III). While expert groups' contributions are useful, when evaluating the experiential dimension they are not particularly relevant. In contrast to childcare "experts," this project sought those research subjects closest to and intimately involved in childcare—children in childcare, childcare providers and parents/guardians who have children within the childcare system. These groups have generally not been involved in childcare discourse in the past. In fact, in the quotation below, one 12-year-old child clearly attests to the necessity of involving these marginalized groups:

> "Listen. Listen to what your kids say, because you know, sometimes it's very important. And sometimes a kid can have a great idea and it could even affect you. Because, you know, kids are people. Kids have great ideas, as great as you, as great as ideas that adults have" (Galinsky, 1999, p. 358).

Moreover, children are rarely asked to contribute to issues directly affecting them

unless a problem such as abuse is suspected or if the child is thought to be "a problem" (Rich, 1968). Children, however, tend to be reliable and valid contributors in articulating their unique perspectives (Hughs & Baker, 1990). But, little research exists that attempts to understand childcare from the perspective of young children or from parents and caregivers for that matter.

It is duly acknowledged that a significant amount of childcare research does currently exist. Much of this research, however, is quantitative in nature (McNeil, 1999; Hofferth et. al, 1991; Willer et. al, 1991; Hayes et. al, 1990). For example, statistics reflecting the most popular childcare arrangements used by parents and typical costs for childcare based on a child's age are widely available (Hofferth et. al, 1991; Willler et. al, 1991; Hayes et. al,1990). Although crucial to our understanding of childcare need, quantitative research alone does not completely explore and describe all issues relating to childcare. Hence, this qualitative research was designed to enhance existing quantitative research in order to expand our understanding of childcare and the normative definitions connected to it.

Traditional childcare definitions tend not to include feelings and emotions connected to the daily giving and receiving of care. For example, one toddler expressed that part of the emotional work she does each time she arrives at childcare is "...I get use to it" (Child Care Resources, 1989). When asked if "getting use to it was hard" she answered without hesitation that "no" it wasn't hard (Child Care Resources, 1989). Instead, she seemed to be implying that "getting use to it" was not negative but rather was part of what she was involved in relative to childcare. Concomitantly, this young expert also seemed to be suggesting that she expended her emotional energy in transition from her home and family to the childcare setting.

Childcare providers also expressed that they too are involved in emotional

work when caregiving. One childcare provider expressed that part of her daily providing of childcare services included feelings that she was not important, indicating that parents lacked respect for her work (Joining Forces Child Care Initiative, 1997). Providers are likely on the right track with this observation. In fact, as a society, we tend to view any work involving children, especially young children, as unskilled and peripheral as well as insignificant (Rose, 1999; Brown, 1998; Peters, 1997; Klein, 1992). If pay is any indication of how childcare is valued, and it usually is, the wages of childcare workers are far below the poverty level (Brown, 1998; The Center for the Child Care Workforce, 1998; Children's Defense Fund, 1998; Peters, 1997; Vardell, 1996; Roby, 1973; Steinfels, 1973).

An example of the undervaluation of childcare was a proposed provisional childcare program in Wisconsin. As part of the fallout surrounding welfare reform, Wisconsin proposed a plan to increase the availability of childcare in that state. The program, called Provisional Care, was one that allowed individuals to earn up to $54 per week, without being fully certified, to perform childcare work (Brown, 1998). This was particularly ironic because at that time incarcerated inmates at the state prisons were being paid more than $54 per week for the work they performed within the prisons (Brown, 1998). Thus, providers are right on target with the expression of unimportance they identify as part of their daily emotional work.

What's more, low pay is connected to high turnover (Brown, 1998; Willer, et. al., 1991; Auerbach, 1979). Nationally, the annual turnover rate for childcare staff is 40%. Because children are building important relationships with their caregivers, "what we call turnover, they experience as loss" (Brown, 1998, pg. 27). Thus, children are also involved in the emotional work of losing a caregiver. This loss is directly attributable to the low pay the childcare providers receive.

Parents too articulate childcare as relationships bounding with emotional work. That is, parents articulate childcare as inclusive of deep feelings when they suggest that providers are people who genuinely "care" not just "for" their child but also "about" their child (Joining Forces Child Care Initiative, 1997; Auerbach, 1979). In fact, parents are likely to value aspects of childcare such as warmth and compassion over other aspects such as the educational content of the childcare program itself (Brown, 1998). Caring about the children expands the definition of childcare postulating it as surrogate mothering and temporary guardianship experiences in addition to it being a financial or business arrangement.

Childcare is indeed more than a business, cognitive and physical arrangement. Childcare includes emotional and interpersonal aspects. As a society, however, we have tended to overlook these other components of childcare, perhaps having decided that they were unimportant and uninteresting (Brown, 1998). Or, perhaps we as a society were afraid to know or to examine these areas—we didn't want to know (Galinsky, 1999; Brown 1998). At the time in our history when childcare was being defined, we were not ready to hear or fully enter childcare debates such as caregiver turnover rates and the wide range of emotions connected to childcare. Today, however, we may have embarked on an era of "social readiness" with respect to childcare (Galinsky, 1999).

If political activity is any indication of social readiness, as a country, we may be ready to "know" about childcare. This is so because childcare includes the stirrings of a politicized issue when the emotional aspects of childcare, for example, are examined (Peters, 1997; Roby, 1973; Steinfels, 1973). The 1960s slogan, "the personal is political" is an apt application for childcare (Ferree & Martin, 1995; Evans, 1979; Freeman, 1975). The feminist concept that in part directed the women's movement,

referred to the fact that individual problems are seldom just individual. More often than not, not just individuals but entire groups of people—collectives—are also experiencing these same problems (Mansbridge, 1995). Additionally, issues such as childcare often become imbued with desperation and hopelessness when widespread interventions are not addressed (hooks, 1984; Auerbach, 1979; Steinfels, 1973).

One politicized activity undertaken to raise the consciousness of childcare workers is called, "Worthy Wage Day" (WWD) (Brown, 1998; Center for the Child Care Workforce, 1998; Vardell, 1996). The goal is to empower childcare workers by demonstrating how important and crucial their work is within communities. This WWD exercise suggests that childcare workers go on "strike" for a day so that communities can experience the full impact of their work were it not available. Although sometimes reticent about participating, childcare workers have engaged in this activity as well as variations of WWD. For example, one grass roots group solicited community members from various agencies to spend several hours at a daycare center or family daycare (Niles Child Care Project, 1999). This exercise was designed to illustrate the often arduous but high-quality work childcare workers contribute to the community on a daily basis.

Parents also have taken childcare to a political level as some question the notion of "good" mothers as those who do not work outside the home. Today, good mother/bad mother dichotomies are useless for many parents who have few choices regarding work or stay-at-home mom statuses[1] (Galinsky, 1999; Steinfels, 1973). That is, women are questioning the applicability and validity of this bifurcated perspective of mothering (Peters, 1997; Scarr & Dunn, 1987). This good/bad

[1] Since women today are the primary caregivers both in the provision and organization of childcare, the female parent/guardian will be used in this research with the understanding that in some cases, males fill that role (Galinsky, 1999; Staggenborg, 1998; Peters, 1997; Roiphe, 1996; Auerbach, 1979).

dichotomy was played out in the media several years ago when college student, Jennifer Ireland, attempted to place her child in daycare (Galinsky, 1999; Rose, 1999). The non-custodial father sued for custody on the grounds that he would NOT put the child in childcare but would use his mother to care for the child while he attended school. The father, Stephen Smith was awarded custody. This very public example clearly posited daycare as bad. Thus, not only is daycare bad, mothers who use it are oftentimes also defined in such terms. Daycare which is labeled as bad irrespective of any evaluation of the care itself, however, may likely be more about mother's role than about the quality of daycare (Galinsky, 1999; Rose, 1999; Scarr & Dunn, 1987; Steinfels, 1973).

Another example of this good mother/bad mother dichotomy in which women find themselves caught is, as one woman suggested, that she did not need anymore guilt, but instead needed support (Galinsky, 1999). These simple but powerful words may indicate that women are questioning status quo hegemonics and beginning, at least individually, to formulate individual arguments against binary definitions of mothering and childcare. In other words, women may very well be involved in the initial construction of politicized identities not only of childcare but, to a larger extent, of motherhood (Staggenborg, 1998; Bradley, 1996; Steinfels, 1973). It is within these settings and under these circumstances that new languages can emerge as traditional images of women's roles no longer fit one's daily experiences. (Galinsky, 1999; Roiphe, 1996; Scarr & Dunn, 1987; Swidler, 1984). The political aspect of childcare will, of course, need to be taken to another level—collective consciousness (McAdam, 1982; Freeman, 1975; Evans, 1979)—and will certainly require discursive spaces (Harding, 1998) in which to frame and articulate these formulations.

This research provides that discursive space. I argue that the actual provision

of care to a child is only one aspect of the childcare issue. This is particularly evident when the evaluation of childcare based on the experience of children, caregiver and parents is central. Thus, this research project decenters (hooks, 1984) extant definitions and concepts of childcare by focusing on childcare experience, effectively problematizing (Chafetz, 1997) more traditional concepts of childcare. The experiential component examines childcare through the inclusion of voices—voices that in the past have been marginalized and unheard, rendering them invisible. This inclusion consists of evaluating and defining childcare from the perspective of providers, children and parents—on their own terms and based on their daily lived experiences. Hence, this research seeks to recover (Daly, 1978) patterns and definitions relevant to childcare but that are often hidden from view. This process of "recovery" begins with theoretical postulations and historical analyses of childcare in order to ground and place the issue sociohistorically.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMING AND THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Why Inclusion?

The voices of children, parents and childcare providers (caregivers) are noticeably absent within the framing of extant definitions of childcare. The perspective of children, caregivers and parents represent an "other" viewpoint typically not part of the childcare discourse. Susan Harding (1987) suggests in her work on standpoint theory that the addition of "other" into dominant discourse is crucial. A single, unidimensional perspective seeking a single truth is not enough. Thus, positivism—or a single truth—is being rejected. In the rejection of positivism, Harding suggests that the method itself—positivism with its quest for a single truth—is flawed. One knows that something must have been omitted when only a single perspective is presented. According to Harding, (1998) what is left out is the experiential dimension of our social reality. Because knowledge is intimately tied to experience, the separation of these two "ways of knowing" renders only half truths. Moreover, bell hooks (1984) suggests that singular truth must be decentered giving way to experiential knowledge that can take the center position. In this way, contradictions to the dominant narrative can be exposed. Foucault (1977) refers to this situation as subjugated knowledge. Giving voice to subjugated knowledge equals power which in turn expands and also creates new knowledge, in this case, knowledge about childcare.

Experiential knowledge has the ability to create new discourse by pushing the boundaries of what constitutes previously defined knowledge. Decentering the subject

can deconstruct the category of childcare creating the possibility of new discourse or, as Mary Daly (1978) suggests, "naming the unnameable." Experiential knowledge starts with an assumption that knowledge and power are intimately linked (Harding, 1987). Consequently, some experiences get labeled as opinion (marginalized experience) while other experiences get framed as knowledge.[2] Thus, an injustice frame is created. The injustice frame serves as a processual component of reframing by defining the original frame as unjust and mediated through legitimized noncompliance of the original master frame (Snow, et al., 1986). When one tries to bring experience into one's frame as knowledge that had been previously defined as opinion, the original frame or "injustice" frame is broken. Thus, the examination of childcare based on experiential knowledge seeks to break the original injustice frame.

One technique used to reframe issues such as childcare is used by Dorothy Smith (Chafetz, 1997). Smith (Chafetz, 1997) suggests that one begins by problematizing the everyday world because consciousness is bifurcated and thus the world cannot be taken as given. This practice deconstructs contextual materials then uses only direct experience as knowledge. The process analyzes texts via "other" perspectives instead of a dominant perspective. The rationale is that the further one is from the dominant ideology, the easier it is to assess the different perspectives (Harding, 1987). In the case of childcare, the "other" perspective(s) consists of the subjugated knowledge (Foucault, 1977) of children in childcare settings, the individuals who provide care for children while parents/guardians are unable to, and those adults who need care for children for whom they are responsible.

---

[2] Framing refers to a "schemata of interpretation" used by individuals to attach meaning to society and their life space which essentially organizes experience (Snow, Rochford, Worden and Benford, 1986).

Research Design

In a very general way, this research links language, subjectivity and power (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). More specifically, this was realized through a qualitative study that consisted of a case study of childcare. Childcare stakeholders were invited to articulate and interpret their childcare experiences; in essence, contributing to childcare knowledge based on experience. By giving voice to previously subjugated childcare knowledge, the power to create and expand new knowledge is realized (Foucault, 1977).

The research was designed for and is about women with an agenda of expanding knowledge about issues that affect and are important to women. Thus, this case study of childcare can be further defined as feminist research precisely because it deals with issues usually defined as "women's issues" (Reinharz, 1997). Moreover, this feminist research emphasizes "...researcher and textual reflexivity and action and praxis orientation: an attention to the affective, emotional components of research; and concrete groundings in immediate situations" (Denzin, 1994, pg. 510). This study incorporates the feminist research technique of triangulation—that is, in this research, combining secondary data, participant observation and intensive interviewing with children, parents and childcare providers (Berg, 1995; Denzin & Lincoln 1994; Reinharz, 1992)[3].

---

[3] Triangulation refers to the use of multiple research methods in order to strengthen research designs. Each method offers something unique to the research project which aids in addressing issues of validity and reliability. In this research, the secondary survey data had a large number of respondents which generally strengthens the research reliability. The survey data, as is often the case, did not provide great detail which is known to weaken the validity of the research. The observational component, however, provided first-hand evaluation of the research subjects which usually increases validity. Whereas the small number of research subjects, in contrast, would weaken the research design in terms of reliability. And finally, intensive interviews were again limited by the small number of interviewees, rendering them non-generalizeable, but these did provide an incredible amount of in-depth data. That is, the intensive interviews were deemed high in terms of validity but rather low in terms of reliability. Hence, triangulation techniques were especially important to this

Research Questions

Much literature exists describing and defining childcare, however, the voices of those groups of people most intimately connected to childcare have been silenced (Rose, 1999; Auerbach, 1979). Although children in childcare, parents and guardians using childcare services and individuals providing the actual care for children are all part of a childcare role set (Goffman, 1961), they have not contributed to this discourse in any significant way. Each group has crucial experiences and knowledge necessary to the childcare issue but has been largely ignored. This knowledge must be included in childcare discourse so that a more complete understanding of childcare and potential childcare implementations can be formulated (Harding, 1987). For example, what does a "waving window" mean, how does a "time debt" enter this discussion and how do childcare providers reconcile the emotional aspects of caring for children such as a "favorite child" (Hochschild, 1997). Moreover, how do these examples correspond to the current definition of childcare defined as non custodial[4] care for children twelve years of age or under while a parent/guardian works or attends school (Klein, 1992; Hofferth, et al., 1991). This research addresses these very issues; it reconstructs subjugated knowledge (Foucault, 1977) relative to childcare by eliciting and elucidating the experiences of childcare providers, parents and children as they explore and evaluate their own childcare realities. It is being argued that childcare has been misframed in the past and now must undergo frame transformation (Snow, et al., 1986). This "keying" (Snow, et al., 1986) of childcare based on the daily experiences

---

qualitative research in addressing issues of reliability and validity as well in strengthening the research overall (Berg, 1995; Reinharz, 1992). Since a single researcher in data collection often means fewer differences in collection procedures, the utilization of only one researcher in data collection also addressed issues of validity and reliability (Berg, 1995). Thus, issues of validity and reliability were considered and addressed within the research design. Moreover, consideration was also given to gaps existing in extant childcare research—refer to Chapter I.

[4] This usage of "non custodial" refers to care by a non parent or guardian.

of those most intimately involved in it reconstitutes these activities from that unique standpoint and focuses on the following general areas:

1. What is a "typical day" in childcare from the perspective of children, parents (users) and childcare providers? This area will include an examination of childcare roles, (i.e., confusion, strain, distance, etc.) meanings and difficulties.

2. How do childcare providers, users and children (stakeholders) define childcare?

3. What might a childcare "wish list[5]" include? This list could include any aspect of childcare that providers, children and users (parents) would describe as ideal offerings, meanings, definitions and/or experiences.

A detailed description of the research methods follows. The methods are based on the three main foci listed above.

Data Collection

All appropriate Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) documents were submitted and approved prior to any actual data collection. The approval form is included as Appendix A. The following section describes the data collection process.

Childcare data for this study were collected in several ways. The research was designed so that two major childcare settings, daycare centers and family daycares, could be sampled. Semi-structured, intensive interviewing, participant observation and secondary, open-ended survey data were used in this research. These three data collection procedures are discussed below.

Intensive Interviews

Intensive interviews are characterized by open-ended questions focusing on

[5] This research question seeks to expose the "doxa" relative to childcare. Refer to this discussion in the section entitled "The Naturalness of Mothering Roles" in Chapter III.

specific content. The intensive interview tends to be interactive in nature with the goal of developing an overview of the interviewee's "background, attitudes, and/or actions in his or her own terms" (Schutt, 1996, pg. 325). Although interview schedules were developed for each research group in this study, the interviewee oftentimes influenced the direction of the interview. Thus, the order of the questions and to a lesser extent the questions themselves differed, however, the subject matter, childcare, was the focus.

Children's Interview. Several sources of childcare literature were particularly useful in the construction of the interview guides as well as the research itself. This research design and content was informed, in part, by the following pieces of childcare research and resources.

First, a review of a video recording of children expressing their views regarding childcare (Child Care Resources, 1989) was invaluable to this process. This video depicted unrehearsed, short clips of children whose ages ranged from approximately 18 months to about 5 years of age. It's About Children (Child Care Resources, 1989) clearly revealed that children not only perceived childcare from a very different viewpoint than adults, but they also seemed to be involved in a large amount of emotional work throughout the day. Oftentimes this work centered on routines and transitions. Moreover, children also seemed to be suggesting that they expended a considerable amount of energy each day working on transitions such as transitions from parental care to other care, naptime transitions and transitions back to parental care at days' end. Based on a careful examination of these short interviews, questions concerning daily routines surrounding childcare became a significant part of each interview guide for this study.

Another important piece of research by Harriet Brown (1998) was also crucial

to this study. Brown's 1998 book, The Waving Window, is an ethnography of childcare whereby the author spent an entire year observing at a daycare center. The daycare, Red Caboose, provided caregiving services for the age groups of infant through kindergarten children. Brown's research offered incredible detail describing daily experiences of childcare providers and children primarily although some information pertained to parents' perspectives. The Waving Window was a useful resource in the interview guide development because it not only validated other literature regarding routines and transitions, it also offered description of the ways in which the children interacted and communicated with the caregivers. It was especially helpful in understanding the extent to which children can articulate their feelings and thoughts at differing ages. Thus, The Waving Window also contributed significantly to this research content and its impact was reflected in the interview guides.

Several interviewing techniques were utilized for the children's interviews. First, this was a semi-structured, fact-finding interview (Tower, 1996; Berg, 1995; Hughes & Baker, 1990; Rich, 1968) designed to uncover information regarding childcare. All children interviewed or observed gave assent prior to data collection (see Appendix B). Because of the children's young ages, questions were constructed primarily using concepts that reflected concrete rather than abstract terms (Helfer & Kempe, 1997; Tower, 1996; Trad, 1990). The interview was designed as an inverted, funnel-style with direct, closed ended questions used initially followed by indirect and broader or open ended questions in the middle and end of the interviewing process (Rich, 1968). That is, the interview began with questions that were relatively simple for the child to respond to as well as those that would be interesting to them such as favorite toys and food. This design was used in order to put each child at ease from the very beginning of the interview process (Helfer & Kempe, 1997; Tower, 1996;

Berg, 1995; Rich, 1968).

Information regarding the children such as their names and ages was collected prior to the interviews so that interviews would be optimally effective (Helfer & Kempe, 1997). In this way, the interviewer began interviews with some general knowledge about each child. Note-taking was used in the data collection process and the notes were word processed in their entirety for analysis purposes (Berg, 1995). Several other interview techniques were also employed during the children interviews.

Leading questions were avoided because of the inherent power differential between children and adults (Tower, 1996; Hughs & Baker, 1990). Young children tend to want to please adults thus making them generally agreeable to researcher suggestions. Because of this, the interviewer allowed children to speak freely and without any adult manipulation of the child's articulations. This is again particularly important because a child's truth will likely be completely different than that of adults (Helfer & Kempe, 1997). In lieu of direct questions to confirm a respondent's answer, neutral probes such as "what do you mean" or "I am not quite sure I understand" were used so that children were given other opportunities to express his/her ideas (Helfer & Kempe, 1997).

The child interview began with rapport-building questions and techniques (Helfer & Kempe, 1997; Tower, 1996; Berg, 1995; Hughes & Baker, 1990; Rich, 1968). The researcher began by sharing with the children her maternal status, several items about her child and what her child may have liked to do at their age. In this way, the researcher sought to develop a "we-ness" with the child. This initial rapport-building was crucial for several reasons.

First, it is feasible that a child is stranger-shy thus inhibiting full participation in the interview. If a child does not feel comfortable with the adult interviewer, he or she

will likely still answer the question asked as children do like to please adults, but may not offer additional explanations (Hughs & Baker, 1990). If a child chooses not to offer the interviewer explanations, the result could seriously hinder the research results. This is so because a young child's vocabulary and articulation skills may entail several explanation attempts in order to fully elucidate their thoughts and feelings (Hughs & Baker, 1990). In these ways, additional explanations are crucial to this research as it will be relatively simple to observe routines and certain periods of a child's emotional work but it is the child's perception of these items that is pivotal. Thus, a positive rapport between the interviewer and children likely motivate the children to converse and communicate more freely (Helfer & Kempe, 1997; Hughs & Baker, 1990; Rich, 1968).

Next, questions concerning children's favorite foods and toys were asked. These questions continued the rapport-building process as well as establishing common ground with the children (Rich, 1968). This inquiry was followed by questions addressing the first research question regarding definitions and meanings of childcare.

Two questions were again used to address this research area. The first had to do with trying to ascertain exactly what children call "childcare." This question, of course, was a precursor to the second question of why a child comes to childcare. The answers to these questions, used together, enabled the researcher to obtain a sense of how children defined and understood childcare.

Two questions were used to address the emotional work children engaged in while in childcare. The questions were purposely separated from each other by several easier questions so that young children would not get caught up or stuck in this area (Stahl, 1999). One question used as a separation technique was another more basic

question regarding favorite things to do while at childcare. Although this question was directly relevant to childcare, its primary use was to give children a break from the more difficult questions and also to re-establish rapport for the remainder of the interview.

Several questions were posited so that children could respond to the routines they engaged in but also what those routines may have meant to them. For example, it may have been that children used routines as part of the transitional work they performed. If so, the routines likely incorporated a sense of control during a period of time when the child felt less comfortable or even vulnerable.

Finally, the last questions correspond to the idea of the "doxa" (Bourdieu, 1977) or childcare utopias referred to earlier in this chapter and fully discussed in the following chapter. Briefly, the "doxa" incorporates within us a sense of limits so that the limits appear to be the natural order (Bourdieu, 1977). Thus, exposing the "doxa" through this utopian exercise enables research subjects to rethink what a perfect childcare situation or setting might entail. The intention with these questions was that children have great and creative ideas about many aspects of their lives; but they must be asked about them. More importantly, their answers must be listened to or heard (Galinsky, 1999). Hearing their answers may provide alternative options for designing future childcare programs. These questions included role playing (Stahl, 1997; Trad, 1990) and asking what the children would like adults to know about childcare. The role-playing question began with asking children to imagine that they were caregivers and the researcher was the child. In this way, children were able to image their perceptions of an ideal childcare setting. A copy of the interview guide is attached as Appendix C.

Parent's Interview. Similar to the children's interview guides, several sources

were also used for the construction of the parent interview guides. Ellen Galinsky's (1999) book, Ask the Children, helped to further define and also focus the questions regarding routines and transitions. Galinsky's research consisted of intensive interviews of children and their parents, centering on understanding work and family life from these two perspectives. Although the research focused on mothers who work, the issue of childcare was prevalent. For example, Galinsky's documentation of childcare issues from the parent's perspective clearly indicated a great deal of conflict and guilt experienced by parents, primarily mothers, as they attempted to navigate both work and family life. Moreover, Galinsky's approach of asking both the parent's and their children's perspectives of an identical situation, such as details surrounding childcare, was an approach incorporated into this research project.

Unfortunately, Galinsky's (1999) interviews with children involved children who were over seven years old. What's more, the vast majority of respondents were teenagers. Certainly this age group makes highly desirable respondents since children who are teenagers can better understand more abstract concepts thus yielding fairly detailed data (Helfer & Kempe, 1997; Tower, 1996). Teenagers and school-aged children, however, are involved in childcare for only a small amount of time by this age, if at all. Consequently, Galinski's research lacked children's perspectives of childcare from much younger users—those who attend childcare for long periods of a day or week. Thus, the experiences of Galinsky's respondents are likely quite different than those of younger and certainly more vulnerable children. For this reason, Galinsky's research was more informative to this study in articulating a parent's perspective.

Another resource, informing the construction of the provider and parent interview guides, were the Allegan County Child Care Survey data (Joining Forces

Child Care Initiative, 1997). This survey sought data from two groups of research subjects: adults using childcare services and those providing caregiving services to children (not including parents/guardians). Several themes were predominant based on these data. For example, parents continually suggested that issues of trust were a major component of childcare. Whereas providers tended to suggest that for them issues of respect for the work they performed each day was vitally important. These patterns describing childcare were noted and are reflected in the respective interview guides.

The format of the interview guide for the parents generally followed that of the children's interview guide. The intensive interviews were completed in approximately one and a half hours and focused on the three research questions outlined previously in this chapter. The interviews were considered to be fact-finding in nature and semi-structured in format (Tower, 1996; Berg, 1995; Hughes & Baker, 1990; Rich, 1968). The question order again was constructed using an inverted funnel format—beginning with direct, close-ended questions and gradually broadening the questions themselves toward more indirect, open-ended questions (Rich, 1968). As with the child interviews, the inverted funnel format was adopted so that the respondent could answer the initial questions quite easily. This technique was used to put the respondent at ease. General information regarding the parent was known prior to the interview such as marital status and socioeconomic background (Helfer & Kempe, 1997). Each parent interview involved note-taking and audio recording which were later transcribed verbatim for analysis purposes (Berg, 1995).

The interview began with an introduction of the researcher and a brief description of the research project. As part of this preliminary process, the interviewer shared with the research subject her own parental status and disclosed that she too

deals with childcare issues daily that are likely to be similar to that which the interviewee experiences. This disclosure was utilized in order to aid in the parent's comfort level, build rapport as well as establish common ground with the parent (Tower, 1996; Berg, 1995; Reinharz, 1992; Hughes & Baker, 1990; Rich, 1968). A copy of the interview guide is attached as Appendix D.

Next, direct questions regarding number of children and those currently in childcare were asked. These questions were followed by questions regarding the amount of time and days the parent's child(ren) were in childcare. These direct questions then gave way to more open-ended questions.

The next set of questions was used to gain information regarding the respondents' evaluation of their current childcare arrangement. Of significant importance in this section were the words the parent used to describe the childcare their child(ren) now uses. This was critical because research (Joining Forces Child Care Initiative, 1997) suggests that parents choose childcare based on several key elements including the level of trust they have for the caregiver and how the parent perceives the level of emotion a caregiver has for their child. The follow-up question to the questions outlined above then focused on past childcare arrangements and why those arrangements are no longer used. This question was designed to see whether the reasons given for no longer using past arrangements consisted of a lack of qualities that are available in the arrangements currently used. In this way, the validity of the former questions can be addressed, in part, by the responses to the latter questions in this section.

Next, questions concerning childcare definition were explored. Based on the discussion centering on voice inclusion presented earlier, it was speculated that these definitions were dissimilar to extant definitions of childcare such as care for a child

while a parent/guardian is at work. Moreover, parents would likely define childcare in ways similar to those in which they described their current childcare arrangement. For example, the utilization of words that implied trust and emotion of all parties involved—the parent, the caregiver and the child(ren).

The question regarding definition was followed by questions that sought information describing childcare routines from the perspective of the parent. These questions about routine included description of delivering the child to childcare and the process of picking them up again. As part of this section, parents were also asked to describe the routine that their child(ren) are involved in while in childcare. This description was compared to the child's and provider's description of the daily routine.

Next, the emotional aspects of childcare were explored. These questions included ones concerning the parent's feeling surrounding the pickup and delivery of their child(ren) to childcare, the thoughts and emotions they experienced throughout the day while their child(ren) were at childcare as well as their feelings regarding childcare generally. Since the word "guilt" (Galinsky, 1999; Brown, 1998; Joining Forces Child Care Initiative, 1997; Roiphi, 1996; Auerbach, 1979) was often associated with parents'/guardians' recanting of childcare experiences, this emotional aspect was specifically explored during this time. The exploration of the emotional aspects of childcare naturally gave way to a discussion of relationships between the caregiver and parent as well as the caregiver and child.

Prior to launching into the final sections exploring a childcare "doxa" (Bourdieu, 1977), a general and direct question was used in order to give the research subject a break from the more difficult work they engaged in while describing the emotional aspects of childcare. This question involved the description of a parent's childcare backup system. For example, a description of the way in which a parent

secured childcare when their child is ill was solicited. Although this question is more closed-ended and direct, it was nonetheless useful because it provided insight regarding support systems that families had available. Support systems (Galinsky, 1999; Hofferth et., al, 1991) are key elements and are related to positive childcare experiences. The support question naturally led to questions regarding techniques a parent/guardian used to navigate (Galinsky, 1999) both their work and/or academic life and their family life.

The final section of the interview guide dealt with an imagination exercise that sought to illuminate the childcare "doxa" (Bourdieu, 1977). This question centered on research subject's description of a perfect childcare setting or the waving of a magic wand over childcare and describing what one sees and feels. The interview ended with questioning the parent/guardian as to whether there was anything else they would like to share concerning childcare. This final question was extremely important because it pinpointed any issues the parent/guardian felt were crucial that were not part of the interview itself. In this way, the respondent may identify another aspect of childcare that tended to be overlooked within the more traditional childcare literature.

Provider's Interview. In addition to Brown's (1998) work referred to earlier, the Allegan (Joining Forces Child Care Initiative, 1997) survey data were also used to develop the interview guide for childcare providers. An intensive interview with each childcare provider within the two research settings referred to earlier was also conducted. The interview was completed in approximately one and a half hours and focused on the research questions outlined earlier in this chapter. An interview guide is included as Appendix E.

The final interview guide description is briefer than the children's and parent's because much of the rationale for question selection has already been addressed in

those respective sections. It was assumed that rapport-building (Tower, 1996; Berg, 1995; Hughes & Baker, 1990; Rich, 1968) would be less an issue with the provider interviews than the others because the provider had been part of the participant observation. The observational component will be described in the next section. As such, the provider was familiar with researcher and with the project. Permission to use the site also assumed a "welcoming" attitude. Nonetheless, the same format was used as with the children and parent interviews. The format consisted of a inverted, funnel-style interview design (Rich, 1968) beginning with direct, closed-ended questions with a gradual broadening to more indirect, open-ended questions. The interview was fact-finding in nature and semi-structured in format (Tower, 1996; Berg, 1995; Hughs & Baker, 1990). The interview utilized note-taking and was audio-recorded. The recording was transcribed verbatim for analysis purposes (Berg, 1995).

The provider interview guide began with questions about length of time as a caregiver, number of children for whom s/he provides care and the number of hours s/he spends providing this care. These questions were followed by a discussion of why the respondent became involved in childcare. The research subject's answers to becoming a childcare worker led to the question of childcare definition.

The next set of questions described the routine process from the perspective of the childcare provider. The routines included what the provider normally does prior to the children's arrival and a description of a typical childcare day. Part of this set of questions explored likes and dislikes of caregiving as well as difficult and stressful situations involved in caregiving such as the low wages and conflicts with parents over differing value systems (Brown, 1998). The section about routines, as with the other interviews, gave way to questions regarding the emotional aspects of caregiving.

These questions began with a focus on feelings prior to the children's arrival

and also feelings after the children left at the day's end and at the end of the week. Next, the caregiver was asked about emotional attachments to the children for whom they provided care. For the family daycare provider, a question concerning the relationship between their own children and the children they care for was next explored.

As with the two other interview guides, a direct, closed-ended question was next asked in order to give the research subject a break from the more difficult emotional description work in which they were earlier engaged. This question dealt with the support system a provider might utilize should the provider her/himself become ill or go on vacation for example. The information gained from this question reflected the extent to which caregivers were able to release themselves from caregiving situations when it was necessary to do so. Oftentimes, lack of provider backup systems involved a huge amount of stress, guilt and tension for caregivers (Brown, 1998). A natural segue from this question was one describing how people uninvolved in caregiving viewed the childcare profession. Oftentimes, the provision of childcare is not regarded as "real" work or a "real" job (Brown, 1998). Research suggests that providers experienced both anxiety and resentment (Brown, 1998; Joining Forces Child Care Initiative, 1997) when their work was regarded as peripheral and unimportant.

Finally, the interview guides ended with questions regarding a childcare utopia or "doxa" (Bourdieu, 1977). As with the other two guides, this question sought a description of childcare without limits and childcare offerings providers considered to be perfect. Part of this question involved asking a provider what s/he would change about childcare generally and also about the care s/he offered. The last question asked the research subject to comment on any other aspect of childcare she deemed

important. The answers added to an expanding definition of childcare.

Interview Guide Critique. In order to address issues of validity, all three initial interview guides were critiqued by several individuals involved in childcare. Two childcare providers, Sheila Stahl (1999), a family daycare provider and DeAnna Young (1999), a former family daycare provider and a current daycare center caregiver evaluated each of the three interview guides. Both caregivers have been involved in childcare for a substantial length of time and coordinate as well as direct the Niles, Michigan chapter of the Southwestern Michigan Daycare Association. Moreover, each caregiver has had considerable experience with toddlers and preschoolers. Their expertise was particularly crucial to the research pertaining to children. Their comments and suggestions were, in part, incorporated into the final interview guides.

A representative from Child Care Resources, (Carambula, 1999) a collaborative agency for this research project, also reviewed the interview guides. Child Care Resources has been involved in childcare for over 20 years both training and recruiting child care providers and assisting families in their search for childcare. They serve over 6,000 families and 3,000 providers annually in their eight county region. Comments regarding the guides were, in part, reflected in the final set of interview guides.

The interviews of children, parents and providers were semi-structured in design (Berg, 1995; Hughes & Baker, 1990). Each guide represented the operationalization of all three research questions while also serving the purpose of directing the content of the study. Because the interview formats were interactive in nature (Reinhartz, 1997), it was feasible that some information collected was not part of the original interview guides. This is especially true of follow-up probes for questions where the interviewer could not have anticipated beforehand every

respondents' answers to which an elaboration was required (Berg,1995). Thus, the guides were designed to act only as a directive tool and should not be regarded as fully inclusive of all information collected.

Participant Observation

Participant observation is a research tool used in order to view a social environment from the perspective of those involved. The goal is not only to see the research setting in totality but also to gain an understanding of how those individuals involved interpret their environment (Schutt, 1996).

In this research, participant observation was performed at two childcare settings. The sites for this project were secured through Child Care Resources (CCR) (Carambula, 1999) as a collaborative effort between CCR and the researcher. Two major styles of childcare arrangements include daycare centers and family daycare—family daycare is daycare performed in the home of a childcare provider whereas daycare center care occurs in a neutral setting and oftentimes involves more children than in family daycare (McNeil, 1999; Hofferth, et. al, 1991; Willer et., al, 1991; Hayes et. al, 1990; Auerbach, 1979). Thus, each major childcare style, family daycare and daycare center care, were selected as research sites.[6]

Two additional criteria were also employed at this point in research site selection. Because children over the age of six years spend a large portion of their day in school rather than in childcare, sites were sought where at least some if not most of the children who attended were of preschool age—two-to-six years. It was reasoned that children not in school would be the group most involved in childcare and could be

[6] Note that these styles do not include parental and relative care which are clearly very different childcare arrangements. Generally, childcare falls within the following categories: parental care, care by a relative of the family, care by a caregiver (non relative) in the child's home, organized activities such as sports or arts classes, daycare center care and family day care (McNeil, 1998).

more reflexive in their articulations of daily childcare experiences than very young children. Children under two years, however, are generally less able to verbalize their experiences, thus, making them less desirable subjects for the purposes of this research (Stahl, 1999; Young, 1999; Helfer & Kempe, 1997; Trad, 1990). In addition to the age criterion, efforts were also made to select sites where preschool children attended at least half-time because those children attending only occasionally were also generally less intimately involved in childcare. In other words, childcare experiences are quite different and more peripheral when one attends for only a small amount of time (Hofferth et. al, 1991; Hayes et. al, 1990; Joffe, 1977).

Each of these two settings was observed three different times for at least two hours each time. Observation occurred as follows: one, the beginning of the childcare day as children arrived; two, a time identified as a "slow or quiet" time; and three, the end of the day as parents/guardians arrived to collect their child(ren). Quiet time and arrival and leaving periods allowed for the observation of routines such as the goodbye routine as well as the transitional and emotional work that children and adults are involved in at these time periods (Galinsky, 1999; Brown, 1998; Hochschild, 1997; Child Care Resources, 1989). Thus, these three time periods provided an adequate sampling of daily life based on the research questions and included observation of children, providers and parents/guardians.

In addition to participant observation, the children in the two observational settings were asked to respond to questions focusing on childcare definitions, typical childcare days and "wish lists" pertaining to childcare. This information was collected in this more informal or unstructured manner than the parent and provider interviews discussed earlier. This informal data collection style was used because it seemed likely that young children, many of whom were two-to-five years old, would not respond to

such a formal interviewing format (Stahl, 1999; Young, 1999). Thus, the interview information was solicited from the children throughout the entire observational periods. During the observational periods, children were given an opportunity to articulate their viewpoints of childcare. The childcare environments as well as all facets of interaction between children, providers and parents/guardians were observed and noted. This process will be explained in detail in Chapter IV.

Secondary Data

Secondary survey data were also used as part of this research project. In 1997, a large-scale childcare survey was undertaken in Allegan County, Michigan (Joining Forces Child Care Initiative, 1997). Both childcare providers and parents/guardians using childcare were sampled for a total of over 1,400 survey respondents. A major portion of the survey consisted of open-ended responses from providers and parents. For example, one question directed to childcare providers asked that providers voice concerns regarding childcare issues that a task force could address. Another example from the parent survey asked parents what they most appreciated and what they would most like to change about their current childcare arrangement. Over 1,300 open-ended responses existed in their original form which were used to address the research areas referred to earlier. These responses existed in a statistical spreadsheet form and were used to supplement the primary data collected and are described in the subsequent sections. Additionally, the survey data were also used to help assist in the development of interview guides. Approval for the use of these data was obtained prior to beginning this research.

Data Analysis

This childcare case study was designed to examine the definitions and meanings of childcare from the perspective of those voices previously unheard and thus rendered invisible. Data were collected utilizing the methods of participant observation, intensive interviewing and the examination of secondary, open-ended survey data. The roles of childcare provider, the child in care, and the parent utilizing care were explored oftentimes using the research subjects' own words so that their experiences could be articulated and evaluated on their own terms. These three groups did, in essence, articulate a redefinition of childcare along the dimensions of their expectations, obligations and daily actions. The research was also designed to "fill in the gaps" and expand on past quantitative research using both role and standpoint theory as well as other theoretical postulations. However, because childcare was addressed from the standpoint of "others," it is feasible that the project and subsequent analysis will generate new, grounded theory.

The data used in this research project were analyzed by identifying patterns and common themes based on the standpoint of children, parents and child care providers (Berg, 1995; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Babbie, 1992). Special attention was given to the ways interviewees phrased concepts, experiences, et cetera. Because the emotional aspects were considered an important component of childcare, the emotional language used was also of special interest. Body language during interviews and during observational periods also became a significant area of analysis as were the relationships on which the interviewees focused. For example, one evident pattern revealed in the secondary data was that parents, in part, defined childcare as centering on issues of trust—that is, trust between the caregiver and the parent (Joining Forces Child Care Initiative, 1997). In contrast to this perspective, childcare providers

incorporate feelings of being unappreciated both emotionally and financially into their formulations of childcare (Southwestern Michigan Day Care Association, 1999). Children, on the other hand, had a very different interpretation of childcare. One child I know mentioned that for him childcare was about trying to feel close to his parents (emotionally) when he was not actually with them (physically). All three examples, however, incorporated the emotional aspects of childcare as well as interactional aspects among these three groups. Because this research was inductive in design, no actual predictions other than identifying patterns and dissimilarities were made prior to the research (Berg, 1995; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Babbie, 1992; Lofland & Lofland, 1984). Thus, analytical techniques for this research were interactive and, in part, data driven.

Analysis began with constructing field notes of all the data identified earlier as part of this project (Berg, 1995; Babbie, 1992; Lofland & Lofland, 1984). The secondary survey data already existed in open-ended, verbatim form. Thus, these responses were categorized by question initially and printed for analysis purposes. Field notes from the participant observation and the interviews were word-processed and printed for analysis. And, finally the audio-recordings were also transcribed verbatim and categorized by question. These were pre-analysis procedures.

Based on a careful reading of all the data, the data were sorted by the identification of "naturally occurring classes of things, persons..." (Berg, 1995, p. 60) and other classifications that were at first evident. This sorting process led to the development of index sheets containing the codes for each classification and subsequent sub classifications of data (Berg,1995; Lofland & Lofland, 1984). Both latent and manifest content were identified and coded including words, relationships, body language, themes and concepts stemming from the research subjects (Berg,

1995). These classification schemes led to the eventual process of pattern examination and the building of sociological constructs. The constructs, when woven together and based on the perspectives of children, parents and providers, produced a childcare standpoint based on experiential knowledge.

This research centers on the exploration of childcare based on childcare definitions and meanings. The following chapter continues the examination of childcare by focusing on the traditional constructions of mothering. This examination is important because popular conceptions of "motherhood" throughout history direct the meanings and definitions we attach to childcare. Historical ideologies of motherhood will be addressed in the following chapter, however, the theoretical explanations of how motherhood becomes a natural extension and a binary referent to "woman" will next be examined.

CHAPTER III

CHILDCARE HISTORY

The Construction of Mothering Roles

Role theory provides a useful way of exploring and rethinking traditional definitions of childcare. Role theory, described by Erving Goffman (1961), argues that the "others" relevant to childcare are part of the childcare role set. A role set includes all relevant performers to a particular activity. Either the loss or gain of a role within a role set will likely lead to social change as actors move in and out of role sets. In addition to role others as part of the role set, role actors also become involved in and attached to roles (Goffman, 1963). That is, actors become intensely committed to a role by vesting in it through a process of self-identification. Neither the childcare role set nor the attachment of those roles have been explored in childcare literature.

Whereas mothering usually consists of an emotional attachment to her children, the childcare role set includes roles that are not officially defined in emotional terms. Nonetheless, the childcare role set involves roles that can be aptly described as emotionally lived and mediated through the experiences of the role set actors. Under the rubric of this role set, parents/guardians utilizing childcare, children within the childcare setting, providers of childcare services as well as childcare experts are all part of the normative role set. Not all the actors, however, are involved in the traditional formulation, description and definitions of childcare. Consequently, extant definitions can only be partial. They are incomplete at best and inaccurate at worst (Harding, 1987).

The very addition to or deletion of a role "other" within a role set leads to change in how childcare is defined. Thus, the addition of marginalized voices within the childcare role set significantly impacts how we think about childcare. The ways in which we think about childcare affect the ways we choose to respond to childcare situations such as various childcare programs and policies. The following section presents the ways in which childcare has traditionally been characterized in motherhood terms. First, an evaluation of the mothering role as "natural" will be undertaken. Second, the male model of work will be examined. Third, the tensions between motherhood and provider roles will be revealed in a historical analysis of childcare definitions.

The Naturalness of Mothering Roles

The roles attached to mothering include providing emotional and physical care for children. Thus, one cannot define the daily caring of children (childcare) without addressing how the mothering role is developed and sustained. Nancy Chodorow addresses gender acquisition as it relates to the care of children in her work, The Reproduction of Mothering (1978). She accomplishes this by critiquing Sigmund Freud's work on the pre-Oedipal phase of child development (Weedon, 1997). Psychoanalysis, however, doesn't account for the reproduction of caregiving or mothering but rather its focus is on child development, self-socialization and internalization (Chodorow, 1997). Chodorow's (1997) work though does converge on the relationship between a child and the child's caregiver—who is usually the mother. Thus, Chodorow's work is concerned with the development of maternal reproduction (Weedon, 1997) arguing that "women mother daughters who, when they become women, mother" (Chodorow, 1997, pg. 196).

Chodorow begins her work with the assumption that women are the universal caregivers (Weedon, 1997; Chodorow, 1997). As such, children grow up with the sense that women provide emotional and physical care to them. Girls are not required to sever their relationships with their initial caregivers as boys are (Bartky, 1990). Consequently, girls initially role identify with their mothers in this first identity period (Nicholson, 1997). Girls grow up with this sense of "naturalness" of motherhood as they identify with their mothers (Weedon, 1997). Mothering becomes not only part of a girl's identity but also becomes part of her destiny.

As part of a girl's destiny, the girl grows up with a generalized expectation emanating from both herself and from others, that she too will provide care or mother. Linda Nicholson (1997) suggests that the young girl turned mother introduces a second identity period. As a mother mothers her child, she is engaging in both her own childhood experiences of mothering while simultaneously engaging in the practice of mothering. Chodorow (1997) defines this situation as double identity (Weedon, 1997). Double identity in practice creates an environment whereby the adult woman identifies both as a mother and as a female child who received mothering. Double identity is a strong, internalized cultural expectation that Chodorow (1997) suggests is precisely why mothering is so successfully reproduced generation after generation (Weedon, 1997).

Girls, from infancy, first identify as caregivers based on their relationship with their mothers which triggers layers of messages that they exist in relation to others. Whereas the second identity process involves identifying as a mother, who is defined by that provision of care. Thus, the double identity process produces a linear relationship between mother, the reproduction of mothering and the domestic sphere as natural (Weedon, 1997). Women come to define and experience themselves in

relation to others (Weedon, 1997; Nicholson, 1997). That is, women exist in relation to children and to men exactly because they are caregivers. This micro act of individual double identity reproduces the macro familial structure which is so prevalent and pervasive today (Chodorow, 1997).

The family as an institution incorporates a sexual division of labor based on a sense of naturalness. The naturalness of mothering and the domestic sphere first contributes to and reinforces, then reifies and finally successfully reproduces the sexual division of labor. It is this very location of motherhood positions, as women in the subject position of mother, that creates the social construction of the sexual division of labor (Weedon, 1997). Thus, women are participants in their own gender construction and acquisition. The very utterance of "woman" is relational in that it elicits a thought/image of woman as caregiver. Moreover, the word "woman" is imbued with particular meanings while it also excludes other meanings such as employee (Brush, 1999). In sum, Chodorow (1997) is arguing that the concept of mothering is constructed and reproduced based on a "naturalness" of that very subject position.

In addition to Chodorow's (1997) argument of naturalness, Pierre Bourdieu (1977) presents a compelling case of how this process unfolds. Bourdieu suggests that a sense of limits originating from "naturalness" is recognized as reality. The sense of limits is so strong that one cannot see beyond them. Individuals in the world believe they are seeing society in totality when in essence they are seeing a narrowed and limited version of society. In this way, society is being misrepresented with the limits actually representing partial truths. The results are that the limits are internalized as the "natural order." The natural order operates as an unquestioning belief because it incorporates the element of naturalness into it. Bourdieu argues that this concept described above is organized through classification schemes he terms the "doxa." The

doxa embodies in each of us a sense of limits that are attached to society via the classification schemes. Thus, the powerful construction of "motherhood" is so effective precisely because it constructs mothering as natural—as biologically ordained. It is this sense of limits and boundaries to which Chodorow (1997) refers when she articulates her vision of double identity. The reproduction of mothering is strongly secured within our culture, within the institution of family and certainly within women themselves. The very fact that women do universally provide the overwhelming majority of childcare is a clear demonstration of this internal and external expectation.

Because childcare is part of the role/expectation attached to mothering, childcare becomes part of the doxic mode Bourdieu (1977) describes. The doxic mode restricts the constructions of childcare options based on motherhood roles. The restriction oftentimes inhibits thinking about community contributions for providing care for children who reside there for example. One way to think about childcare is through an examination of the connections between childcare and work.

Childcare and the Male Model of Work

Motherhood as a conception prefigures childcare discourse because childcare is often referred to and involves "surrogate mothering." Thus, the issue of care for children is intimately connected to and cannot be separated from motherhood (Roiphe, 1996). Therefore, issues of motherhood must be examined in tandem with childcare. Conversely, today, motherhood and work are also inseparable. Mothers often find, however, that embracing the monolithic, patriarchal version of work as a separate sphere may be dissonant with their role as mother (Staggenborg, 1998; Peters, 1997).

The ways in which roles are generally attached to work are particularly

significant to this discussion. Role embracement refers to the complete disappearance of a role into a situated activity—in this case, the activity is work (Goffman, 1961). The male model of work incorporates the ideology of disembodied workers (Acker, 1990). Work functions from a male standpoint that is based on rationality and impersonality. The work concept also assumes and requires that outside responsibilities not relevant to work, like childcare, are undertaken by "others" (Staggenborg, 1998; Peters, 1997)). Traditionally, the others are women (Acker, 1990). Thus, ideal types of workers are those that are primarily focused on and fully engaged in their work role. Personal responsibilities outside of work exist only in a peripheral and secondary manner for ideal types of workers.

It is the activity of work that produces the role of employee. Consequently, the role of employee replaces that of mother when working mothers enter the workplace. Erving Goffman (1961) explains that individuals can take on several roles simultaneously but they must hold a single role central while holding the others at abeyance (Goffman, 1961). The problem for mothers is that both roles, that as mother and that as employee, may both require the central position. This in turn may cause role strain or confusion (Galinski, 1999) as mothers seek to choose between two prominent master statuses. For example, statements from mothers such as "...I [feel as though I] am drowning in work..." (Galinsky, 1999, p. 108) and "I...[do not know] what my role is" (Galinksy, 1999; p. 101) seem to support the uneasy role transition working mothers may perform.

It's feasible during the role struggle that mothers engage in a practice Goffman (1961) refers to as "role distance." Role distance occurs when an individual feels they must erect a barrier between themselves and a particular role. Oftentimes, Goffman suggests, role distance occurs when an activity is deemed unimportant or

unappreciated by others. To be a successful employee, many women may feel that they need to or are expected to distance from their mothering role while occupying the employee role (Galinsky, 1999). The problematic in this case is that Goffman (1961) assumes that one engages in role distance voluntarily. Economic survival may very well force women into distancing from their mother role in order to be productive in the public work sphere.

A traditional work ethic juxtaposed with societal expectations for mothering may also contribute to forced versus voluntary role distancing for mothers in the workplace. For example, role distance occurs when a mother sees her child looking flushed as with a fever, and she disregards what she sees without taking a temperature because she has no alternative but to go to work. The uneasy stirring she feels all day long, however, may very well compete for the central role position. Her mind may wander during a meeting because something doesn't feel right in her world as work and mother roles transverse. Structural interference (Galinsky, 1999) ensues for this mother as work and familial expectations cannot be interfaced, thereby making it nearly impossible to meet either demand adequately or completely. Moreover, Galinsky (1999) suggests that structural interference produces a negative psychological impact, i.e., stress and depression, which she defines as "spillover." Spillover can be construed as a role struggle for women in the form of competing master statuses.

When mothering is situated as a central and natural role, it creates a struggle over central subject positions for working women (Weedon, 1997). When work is based on a male model of work, this struggle intensifies. Women in general and men who participate in childrearing responsibilities don't readily fit the male model of work. With its single focus on impersonality, including caregiving for children that is

performed by "others," the male model of work becomes unnatural for these individuals because they are the "others."

Childcare responsibilities, however, are traditionally part of women's "natural" work. Women are usually the "others" who care for these outside responsibilities. For example, parents who take sick days when their children are sick or bring children to work when school is cancelled because of snow, and the documented prevalence of the 3:00 p.m. phone calls as children arrive home from school (Hochschild, 1997) are clear indications that the male model of work doesn't fit for these individuals. For them, many of whom are women, paid work is "unnatural" but necessary.[7] The central role position of mother, however, is grounded in a sense of "naturalness" (Weedon, 1997). The naturalness defies and denies change. It is this very competition and conflict of roles or subject positions that has not found its way into the childcare discourse. This daily struggle between central subject positions is largely invisible in our culture and in childcare research.

Galinsky (1999) adds to this discourse by postulating her theoretical assumptions of role work/struggle in which parents engage within her research, The Six Stages of Parenthood. This work presents parenthood as oftentimes enmeshed in a struggle—or a gulf between our expectations and our daily lived reality (Galinsky, 1999). For example, one mother explains this situation as "...[a] conflict between having this idealized vision of what a great job is and having this idealized vision of what being a great parent is. And the higher the bar gets raised on either of those fronts, the more difficult it is to meet those expectations" (Galinsky, 1999, p. 201). Brown (1998) goes on to explain that women caught between expectations of

[7] It is important to note that Chodorow's (1978) work tends to describe motherhood primarily from a white, middle class perspective that doesn't necessarily include women across cultures, ethnicity/races or classes.

motherhood and workforce participation essentially combine need and guilt making for a potent and potentially explosive mixture (p. 135).

Many times, parents stay "stuck" between extant expectations and their reality (Galinsky, 1999). In order to become "unstuck," parents must either change expectation or change reality. This reconciliation process is usually precipitated by feelings of guilt emanating from parents. Galinsky (1999) suggests that the guilt is a positive sign informing a parent that reconciliation work is required. Thus, the guilt is a certain sign that change must occur. Guilt stemming from childcare must be reconciled by either not engaging in childcare—an unrealistic suggestion for most parents—or by changing one's expectations of parenthood (motherhood) (Peters, 1997). That is, the framing of childcare as negative and defined as a failure of one's maternal role needs alteration. The dichotomy between good mother/bad mother formulations is impractical. Consequently, a positive image of motherhood regardless of whether the parent uses childcare is necessary and must replace traditional concepts of motherhood.

Many examples of Goffman's (1961), Chodorow's (1997) and Bourdieu's (1977) concepts will be illustrated in the following section which explores childcare definitions and meanings in historical context. Thus, in order to imagine a utopian childcare future based on experiential knowledge, first, the past needs to be examined (Steinfels, 1973).

History of Childcare Meanings

Philanthropic Pursuits

In her book, A Mother's Job: A History of Day Care 1890-1960, Elizabeth Rose (1999) suggests that daycare definitions have been transformed since the

establishment of the first formal day nurseries of the middle 1800s. The original definitions were connected to those areas that constituted appropriate female philanthropy. Daycare involvement was an area in which women of elite status could be involved as leaders and organizers. This connection to philanthropy formed a relationship to daycare as a charitable intervention (Rose, 1999; Roby, 1973; Steinfels, 1973). Finally, Rose (1999) as well as others, (Brown, 1998; Auerbach, 1979; U.S. Women's Bureau, 1976; Roby, 1973; Chafe, 1972), suggest that daycare was transformed most significantly during World War II as an entitlement or a right. The only way daycare was framed as a right during this era was if it were also tied to and/or legitimized as educational as well as custodial. It is crucial to be aware that the issue of daycare (this proposal will use daycare and childcare as synonymous and interchangeable[8]) is not static and is currently under transformation especially due to the 1996 abolition of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) (Blank, 1997).

The emergence of formal daycare was developed because upper class women observed children on the streets during the daytime playing and caring for younger children. In the mid and latter half of the nineteenth century, it was commonplace that children in the streets of cities and neighborhoods could be observed, "peddling fruit, selling newspapers...rocking small babies...and playing kick-the-can" (Rose, 1999, p.13). Many times, children were on the streets playing without adults because mothers were working and no formal arena for childcare was available. The children, these elite women felt, were being subjected to a worldly education of public life for which they were not fit to be observing or participating. Based on traditional meanings of how and where children ought to be reared, some upper class women felt that children out on the streets ought to instead be supervised, nourished and also

[8] The term "day nursery" was replaced with "day care" and then with "child care" as emphasis was given to custodial care instead of a specific time period, i.e., "day" (Klein, 1992)

trained (Rose, 1999; Roby, 1973)—trained based on an elite value system.

One such value that middle and upper classes held was that child rearing occurred in the private sphere not in the very public and busy streets. The existence of children in the streets represented a break from this ideology. In sociological terms, this behavior shifted backstage behavior, that which is done behind closed doors, into frontstage behavior that which is done in the public arena (Goffman, 1959). Not only was the belief that children belonged in the home, separate from the rest of the outside world (Rose, 1999), but this very separation served the dual purpose of making poor and needy children invisible. This invisibility certainly made the task of ignoring structural aspects of poverty more palatable.

Thus, upper class women, serving as philanthropists, defined children on the streets as a social problem even though in many cases mothers and neighbors[9] may have been supervising children's activities from a window while she worked inside. Moreover, these elite women never entertained the idea that children playing while older children watched over them was an example of older children contributing to family or community (Rose, 1999). In essence, children in public places, the streets in this case, were defined as problematic by a group having the power to do so[10]. Children, not under "direct" supervision of their mothers was socially constructed as problematic but this construction was assumed to be intrinsically real. Avenues to addressing the issue were formulated without the aid or input of families who were deemed as problems. "...The institutions that they created may not have been exactly

[9] Patricia Hill Collins (Peters, 1999) uses the term "other mothers" when she refers to women who are neighbors and family friends women who take some supervisory responsibility for children in the community.

[10] See Stephen Lukes' (1974) discussion focusing on the three dimensions of power. The first dimension of power best applies in this case. Briefly, power is the ability to enforce one's will over another. Those individuals whose voices are not heard are located outside the power structure. The position of outside produces the tacit assumption that there is not a concern or problem because the "other" voices are not heard. Consequently, a singular public is purported to exist that accurately and fully represents the public sphere.

what the working mothers would have wanted, had they been asked" (Rose, 1999, p. 17).

The institutions that elite (and sometimes middle-class) women created to address "neglected" children were in the form of day nurseries which were modeled after French *creches* (Rose, 1999; Brown, 1998; Klein, 1992; Sidel, 1986; U.S. Women's Bureau, 1976; Roby, 1973; Steinfels, 1973; Beer, 1938). *Creches* resembled orphanages where children were cared for by a matron usually within a large rented house (Beer, 1938; Rose, 1999). Surprisingly, though the elite women or female philanthropists usually did not actually directly provide care for the children in day nurseries, they often referred to themselves as "foster mothers." Not only did this formulation reinforce the orphanage-like environment within which children may find themselves (Rose,1999; Brown, 1998) it also tended to indicate that mothers had abandoned their "natural role." This would seem a tensional and impossible situation for women who needed to be in the workforce.

Initially, caregivers working in day nurseries had very little if any formal training in childcare but rather many times the only criteria was that they were available, willing, female and inexpensive to employ (Rose, 1999; Beer, 1938). The main task of matrons was the cleanliness of the children and of the facility (U.S. Women's Bureau, 1976). It was not unusual that children brought to day nurseries were given a washing and a change of clothes as soon as they arrived (Beer, 1938). Although matrons working in day nurseries may have been a potential source of "insider" knowledge about childcare, they were usually not part of the day nursery board or any organizing body which dealt with policy, expansion or improvements (Rose, 1999; Beer, 1938). From the very beginning, the voices of caregivers were subjugated. In sum, childcare was first defined as an acceptable philanthropic activity

for upper class women interested in providing for children in their communities.

Precisely because childcare was defined as a social problem and a philanthropic venture, early definitions were also tied to poverty and charity (Steinfels, 1973). Mothers who were part of the workforce during the 1800s in the United States were usually referred to as victims—victims of divorce, widowhood or had been deserted by a male breadwinner (Klein, 1992). Because of their victimization, women were forced to work to provide for their children. Oftentimes, the code word for this group of women was D.D.D. which represented the words but more importantly, the status of desperate, deserted and destitute (Rose, 1999, p. 30). Consequently working mothers were defined as those who had needs, not so much for themselves but for their children. Thus, working mothers were defined as needy rather than as women who were providers or members of the workforce. In fact, oftentimes, women were made to justify their involvement in the workplace before their child(ren) were allowed to participate in a day nursery (Rose, 1999; Gordon, 1994; Roby, 1973). In some cases, mothers were forbidden to use day nursery services if the matron or board of directors felt that they were not working out of economic necessity but instead were simply attempting to improve their "lot" in life or had set too high standards of what constituted legitimate needs.

Even though childcare was first defined as an appropriate female philanthropic venture and constructed as a social problem, the fact that it was framed as a social problem carried with it certain benefits. The outcome of this construction was that it began the process of building a discourse around the issue of childcare. That is, even though people were discussing childcare oftentimes in what would seem to be negative terms, at least they were talking about it.

Mothers' Pensions

By the 1920s, the Progressive Era ushered in the rise of social workers whose main ward was the appropriate dispensing of community/charitable services. Against this historical backdrop, the power of philanthropists to define childcare gave way to social reformers and social workers (Rose, 1999; Gordon, 1994; Roby, 1973; Steinfels, 1973; Beer, 1938). Social reformers engaged in claims making centering on the government's financial responsibility for D.D.D. mothers. This very act of claims making, narrowed the definition of childcare as it created a distinct division between a mother's role as child-rearer and a mother's role as provider. The rationale for this split by some social reformers was that women in the workplace were faced with the irreconcilable roles of worker and mother (Chafe, 1972). Social reformers referred to this situation as a "double burden" and felt that it was a "no-win" situation (Gordon, 1994). Jane Addams was one of the social reformers who had the foresight to realize the ensuing role strain that would surely result from this double burden (Rose, 1999). The former definition was adopted by social workers and social reformers as they sought pensions for mothers so that they need not participate in the workplace. The latter definition of provider was considered inappropriate and dissonant with a mother's natural role as caregiver.

Mothers' Pensions were first organized by individual states and then incorporated into the federal governmental structure (under the name of Aid to Families with Dependent Children) in 1935 in order to provide financially for mothers who were D.D.D. The pensions prescribed to the ideology that "[a mother's] true position is determined not by her poverty but by her duty..." (Rose, 1999, p. 74). This Victorian ideology, often referred to as the "feminine mystique," was rooted in functional sociology (Steinfels, 1973). In essence, the feminine mystique meant that

unquestionably, a woman's place was in the home. This meaning preceded that which was presented in Betty Friedan's book, The Feminine Mystique (1963).

Based on the feminine mystique, day nurseries began to lose their legitimacy to exist and social workers, who were employed by various government agencies, began to argue that children are best cared for in the home (Roby, 1973). The social reformers/workers were known as maternalists because they felt that mother's duty, first and foremost, was that of child rearing (Gordon, 1994; Chafe, 1972). It was the voice of social reformers in theory and social workers in practice that spoke for mothers who were in need of day nursery services. Before mothers' pension funds could be fully, or even partially implemented, however, the depression quickly altered the social climate (Roby, 1973). The advent of the depression together with a new and competing model of daycare again impacted and transformed the definition and the subsequent meanings of childcare. The significance of mothers' pensions was that financial aid to mothers rather than public policy supporting public daycare was advocated. This very decision had a long-term impact on daycare policy (Rose, 1999).

Childcare and Education

The emergence of nursery school ushered in a different understanding of how children were cared for outside the home. Nursery school became an attractive alternative to day nurseries as education became the focus (Rose, 1999; Brown, 1998; U.S. Women's Bureau, 1976; Roby, 1973; Steinfels, 1973). This very difference changed the atmosphere of daycare because daycare was not universally seen as a "necessary evil" but instead was sometimes deemed as a desirable and even beneficial component of child development. Not only was daycare framed in a positive way in some cases, but the educational focus made the nursery school services attractive to

middle and upper class families. The kindergarten movement in the United States was rooted in this nursery school development at the turn of the century. This educational element began a shift in daycare definitions from charitable services for the needy to educational services necessary for all children. When applying for nursery school services, mothers rarely explained their need as financial (needing to work) but quickly learned that the appropriate answer was to provide an atmosphere whereby their child could take advantage of a learning environment (Rose, 1999). Since this time, many efforts to connect childcare and education via federal policy have been stymied (Auerbach, 1979).

Another important shift in this historical epoch was that now child development experts were also part of the group who defined childcare services. Psychologists, doctors, educators and other groups laid claim to childcare as legitimate aspects of their professions (Rose, 1999). This pedagogical development posited mothers as ignorant and not capable of child rearing. Behaviorist John Watson arrogantly dedicated his first book to "the first mother who brings up a happy child" (Rose, 1999, p. 105). A significant aspect of this shift, however, was the introduction into the dominant childcare discourse the ideology that childcare was not only a private responsibility but also a public one.

Childcare and the Depression

The sociohistorical milieu of childcare was again in flux during the early 1930s. Contrary to what one might expect, daycare use increased during the depression era (Roby, 1973). Unemployed men and working women were the norm not the exception as it had been in the past. Precisely because women were paid less for their labor and their labor was less stable, women's jobs tended to be easier to secure even

though they were often obtained on an irregular and sporadic basis (Rose, 1999). Generally, this very change caused great anxiety and resentment about women in the workforce at a time when men were unable to find employment. Oftentimes, women were shamed for engaging in paid labor and many employers prevented women from paid work if they were married. Nonetheless, the hostility directed toward women in the workforce did not decrease women's employment participation. Many times, the jobs women were performing were jobs that men did not want, however, their work did enable families to survive during this difficult economic period (Joffe, 1977). Because women's labor participation was increasing, daycare availability also expanded. Not only did daycare opportunities increase, many of the restrictions and qualifications in the past gave way to a more relaxed daycare entry process (Rose, 1999; Roby, 1973). For example, women were not evaluated in such strict terms as to why they required daycare services. This depression crisis also broadened definitions of daycare and its subsequent general acceptability because the depression affected all classes of people. In other words, daycare was seen as necessary for all classes of families, not just those in the lowest classes. In sum, the depression was the beginning of a continuing process of daycare transformation in definition and meaning. A crisis even more looming than the depression, however, continued this transformation.

Childcare and World War II

Definitions and perceptions surrounding childcare were impacted most significantly during WWII. Whereas nursery schools defined childcare as a "tool" (Rose, 1999) mothers might use to educate their children, the WWII era developed another definition. In the past, childcare and rearing were seen as a mother's civic duty to the community to provide and mold good citizens. During the war, however,

mother's civic duty was imbued with patriotic ideals (Staggenborg, 1998; Auerbach, 1979; Joffe, 1977; Roby, 1973) and those preferring to remain stay-at-home moms were referred to as "slackers" (Roby, 1973). With men serving in the military, women were left to produce the country's goods including military goods. Thus, images of women like the now famous Rosie the Riveter, were highly regarded. War was also waged on American soil as the continuing debate over mother's role ensued with statements like the following being commonplace ..."[A] mother's duty is to her home and children...[T]his duty is one she cannot lay aside, no matter what the emergency" (Chafe, 1972, p. 164). Nonetheless, women, including mothers, were defined as laborers as their master statuses during this time (U.S. Women's Bureau, 1976).

Because women were desperately needed in the workforce, daycare opportunities were vastly expanded and often publicly subsidized (Brown, 1998; Auerbach, 1979; U.S. Women's Bureau, 1976; Chafe, 1972). In fact, many agencies such as the Women's Advisory Committee regarded childcare as their most important issue during that time (Steinfels, 1973; Chafe, 1972). This attention and expansion, however, never fully addressed the vast majority of childcare requirements of many families. One journalist estimated that out of 662 areas needing facilities, only 62 had programs that were operational (Chafe, 1972, p. 170). This may have been due, in part, to the continuing debate of America's social value system dictating mother's true role.

Although the struggle between maternalists and the government concerning women's labor roles continued, the federal government and to a lesser extent private business seeking to recruit workers now gave voice to what was women's primary role. Advertisements attempted to redefine childcare in a positive manner with ads depicting playing and happy children at "Mrs. Stoever's house" were accompanied by

a caption reading, "[M]ilk goes down in a big way for contented youngsters, and Mrs. Stoever's hands are full with this important war-job" (Rose, 1999, p. 164). Mrs. Stoever is a foster mother whose work caring for children enable the children's mothers to work outside the home, presumably producing items necessary for the war effort.

The war represented for the United States a time of "unsettledness." Ann Swidler (1986) uses the terminology of "unsettled times" to describe a temporal period when there is a break between what we believe and what we see. In other words, no correspondence exists between what we define as our objective world and how we interpret that world subjectively. The feminine mystique juxtaposed to women in the workforce was an example of this disjunction between objective (women in the workforce) and the subjective (the feminine mystique). These discursive thinking spaces (Harding, 1998) or unsettled times really presented the country with possibilities in the childcare arena. Although mothers had in the past accepted the motherhood role unquestioningly, reformulations of mothers as labor force participants clearly demonstrated that mother's role was not biologically ordained as the dominant narrative had previously posited. The argument advocating women's use of daycare while they worked as a patriotic contribution lost its power when the war ended. Thus, new arguments needed to be formulated that again redefined childcare.

Postwar Definitions of Childcare

The issue of childcare embarked upon an era of politicized debate in late 1940s (Bradley, 1996; Auerbach, 1979; Roby, 1973; Steinfels, 1973) as women were claiming the right to articulate their roles in society (Rose, 1999; Roby, 1973). The war had ended and it was assumed that, with everything returning to normalcy, women

would again tend to house and children as their civic duty and responsibility (Roby, 1973). Some women, however, were reticent about leaving the public domain. In fact, new definitions of childcare were often reformulated as rights—rights to available and adequate daycare (Rose, 1999). One public demonstration in Philadelphia, involving a handful of mothers attempting to assert their politicized identities, stated that "[W]e want the centers to stay open permanently and eventually became [sic] a part of the school systems" (Rose, 1999, p. 183)...and "day care should become a permanent right of American women" (Rose,1999, p 189). What transpired instead of the sustaining of childcare centers was that these women, who only several months earlier had been defined as "patriotic," were instead labeled as "communists" (Auberbach, 1979; Roby, 1973; Chafe,1972). Moreover, when mothers did use childcare, they were described as pathological and deemed unfit (Steinfels, 1973).

More successful arguments centered on daycare as a need versus a right. The significance of this period is that mothers were beginning to protest the fact that social workers, philanthropists, etc. were defining childcare but mothers' voices were not heard. This was perhaps the first time that mothers began to articulate their childcare needs and rights as they attempted to insert their voices into childcare discourse in a very public way. Counter arguments centered on daycare's connection to increased juvenile delinquency which were subsequently unfounded and were never supported by any empirical data (Chafe, 1972). This connection, however, had the power to again reframe daycare as part of the larger issue of poverty.

During the 1950s, several child development experts arrived on the childcare scene to contribute to the continuing debate. Dr. Spock's popular child care handbook offered mothers advice on virtually every aspect of child rearing suggesting that a mother's job is clearly and primarily full-time mothering (Rose, 1999).

Prominent psychologist, John Bowlby, also added his expertise to the childcare issue (Peters, 1997; Hayes, Palmer & Zaslow, 1990).

Bowlby's main argument centered on maternal attachment theory which suggested that a child's development was related to the degree to which a child was bonded with her/his mother (Peters, 1997; Steinfels, 1973). The 1950s is oftentimes characterized as the "alarm phase" of childcare (Hayes, et al., 1990) with Bowlby's work acting as impetus to this phase. Bowlby contended that a mother must provide two essential items to an infant in order for an enduring relationship to exist between them. First, this relationship between the mother and infant provides a "secure base" so that an infant feels comfortable to explore his/her environment. Secondly, a mother must provide a "haven of safety" for return if the child becomes distressed. The secure base and the haven of safety provide the security an infant must have in order to develop normally.

Within this context, research focused on childcare as potentially causing harm to children because the child is deprived of its mother and cannot securely attach to her (Trad, 1990). The implicit assumption included the idea that a mother who was in the workplace was not available for bonding which thereby negatively impacted a child's development. This scenario was defined as maternal deprivation (Tizard, 1991). Bowlby's work has since been refuted as the original research environment in which he bases his findings was an institutional setting not a childcare setting (Galinsky, 1999; Brown, 1998; Hayes et al., 1990). In essence, daycare was defined as harmful to children (Galinsky, 1999; Roiphe, 1996; Hayes, et al., 1990). Childcare as harmful (this includes the large amount of literature on childcare quality) is still being researched today thus these definitions contribute, in part, to current extant childcare meanings (Faludi, 1991; Tiger & Fox, 1978).

Contemporary Definitions of Childcare

Although the 1960s was viewed as a progressive time in U.S. history, there was a general tendency to regard childcare as a laissez faire issue—hands off—(Auerbach, 1979) during the first half of the decade. The 1950's Bowlby influence served to frame childcare in the 1960s as "mother care" versus "other care" (Brown, 1998). This framing reestablished childcare within a good/bad dichotomy. Moreover, childcare that did exist and was subsidized during that time was regarded as welfare services although not as services for the general good of society (Roby, 1973; Steinfels, 1973).

Paradoxically, in 1965 our country experienced a strong split from the maternal deprivation ideology at a federal level with the advent of the Head Start program (Steinfels, 1973). Head Start was not instituted as a day care program *per se* but was designed as an educational tool to assist children in poverty to "catch up" with other children developmentally and cognitively. The significance was, however, that the Head Start program placed children as young as four within an institutional setting whereas in the past, maternal deprivation theories suggested this placement was harmful to children. Concomitantly, Head Start was evaluated as successful from the very origins of the program although considerable dispute surrounding these positive evaluations still persist today (Steinfels, 1973). Thus, the Head Start program dispensed with, in part, the pathological view of mothers who used childcare.

During the 1970's, the communist label again reared its head as President Nixon vetoed a significant piece of childcare legislation, the Comprehensive Child Development Bill (Klein, 1992; Auerbach, 1979; Joffe, 1977; Steinfels, 1973; Chafe, 1972). The bill, authorizing over two billion dollars for childcare services was crushed with a statement by Nixon that ... "for the Federal Government to plunge headlong

financially into supporting child care development would commit the vast moral majority of the National Government to the side of communal approaches to child rearing..." (Joffe, 1977, p. ix). Nixon's statement clearly left childcare under the auspices of the states (Auerbach, 1979). Moreover, "...the ideological stance to which Nixon committed himself remains present today..." (Klein, 1992, p. 35). That is, the bifurcated perspective of childcare, public versus private issue is still hotly debated.

Nixon's veto was a significant political action with far-reaching ramifications for childcare. The Comprehensive Child Development Bill had the potential to reformulate childcare from the custodial[11] definition we still use today toward a developmental definition incorporating extensive quality standards as well as education ones (Steinfels, 1973). Moreover, the bill would have offered childcare to all families not just those in the lowest classes. The bill would have essentially embraced childcare as a national concern with national interventions similar to those of other industrialized countries such as Sweden and Finland in addition to many other countries (Roby, 1973). That is, the bill would have institutionalized childcare as well as acted as an impetus to the restructuring of the family and the values commonly attached to family (Steinsfels, 1973). The veto, however, likely occurred because Nixon had tied the childcare legislation to a welfare reform proposal, the Family Assistance Plan, which garnered little support and never materialized. Because of that relationship, Nixon was not interested in investing large sums on money into childcare without the welfare reform component. The veto and justification Nixon attached to it, left childcare defined as custodial care and also reestablished the maternal deprivation connection

[11] The use of "custodial" in this case refers to care that is used as a bandage for families in crisis so that status quo can be maintained. The intention is that this style of care is not part of any permanent societal implement or large scale social change. Instead, it is temporary as well as reactive as opposed to proactive in nature (Steinfels, 1973).

which had just been broken several years before (Steinfels, 1973).

Summary

There is no doubt that childcare is a necessary part of most families' lives regardless if it is postulated as a public or private issue (Klein, 1992). "This dialectic demands a response in every historical period" (Klein, 1992, p. 327) but more often than not, the discourse can be found obscured in some bureaucratic setting, postponed and recast for the next generation. The steadily increasing rate of working mothers instantiates this childcare reality (Hochschild, 1997; Committee for Economic Development, 1993.). Another shift in childcare meaning is being realized today especially as part of welfare reform which seems to support the notion that mother's role is primarily that of provider as opposed to child-rearer. Thus, welfare reform like WWII, represents another period of "unsettled times" (Swidler, 1986) in the United States which is literally shaking the "doxa" (Bourdieu, 1977) around which mothers' roles and childcare issues are located. Unlike the Mothers' Pensions Program and AFDC, welfare reform makes a vastly contradictory statement regarding motherhood. This reform explicitly stipulates that motherhood is experiencing role change (Lubeck & Garrett, 1988) which has a great impact on how childcare is defined.

Whereas motherhood traditionally has meant child rearing, today, motherhood is more consonant with the role of provider, especially in the lowest classes if welfare reform is any indication. Thus, issues such as cost and available avenues to childcare are more readily being explored (Hofferth et al., 1991; Auerbach, 1979) instead of those centering on whether children "ought" (Galinsky, 1999) to be in childcare.

Formal childcare began as an appropriate female philanthropic venture (Rose, 1999). Middle and upper class women framed childcare as a social problem and a

worthy charitable service. Social reformers and social workers then defined childcare as a necessary evil that needed to be regulated. This definition was broadened with the addition of an educational element as nursery schools began to replace day nurseries (Chafe, 1972). During the WWII "unsettled times" (Swidler, 1986), these definitions were again broadened compared to those postulated originally. Finally, childcare was defined as a need (albeit unsuccessfully) during the late 1940s and today is in the process of being defined as a right as well as a need within the welfare reform context.

The construction of mothering roles has had a significant impact on childcare meanings. First, mothers' voices tended not to be part of the role set who articulated childcare definitions. That is, although mothers, as well as children and providers, were significant members of the childcare role set, childcare meanings were articulated by others throughout history. These traditional articulations tended to primarily label mothers as caregivers as their natural role as opposed to economic providers. This opposition induced a struggle for role positions for mothers who worked outside the home.

What's more, employment tended to be based on a male model of work which assumes that employees are disembodied workers (Acker, 1990). Disembodied workers exist as ideal types of workers who are primarily focused on and fully engaged in their work. This impersonal state was functional because personal responsibilities were adopted by "others." The others were usually women. However, because women are often employees and mothers simultaneously, an incredible tension results as dual and competing roles collide. For example, a component of the work ethic is that one ought not bring personal problems/troubles to the workplace. Thus, personal troubles ought to be left at home. Because mothers are responsible for the home and all that entails, leaving these problems at home is inconceivable. The

outcome may be structural interference and possibly spillover as women find it impossible to navigate these dual roles (Galinsky, 1999).

The following chapter continues the research aim of understanding childcare from the perspectives of children, providers and parents. The chapter begins the process of data description by way of telling of the story of a typical childcare day based on the observations described previously.

CHAPTER IV

CHILDCARE ROUTINES

Data Description and Analysis

Chapter IV includes both a detailed description of childcare routines based on the participant observation, interviews and survey data described in Chapter II and an analysis of these data. This chapter addresses the first research question posited in Chapter II. Prior to launching into the description and analysis, however, I would like to share some insights about my participant observation that did not make its way into these sections. This debriefing will be followed by an overview of each childcare setting and their respective caregiving philosophies.

Debriefing

It seems fitting and valuable to present data that did not make its way into the childcare observation work entitled, "flow of the day," presented later in this chapter. Obviously, all data observed could not be incorporated into this story-telling portion. Some of it, however, was not used to describe the child care settings because it involved me as the researcher. As such, my being in a childcare setting and those experiences connected to my presence were "atypical." The research aim, in contrast, was a description of the "typical." Nonetheless, those experiences support many of the analyses presented in this chapter. Thus I choose to include them at this point.

Even though I was at each childcare setting for a very short period of time, I found that I felt bonded to the children, providers and parents. The providers, parents

and to a lesser extent the children all shared personal information about themselves as did I. That is, we formed relationships. Several of the children quickly endeared themselves to me. For example, I recall with fondness the extreme gentleness of one little boy and the dare devil nature of another. I find myself wondering if Timmy can walk yet—I am sure he can. Concomitantly, I quickly gained appreciation and respect for the providers. Moreover, I also rapidly gained respect for those parents who were so committed to their parenting roles.

On my first day of observation at one of the childcare sites, each child presented me with a hand-drawn picture of themselves with their name scrawled underneath. Some of the older children wrote notes to me under their names. These notes conveyed their excitement at my being part of their world for this short time. These activities not only served as welcoming signs but also were significant ways in which the children were engaging in transition rituals. These preparatory activities served as signals for the children that something different would be occurring. In the same manner, on my final day at the childcare site, the children proudly presented me with flowers and notes of well-wishes. These actions again served the purpose of signaling transition. In this case, the transition was that I would no longer be a part of their childcare days. In fact, I recently received a note from the children at one of the childcare sites. I smiled when I pulled the note from the mailbox quickly recognizing the large, sprawling print covering the entire envelope. I knew the note originated from a favorite preschooler. The note again wished me well, stated that the children missed me and was signed by each child. As with the other two examples, this note served to reinforce the transition rituals that signaled an end—the end being that my time with them was over.

I also experienced extreme pleasure and also extreme boredom with being in a

childcare environment. The schedules were so monotonously routinized, in some cases, I wondered how the caregivers could be engaged in them each day. Days were filled with wiping noses, assisting children in the bathroom, feeding and cleaning just to name a few. But then, a child would approach me at the height of my boredom with a mangled daisy wanting to share its summer scent with me. My mind set would then instantly change from boredom to a feeling that there was no place I would rather be at this particular moment than sharing a daisy with this three-year-old. In this way, the experience of boredom shifted to one of life's quintessential moments. These incredible contrasts are exactly those that are also part of the experiences often connected to mothering—or to fathering for that matter.

Conversely, I also encountered some interesting experiences based on being a mom (and an adult) in childcare settings. For example, many times children considered me to be an authority figure based solely on my adult status. That is, on numerous occasions, children would ask me whether they could do something or have something and were asking my permission. I would normally respond that I did not know and that they would have to ask whatever caregiver was nearby. The child would usually become frustrated with this answer, sometimes displaying a look of disbelief at my response. In fact, one child became so frustrated with my noncompliance of presumed authority, that he became teary.

What's more, I also felt incredibly intrusive. Observing such an intimate setting sometimes resulted in my feeling uncomfortable while observing. In fact, sometimes the observation periods felt surreal to me. One could compare my research in childcare sites to observing people in their own homes because providing care to children is typically defined as "private. But, this "private" act of caregiving was occurring in a "public" place. Thus, this interplay between public and private was

omnipresent existing oftentimes in an uneasy tension. With these insights in mind, I begin telling the story of childcare beginning with an overview of each childcare setting and their respective caregiving philosophies.

Overview—Sunnyside Child Care

Sunnyside Child Care is a group family daycare home. As such, they are licensed to serve as many as twelve children at any given time. Group family daycare tends to be less common than standard family daycare. This is so because in Michigan family day care is licensed for six children and only a singular provider is required whereas two licensed caregivers are required for a group home.

The proprietors of Sunnyside, Rich and Leslie Syler, are a married couple. They are likely in their 40's with two adult children, one of whom still lives at home and attends the local university. Leslie and Rich have been providing childcare as a team for almost 18 years although Leslie has been a childcare provider for almost 25 years. Leslie had been a singular family childcare provider before Rich decided to participate in the business with her.

The Syler's home is located in a housing edition very close to the main shopping area in a medium sized community in Southwest Michigan. They live in a middle class neighborhood. The house itself sits on a large lot with a fenced back yard which serves as a play area for the children. As one enters the house, the living room is to the left, the dining room and kitchen are straight ahead, with a small bathroom off the kitchen. An enclosed sunroom is beyond the dining room and a doorway leading to the play area is through the sunroom.

As parents (and/or guardians assumed) arrive with their child(ren), they are greeted with an orderly environment decorated in soft tones such as pale blues and

tans. The entrance hallway has a bulletin board on one wall where notes are posted as updates for parents. The living room contains a large television, several chairs, stacked green sleeping mats and a toy box containing the children's blankets. It is a very uncluttered room. A large picture window overlooks the walkway. I am later informed that this window serves as a "goodbye" or "waving window" for the children and parents. A note welcoming my arrival was posted in the entranceway as well as a reminder to parents that today begins the first observation period. Sunnyside is considered by parents and professionals alike to be one of the highest quality family day care homes in the area.

Overview—The Children's Center

Like Sunnyside, The Children's Center is also considered to be one of the finest, highest-quality day care centers in the city. The Children's Center is located in a renovated church in a Southwestern Michigan community. It is tucked back off the main roads of the community by several blocks in a semi-residential area. The structure's downstairs serves infants (under 30 months) whereas the upstairs serves children ages two-and-a-half through five years. As one enters the building, one finds themselves in a small mud room. This room is where coats, boots, etc. are stored. A mailbox for each family is also located in this room.

Through the mud room is a large room filled with toys and children. The room consists of medium colored wood walls and ceiling with tan carpet covering the floor. Six large windows are located about 6 feet up the walls; one of the windows serves as a "waving window" and one overlooks the outside play ground. Children are able to access the window using a set of three steps that are located underneath the window. Two ceiling fans and several lights extend from the high ceiling. The room is divided

into several play/activity areas, a loft and an eating/wash/restroom section. At the back of this large room are two small rooms. One serves as an office and the other as an additional activity/play area. There is a picture window between the small play room and the main room. Children's artwork is displayed on the walls and a bulletin board presents pictures of the children with their families.

Three full-time, permanent caregivers as well as office staff and part-time relief staff work at the Center. It is 7:00 a.m. and the Center is opening for the day. It's Monday morning and is a typical, brisk March day. The Center has been closed for four days, two of which were the weekend and two were training/conference days for the staff. Karri, a young mother herself, is the lead teacher for two-and-a-half through five year-olds. Karri opens the Center's toddler/preschool area each morning, Monday through Friday.

Karri has been a childcare provider for almost 12 years. She had previously worked for six years as an aide at another center in town. From there, Karri moved to Washington state where she worked for two years as a therapeutic childcare teacher working with high risk children. Karri has worked at the Center for four years.

Katherine has also already arrived; she is in training to be the Center's new director. Diane is the current director but is relinquishing her duties in May to spend the summer with her two children, Aaron and Katie. Aaron and Katie both attend the Center in the toddler/preschool section. Karri and Katherine are chatting about the conference and comment on how energized they feel and excited they are to institute some of the new ideas to which they have been exposed. During the conversation, Karri is busily preparing for the children's arrival. She sets up tables consisting of various activities such as coloring, puzzles and blocks.

Caregiving Philosophies

Because the caregiving philosophies of each childcare site direct the day's general processes and the ways each event and activity is addressed, a description of Sunnyside's and the Center's philosophies follow.

Sunnyside Child Care

Rich explained the philosophy they employ at Sunnyside. Sunnyside offers an environment based on flexibility which Rich and Leslie feel is a benefit of a family day care versus a daycare center. The atmosphere is not one characterized by rigidity and staunchness but instead is based on providing an environment based on making the children feel safe. Although Sunnyside offers preschool instruction, the primary goal at this childcare home is offering the children security, providing for their physical needs, and loving them.

Sunnyside incorporates what Rich Syler defines as a "modified Montessori" style of caregiving. A major tenet of Montessori caregiving involves the development of children at their own unique pace rather than one based on age. For example, Rich and Leslie do not group the children by age because they recognize the benefits of "learning up" as well as "learning down." Not only do the children learn skills more typically associated with older children by "learning up," they also learn to develop the ability to become compassionate nurturers for those who are younger, i.e., "learning down." Rich and Leslie explained that they call their style "modified" because their style of caregiving is more rooted in organization and routine than what is typically defined as "Montessori."

Moreover, Sunnyside is based on equality between the children and their caregivers. Both Rich and Leslie are soft-spoken individuals who always converse

with the children in a normal manner. That is, they do not speak to the children in "baby talk" as they believe this indicates disrespect to the child while also placing the child in an inequitable position relative to the caregiver.

Finally, the Sylers use an "open door" policy, both figuratively and literally, with regard to their home. Parents may drop in at anytime to check in on their child. The door is never locked and parents are encouraged to simply open the door and enter the home without knocking. In fact, Leslie explained with a laugh that the only people who ever use the door bell are salespeople.

The Children's Center

The staff at the Center provide a caregiving environment which fosters learning and independence. They encourage children to develop language skills, abstract thinking and problem solving. Whenever possible, the caregivers at the Center allow the children to direct their own activities, solve their own problems and make their own plans and choices. The independent nature of the Center is organized so that the children learn how to take care of their own needs while also learning how to learn. These skills, they believe, are ones that will be part of a child throughout their entire life.

A technique the Center employs is called "high scope." High scope is based on a Montessori model of caregiving that focuses on child-directed activities. High scope emphasizes the process of: one, talking about what one is going to do, such as who a child will play with; two, performing the activity—playing with the child; and three, talking about the activity that one had originally planned—in this case discussing what happened when playing with the child. In sum, the Center provides an atmosphere whereby children develop a positive self-image of themselves which makes them

successful as children and provides the initial foundation for success as adults.

Childcare Routines—The Flow of the Day

The case study of childcare outlined in Chapter II consisted, in part, of participant observation of two childcare styles: a family group daycare and a daycare center. Three separate observation periods of each research site were conducted. This method was used since the children attending childcare may change from day-to-day. Moreover, each day brings with it unique challenges for all involved—the children, caregivers and parents. Consequently, the childcare experiences also differed. Each observation period consisted of two-to-three hour segments with the three periods in totality representing an entire childcare day from arrival through departure.

A great deal of attention was focused on childcare routines both in description and analysis because the routines drove the entire childcare experience. First and foremost, as will soon be evident, the "typical" childcare day was highly routinized. The childcare routines framed childcare making those experiences familiar and known. That is, the childcare routines or the "flow of the day" was a way of thinking about childcare that, in fact, defined childcare. The routines characterizing childcare posited it not as temporary or anonymous experiences but rather as experiences similar to a familial culture that was fixed and institutionalized. Because childcare was rooted in routines, these routines drove and defined childcare experience. Thus, childcare routines will be thoroughly described and examined throughout this chapter.

This research will next present a detailed description of each research site based on the observations. The following descriptions are roughly categorized by arrivals, breakfast, play (including instructional play), lunch, nap, snack and

departures, although much overlapping existed. The format is organized so that a description of the family daycare period is first presented followed by the corresponding period at the daycare center. The observational description is augmented by interviews of the children, parents and providers. The following section begins telling the story of childcare based on observation of each research site. The childcare day is organized chronologically with arrival routines presented first. After each period (arrival, breakfast, etc.) is presented, an analysis of that period will follow.

Arrivals—Sunnyside Child Care

The day begins at Sunnyside Child Care very early indeed. The late winter morning is brisk with the sun still making its way down to greet the day. It is 6:25 a.m. on a Friday morning. Over a quick cup of coffee, Rich and Leslie explain to me that when the children begin arriving, it occurs quite quickly and this statement proved to be quite accurate.

The first child, Molly, arrives at 6:55 a.m. Molly is 18 months old. Her mother informs the Sylers that they had gone to bed late last night and both are a bit grumpy. Molly's mother removes Molly's pink snowsuit and places it in the cubbyhole located in the entranceway. Each child has a labeled cubbyhole for their stuffed animals, outerwear and other items they may bring to Sunnyside. The snowsuit is placed in a plastic bag because there had been a recent lice scare there. Molly's mother also removes Molly's shoes and they are placed neatly against the wall in the entranceway opposite the cubbyholes. Molly and her mother say a very quick goodbye lasting about 30 seconds. Molly quickly strolls into the living room and begins to interact with Rich.

While Molly's mother is still there, two more children arrive, Timmy and

Courtney. Timmy is the youngest at 12 months old and Courtney is the second oldest, an older three-year-old, of the group. Timmy's mother is explaining that he had received five immunizations yesterday but despite the shots he seems to be feeling fine with no elevated temperature today. Timmy's mother and Leslie discuss the type of food Timmy should eat today and agree on baby food, cereal and bottles.

Rich begins a conversation with Timmy and Courtney's mother about a recent move of hers. They discuss the move and then turn to a conversation of pagers and a new phone number. Leslie collects the new phone number and promptly places it in their file. During this conversation, the mother of the two is removing the children's outerwear and placing it in plastic bags and then into their cubbyholes. Shoes are also removed and neatly placed against the wall in the entranceway. Timmy and Courtney's mother say, "bye bye" to each of them and leaves the house. Timmy, Courtney and their mother's transition from parent care to childcare was made with ease. Timmy toddles over to Rich, who is seated in the living room, and crawls into Rich's lap. Courtney grabs her blanket out of the toy box and plops down in front of the television. A show is playing on a public television station. As Timmy and Courtney's mother leave, another parent enters before the door is shut.

Jessica and her father arrive next. Her father helps Jess off with her coat and shoes following the same routine as the other parents and children. At the sight of me, Jess moves closer to her father and grabs his arm. Jess, a three-year-old, holds a book up showing me what she brought to Sunnyside today. Jess's father says, "give me a hug," and he then leaves the house. Jess and her father use affection as part of the transition routine. It is 7:01 a.m. Six minutes have passed and four children have arrived at Sunnyside.

It is almost eerily quiet now after the first wave of children has arrived. Both

Leslie and Rich are conversing with the oldest children and Jess says she must use the potty. "Make sure you wash your hands," Leslie reminds her. "How was your gymnastics class," Leslie asks Jess as Jess is washing her hands. "I bumped and got a bruise," Jess replies and shows her the bruise. Not only are the stakeholders knowledgeable about routines within the childcare setting, they are also oftentimes familiar with other routines that are not part of the childcare day. This knowledge helps to fuse home and childcare.

Rich has both Molly and Timmy on his lap and is chattering with them. Rich grabs a tissue and quickly swipes Timmy's runny nose. Timmy is quite content on Rich's lap with his blanket which he holds up to show me. Molly looks up to me, looking tired as her mother had explained. Timmy is a blond-headed infant while Molly has dark brown, thickish curls which form a neat pattern around her face.

The older children, Jess and Courtney, are watching a television program called Pappyland. Courtney announces that she must also use the potty. She tells Leslie that her brother, Timmy, "is feeling better today." Leslie is busy in the kitchen while also overseeing the potty breaks. After the children are finished in the bathroom, she returns to the living room and sits down. Leslie sits for less than a minute, however, as a child approaches her explaining that there is something she needs and Leslie gets up to assist the little girl.

Molly begins to whimper for her blanket which Rich quickly places in her lap and she immediately quiets. Timmy is getting restless and Leslie, as though on cue, gets him a toy. As soon as Timmy hears the rattling of the toy, he quickly squirms off Rich's lap moving toward the sound on all fours. Timmy excitedly reaches for the toy Leslie extends toward him and promptly places it in his mouth. Molly is now also interested in Timmy's toy and leaves Rich's lap as well. They both inspect the toy

thoroughly and then Molly presents Timmy with a hug which makes Timmy giggle. These children enjoy each other's company. Roughly 25 minutes has passed and the second wave of children begin to arrive.

Next, a father arrives with a toddler, Jacob, who is an older two-year-old. Jacob's father seems hesitant at my presence as we exchange a brief nod. He helps Jacob remove his coat and shoes placing the coat within the plastic bag and then into the cubbyhole with Jacob's shoes neatly placed against the opposite wall. Jacob's father seems reticent about leaving and tries to engage Jacob in conversation but Jacob is off and already involved in play. He says to his son "hey, Jacob, be good today okay, wave goodbye, I'll pick you up tonight." Jacob is so busy in play he barely acknowledges his father's words. Rich intervenes, saying, "are you gonna wave goodbye today?" Jacob's father and Rich begin conversing about the weather. Leslie remarks that Jacob is wearing blue jeans again today and he seems to think that he looks good in them. Jacob's father agrees saying that Jacob walks around the house saying things like, "jeans, me cute." Leslie laughs and comments that Jacob is quite the stud in his blue jeans. With a laugh, Jacob's father then takes his leave of Sunnyside. The small talk seemed to relieve the father's hesitancy.

At this point, a mother brings in another child, DeAnna, and begins removing the child's coat. DeAnna is the oldest child at Sunnyside. DeAnna removes her own white boots which are trimmed in white fur. DeAnna's mother says, "see you DeAnna," they hug and kiss as DeAnna squeals. This goodbye lasted only about a minute. DeAnna begins chattering with Leslie and then sizes me up. As DeAnna's mother is leaving, another mother and her son, Tyler, are entering the house.

Curtis, a red head, also enters carrying a truck with him. Curtis, aware of the show-and-tell routine, knows he will have an opportunity later in the day to present his

truck to the rest of the children. His mother, Cheryl, cues Leslie of Curtis' emotional state indicating that he is crabby this morning. She then begins making small talk with Rich as she watches her son assimilate into his surroundings. Satisfied that Curtis will acclimate with ease, she calls to him saying, "can momma have a kiss" as she continues her conversation with both Rich and Leslie.

During this time, Jacob's father reenters Sunnyside with a ziplock bag in his hand. He shows the bag to Leslie which I soon find out consisted of stickers. The stickers are used for the toddlers when they use the bathroom successfully. The toddlers who are toilet training all have a sticker book where they proudly place the stickers as indicators of their successes. Leslie mentions that she is glad he remembered the stickers as Jacob was a bit upset one day when he did not have his sticker after using the bathroom. Jacob's father again says goodbye to his son as he stoops down to roll Jacob's pant legs up. Jacob does not want his jeans legs rolled up so his father quickly gives up and leaves the house once again.

Curtis' mother is still at the house and is discussing the Good Friday holiday. Leslie explains that they will be closed for Good Friday. Cheryl and Leslie begin discussing Easter and how it will be celebrated at Sunnyside. Each parent, Leslie explains, brings plastic fillable eggs and Rich and Leslie provide the fillings and conduct an Easter egg hunt for the children. Once the conversation is finished, Cheryl says to Curtis, "bye, bud," and leaves the house.

Jessica and Courtney are watching television and giggling over the nursery rhyme "Itzy, Bizy Spider." Molly waddles over to a favorite chair that has toys fastened to a rail which is attached to the chair. DeAnna walks over to Molly and begins talking to her about the toys. Molly is annoyed by this intrusion and begins to yell. DeAnna is told not to pester Molly anymore. This episode sends Molly

retreating to Leslie's lap. Another television show is coming up and Rich takes a vote on which one they will watch. Crats Creatures, an animal show, wins out over Sesame Street.

Next, a father, Tony, arrives with his daughter, Christine. Christine is a young three-year-old. Tony begins interacting with Rich as they discuss the weather and then the conversation turns to sports. Tony, cueing Rich into Christine's emotional state, explains that she woke up in a bad mood today. Christine's father begins to help her take off her coat and shoes and again follows the same routine as other parents have. Tony is only in the entranceway about one minute and begins to leave which causes Christine to quickly rush to his side, grabbing his arm. Tony, distracting Christine from his leaving, cues Rich and Leslie that Christine brought a doll with her today. He hopes the doll will assist Christine with her transition this day. Tony leaves as Christine watches him and then she looks around the room as if to survey what she might now like to do.

Jacob informs Leslie that he needs to use the bathroom and Leslie leaves her chair to assist him. Jacob was successful in the bathroom so he is entitled to a sticker. He quickly chooses one from the page and goes to his sticker book. When he picks the book up, a couple stickers fall out which he takes to Leslie. She helps him replace the stickers.

Another father enters the house with his son, a toddler named Caleb. Caleb's dad watches him anxiously as he settles in and he also begins a conversation with Rich. Caleb's father wants to leave but seems hesitant about departing. He mentions to Leslie, cueing her of Caleb's emotional state, that Caleb is a bit grumpy today. He laughs and then saying "he's all yours Leslie, the check's in the mail," he quickly ducks out the door.

The last of the second wave of children has now arrived. The Sylers have only nine children today, a light day, as Mona and Larry do not come on Fridays. Other than Fridays, the same group of children are part of this childcare set. Although occasionally a child may move in or out of the group, the group is quite stable. These same children spend a great deal of time with each other each day forming attachments that are strikingly similar to that of siblings. Four boys and five girls are being cared for today at Sunnyside. Two of the nine are technically classified as infants, four are toddlers, and three are preschoolers. It is now 7:55 a.m. and only one hour has passed since the first child arrived at Sunnyside.

Now, both Christine and Timmy are on Rich's lap and Molly is again trying to show me her favorite chair by pointing to it. The older children are watching the voted upon television program while the younger children are either on a lap or playing on the floor. All the children are in the living room. Rich begins a discussion with the older children about the television program asking them what a baby sheep is called. A conversation about baby sheep ensues. Leslie, however, has left the living room and has begun preparing breakfast.

Arrivals—The Children's Center

The Children's Center is also characterized by routines of which children, parents as well as caregivers are quite familiar. The first child arrives at the Children's Center at 7:15 a.m. Tanner, an older three-year-old arrives with his father. His father brings in an extra sweatshirt and puts it in the child's cubbyhole that is located in the middle of the room. Tanner's father waves goodbye to him but Tanner does not notice as he is already busy at play. Darla, an office worker arrives for work and walks through the main room. Darla is followed by the arrival of Sarah who is

accompanied by her mother. "Bye Sarah banana," says her mother. Sarah, an older three-year old, replies with a, "no, no, no." Sarah whines a little and shuffles her feet but begins to engage in play as she permits her mother to leave.

Linda arrives with her mother and a new Pokemon ball. Linda shows me the ball saying that this Pokemon is evil. Linda is finished showing her new toy and now wants her mother to read her a story before she leaves. Her mother says that she can't because she must go to work now. Linda, on the other hand, with only a little whining, is able to convince her mother to read a short story. Linda and her mother use a book to aid in their transitional work from home to daycare. They sit on the small couch under the loft and Tanner soon joins them to hear the story.

It is now 7:25 a.m. and Karri is preparing the water table for the children to play with when Sarah announces that she would like to play puppets. Karri enlists Sarah's help to assemble the puppet theatre. The theatre is a thick cardboard structure with a window in front through which the puppet show is performed. Sarah inspects several of the puppets saying that she has some of the same puppets at home. Sarah, in an attempt to share her family experiences, begins telling Karri that her father has an "ouchie," because he hurt himself at work.

Meanwhile, Linda's story is over and her mother is preparing to leave. She has been at the Center for about ten minutes. She says, "bye Linda, do you want to give me a hug?" Linda kisses and hugs her mother and seems perfectly content now to let her leave.

Taylor and his mother arrive. He, like Linda, has brought an item from home that serves to fuse home and childcare. He has a new beanie baby which he shows to anyone who is interested. His mother has forgotten something in the car and leaves to get it. Taylor does not acknowledge that she has left. Taylor and Sarah want to play

on the computer so Karri readies the two computers that rest against the back wall. At 7:30 a.m., Angela, another caregiver arrives for work. Taylor quickly shows Angela his beanie baby. His mother has returned and says, "got to go, see you later." Taylor's mother speaks to Karri and explains that Taylor has been coughing a little, he seems a little warm but does not have an elevated temperature. This information cues Karri that Taylor may be difficult today or be in need of additional attention. Karri, sensing the mother's anxiety at leaving Taylor when he may not feel his best, promises to keep an eye on him.

Linda, Sarah and Karri are playing at the puppet theatre and Tanner wants to sit with Sarah. Karri directs Tanner to ask permission. He asks if it's alright to sit with her and Sarah says that it is not alright and Tanner seems frustrated. Timothy, a five-year-old, arrives with his father carrying him in his arms. Timothy does not want to be put down and his father tries to distract him by talking about what Timothy will do today and the fun he will have. Timothy is not comforted by the knowledge of the day's routines and is attempting to engage his father in other conversation in hopes of extending his father's stay. His father leaves and Timothy mounts the wooden steps and watches him leave from the "waving window." Timothy quietly goes to the coloring table and begins drawing a picture.

Next, a mother arrives with Mark, a four-year-old. She makes a very quick departure. Angela, Karri and several of the children are playing puppets and Mark joins them. It is 7:45 a.m. and Mark is now upset with Sarah. Karri prompts him through his frustration by saying, "use your words Mark, let her know." Sarah leaves the puppet theatre and joins Timothy at the coloring table. They sit side-by-side but do not interact. Karri is busily settling another dispute and again suggests to Mark that he use his words. "Please stop popping my head," Mark says to Taylor. Taylor

wants the boat which is floating in the water table. He says he will be done with it in five minutes and Taylor can have it then.

Linda is singing a song and invites Tanner to be part of her puppet show as another mother enters the main room with two girls. The younger girl will go to the infant room while Patti, the older girl, will stay in the toddler/preschool area. Patti, the three-year-old, is sobbing and her mother is trying to quiet her but before she can do so her other daughter also begins to sob. This is likely a difficult morning for the girls and the mother. I noticed that before the three of them entered the building, they were in their van in front of the building for as much as ten minutes. Angela tries to distract the girls' attention from her mother but is unsuccessful. The mother takes both children to the infant room and is gone for about ten minutes.

Another set of parents arrive with a three-year-old girl, Gloria. Gloria's father teases Karri about the conference they have just returned from and they begin discussing one of the sessions. Gloria wants to go downstairs to say goodbye to her baby brother and they leave for a couple minutes.

Sarah is giving Taylor a hug and then they begin talking about the Pokemon movie that came out on video this past weekend. At the other end of the room, Linda joins Timothy at the coloring table and they begin conversing. Patti returns from the infant room while Karri and Angela are discussing plans for the day and about tomorrow's activities. Patti and Tanner join the coloring table as the phone rings. Angela answers the phone and a parent is informing her that one of the children is ill today and will be there tomorrow morning.

It is 8:00 a.m. and Angela is cueing the children that the day's routine will be a little different and that they have some news to share with the children. Sandy, the last full-time caregiver has arrived as Gloria returns to the main room with her parents.

Gloria and her parents begin putting a puzzle together at one of the tables, although Gloria seems less interested in the puzzle than her parents. Sandy makes her way to the table and comments on their work and begins chatting with the parents. Gloria's parents stay for quite a long time, perhaps 15-20 minutes and complete the entire puzzle before departing. Gloria's mothers says "I'll see you at naptime, I have to go, goodbye." Gloria does not seem concerned that her parents are leaving and quickly surveys the room before choosing an activity to begin.

Another five-year-old boy arrives and he is excited to see his buddy, Mark, at the Center and quickly goes over to him. These two boys have developed a gentle friendship. A father arrives with his son Garrand. Garrand seems cautious about his surroundings and stays close to his father. Sarah approaches Garrand's father and tells him about what she is doing. Garrand's father nods to her as Garrand tries to persuade his father to stay and put a puzzle together with him. Still another father arrives with his five-year-old son, Adam. Adam holds onto his father's pants pockets as though resisting any possible move his father may have to leave the Center.

Patti's mother has finally returned from downstairs. She prepares to leave and Patti barely acknowledges her as she plays at the water table. Katlin now arrives with her mother and several other children approach her explaining that they had seen them in the car as they drove up. The children saw them through one of the large windows. Adam and his father are sitting on a bench by themselves and Adam's father is reading a story to him. As Adam's father tries to leave, Adam begins to whine and his father sits down again.

It's 8:10 a.m. and Karri announces that they must put the puppet theatre away now. Mark approaches Karri stating that he has seen Neal's arrival as he watched through the waving window. Some of the children are now washing their hands at one

of the three sinks located in the kitchen/bathroom area. Soft music floats through the room and the children seem to know that this means to put toys away. A line begins to form at the two bathroom stalls. Garrand's father is finally permitted to leave. Angela walks to Garrand, takes his hand, leading him to the small back room where they will all talk about their day. Adam and his father are now in the mud room but Adam is still not allowing his father to leave.

Neal and his father arrive through the mud room and enter the main room. Neal's father stays only about five minutes. As he leaves, Neal runs into his fathers arms almost knocking his father off balance. Neal's father says, "you are so strong, I love you," and then he exits. "Where's Daniel," inquires Neal. "He's still on vacation," answers Karri. Neal, knowing that Daniel usually arrives before he does, is disappointed that his friend will not be in daycare today. Karri and Sandy make their way to the small room where most of the children are now congregated. A mother enters with her son and Garrand's father returns and enters the small room where his son is. He leaves again saying to Angela, "he just didn't want to let go today, no not today." Angela nods in commiseration with him.

Angela is preparing breakfast and everyone else except Adam are in the small room. Linda rushes out of the small room as she needs to use the restroom. Linda calls to Angela from the bathroom that she wants to show Angela something. Linda shows Angela a scrape on her leg where she had fallen. Tanner has also left the small room in search of a bandaid for a paper cut. Adam's father has left and Adam is lying on the small couch underneath the loft.

Karri uses a song to cue the children of an upcoming transition, singing "it's time to put the books away so we can talk about our day." Karri and Sandy begin talking about the conference they had attended and all the time providing the children

with great detail about things such as the weather. Karri describes how Sandy's hair was blowing in the wind and the children begin to giggle over the description of their caregiver's hair. The children are all sitting on the floor on carpet squares. Linda has returned from the bathroom and does not want to sit on her carpet square. Linda is not interested in talking about the day and the sharing of what is to happen. Instead, she wanted to continue to play. Karri asks the children to think about something they did yesterday that they can share with the group. Before long, Karri broaches the subject that Sandy is leaving at the end of the week. Sandy took another job at a bank and is going to go back to college. "She won't be a teacher anymore," Karri explains. "Even though they [referring to other teachers who have left the Center] are not our teachers anymore, they can still be our friends." The leaving of a caregiver is often difficult for the children, because the caregiver and children have formed attachments to one another. The children do not seem to be surprised as their parents had been informed of the departure a week ago and have likely shared this change of caregivers with their child(ren).

Meanwhile, Angela finishes organizing breakfast which is prepared downstairs by the cook. Angela asks Adam why he seems so tired today. He says that he overslept and that he was up during the night because his ear hurt. He feels better now he informs Angela. "Are you ready to go to the back room" she asks Adam. He is not ready but Angela says that he will need to be in a couple of minutes. After several minutes, Angela ushers Adam toward the small room and Adam sits on the bench outside and listens to the discussion taking place inside. They are looking at the month on the calendar discussing how many days were sunny in March.

It is 8:35 a.m. and a father brings another child, Colin, into the Center. Mark takes this opportunity to escape from the small room and doesn't respond when Sandy

calls him back. Sandy retrieves him, tucks him under her arm, exclaiming, "we are not going to play this game today." The children are getting restless and are ready to move to the next activity which they know is breakfast. Breakfast is a favorite. The children are listening to a story on tape now as Karri shows the corresponding page from the book. The phone rings again and Angela answers it and begins explaining vacancies the Center currently has available.

At 8:45 a.m. a father enters with his daughter. They say a quick goodbye and he leaves. The girl shows Angela her new stuffed animal which she says she has named, "Angela." Angela laughs, clearly enjoying the compliment that the child has given her. She begins talking to the girl about what they will do today as a way of preparing the girl for her childcare day. She then says, "you can go back for the rest of the story sweetie and I'll see you for breakfast." The children in the small room are getting even more restless and are ready to eat breakfast. Karri is trying to distract them but without much success.

Another girl, Jennifer, arrives with her father. Her father tries to leave quickly but Jennifer follows him back through the mud room. Angela begins talking to Jennifer in an attempt to distract her from her father's leaving. Jennifer's father hesitates a moment to watch the success of Angela's distraction and Jennifer's arrival transition. Satisfied, he turns and leaves with a slight smile. Angela leads Jennifer to the table for breakfast cueing her toward the next routine. Although reluctantly allowing her father to leave, Jennifer is not ready to sit down for breakfast so instead she stands beside the table.

Analysis—Arrivals

Each of the three groups of stakeholders, children, providers and parents,

experienced the same set of routines relative to arrivals. While perspectives of the same circumstance overlap, they also differ in significant ways. Therefore, stakeholders' perspectives were initially examined separately.

Children. Arrivals were an integral part of the children's day. At the Syler's, arrivals began with Molly at 6:55 a.m. Within only six minutes, Timmy, Courtney and Jessica also had arrived. At Sunnyside, arrivals involved putting children's childcare belongings away as part of the normative routine. For example, Molly's mother helped her remove her snowsuit and shoes and then placed the items in the labeled cubbyholes.

What's more, children were busily acclimating to their surroundings. Molly, for example, said a very quick goodbye and her mother left within 30 seconds. Molly was surveying the front room even before her mother left, deciding what she would next do. Jess, on the other hand, was somewhat intimidated by my presence so she sought comfort by claiming her father's arm. Only a short amount of time passed, however, before she released her father so he could go to work. They hugged and Jess's father left. The first wave of arrivals had ended.

The second wave of arrivals at Sunnyside began around 7:30 a.m. First, Jacob arrived with his father. Again, the arrival consisted of the removal of outerwear and placing them in the labeled cubbyholes. This busy work also served the purpose of organizational work. The children's belongings needed to be placed where they could be found by either a parent or the Sylers. As with Molly, Jacob quickly adjusted to the surroundings and neglected to acknowledge his father's leaving without due prompting. In many of cases of arrivals, the parent prompted the child of their impending departure asking for a kiss or hug. Curtis' mom requested one asking, "can momma have a kiss?"

Arrivals of the children were completed at the Syler's within one hour. The children tended to transition generally with ease. No doubt, much of this had to do with the fact that the day was a Friday. The children had been engaging in this routine since Monday. At the Center, Monday arrivals tended to be met with more intensive transitional work for the children.

Arrivals of the children at the Center began at 7:15 a.m. The first child to arrive, Tanner, barely acknowledged that his father was leaving. His father brought extra clothes for him, put them away in his cubbyhole and said a very quick goodbye. This was part of the organizational work that also occurred at the Syler's as part of the arrival process. Sarah's mother, however, did not have a chance to depart so quickly. Sarah reacted to her mother's leaving with a, "no, no, no." Sarah did whine a little but her mother was still able to leave relatively quickly. The extent of ease by which the children transitioned from parent's care to childcare seemed not to be driven by the childcare environment as that tended to be similar each day. Instead, the transitions may be met with ease on a particular day for a child and the following day may be more difficult; thus, this was never a constant. Perhaps the child had not slept well the night before, wasn't feeling well or perhaps something happened between them and their parent or sibling that made them more vulnerable to a difficult transition. Other than a Monday morning being a more difficult transition day, few patterns were revealed to explain why each day differed for the children's arrival transitions.

In contrast to Tanner and Sarah, Linda was able to finagle a story out of her mother before she allowed her mother to leave. Linda's mother stayed at the Center reading to Linda and Tanner for at least ten minutes before she gingerly ducked out the door. Arrivals at the Center occurred more slowly than at Syler's. In 15 minutes, four children have arrived.

Like the situation at Sunnyside, Taylor was not feeling well so his mother spent several minutes discussing this with a caregiver. They engaged in "kid talk" as part of the arrival routine. Nonetheless, Taylor acclimated very quickly and hardly noticed his mother leaving. Mark, the next to arrive, seemed to mimic Taylor's response of his parent leaving the Center. Roughly two-thirds of the children, in fact, tended not to have a difficult transition from parent care to childcare. That particular day, they made the transition with relative ease. Several, however, did have a difficult time with their parent's departures.

Timothy, for example, engaged in a tremendous amount of transitional work surrounding his father's leaving that day. First, Timothy did not want his father to put him down from carrying him into the Center. Next, he skillfully tried to engage his father in conversation to extend his father's stay. Upon his father's leaving, Timothy solemnly watched his father leave through the "goodbye window." Once his father was gone, Timothy purposely engaged in a solitary activity choosing not to interact with other children. Timothy worked through this by drawing which he did without interacting with other children or caregivers for almost 30 minutes. Slowly, he began to allow first a caregiver then another child to converse with him.

Two other children, in particular, also had a difficult time with Monday morning childcare transitions upon arrival. Adam, for example, physically held onto his father by his father's trouser pockets not allowing him to move. Adam's father got as far as the mud room to depart but Adam would not permit him to leave. After about five minutes, Adam's father left. Adam purposely separated himself from the group while he worked through the emotions connected to his father's departure. Adam laid on the couch by himself quietly watching the activity of the room for almost 20 minutes. He did not try to interact with any of the children. Finally, a caregiver

encouraged him to join the group of children but he did so grudgingly.

In contrast, Patti protested to her mother's leaving in a much more vocal manner than did Timothy and Adam. Patti sobbed and pulled on her mother. Even an attempt by a caregiver to distract Patti did not work. Patti's mother ended up taking Patti with her downstairs where she delivered her younger daughter. They were downstairs in the infant room for about ten minutes. When they return to the toddler room, Patti seemed willing to finally let her mother go. Patti did, however, purposely ignore her mother as she left as though punishing her for leaving.

Arrivals were particularly stressful for some children especially on Mondays. The children diligently worked through the process of role change. For them, they were involved in a transition from mom's or dad's "baby" (most of the children were the youngest in the family) to a mature child in a public setting, i.e., family daycare or center care. Thus, they needed to be able to almost instantaneously make this transition with the simple but powerful opening of a door as they entered the childcare setting. Many times, the children slipped back into roles more associated with those in a private setting, i.e., at home. Other times, the children fused the two roles developing a new one such as an intimate, close-knit relationship with the caregiver somewhat similar to a parent-child relationship. This fusion was evidenced by lap sitting or the sharing of a new toy or personal stories, i.e., "my dad got an ouchie." In any case, these are major transitions for any person but especially for those who are very young.

Children were also working through issues of missing their parents, their home, their siblings, their toys and the routines associated with each. The prevalence of "goodbye" or "waving" windows in many childcare facilities supports this observation. One example, Timothy's arrival and subsequent waving to his father at the Center

clearly demonstrated this phenomenon. The "waving window" was part of a routine in which children could engage in order to aid them in their transitional work. In another transitional example, one child made comments to herself throughout the day that her mother will be back for her as though this utterance was reassurance that her mother would no doubt return. Other routines, such as watching television, claiming a security blanket from a toy chest or even a favorite daycare friend were all part of knowing what is happening, what is acceptable and who is at the daycare. The knowing of the routines was the transitional key. The familiarity guided the children throughout their childcare day.

Providers. For childcare providers, arrival time was one characterized by making sure the children's needs were being met whether that child needed quiet time, a special blanket, a favorite toy or lap time. A child may need a great deal of assistance and guidance during this routine process. One example was Angela's work in acclimating Adam into the morning routine as he lay on the couch uninterested in involvement in the normative activities. Providers were also involved in mediating disputes between the children. Because arrival time for children was characterized by considerable transitional work, disputes tended to be prevalent during the arrival routines.

Providers also had expectations of parents during the arrival routine. At Sunnyside, for example, a bulletin board posted daycare information (like my being there to observe that day) so that parents knew when change occurred within the regular routines. At the Center, information of this sort was placed in mailboxes in the entranceway. Thus, providers expected that parents would take note of this information. Caregivers also had expectations of parents as to when children were to arrive. Particular hours of arrival were part of the routine. Should that change, a

phone call was expected to alert the caregiver that a child would be arriving later than usual. What's more, parents also were expected not to bring children prior to caregiving hours. At both childcare settings, the timing of arrivals was part of the routines.

Holidays often brought a break in the normative routines. Parents were expected to participate in the holidays based on the providers' directions. For example, parents from Sunnyside were instructed to bring plastic, fillable eggs for their children as part of the holiday celebration. Parents were also expected to address other needs their child(ren) may have while at daycare. In another example, some children needed stickers as part of the toilet training routine while other children simply needed a favorite blanket or an extra change of clothes.

Arrival time was also a time during which parental interaction occurred often involving special concerns, instructions and cues about their child's emotional state. This was a time of a precarious role transferal whereby a parent was still present but was in the process of relinquishing the parental duties as s/he attempted to leave the childcare setting.

Caregivers were involved in work, however, even prior to children arriving. During an interview, Karri, the lead teacher at the Center, described this as a process of organizing the day relative to how many children will be there each day. Since different children thrive on various activities, she tried to find a good match between the day's children and the day's activities.

Parents. It was evident based on parent interviewing that most of the parents at both Sunnyside and the Center were fairly knowledgeable concerning the actual routine their child(ren) were involved in throughout the day. They knew when lunch, naptime and different types of playtime occurred. Thus, during the workday, parents

could imagine how their child was enjoying a favorite luncheon dish or engaging in outdoor play for example. The knowledge of the routines helped the parent stay emotionally connected to their child. That is, there was comfort in knowing the routines.

Arrivals were also characterized by conveying information about the child. Timmy and Courtney's mother spent some time explaining to Leslie the immunizations Timmy had received the day before. They also spent time discussing and deciding on the type of food Timmy, who is 12 months old, would consume that day. These instructions also served as cues to the providers. The code phrase, "not having a good day," or some variation, was easily deciphered by the providers that the child may be in need of extra attention or require additional space to engage in their transitional work.

The arrival routine was not only centered on the child—"kid talk"—it also revolved around "small talk" as parents, children and providers engaged in this transitory routine. For example, at the Syler's, Rich and one of the parent talked about the weather while another time a conversation about moving developed. Thus, both "kid talk" and "small talk" were components of the arrival routine providing cues about all the stakeholders.

Parents generally seemed more anxious during arrivals than departures, ducking out quickly if their child permitted them to do so and staying longer if necessary for their own well-being or those of the child. During this time, the parents were engaging in the transferal of their parental roles and the donning of an employee role. Some parents spent a significant amount of time preparing their child and perhaps themselves before they arrived at the childcare setting.

For example, Daniel's mother, Dawn, explained during an interview that she

spends time in the morning talking with Daniel about the kinds of things that will occur at the Center that particular day. The importance of knowing the day's routines was crucial. They may discuss special events or just the kind of day Daniel will have. They discuss what will be served for lunch or if a caregiver is on vacation or leaving the Center. Dawn also mentioned that she offers Daniel actual time cues relative to leaving. For example, she might tell Daniel that, "it is five minutes before we go." For Daniel, he needs to know what to expect, she explained. Thus, his mother makes this a part of their pre-arrival routine.

In addition to the preparation described above, Dawn schedules 20 minutes with Daniel at the center before she must leave for work. This is the time that she and Daniel play at the Center to assist him in his acclimation process. Dawn further explained that the 20 minutes is time not only for Daniel but also a time for her to spend in transitioning from mother to employee.

Tanner's mother, Mary, also utilized an arrival routine similar to Dawn's which Mary described during an interview. Mary explained that she and Tanner normally discussed what would occur during the day. The knowledge of the day's events, she explained, can get Tanner motivated to get ready to go. Mary also described her feelings of being rushed and anxious prior to leaving the house for the Center, "we're running late and it's difficult." But also, Mary explained, she is "anticipating relief" from children and looking toward the quiet and calm that was sure to follow.

Arrival Analysis Summary

The arrival at childcare based on a child's, parent's and provider's perspective was inclusive of many different elements as part of this routine. It included an organizational aspect of putting a child's items in their proper places. Arrivals also

consisted "kid talk" as well as "small talk." Sometimes, arrivals were times of sharing personal information between the child and provider or sharing of a new toy. Bathroom breaks, washing and other needs were also part of this routine. Mediation between children was a large part of the arrival period for providers. Whereas for parents, arrivals were often characterized by rushing but the anticipation of relief. Most of all, arrivals consisted of role change for children and parents primarily as children sent their parents off to work with kisses, hugs and "I love yous."

Sunnyside tended to have very quick arrivals of children which at times was almost hectic. The Center, on the other hand, had children arriving steadily but more slowly. The arrival period at the Center transgressed over a longer period of time, almost two hours compared to one hour at Sunnyside. Children at Sunnyside were greeted with quiet, more sedate activities such as conversation or a television program. At the Center, the children began playtime activities immediately upon arrival, instantly engaging with other children. At Sunnyside, the child arriving tended to first interact with the caregiver before engaging with other children. This may be because the children were generally younger at Sunnyside than at the Center. Finally, individual arrival routines were apt to be shorter in duration at Sunnyside than at the Center. Parents were inclined to stay longer at the Center than at Sunnyside, playing and interacting with their child. This may have been due, in part, to the Center's structure not appearing as a home so staying at the Center may have felt less intrusive for parents.

Almost half the time, fathers, not mothers, dropped children off at childcare. They seemed to "know" the routines as well as mothers. Thus, fathers as well as mothers were engaging in personal work during this time. The fathers were not the disembodied workers, at least in this case, who have "others" caring for the personal

responsibilities of daily life. As with mothers, fathers also were engaged in caregiving tasks. They too were "others" relevant to the male model of work. Hence, it would seem that fathers who engaged in caregiving responsibilities, as with mothers, also do not fit into the male model of work.

What's more, traditional definitions of childcare tend to assume that childcare services are needed because mothers are part of the workforce. The participation of fathers in childcare environments seems to call this assumption into question. Thus, childcare services are needed because parents, not just mothers, are in the workforce. This changes the way we think about childcare as well as motherhood.

The arrival process in childcare consisted of myriad elements that in totality comprised the arrival routine. The routines were cloaked in familiarity which aided all stakeholders with these sometimes difficult transitional times.

Breakfast Time—Sunnyside Child Care

Arrivals are followed by breakfast. At Sunnyside, Leslie is making waffles this morning which she knows is one of the children's favorites. Leslie calls from the kitchen asking Rich to send in the helpers. He calls to Jessica, DeAnna and Courtney that Leslie needs kitchen help. Rich quickly adds that they are selected based on their age not their sex. DeAnna and Jessica scamper off to the kitchen but Courtney isn't ready to leave the television program. Courtney finds her way into the kitchen several minutes later when the show concludes. The preschoolers are engaged in the familiar routine of setting the large, antique oak table with paper plates, sipper cups and paper cups. They carefully count numbers of plates and cups having to do so several times as they get confused as to who gets what type of cup and they then lose their count. Leslie guides them through the process helping them to organize the settings. Finally,

the table is set with each place setting having the correct cup, plate and napkin. Two highchairs are placed on either end of the large table.

In the living room, Christine leaves Rich's lap and Caleb takes her place. Christine wants to help with the waffle making and Leslie agrees saying it's fine. Christine enters the kitchen to help. Timmy is getting fussy and squirms off Rich's lap. Again Rich goes in search of more toys for him. Timmy seems to sense what Rich is doing and eagerly crawls after him. DeAnna is showing Christine where she should sit at the table that develops into a full-fledged discussion for them. Jess, knowing that one of the children from the group is missing today, asks Leslie if Larry is sick today and Leslie reminds her that both Larry and Mona do not come on Fridays. Jess does not accept this answer and continues to talk about where Larry is today.

DeAnna remembers that they had baked cookies for me and goes to find them. The cookies are wrapped in green tissue and she proudly presents them to me with a note she wrote herself. I fuss over the gift and then DeAnna asks if I think I might share them. I respond that certainly I might do just that. Timmy now crawls into the dining room area to see what's going on there. Rich quickly comes in to retrieve him but instead places him into the high chair and gets him a bottle.

"I can dance," Courtney announces to me. She swirls around the dining room and Jessica follows suit. Courtney giggles at her. DeAnna, remembering the previous day's activities, explains that they all drew pictures for me and also learned how to introduce themselves. DeAnna gives an introduction and giggles when I respond in kind. Jess shyly imitates DeAnna's introduction and then DeAnna directs Courtney that she must now perform her introduction. Courtney does not want to do this and DeAnna tries to guide her toward me. Courtney begins to cry. Leslie mediates the dispute by telling DeAnna to let Courtney alone. Quickly this is forgotten as the

preschoolers begin to share personal information about themselves such as their ages and birthdays. Leslie calls to Rich that he can send the first group of children into the dining room. Dividing the children into manageable groups is part of daily routine thus the children seem to wait to see to which group they will be assigned.

Rich sends Jacob and Christine in from the living room whereas Molly and Timmy are already in their high chairs. At this point, Rich begins organizing cleanup in the living room with the five remaining children. Cleanup signifies that breakfast is soon to follow. The preschoolers are able to stay on task, but the two toddlers, Caleb and Curtis, are distracted by the smells emanating from the kitchen. Rich erects a barrier of toys to help keep the toddlers from entering the dining room before Leslie is ready for them.

It's 8:30 a.m. and the children are enjoying waffles, strawberries and milk. Jacob dribbles milk from his sipper cup and it lands on the table which he promptly wipes up with his napkin. He picks up a huge strawberry, carefully inspects it and declares that it is the moon as he holds it up into the air. Rich has now released all the children from the living room and he has taken over the waffle making as Leslie tends to the needs of the children such as distributing syrup, milk and more strawberries. The last child finishes eating by 8:50 a.m. Neither Rich nor Leslie eat breakfast this morning.

Breakfast Time—The Children's Center

At the Center, breakfast begins a bit later than at Sunnyside. This is likely so because children arrive later in the morning than at Sunnyside. It is 8:55 a.m. and breakfast is ready. Karri releases the first group of children from the back room and the children begin washing hands and using the restroom. Some of the children are not

directed to wash and use the restroom but do so almost automatically as they are quite familiar with what occurs at the Center prior to eating. The children will be eating bagels with cream cheese, apple slices and milk. Eighteen children are at the Center now. Three tables are set for breakfast and a caregiver is present at each table directing discussion and manners. They all eat together including the caregivers using a family-style structure. That is, serving dishes are placed in the middle of the table and each person serves themselves. Karri gets up to get Mark another bagel because he does not like cream cheese. Neal, one of the older children at the Center, dazzles the younger children at his table by discussing what R.V. means.

At 9:00 a.m. the bell on the door rings and many of the children look up to see who is coming through the door. It is Diane, the Center director, with her two children, Aaron and Katie. Aaron does not want to enter the room and scowls. Diane picks him up and all three of them head toward the office. Conversations resume at the tables as one girl shares with the other children what her big brother got for his birthday. The phone rings and Diane answers it as her two children follow behind her. Childcare transition for Aaron, Katie and Diane is different than the other families because Diane is employed there. Diane doesn't leave the Center when she goes to work. Hence, their transition from home to childcare tended to occur more slowly.

At the breakfast table, Mark karate chops his bagel and Adam, not to be outdone, beats his chest with his fists. During this physical display, Katlin gets up to get another carton of milk for her table. Aaron and Katie have moved to the drawing easels and are making pictures, not yet joining the other children. Two other boys pull their shirts over the heads imitating monsters. They are told that what they are doing is not a good idea and they promptly stop. Breakfast time is finishing up and the children are anxious to begin the next activity.

Analysis—Breakfast Time

The analysis of breakfast routines includes only the perspectives of the children and the providers because parents were observed only during arrival and departures.

Children. As with the arrivals, breakfast was also driven by knowledge of the routine. Children were cued that breakfast would soon be eaten by putting toys away or washing hands for example. What's more, the children also expected to be organized in groups at both the Center and Sunnyside when released to the tables. They also seemed to know who from their group was not in attendance. These routines were steeped in familiarity even to the point of knowing what the children's favorite foods were.

Obviously, the main purpose of breakfast for the children was eating. What's more, however, the children's breakfast time routine tended to be initially focused on organization skills and learning. This was evidenced at Sunnyside as the older children counted and set the table for breakfast. The setting of the table was part of the breakfast process.

Conversely, at the Center, preparation of breakfast was not part of the meal process. Instead the pre-meal process consisted of using the restroom and washing hands. Learning at the Center occurred at the table as children learned proper manners and etiquette. In one case, two boys were informed that lifting one's shirt over one's head was not proper while eating. Children also learned how to serve themselves as when Katlin helped herself to another carton of milk. The serving of oneself is part of the Center's philosophy that stipulates that children need to learn to take care of one's own needs. Finally, at the Center, children were learning conversational skills as part of the meal process. One example of the conversational skills was a child's sharing of

her brother's birthday and the gifts he received.

Providers. Whereas breakfast time largely served the purpose of eating for the children, for the providers, breakfast was a time of serving and assisting the children. The providers were in effect performing a role that would normally be performed by a parent if at home. They served the needs of the child while also teaching the children the appropriate eating norms associated with our culture. At Sunnyside, Rich and Leslie were continuously serving the children such as refilling milk and cutting waffles. At the Center, however, the caregivers sat with the children and also ate. Thus, the focus was on teaching and sharing in addition to feeding the children.

The providers also instilled familiarity and thus comfort for the children by way of the routines they used. For example, the knowledge of who gets what style of cup during breakfast meant they had to be familiar with the child. Simply knowing a child's age would not be sufficient in evaluating their fine motor skills. The significance is that the providers "knew" the children including the extent of their abilities.

Breakfast Time Analysis Summary

Breakfast time, based on the observations, first and foremost served the needs of the children—in the case, nutritional needs. Much more, however, was also occurring. Children were learning organizational skills and conversational skills. They were learning etiquette and independence skills. They were sharing. Caregivers served and assisted the children while organizing bathroom breaks and hand washing. Caregivers at both sites also played the role of teachers as they guided children through table setting and proper table manners. Breakfast was a major component of a "typical" childcare day. It involved routinized, day-to-day activities that would look

very similar on any given day. The routines woven together, however, provided a climate of familiarity for all stakeholders. It was this climate that fully captured the childcare experience.

Playtime—Sunnyside Child Care

Indoor. Back at Sunnyside, the plan is to play downstairs now that breakfast is finished. After the children use the bathroom, they begin their organized descent downstairs in these now familiar groups of three or four. The play room is huge and well-stocked with virtually every toy a child could imagine. It is a cheerful, well-organized room with the toys somewhat separated by age group. Some of the toddlers head to the play gym which Rich explains was just brought out of storage thus the children play on it as though it were new. The Sylers are fortunate to have enough room to rotate toys, including the larger toys.

As though on cue, several of the older children approach the window peering outward toward a toad house located there. The toads burrow under the gravel for the winter but sometimes come up during nice days. The toads, however, do not show themselves today and the preschoolers move on to another activity. Leslie and the preschoolers begin a structured exercise in matching colors and shapes on laminated folders. This activity is organized such that the children perform the matching of shapes and colors and wait—expecting that Leslie or Rich will "check" their work.

Leslie lowers herself down to the floor to talk with several children but quickly notices that Molly needs to be changed, so she gets up promptly. Rich again divides the children into two groups so that they are more easily supervised as Leslie goes upstairs with Molly. The children want a story so Rich begins this work at the large, easel style story board. Curtis becomes bored with the story and saunters over to me.

He plays with a rather simple toy where cutouts are covered and a child can lift the pegged cover to reveal a shape. Curtis smiles in delight as each shape is uncovered. After about an hour of play, the play room cleanup begins signaling an end to playtime.

As the children and the Sylers finish the cleaning, they begin their march back up the stairs. The children mount the stairs in their small groups, as opposed to all the children at once, to help prevent accidents stemming from pushing or the losing of one's balance. The children had made snicker doodles for me and I have agreed to share them. After snack time, the Sylers decide it's still too cold to be outside so instead Leslie organizes an indoor, physical activity for the children.

The next activity is an organized playtime that serves to integrate home and childcare. Rich works to engage the children in circle time where the children discuss what item they brought for show-and-tell. The children, however, seem unable to settle into this activity. Thus, Leslie calls out, "okay, everyone on the floor on their backs." The group scurries to find their places in the living room giggling as they do so. The giggles and excitement indicate that the children know exactly what is upcoming and it is an activity they enjoy. Upon finding spots they claim as there own, Leslie instructs them to "peddle your bikes." The children with legs in the air begin peddling furiously. "Where will we go," Leslie asks. "We are going to McDonalds," yells one of the preschoolers without hesitation. As Leslie takes on different roles at varying locations to which they peddle, the children also must adopt different roles such as order taker or hamburger maker.

Their last ride takes them to the park. The children get off their bikes, remove their backpacks in exaggerated gestures and walk to the pond. They break up their imaginary bread into small pieces as they feed the ducks. "Look," Leslie exclaims, as

she points to the nonexistent ducks. She points to the toy box which Curtis promptly goes to and lifts the cover. All the children seem surprised that no ducks are under the cover. Leslie laughs heartily, thoroughly enjoying their surprise and this activity. It is only 10:30 a.m. and still too cold to go outside so the group begins their descent back to the play room until lunch.

Outdoor. Another day brings warmer weather to Sunnyside. It is 11:30 a.m. on a Wednesday morning. Although it is still early in March, it is already 75 degrees outside. Rich is sitting outside supervising the children and Leslie is just coming out the back door off the sunroom. Rich laughs and explains that on these types of days, everyone wishes they were outside sitting and watching children play. These idealized versions of childcare, however, are few and far between he adds. The constant cleaning, children's tantrums and incredible organization associated to being a childcare provider are seldom noticed by individuals who may only see Rich sitting and watching children play. The children are busily playing, running, singing, jumping and inspecting the grass as they hunt for flowers. Larry, a toddler, points to the sky, saying "plane," as an airplane zooms over our heads. Christine runs toward me, saying "hi," and then quickly runs away. Timmy is on the grass on all fours. Today feels like a gentle day.

Leslie leaves the yard to get a box of tissue and promptly returns to wipe two runny noses. Timmy begins to cry and Leslie goes over to investigate. Jacob offers that Chris hit Timmy. Christine looks scared, knowing she was rough and that's against the rules, so she quickly says, "Chris, no naughty." It's lunch time but the Sylers decide to prolong their outdoor play as the children are so content and are clearly enjoying the beautiful weather. Curtis is sitting by himself on a large wooden chair watching the bustling activity of the children's play. Rich is organizing different

races for the children in an attempt to wear them out before their nap. It works and after several races, the children begin to slow down. Finally, they march in groups into the dining room for lunch. The children are ready to eat and in need of a nap that is to follow.

Playtime—The Children's Center

Like at Sunnyside, the Center organizes playtime activities based on familiar routines. Outdoor play has been delayed somewhat, as a tantrum erupts from Colin and Sandy leads him over to the bench area and talks to him. He cannot be quieted and Diane walks over and relieves Sandy. Some caregivers seem to have a knack for helping particular children work through a tensional state. The phone rings again and the children are again forming a bathroom line and washing their hands after their breakfast. Everyone knows that it's time to go outside and play.

Outdoor. Since the children are familiar with this routine, they begin getting their coat, hat, boots and mittens with little prompting. As they finish donning their outwear, the children sit on the bench by the door which leads to the playground. They are waiting for an available caregiver to go outside to supervise them. They wait quietly and without being told to do so, expecting that someone will soon be ready to escort them. "Do we need coats, Sandy," asks one of the children. Sandy answers that yes they will because it is cold. "Why is cold," inquires another child.

By 9:20 a.m. the last child for today has arrived. Twenty-one children have arrived at the Center within two hours today. Karri is changing Gloria's diaper by the sinks as Angela leads about half of the children outside. Gloria toddles over and is asked, "where is your coat and hat?" She leaves to find them. Sandy is teasing Sarah saying that Sarah's pooh mittens belong to Sandy. Colin has finally settled down and

is looking for a pair of mittens to wear outside. Sandy finds a pair for him but he rejects them saying he wants ones that are softer. Knowing that Colin has just settled down from a significant tantrum, Sandy gently guides him to another selection. They settle on a pair and he too heads outside with Sandy behind him. It is almost 9:30 a.m. and all the children are outside. Karri is cleaning up breakfast and organizing the next activity for the children.

Indoor. It's 10:00 a.m. on another cool but sunny Wednesday morning in March. The children have just returned from outside play and are removing their coats and replacing their boots with shoes. Three tables are set up with crayons and paper. This setup cues the children that it is time for play centers. Play centers is free play where the children can play at any center or participate in any craft that is set up.

Several of the children are putting on "dress up" hats while several others are in the loft which serves as a simulated kitchen. A cubed gym has also been assembled and a car and block center is also available. A couple of children are playing drums using cereal boxes and plastic spoons. Sarah, in an apron, is busy taking imaginary food orders and Colin is playing with the building blocks. He says to Gerry, a three-year-old girl, that he is "making a tower for you." Gerry inspects his work, gives him a quick hug and says she is leaving to visit a friend as she exits the block area. All three caregivers are now interacting with the children as most of the children have moved from the sedentary activities to more mobile ones.

A three-year-old boy walks around the room with long gold beads strewn around his neck. He keeps looking down at the beads watching the light reflect off them. Aaron and Katie, who are brother and sister, are playing together. They get up and Katie leads Aaron by the hand to another play area. Karri jumps up off the floor as she hears a squeal indicating that someone is unhappy. Angela is playing peek-a-

boo with a little boy in the cubed gym. Whereas Sandy is interacting with several children in the kitchen loft giving them food orders. It is very busy in the main room as children scamper from one activity to another. It is 10:20 a.m. and there are 26 children at the Center today.

An older boy invites me to look out the window with him. We do and he talks to me about the playground. The boy points to two bikes in the sandbox explaining to me that they will not move well in the sand. He acts as my guide describing many of the play ground toys to me. Most of them he likes but he is still clearly bothered by the bikes in the sandbox. He "knows" the bikes do not belong there.

Two other children approach the office door, peering intently inside. Still another boy brings me a book and begins reading the "scary" book to me. Two children are delivering the "mail" which they just finished preparing in the office center. The children have clearly used these play centers many times before because they do not need or want any instructions on them. They know that play centers means they are in charge of their play.

Sandy runs across the room and in a dramatic motion, grabs Anthony, the youngest child there, catching him in her arms. He giggles, enjoying the affection, and they fall into the little couch and begin snuggling. Sandy, on Anthony's insistence, reads a book to him and several other children join them for the story.

One girl is leaving the loft area and stumbles on her way down the steps. She looks around to see who is looking, gets up, grabs her elbow and continues to play. Meanwhile, Karri is talking to two older boys. They nod as though Karri is involved in settling a dispute.

It is 10:45 a.m. and the five-minute bell has rung indicating that play centers are coming to an end and another type of play will follow. Sandy dismantles the gym

while Karri drains the water table. Some of the children from the water table begin drying the floating toys they had been using as Angela busily changes a little girl's diaper. As the final bell rings, a mother comes in early to collect her son. He seems surprised, not really happy, that she is early which is a decided change in his childcare routine. All the children are seated at the three small tables to which they had been assigned. The assignments stand for a period of time before each child is reassigned again. This aids the children in knowing what to expect as far as caregivers and other children who are also assigned to the group. Each teacher/caregiver is asking the children for which areas they will be responsible to tidy. The children readily volunteer for an area and they are dismissed to perform their work.

At 11:00 a.m. the children are busy with circle time. One child has brought cardboard tubes from home and the caregivers are using them as part of this activity. Many times, children bring different items from home to be used at the Center. For example, one child brought in those CDs that are received in the mail and offer free internet access. These were painted and used as sun catchers. Not only does bringing in these items serve to fuse home and daycare, it also indicates that while at home children are still thinking about childcare. Childcare is not "shut off" when the child leaves. Thus, childcare spills into the home as well as the home spilling into the childcare/daycare.

The children divide into three groups and use the cardboard tubes as telescopes. The tube is handed to a child and as the child peers through it, they spot something they did that day and describe the activity. This activity reflects the "high scope" philosophy to which the Center prescribes. This philosophy is described at the beginning of this chapter.

By 11:15 a.m. the children have moved back to the tables. They are each given

a pile of buttons. Each teacher instructs the children to do different things with the buttons for example, separate them by color, size or shape. The children begin talking about which are their favorites and why. Within ten minutes, the children are transitioned again to another activity which is signaled by dismissal from the tables.

The children are grouped based on their known assignments and they congregate in different areas on the floor. One child has forgotten to which group she belongs and looks distressed knowing that she is expected to remember her group. She asks me if she is part of the "blue" group. I tell her I do not know and she shoots me a look of irritation and disbelief. She quickly claims a group without asking a caregiver but is soon directed to her rightful group.

Next, they begin a number and memory activity in groups of about eight children each. Different shapes and colors are removed from the easel and the children are asked what is missing. Angela asks the children how they can figure it out, and one child replies, "because we are smart." By 11:45 a.m. the children begin preparing for lunch by washing and using the restroom. At the Center, washing and bathroom breaks always signify a transition. After lunch, the children will go outside to play before they settle in for their naps.

Analysis—Playtime

Children. Playtime generally was a time of having fun and also a time of learning. Children were running, jumping and singing. At Sunnyside, the children were learning about nature as they observed the toad house and were engaged in matching exercises. At the Center the children tended to participate in an incredible amount of role playing as part of their learning. For example, several children were playing dress-up, another was preparing food in a kitchen donning an apron and still

another was part of a make believe family. At Sunnyside, the role playing involved bicycling and taking on different roles at different stops.

What's more, children were also involved in cleaning up their play areas at both childcare sites. Sometimes the children directed this activity of cleanup and other time they were directed by the caregivers during cleanup. Organization was also part of cleanup when children did direct this activity, they had to decide how to best clean up the toys, i.e, deciding what was out of place and where it should be returned. For outdoor play, organization centered on matching up one's coat, hat and other outside wear. Most significant, however, was that even in play, the routines were fixed and permanently imbedded even within free play. Thus, the sense of permanence that loomed in both childcare settings added to understanding the meanings connected to childcare.

Providers. Playtime was one of work for caregivers as they taught and attempted to make learning interesting and entertaining. Additionally, playtime was one filled with ensuring that children were physically safe (on steps, using slides, other children behaving roughly). Safety during playtime often consisted of carefully separating children into small groups so that safety could more easily be assured. Outdoor play brought with it another whole set of organizational duties such as matching up 25 sets of hats, mittens, boots and coats to each child. Cleaning and returning items to their proper places was a constant component of playtime for caregivers. They worked with the children to put toys away which was often built into the play routine itself. For example, the five-minute bell during playtime at the Center signals the beginning of this process.

The settling of disputes was also part of the playtime routine for caregivers. Caregivers at the Center spent a large amount of time mediating disputes between

children and with toy sharing, for example. Children displaying tantrums, stemming from a dispute, was always a possibility. When the children became upset, they may not be able to regain control over their emotions. In these cases, a child may become physical toward another child or caregiver. It was very emotionally draining for the caregivers as they must quickly assess the situation and develop an instant solution.

As with other components of a caregivers work, childcare providers spent a large amount of time attending to the children's needs. Leslie at Sunnyside was almost continually changing diapers and wiping noses. In comparison, at the Center, they too were involved in assisting the children with their bathroom breaks and changing diapers for the younger children. These somewhat intimate aspects of caregiving, often called on caregivers to perform, are duties typically associated to that of parenting.

Playtime Analysis Summary

It was not particularly surprising that playtime for children consisted of playing. That was, however, only one aspect of playtime. Playtime also consisted of learning, cleaning up and organizing. Playtime for providers, however, was instead, characterized by work—that is, mediating disputes, serving the needs of children and teaching. Most telling, however, was that the routines afforded both the providers and the children a climate of affability which enabled all to gently transition, in most cases, into even those routines which were least popular.

Lunchtime—Sunnyside Child Care

As "the flow of the day" continues, lunchtime tended to follow playtime. At Sunnyside today, the children are eating chicken nuggets, tater tots, sliced cucumbers,

fresh cantaloupe, bread and milk. The children are at varying degrees of eating because they come to the table in groups or waves. Larry is annoyed because he does not want ketchup on his plate. Leslie looks at him and shrugs. Timmy is crying way before his lunch is finished. Leslie releases him from the high chair and readies him for his nap. The Syler's daughter comes in from a jog and Molly's eyes light up and she begins pointing to her, making gurgling sounds expressing her excitement. Even though Molly is one of the youngest children at Sunnyside, she still takes comfort and fully enjoys those people who have become part of her childcare world. Thus, not only does Sunnyside consist of familiar routines, it also consists of familiar people.

Lunchtime—The Children's Center

At the Center, the first group is dismissed from their playtime activities and they begin using the restroom and washing their hands signifying that yet another transition is underway. By 12:00 p.m. all the children are eating lunch. Lunch consists of fish sticks, bread and butter, corn, milk and orange slices for dessert. Lunch is organized in a family-style manner with children requesting seconds if they wish. The family style structure reflects the philosophy of the Center that stresses independence and learning to care for one's own needs. One child does not want any corn and Angela says he must at least have a "no thank you" bite before refusing it. One little girl is sitting next to Karri and gently begins to rub her leg. The affection between the two indicates a high level of caring and attachment—they genuinely like each other. The ease by which the little girl engages in this affectionate display towards her caregiver suggests that these types of emotions and displays are commonplace. As the children finish eating, they scrap their plates and again use the restrooms if necessary and wash their hands. After this is completed, they ready themselves for the next

activity.

Analysis—Lunchtime

Children. There is little doubt that the children thoroughly enjoyed eating. At both Sunnyside and the Center, lunchtime was a very functional meal. That is, the children's main work during this time was eating. This was particularly true at Sunnyside. At the Center, children, as with breakfast, served themselves during this time. The children were involved in learning. For example, learning to try foods that one may not like such as the "no thank you bite" of corn. Children also scrapped their plates and neatly stacked them to be sent downstairs to the kitchen. What was particularly evident at both childcare settings was that the children were getting very tired. There was conversation at both childcare settings but the level and depth of conversation was less than at other eating times. This was especially true at Sunnyside due, in part, because the children were engaged in a considerable amount of physical outdoor play that day. Conversations centered more on the food and appropriate table etiquette rather than on other topics such as what a child's favorite movie was for example. Because of fatigue, the children's attention spans and level of patience and tolerance seemed much shorter than at breakfast. The children generally seemed less interested in talking and were in dire need of their upcoming naps.

Providers. The children's eating times also involved work for the caregivers. Mealtimes were sometimes almost hectic. For example, the Sylers were simultaneously serving, cooking and directing behavior. For them, eating times were not characterized by food but by service to the children with cleanup always following. In contrast, the Center had a cook on staff, so mealtimes for caregivers were less hectic. Instead, they were teaching times as caregivers ate with and directed children

relative to the task of eating but also to directions involving issues of general appropriateness such as washing hands before and after eating. Because the children's naptime was severely needed and upcoming, the providers needed to exercise considerable patience with the children as many of them were getting very crabby.

Lunchtime Analysis Summary

Lunchtime at both childcare settings was the most functional eating period of the day. The children ate quickly and then began preparing for naptime. Bathroom breaks and diaper changes were part of the normative lunchtime routine followed by hand washing for the children. Lunchtime tended to be one of attending to the needs of the children, although at the Center, the children sometimes initiated attending to their own needs, for example, filling their own plates. Because the children know what follows lunchtime—naptime—part of their general grumpiness may have been the knowledge of an upcoming and oftentimes least favorite routine.

Naptime—Sunnyside Child Care

It is very hectic now at Sunnyside as children are asking for seconds, finishing lunch, using the bathroom and readying for their naps. The Sylers have eleven children to care for today. Rich begins organizing the mats for sleep time. The older children assist with this familiar process. Each mat is labeled with a child's name and each child has a designated floor area for their mat. This floor area is significant because it represents a physical area that belongs to them. The children are aware of where their sleep area is located and ready the area with their sleep items. The children are now very tired indeed. They are quickly getting irritated with one another and with Rich and Leslie. Jacob sits and cries saying that he has to go to the bathroom. Leslie

begins the routine of changing diapers and ensuring that each child has used the bathroom who is capable to do so. Molly is upset because she does not have her baby doll and goes to the cubbyholes to get it.

Rich begins reading a book to the children as some sit on their mats and others sit around the chair where he is sitting. The book has a picture of a cactus in it and Leslie goes to get her cactus plant so that the children can see how "pokey" it is. It's about 12:50 p.m. now and Leslie leaves to begin the kitchen cleanup from lunch. Both Rich and Leslie ate a bit here and there as they served and supervised the children during lunchtime. Christine yawns as the children are now doing sharing time circle. Courtney tries on a necklace of beads one of the other children brought. She touches a single bead, rolls it in her fingers and examines the color.

"What time is it," Rich asks, cueing the children of an upcoming transition. The children answer, "night time" signaling their consent to lay down for their naps. Leslie is still working on sending the children to the bathroom and releases two more. "All the little ones are done," Leslie informs Rich. Christine keeps repeating that she needs to go potty. Rich ignores her knowing that this is often part of Christine's naptime routine. Christine sleeps in a crib at home and has a difficult time adjusting to mat sleeping. Based on this knowledge, the Sylers have designated her sleep area near the door of the living room because many times Rich or Leslie must pull Christine and her mat into another room before she will settle into sleep. Christine will not settle down today so before long, Leslie pulls Christine to another room. She then goes back and covers children with their blankets, distributes kisses and tells each child, "I love you." Courtney teases her saying that she was forgotten, Leslie goes back and gives her another kiss as both engage in this emotional work. Courtney's teasing also seems to be a familiar part of the naptime routine of finagling extra affection. Leslie

returns to her quickly as though she expects Courtney to ask for another helping of kisses. "Night, night, sweet dreams," Leslie says before she leaves the living room. By 1:30 p.m., the children are all sleeping.

Naptime—The Children's Center

At the Center, Sandy and Angela have finished cleaning up from lunch while the children were outside playing. They have also distributed the blue mats onto the floor for naptime. Thus, as the children reenter the building after play, the mat display signals the children that they need to ready for the naps. It is 12:50 p.m. and the children are being called to come inside. After removing their outside clothing, the children begin to line up outside the bathroom. A large toothbrush pallet is on the table and the children grab their brushes and brush their teeth before naptime.

Sandy is administering eye drops into Mark's eyes and he becomes very angry about the drops. Mark begins kicking and screaming as Sandy finally succeeds with the drops. Karri, relieving Sandy, pulls Mark into her lap hoping she can comfort him. He quiets some by Karri's gentle soothing but is still whimpering. After a couple minutes, Karri instructs him to go get in the bathroom line. Karri's prompting, serving as a transition trigger, agitates Mark. Mark gets up, kicking a sleep mat and then knocks a dustpan off the wall with his hand. The pan falls to the floor with a clatter. Mark may be resisting not only eye drops but also naptime as he has full knowledge that he must settle into sleep.

The children had been permitted to look at books while sitting on their sleep mats. But now, they are asked to put the books away and lay down. The children lay down with their blankets, pillows and stuffed animals. Tanner, in a very serious voice, says to another boy his same age, "I need to tell you something." Tanner whispers to

the other boy and then says, "good night, sleep tight." Finally, he says to the other boy, "let's go under the bed." With that, they both cover their heads with their blankets and lie down.

A couple of the children are now whimpering and Mark is still crying rather loudly. Soft music begins to play through the speakers cueing the children that the emotional work of settling into their naps has arrived and the children begin to quiet. Diane, Darla, Karri, Angela and Sandy are all sitting on the floor rubbing the backs of children with both hands as the children begin to drift off to sleep. The children, now close to sleep, clearly are enjoying the affectionate touch of their caregivers.

Analysis—Naptime

Children. As with arrival time, naptime was also stressful for some children while at childcare. While naptime was one of intense emotional work for all children, some children expressed this work in more negative ways. At the Syler's, naptime was characterized by a flurry of activity prior to settling in for their naps. Some of the children were content to simply lay down and settle in. Jacob, for example, was clearly anxious to sleep with his droopy eyes barely slits when he went to claim his sleep mat. Other children were ready for sleep but were anticipating their story and sharing time that normally precipitated sleep. Their familiarity with the naptime routine enabled them to hold out for their sharing time that they knew came first.

At Sunnyside, Christine had a very difficult time settling in for a nap. A transition routine of using the restroom, hearing a story and engaging in sharing time did not serve all her naptime needs. Christine contended on several occasions that she had not used the restroom although she had. Leslie, fully understanding Christine's naptime needs, finally had to separate Christine from the others by having her nap in

another room before Christine was able to settle into her nap.

Mark's tantrum at the Center just before naptime was a strong example of the stress involved with this time period. Mark was very frustrated and angry about receiving eye drops prior to naptime. The eye drops episode escalated into downright anger as he kicked his feet, the ground, another child's mat and finally a dustpan that hung on the wall. His crying and whimpering lasted about 45 minutes. Soothing techniques seemed only to be helpful while they were being administered but when they stopped, he again became agitated.

Generally, routines used to transition from playtime to naptime included, bathroom breaks followed by hand washing. Next, the children brushed their teeth then could sit on their sleep mats and thumb through books. Soft music was also played and finally, the caregivers gently rubbed the backs of the children before the children drifted off for their naps. These techniques tended to enable the children, in most cases, to make a relatively easy transition into sleep.

Although sometimes difficult for children, naptime was a time of bonding and love—that of affection and emotional attachment. Kisses, "I love yous" and other endearments were freely and genuinely given and received. Leslie, at Sunnyside, gave each child a kiss, made sure each was properly covered and told each child she loved them. Even the children who already had drifted off received the same affections. Courtney so enjoyed this time of love and bonding that she teased about being forgotten so she could receive another set of kisses and "love yous." At the Center, the affection tended to consist of gentle back rubbing and soft whispers to the children. In both cases, the children fully enjoyed these bonding techniques, knowing and expecting this level of affection prior to sleep.

For children, naptime consisted of a carefully orchestrated series of routines.

For both the Center and Sunnyside, naptime was characterized by bathroom visits, hygiene such as washing hands, the location of blankets, mats, pillows and favorite stuffed animals. Most times, children made the transition to naptime with ease although several children tended to have more difficulty. Naptime was also not only connected to physical needs but also involved emotional aspects such as verbal endearments and gentle soothing touches. Children were involved in giving and receiving affection as they continued to build nurturing relationships with their caregivers.

Providers. For caregivers, preparing for naptime involved making sure the children had used the bathroom or had had a diaper change. Moreover, naptime was also filled with an incredible amount of organizational detail, for example, matching up mats, blankets, etc. Naptime was one of highly routinized activity. Conversely, in some cases, naptime might also involve a certain amount of flexibility. This is so because as children grow older, they are less in need of a nap. In these cases, providers may need to organize additional activities for children who did not nap.

Based on observation and interviews of providers, the children's naptime was often a time filled with paperwork and organization for the caregivers. The Sylers used this time to complete paperwork associated with childcare so that when the children leave at the end of the day, the evening was their own. The Center caregivers performed organizational and planning functions during this time but also were able to take personal breaks. Thus, naptime for caregivers provided them with a break from the work of caregiving. With snack time and then the children's departures still upcoming, this was a welcome break.

Together with the high level of organization, caregivers were involved in their own emotional work as they distributed affections to the children. That is, the

providers were engaged in emotional caregiving as they dispensed kissed and whispered phrases of love to the children. In sum, providers skillfully navigated the children into sleep by use of the routines as transitional triggers. Providers depended on these familiar triggers to help the children through their emotional work. Cues such as asking the children, "what time is it," or soft music served these purposes. Thus, providers used the children's familiarity with routines as caregiving tools.

Snack Time—Sunnyside Child Care

Today is yet another warm and welcome March day at Sunnyside. It's 3:00 p.m. on a Monday afternoon. The children are waking from their naps. Several children are sleepily making their familiar trek to the dining room table after a bathroom visit. Rich is organizing a game that the children will play before they have their afternoon snack. Leslie is preparing a snack of watermelon, crackers and milk in the adjacent kitchen. The game Rich is arranging is called, "Follow Your Nose." This game involves the displaying of several picture cards and the children are to match what they smell from the small jar to a corresponding picture. Although the children do participate in the game, their attention is much more on the food Leslie is preparing. After several attempts to engage the children, Rich gives up knowing the food has won out over the game. The children begin eating their snacks.

Snack Time—The Children Center

It is 2:55 p.m. on another Monday afternoon at the Center. The day is cold and rainy and some of the children are just shaking off sleep as they awaken from their naps. Others are awake and ready to get up off their sleep mats. Twenty children, all with differing needs, are at the Center today. One caregiver is preparing the afternoon

snack. They are short a caregiver today, so Diane, the director, is filling in for the caregiver. Snack time is the only time that the children eat in a less formal manner at the Center. After they wake and put away their nap items, they wash and use the bathroom if needed. The nap items are stored in the small room off the main room in large white laundry bags. The children are welcome to eat their snack as they are ready. This gives the children an opportunity to wake at their own pace. Fully aware of this practice, some children eagerly make their way to the table while others continue to sleep or simply lay quietly on their mats.

Gloria's father arrives to pick her up. She is still lying down but is awake. He sits down on the floor next to her and he speaks to her softly telling her that mommy will not be home for dinner tonight. He wipes her runny nose and tries to get her moving up off the mat. All children are now almost fully awake and the room is now beginning to bustle with activity. Angela is applying cream cheese onto crackers for the children. She instructs them, "raise your hand and I'll come right over" to give them crackers.

Today is Daniel's fifth birthday and his mother brought a large cake for the children to celebrate. A conversation quickly ensues between the children focusing on how old they are and when they were or will be five. The birthday celebration is significant because it serves as an indicator to the children than Daniel is ready for the next step—kindergarten. Gloria's father is still trying to rouse his daughter as he tries to replace her hair clip. He is unsuccessful and asks Diane for help. Karri, who arrived at 7:00 a.m., is getting ready to leave and her replacement has just entered the room. Her replacement is a college student from the local university. One boy approaches the table and he is told that he must wash his hands before eating so he strolls to the sinks. Several other children are letting Angela know they are ready for

more cream cheese and crackers.

It's 3:10 p.m. and Angela teases the children saying the birthday cake is hers and she has not yet decided if she is going to share it. Diane is kneeling down over Linda who tells Diane that, "I dream about flowers." Meanwhile, Angela is helping Daniel serve the cake reminding him not to lick the frosting off his fingers as he serves. The children sing happy birthday to Daniel and end the song with a "cha, cha, cha." All three caregivers are serving, organizing and directing during this treat time.

Analysis—Snack Time

Children. Snack time for children tended to be the most social eating period. The children were rested and much more able to engage in socializing. For example, they sang songs and talked about their ages. Eating, especially at the Center, was more informal. As children awoke from their naps, they were able to begin eating their snack without waiting for other children. Some of the children preferred to stay on their sleep mates, such as Gloria and Linda, waking up slowly. Others, on the other hand, were eagerly waiting for naptime to be over so they could rise immediately. Not only were the children at the Center getting ready for a snack, they were also putting their sleep items away appropriately. Next, they were taking turns using the restroom and washing their hands.

Following their snack, they were treated to an additional snack because of Daniel's birthday. Everyone shared in the cake including the providers. The sharing of a birthday snack served the purpose of another transition. For Daniel, he turned five years old. Daniel will begin school in September. Because of this, he will not be returning to the Center in the Fall. Daniel was very excited about sharing this time with his daycare friends and they were excited about sharing this time with him. As

the children conversed about their own ages, there seemed to be the implication of number of years before they too would be making the transition that Daniel will soon make.

At Sunnyside, the children were anticipating playing outside which was a rare treat for March so they were less interested in the snack than they normally might be. The children were not intrigued by the game Rich tried to play. They were much more interested in the food and then going outside.

Providers. The Sylers, at Sunnyside, again, as with the other eating periods, tended to serve during snack time. They busily cut fruit and filled milk glasses, serving and organizing but not eating any of the snack themselves. Rich, just prior to the snack, was performing a teaching role although the children were not interested in the activity.

At the Center, the providers also were involved in serving and directing similar to what had occurred at Sunnyside. In addition to this, however, several other things were also occurring. Diane was filling in for an absent caregiver, thus, she was serving the role of filling in a childcare gap. Moreover, Karri was leaving the center because her shift was over. This was an important distinction between center and home caregiving. At family day care homes, the providers tend to be the only caregivers present. There is no change in staff and the caregivers are present until the last child leaves. Whereas at the Center, staff were finishing a shift and new staff were arriving. Moreover, if a caregiver were sick, backup systems were used. Family daycare providers normally do not have these types of back up systems at their disposal.

Snack Time Analysis Summary

Snack time was one of the most social eating times. This may be due to the

fact that the children were rested from their naps and they also knew that playtime and then pick up would follow. Playtime and reuniting with their parents are favorite times for the children. Snack time also consisted of bathroom breaks, hand washing, eating and organizing as the children put their sleep items away. As with most of the routines in childcare, snack time involved teaching, organizing and serving but also it was associated with the provision of backup systems and the ending of shifts for providers at the Center.

Snack time was also one in which if a celebration were to occur, it would normally happen during snack time. This was the case for Daniel's birthday. The birthday celebration was important for several reasons. First, Daniel was excited to share this time with the other children at daycare. Not only because it was his birthday but also because these children were Daniel's friends. This group of children were not temporary people in Daniel's life but they were significant people with whom he wished to share significant events. Concomitantly, Daniel was moving out of daycare in several months and moving into a new world. The celebration served as a signal that soon the other children and Daniel would be separated. Things would change. Thus, the celebration broke routine cueing the children and caregivers of impending change.

Departures—Sunnyside Child Care

The final routine comprising the "flow of the day" included playtime as well as parents picking their children up at days' end. Because the late afternoon playtime and departures happened simultaneously, they will be examined together. Thus, both play and departures are described in this section.

After the snack, the Sylers take the children outside in two "waves" to play.

Today, it is a very pleasant 70 degrees. The children are excited about the prospect of playing outside which is rare treat for March in Michigan. A flurry of activity precipitates the waves of children departing the dining room as they use the bathroom and find and don their shoes. Two preschoolers collide at the corner of the kitchen and bathroom and fall down. At first they look as thought they might cry but they begin to giggle instead. Naps help the children deal with these unexpected happenings.

Rich calls to Curtis that he can go outside with the first group that Leslie is leading but then realizes that the group is larger than Leslie can sufficiently supervise and he calls him back. Curtis looks as though he may begin to cry and Rich quickly distracts him with the offer of some additional watermelon. "Take backs" are nearly impossible for children to understand. Leslie is talking to the children about the birds that are all around outside. The children are scooping up peanuts to fill the bird feeders. Two of the children also grab an ear of corn for the squirrels and the children exit the porch.

Molly's father arrives to collect her and I hear her squeal in delight as she runs into his arms. Her father kneels down to her and they talk about what a beautiful day it is outside. The end-of-the-day reunion is marked by excitement and affection by both parties. Molly's father has thick dark hair like hers and he is wearing a dark blue uniform. Molly's father, Don, helps Molly with her shoes and they quickly depart. Interestingly, Rich stands back and to the side of the reunion offering both physical and emotional space for Molly and her father. This stance signals that Rich is overtly relinquishing his "parenting" duties—that is, he is passing the parenting torch.

Outside, Leslie has the children blowing bubbles through many different bubble apparatuses. Leslie uses a large star wand to make gigantic bubbles for the children. Christine is jumping all around imitating how the bubbles are moving all around her.

She then bounces to the large castle play house to have a look inside. Christine's mother now arrives and Christine acknowledges her with a quick smile and continues her play. The almost cautious acknowledgement on Christine's part seemed part of her and her mother's pickup routine. Christine needed to warm up to her mother somewhat slowly and her mother did not seem surprised by this. Her transition from a child in childcare to her mother's baby was one Christine needed to work on at an almost slow-motioned pace. This pace had clearly been negotiated and agreed upon by both parties.

Larry is excited because he has spotted the cat and begins yelling, "kitty cat" as he tries to catch the cat. Courtney shows me that she has not given all the peanuts to the birds and deftly puts several in her mouth saying, "sometimes we can eat the peanuts." Rich's group of children are now coming outside to join the other children. George, Jessica's father, arrives to collect her.

George and I chat for several minutes about where he works and about past childcare arrangements he has used. During the conversation, we continue to watch the children play. Jessica acknowledges her dad's arrival by approaching him and they talk for a moment. Courtney is dancing around the yard with the star bubble wand over her head proclaiming that she is a "Christmas tree." Curtis' mother arrives and he gives her a quick hug and resumes play. Caleb's mother also arrives at about the same time. It is about 3:45 in the afternoon. Most of the children will be picked up by 4:00 p.m. This pickup time is one that the Sylers have prearranged with the parents and they do not provide care after that time. The Sylers expect that the parents will honor these hours and the parents do. In fact, it's almost magical that out of nowhere but exactly like clockwork, parents begin to appear.

Rich organizes a foot race with the toddlers and the parents stand back to

watch the show. Although the parents are interacting with each other a bit, and also with Leslie and Rich, mostly they seem content to simply watch the children play. There is something magical about children playing in the spring. The children seem very pleased to be outside and are not eager to leave. Another mother arrives and one toddler runs to greet her, delivering a big hug. Now parents are attempting to collect their children's belongings and trying to make an exit. Some parents do spend a significant amount of time at Sylers during pickup although it is likely due to the nice weather, at least in part.

Larry and Mona's father has arrived and he has been there for about 15 minutes. He looks as though he is ready to leave and tries to get the children focused in that direction. Their father is dressed in professional, office attire. He has made several attempts to get them collected and move them toward the gate but they are not at all interested in leaving. The father seems to offer few cues to the children about leaving and I wonder if pickups are not part of his usual work. Finally, he picks Larry up and takes Mona's hand. Larry is furious and begins howling and attempts to free himself from his father's arms. The father looks annoyed, frustrated and somewhat embarrassed as he knows that they are being observed. Rich and Leslie expertly look away pretending not to notice. The arrival of a parent instantly triggers a transferal of parenting duties. Thus, it is not their business, the torch has been passed. With Larry still in tow under his arm, the father leaves with his two children.

Timmy and Courtney's mother arrives and Leslie and she chat briefly. Leslie talks to her about getting some sunglasses for Timmy when he is outside as he seems to squint significantly in the sun. She responds saying that she thinks she should be able to find a pair to fit him this year. Timmy is quite small for a 12-month-old and last year she was not able to find any sunglasses that fit his face.

Curtis' mother, Cheryl, is following Curtis around the play area as he shows off how well he moves about the play castle. Curtis is also sharing his daycare world with his mother. Courtney runs up to Leslie and gives her a quick hug and Leslie responds with a, "I love you" to Courtney. Courtney turns and runs away. Cheryl and Leslie begin a conversation about the outfit Courtney is wearing today. The conversation moves to Timmy's first steps which he has not yet taken. Cheryl thinks that they will take a vacation this spring to Disney but that Timmy is too young to accompany them. Leslie nods in agreement. The conversation between Leslie and Timmy's and Courtney's mother is shrouded in familiarity almost taking on an intimate tone. The significance is that these are conversations between people who know each other very well—they are almost familial in their familiarity. Courtney runs back up to them asking, "pleeease can we stay?" her mother nods and Courtney runs off again.

Before long, and almost instantaneously, all the children have left except for DeAnna who is the oldest and has been at Sunnyside the longest of all the current group of children. By 4:30 p.m., Rich, Leslie and DeAnna reenter the house and Leslie sets up the computer for DeAnna to play. DeAnna is sulking and proclaiming that she is bored. Her parents will not pick her up until about 5:00 p.m. All the other parents pickup by 4:00 p.m. which is a new rule of Sunnyside although DeAnna is still under the old set of rules. DeAnna plays on the computer for a half hour until her aunt arrives to collect her. Her aunt informs her that they are going to dinner to celebrate the aunt's birthday. Leslie and the aunt hover by the front door and discuss a promotion the aunt just received. The aunt is excited by the news and is very willing to share it with Leslie and Leslie is clearly enthusiastic about the news. By 5:10 p.m., the Syler house is startlingly quiet as the last child leaves. The caregiving routines will be shelved until tomorrow. At 6:45 tomorrow morning, however, these useful tools

will be retrieved and used again and again.

Departures—The Children's Center

At the Center, the pickup routines have begun. A mother enters the room to collect her daughter. Her daughter spots her and says softly, "my mommy." Her mother kneels down to her and gently begins rubbing her back, plays with her hair and talks softly to her as the girl finishes her cake. Both mother and child are engaging in a reclaiming process as they talk gently with mother thoroughly enjoying the feel of her daughter's matted curls. She rolls the hair between her fingers as though she had forgotten how it felt and smelled.

Daniel is talking about the decorations that were on top of the cake, sending them around for the children to inspect. Meanwhile, Diane is organizing activities for the afternoon. Normally, they would go outside to play but can't today because of the rain. Instead, they will play in the small room while the main room is set up for play centers. The children are instructed to put their shoes on, which were removed during nap, before going to the small room.

A father arrives for his son saying, "let's go home, put your coat on for me and I will carry you to the car." Although the father's son is close to being too big to be carried, this routine of closeness acts as an adhesive reestablishing the parenting bond instantly. Angela is talking to the mother who arrived earlier about how her daughter is eating while Anthony is getting his diaper changed by another caregiver. All the children have finished eating by 3:30 and they are ushered into the small play room. Four or five boys play with cars on a small wooden ramp. Linda is singing, "If you wish upon a star." There are 20 of us in the play room which includes three adults. Seven of the children are females and ten are males.

A five-year-old boy's mom comes to pick him up and he bounces toward her as she opens the door to claim him. Several children are playing teacher using the easel board as they play. Several others are reading stories to whoever is listening. A bulletin board displaying pictures of children involved in Center activities dons one wall. The pictures serve as an indicator that the children and caregivers operate as an extended family. On the floor on one side of the room are the laundry bags the children use to store their nap items. Each bag has a symbol, such as a tree or car, that is associated to its owner. The familiar symbols, chosen by the child, become part of the child's daycare identity.

Another parent, a father, arrives to collect his son. A three-year-old girl begins to cry because she does not want to share her toy. Diane plops down on the floor and puts Tanner on her lap. Aaron, her son, is annoyed with this and also tries to also get onto her lap. She sits him next to her on the floor and puts her arm around him. Diane is doing triple duty right now as mother, caregiver and center director. The children are getting restless most likely because of the closeness of the small room. They look through the window to see how the main room play centers are progressing. "Rainy days are difficult," Diane comments. The difficulty may be due, in part, because the children do not so readily know the routines connected to this playtime. This change in routine leaves the children with the possibility of the unexpected. Sometimes the unexpected is uncomfortable

A mother arrives to get her daughter. The girl does not speak to her mother but claims her by grabbing her arm. Sandy has completed cleaning the kitchen and is assembling the centers. It is 4:00 p.m. and Angela is getting ready to leave. The children are dismissed from the small room and will engage in free play for the rest of the day.

Tanner's mother arrives to collect him with Tanner's newborn sister in tow. She is on maternity leave so she is able to pick him up early. The caregivers all go to look at the baby and to talk to Tanner's mother. They are sharing the intimacy of a newborn baby. Children are busy playing blocks, office, dress-up, delivering mail and newspapers and building towns out of large, light-weight blocks in addition to other activities. Two children are also busily playing games on the computer.

As another mother arrives for her daughter, the girl runs and jumps into her mother's arms giving her a big hug. This last pickup completes the first wave of departures. Tanner's mother is still at the Center and now has Tanner on her lap and she is talking to a caregiver. Katie wants to be part of the office and Daniel offers her part of the desk on which he is working. Katie declines and instead sits with her mother, Diane. Katie begins to softly whine as though she is trying to get her mother's attention. "Katie working at Gazette," David again offers but Katie ignores his comment. David was engaged in trying to comfort Katie but Katie wants to receive the comforting from Diane.

Colin begins to howl as several other children want to use the building blocks and begin to dismantle his town. Diane tries to settle the dispute by sharing the blocks but Colin explains that he needs every single block for the town he is building. Diane places several of the blocks in the cubbyhole where they are stored but Colin promptly retrieves them again saying he wants "all" of them.

It's 4:20 p.m. and the younger children seem to be involved in more structured but singular play whereas the older children prefer self-directed, group play. Sarah approaches me asking, "what time will my mommy be here?" I shrug and Sarah quickly says that at, "twenty after five" she will be here. Sarah looks toward the clock although I am sure that she cannot yet read a clock. Sarah takes comfort in knowing

the time her mother will arrive to collect her. One caregiver is cleaning the painting table and Diane begins picking up toys and putting them away. At the opposite end of the room, another dispute erupts between two children wanting the same toy. Diane mediates asking how long the first child will play with it. "Three minutes," he states. Diane tells the other child that he may have it in three minutes. Without prompting, Aaron and Colin begin rolling up some of the play mats and putting them away. They know the end of the day is near. Sarah is peering out the "waving window" waiting for her mother to come. She knows the sequence of the other children's pickups and knows that hers is very soon.

The second wave of collections begins around 5:10 p.m. and it moves very rapidly. A mother arrives for her daughter and quickly ushers her out the door saying, "we're late, late, late, we're going to go see grandma." A father next arrives for his son and the three-year-old exclaims, "daddy, daddy, daddy," and runs to him. A mother enters for her daughter and her daughter squeals in delight as the girl sprints toward her mother. Daniel's mother enters the room and so does Mark's mother. Mark also lets out a squeal when he sees his mother. Daniel's mother and Diane are talking about Daniel's birthday and how she almost forgot to get a cake for him and his friends at the Center.

Neal's father enters the room and he begins talking with Daniel's mother. He has brought newspapers with him and Neal begins putting the papers in everyone's mailbox. Both Neal and his father are familiar with this routine and clearly have engaged in it before. Daniel's mother and Neal's father converse for approximately ten minutes. Although it doesn't seem that they know each other outside of their daycare connection, they are not strangers—they know each other from the many times their pickups have coincided.

Sarah's mother now enters the room and Sarah squeals in delight and heads toward her in a full run, jumping into her mother's arms. Another mother comes in for her son followed by Colin's mother. Colin is sitting very quietly at the small table cutting pictures out of a catalog. He tells the caregiver he is cutting them out for his sister. The caregiver seems baffled. Colin's mother approaches them, kneeling down on the floor and explains that Colin's best friend has just gotten a new baby sister. Now, Colin also wants a new sister. Colin's mother waits several minutes until he is finished cutting and leads him out the door with his pictures firmly but carefully grasped in his small hand as though he were actually carrying his sister. Colin is making his departure transition very slowly today. For Colin, returning home may be a reminder that he still does not have his new baby sister.

It is 5:30 p.m. and the Center is startlingly quiet. Diane is ushering her children out the front door and the part-time caregiver is getting ready to lock up for the evening. The Center is closed until tomorrow at which time it will commence using those familiarly, orchestrated routines.

Analysis—Departures

Children. Because departures occur together with playtime, departures were filled with play. Children blew bubbles, ran races, danced and sung. At the Center, the children were involved in a great deal of role playing like mail carrier and newspaper worker. They were also involved in disputes over toys. Some, like Sarah, were involved in watching signs that they would soon be picked up for the day.

Children, for the most part, enjoyed being picked up at the end of the day. They met their parents with squeals, hugs, arm-grabbing and running into arms as they acknowledged their parents arrival. Some children acknowledged their parents arrival

with a quick nod or look or smile and then would resume playing. Perhaps the quiet acknowledgments were part of the departure routine for the children suggesting that they wanted their parent to "come to them" or "come join their play." That is, the children wanted their parents to show them that they missed them while at work. Or, maybe the quiet acknowledgements were part of the routine in which children needed additional time to transition from childcare to being mom or dad's baby. What's more, departures were filled with collecting the child's items such as a favorite toy they had brought and finding shoes, hats, etc.

Some of the children, Larry and Mona at Sunnyside, for example, were not ready to leave even though they were happy to see their father. Because they were not ready, crying ensued as the father decided he needed to exit. Courtney and Timmy also were not ready to leave Sunnyside but were able to negotiate more time while their mother waited. At the Center, Colin, the last child left at the end of the day, also was interested in the picture cutting project for his "make believe" new sister. This cutting and carefully folding the cut outs was very important to him and he clearly communicated this level of importance to the caregiver and his mother just by his quietness. Regardless of demeanor, however, the children were clearly all involved in the emotional work of leaving including the transitions back to their homes.

Parents. Generally, parents during pickup time were clearly ready to see their children. They greeted their children with hugs, smiles and endearments. At the Center, one mother gently rubbed her daughter back when she arrived softly announcing her presence. Other parents arrived, acknowledged and simply watched their child play. While they watched, some were involved in "kid talk." For example, Leslie and a mom spoke about sunglasses for a youngster. As the conversation developed about the child walking, the parent was learning and Leslie was in a

teaching role relative to the parent. At the Center, Angela and a parent were also engaged in "kid talk" about how the child ate that day. For these parents, some were less rushed then when they arrived in the morning and were enjoying the slower pace. Others, however, were late for prior engagements and needed to depart quickly. Thus, they immediately claimed their child and were out the door. For those needing to leave quickly, their departure routine was filled with rushing and anxiety as they tried to leave.

Talk of a different type also was evident during departures. When Mary arrived, she brought her newborn with her. The caregivers made a fuss over the child commenting how beautiful she was. Mary and a couple caregivers also talked generally about the infant and inquired about Mary. Thus, they were involved in "personal talk." Personal talk was not centered on the child in common, i.e., the child in childcare but on other issues. Talk was also not focused on issues such as the weather, i.e., "small talk." Personal talk also occurred between Leslie and DeAnna's aunt as they could be heard whispering about a new promotion. In this way, departures included a social aspect between the caregiver and the parent as well as serving as indicators of their attachments.

What's more, during interviews of parents, they expanded on the observational description of departure routines. Daniel's mother, Dawn, explained that she is still developing a pickup routine with Daniel. At the end of the day, Dawn is physically tired when she arrives for Daniel. Many times, Daniel is not ready to leave when she arrives because Daniel does not want to leave the Center while there are still other kids playing. She sometimes becomes frustrated that they cannot leave quickly. Because she is frustrated she is not always able to give Daniel his transitional space and time.

Mary, however, does not usually pick Tanner up at the end of day because

Tanner's father does this. Her feelings leading up to this time tended to differ. Mary normally arrives home ten minutes before Tanner. She explained that before seeing Tanner at the end of the day, she gets excited at the prospect of seeing him. Mary describes her pre-pickup process as one of contemplation about what they will talk about when he gets home. She looks forward to sharing in his daycare day.

As Dawn reflects on the Center throughout the day, her thoughts often focus on the fun Daniel is having. Dawn has a high comfort level about the Center while she is at work saying that she is well-assured that he is alright. Mary also echoed these similar sentiments when she reflects on her child at the Center during the day. She explained that she does not worry whether he is safe or happy because she knows he is. In fact, she stated that, "I don't have to worry about any of that ever. I never have any second thoughts about childcare." Moreover, she has a level of comfort knowing that Tanner is building important friendships. Both mothers articulated comfort in knowing, not only knowing the routines associated to childcare but also knowing their children were well cared for.

Providers. Departures for providers were again filled with work. As they awaited parents' arrivals, they organized foot races, taught about birds, mediated disputes, changed diapers and organized clean ups. Together with the parents, they were involved in "kid talk," "small talk" and "personal talk." In at least one case, a provider was teaching a parent. Providers also were still engaged with the children during departures. For example, Courtney and Leslie demonstrated their relationship with each other by exchanging "I love yous" while Courtney's parent watched. Providers also were involved in releasing their temporary parenting role. For example, pretending not to notice when a child did not want to leave and Rich's giving of physical and emotional space when Molly was collected were both indicators that the

providers were no longer in charge.

Based on a provider interview, work for caregivers did not end when the last child left. The Sylers expressed that they engage in a process of reflection—on the day and on the children. Rich explained that after the children have all departed at the end of the day, he considers what the children will be returning to after they leave his home. For example, if he knows a child is from a poor family, he does a mental check evaluating whether he fed the child well enough before the child left. Regarding all the children, he explained that he examines whether he met the children's needs that particular day. And finally, he contemplates what they will do the next childcare day. Thus, for caregivers, their work spills over into their non-work hours. Like the children they provide care for, these are also transitional times for caregivers—ones often characterized by significant role change and role distance as they relinquish their duties and as children return to their parent(s).

Routine Analysis Summary

The goal of examining childcare routines was to better understand what happens during a "typical" childcare day from the perspective of children, caregivers and parents. Overall, the description of a "typical" childcare day was based on the six observation periods and interviews of stakeholders. Two different childcare settings were used as research sites during observation. Although differences in philosophies and routines to some extent did exist, these settings were overwhelmingly similar based on the experiences of the children, caregivers and parents involved. The day consisted of arriving, eating, playing, napping and finally, leaving at the end of the day. Children most enjoyed playing, eating and being collected when their childcare day was completed although exceptions certainly did exist. In contrast, arrivals and

napping tended to be the most difficult for the children. These areas seemed to involve more intensive emotional work for some.

The routines such as arrivals, departures, eating, playing and napping seemed to flow into the next almost seamlessly. Considerable overlap occurred between routines such that much of what made up one routine also was a major part of another. For example, meeting the physical needs of the children, organization, cleanup, learning and attachments were evidenced with each routine. The children were actively engaged in emotional work while they participated in their routinized days. The children laughed, cried, hugged, loved and were loved while meeting each challenge in a safe and stable environment. Although the days were organized around these routines, the children were constantly working through the end of one activity and the start of another. Each transition brought with it either acceptance or resistance to the next routine depending on the day and depending on the child.

The caregivers met each child's demand with patience and skill as they navigated the children through the day. The days were filled with safety, learning, frustration, tears, laughter and love as will be the following days at Sunnyside and at the Center. Whereas the caregivers gently guided the children through these routines, some transitions were met with ease and other times, the children had great difficulty with them.

Most telling through an examination of the "flow of the day" was that the routines were the heart of the childcare day. Not only did routines organize the day, they offered a way of thinking about childcare. The routines were rooted in familiarity and of "knowing" for all stakeholders, involving a permanency that in turn offered comfort—they provided a climate of affability. Moreover, routines were imbedded with transitional cues such as the "waving window." Thus, the routines framed

childcare experiences with each transition folding into the next, the days forming weeks, and months and finally a year has passed.

Whereas the childcare routines are the heart of childcare experiences, an examination of the meanings attached to the routines continue the work of understanding childcare from an experiential perspective. Thus, the following chapter addresses the second research question focusing on childcare definitions.

CHAPTER V

CHILDCARE DEFINIONS AND UTOPIAS

Childcare Definitions

The examination of routines served the purpose of understanding childcare from what has traditionally been the "insider" perspective--that is, children in childcare, caregivers providing childcare and parents who require childcare services. It was quickly evident that the routines connected to childcare involved more than the daily doing and receiving of childcare. This research uncovered the sometimes hidden areas of childcare including emotional and transitional work such as attachments and anxiety often experienced by the stakeholders involved. Moreover, what transpired during the childcare days were significant, life-defining events for the children, caregivers and parents at Sunnyside and at the Center. When evaluating childcare routines, it was evident that childcare consisted not only of routines but also those meanings and definitions attached to the routines. The following section will continue the examination of childcare by focusing on childcare definitions postulated by those stakeholders most intimately involved in childcare.

As noted in Chapters III, childcare experts tend to define childcare as care for children while parents and/or guardians are working or attending school; as care for children who are 12 years old or younger; and as a business venture. It is typically seen as a necessary evil. During the course of this research, those definitions have been found to be gravely inadequate. The following section addresses the second research question regarding childcare definitions. That is, this section explores

definitions of childcare expressed by individuals typically defined as "non experts"—children, caregivers and parents. A definition of childcare by children is first presented.

Children

Within this research design, the most difficult component of data collection was utilizing children as research subjects. Oftentimes, children at the research sites were talkative only when it was self-initiated and child-directed. Nonetheless, through observation and verbalization, the children were able to contribute the following to the discourse.

Most of the children at both childcare settings generally explained their time in childcare relative to their parents' employment. In other words, they were in childcare because their parent(s) were at work. One little girl repeated the phrase, "my mommy at work," throughout the day as a way of explaining her involvement in childcare and perhaps as a way of maintaining a sense of her "mommy" because she knew where her mother was. In addition to this formulation, however, they also tended to describe childcare in several other important ways.

First, children saw childcare as learning. In fact, many times the children referred to the childcare as school and not childcare. Although the children did refer to the two childcare sites as schools in some cases, at the Sylers, neither Rich nor Leslie was referred to as teachers. In contrast, at the Center, oftentimes, the caregivers were addressed in "teacher" terms. What's more, DeAnna, a four-year-old, called Sunnyside not Sunnyside Child Care but Sunnyside School. This is an important distinction perhaps indicating that school, even for youngsters, is considered to be a more socially legitimate place to attend than is a childcare setting.

Nonetheless, for DeAnna, Sunnyside was not childcare but was a preschool of sorts. Since DeAnna will be attending kindergarten in September, she saw Sunnyside as a training ground for the upcoming year in the public school system.

Children also suggested that childcare consisted of a social and interpersonal aspect. For example, one child responded that, "moms have to let us play." Thus for some children, childcare was about having fun. In fact, during an interview, Daniel's mother, Dawn, explained that many times when she comes to collect Daniel at the end of the day, he is not ready to leave. He wants to stay and play with the other children. Dawn has adjusted her schedule so that she picks Daniel up later in the day from the Center because Daniel does not want to leave while his friends are still there. What's more, during a recent vacation, Daniel asked to go to the Center because he missed playing with his friends. Dawn remarked that she was initially disappointed by Daniel's request because she had purposely taken time off work to spend time with Daniel. Before long, however, Dawn's disappointment was replaced by gratitude with the realization that Daniel was happy and content at the Center. For Daniel, the Center can be understood in terms of friendship and playmates.

In fact, other children also suggested that childcare was a place where their friends were. Many examples via observations were noted supporting these formulations. Daily, children were sharing secrets with one another such as Tanner's statement to another child before nap saying, "there's something I want to tell you," followed by a whisper and a knowing look. The children also showed signs of missing each other when a significant friend was not in attendance, i.e., Neal's question Monday morning immediately upon entering the Center asking, "where's Daniel." In fact, Courtney, at Sunnyside, continued to ask where Larry was even though she was told he did not come on Fridays. Finally, the children also displayed numerous

examples of genuine caring and affection for one another. Colin's tower built for Gerry and Gerry's subsequent hug illustrated these close relationships.

It is critical to note that not only are these relationships intimate ones, they are characterized by longevity. Many of the children at the two centers had been in attendance since infancy. For example, Daniel's mother, Dawn, remarked that Daniel does not "know" any differently. That is, there has never been a time that Daniel has not been a regular at the Center. The case is the same for DeAnna at Sunnyside. Moreover, many times, families have several children who use the same childcare arrangement. Larry and Mona at Sunnyside and Aaron and Katie at the Center are examples. Thus, these relationships are often long term ones in terms of the family. A particular child, Larry, for example, has only been at Sunnyside for a short period of time. Mona, a preschooler and Larry's sister, however, has been in attendance for a substantial amount of time.

What's more, childcare relationships often involve a large number of hours over a long period of time. Nationally, more than 70% of infants and toddlers who attended family day care or daycare centers and whose mothers were in the workforce, spent at least 35 hours per week in a supplemental care arrangement (Willer, et. al, 1991). Hence, the majority of the children in childcare arrangements are oftentimes there every day and for the entire day. Most likely, children spend more time in childcare interacting with their caregivers and other children than with extended family members such as grandparents. Thus, the large amount of time and length of time children spend in childcare is reflected in the depth of relationships they build.

Finally, in children's definitions of childcare, children never referred to any caregiver in terms of "mom" or "dad." The children clearly knew who their parent(s) was and who was not their parent(s). Instead, the caregivers were usually addressed

by their first names such as Rich, Karri or sometimes "teacher" for example. It is interesting to note, however, that Rich mentioned that on several occasions, the first word from infants in their care was "Rich" not "mom" or "dad." Because children often spend a significant amount of time in childcare, an infant's first utterance may very likely be the name of the caregiver. Their first word, the caregiver's name, may also reflect the level of attachment an infant has developed with a caregiver.

Children also connected childcare to attachments. Providers and parents often mentioned this aspect of childcare. Children may also form a special attachment to a favorite caregiver. Phone calls, notes and even little hand-made gifts for caregivers after the child had left childcare permanently, were also common.

In sum, children expressed that childcare was about parents working and children learning, playing and building relationships. Children defined childcare, first and foremost, as part of their parent's employment. Part of their role as children was to participate in childcare while their parents filled their own work role. Attending childcare was the children's contribution to their families so that the families could be sustained economically. Children also suggested that childcare was an educational milieu where they were learning important life skills. The children were at childcare, in part, to learn. Finally, children tended to define childcare in social terms. Not only did childcare afford children play opportunities but it also provided playmates whom they described as friends. Thus, they clearly developed attachments to both the caregivers and the other children.

Providers

In some cases, caregivers described childcare in experientially different terms than did children. Based on the description of childcare presented in Chapter IV, it

was evident that childcare could be defined in terms of daily routines—playing and feeding, for example. In addition to these, childcare providers echoed the sentiments of children when defining childcare but were able to expand on those themes as well as offer extensive detail. Like the children, childcare is defined by caregivers as social, educational, work-related, and relational. But, caregivers offer several other descriptors. For example, during an interview, Leslie Syler defined childcare as "returning soft ice cream."

Since the Sylers have been providing childcare in the same small community for over 24 years, they have built hundreds of lasting relationships there. Moreover, because they provide care for 12 children, they spend a great deal of time at the grocery store. Whenever the Sylers grocery shop, they are sure to run into people in most every aisle who had been, in the past, childcare families. Oftentimes, Leslie explained, the families treat the Sylers as part of their extended families. As such, they are often interested in "catching up" with the Sylers as they share news of each other's lives. Hence, in many cases, the Sylers may spend a great amount of time in the aisles of grocery stores. On many occasions, Leslie explained, the ice cream has soften before she and Rich can make their way to the counter. Consequently, Leslie can often be seen returning soft ice cream to the freezer before she leaves the store. This metaphor fully captures many aspects of their childcare definitions. These definitions will be examined next.

The survey data, described in Chapter II, augmented providers' definitions of childcare. That is, childcare providers defined childcare as involving relationships, one provider noting that, "most of us really do care [about children]." This statement was strongly supported during the observational periods, demonstrated, for example, by the numerous instances of affection. In fact, the children often reinitiated contact with

the caregivers after the children were no longer in their care. During an interview, one provider shared a letter with me from a woman who she used to provide care for and who is now a mother herself. The letter explained that she fondly remembered collecting "collie corn" in the spring with the caregiver. Now that the woman is a mother herself, she is establishing this same tradition with her own daughter. The childcare provider showed me an envelope of collie corn she was collecting for the young lady saying that she will be sending it off to her soon. Thus, the relationships with the children were reciprocal whereby both child and caregiver oftentimes formed lasting relationships.

While interviewing Rich Syler, he explained that both he and Leslie missed the children perhaps even more than the children missed them. Sometimes, he recalled, he and Leslie would see a child in a store, for example, and would be excited about seeing him or her. He and Leslie might begin talking to the child but the child may not remember who they were. "Those," he stated, "kinda hurt." But, he was quick to point out, "we know that we have had a positive impact on the children even if they do not always remember us." Rich went on to explain that both he and Leslie have learned to emotionally distance from the children because it was painful for them if they didn't when the child permanently left their care.

These same types of relationships were also prevalent at the Center. Karri, lead teacher at the Center, described childcare as involving lasting attachments. Often, Karri explained, a child returned to the Center to visit or called on the phone when they missed a particular caregiver. What's more, even though the Center employed several caregivers, it was not uncommon for a child to form an attachment with a specific caregiver.

In addition to the bonding between children and caregivers, other relationships

were also evident. For example, recall DeAnna's aunt and Leslie sharing news of a promotion and a parent teasing Kerri about the conference she had attended. These providers and parents were forming relationships having little to do with issues of childcare or even the child for that matter. Moreover, the children, parents and providers observed and interviewed in this study as well as the survey respondents tended to report that childcare consists, in part, of bonding and of attachments. There is no reason to believe that these descriptions would differ with respect to childcare relationships at other childcare settings. Thus, childcare can be aptly described and understood as attachments consisting of fondness, love, missing one another, and nurturing.

Although childcare involves strong relationships, other strong emotions also were part of how childcare was defined. Childcare is arduous work for caregivers, often consisting of impossibilities. In the provider survey data, several providers suggested that caregiving is frustrating, stating that, "[m]y days are impossible" and "I can't be in two places at once." The needs of children are constant and immediate. This mixture is physically and emotionally draining for providers. Oftentimes, caregivers do not get a break from these pressures during the day and perhaps not at all if they are parents in addition to being providers. That is, they get little relief from the constant and immediate needs of children because serving those needs is their job.

In fact, within the survey data, many providers requested support groups and counseling services to deal with these day-to-day challenges. The following statement by one provider summed up both the love and frustration that are part of a childcare provider's job, "I love the children I care for...[but] I will be very glad to be done with it. ...[H]ome daycare is very difficult." The conflict between love and frustration is a significant aspect of caregiving. This conflict was evidenced by one caregiver when

she proclaimed in exasperation, "we will not be playing this game today." This caregiver was frustrated over the constant disobedience of a boy who was being disruptive and would not participate in the current activity. In response, she gently but firmly tucked him under her arm and returned him to the activity. Before long, however, they could be seen giggling together over a silly book.

In addition to emotions such as frustration, providers also defined childcare as teaching. To illustrate, one childcare provider explained during an interview how she spent a considerable amount of time teaching the children about death during Charles Schultz's recent passing. During another interview, a provider explained how excited children get when they learn to print their name. Caregivers were also teaching toilet training, independence and social as well as other skills. But when providers spoke of teaching they also meant teaching parents.

Parents often used the caregivers as sounding boards and advisors for parenting tips. In these cases, caregivers were not only guiding children but also they were simultaneously guiding parents. During an interview, the Sylers described this role suggesting that they never impinged on a parent's authority but would readily offer advice if requested. One example they shared concerned helping a parent understand that their use of logic and abstraction was too advanced for their youngster. Because of this, they were likely confusing their child instead of clarifying a rule. Another parent reported feeling great relief when a caregiver at the Center taught her how to clip her son's nails. In this way, providers were offering professional services; they were serving as teachers and role models for parents. Interestingly, more than three decades ago, a family daycare in New York City began offering a service called "teacher mothers" (Steinfels, 1973). Teacher mothers assisted parents, almost exclusively mothers, with child rearing advice and even actual help if

necessary. Not only did the childcare providers/teacher mothers provide assistance, the relationship also provided consistency in care between the home and the childcare center which positively impacted the children (Steinfels, 1973).

Not only were providers serving as role models, providers also suggested that they served as "surrogate parents" and "extension of parents" when explaining this aspect of childcare during interviews. The caregivers provided both the physical and emotional aspects of childrearing that are typically defined in parenting terms. Thus, the providers were parenting, albeit temporarily, even when they were not, in fact, the actual parents of the children in their ward.

Although childcare providers offered guidance, served as role models and were teachers, they were also learners. One provider explained during an interview that childcare work was filled with compassion and patience as children become very upset and cannot articulate why they are feeling a particular way. Thus, providers were learning how to best meet the needs of each child as an individual. Another provider explained this learning work using the word "equality." Rich Syler suggested that childcare was based on an equal relationship between the children and himself, one that consisted of mutual respect and is imbued with issues of dignity even when those who are very young cannot articulate their needs. Nonetheless, caregivers must learn to provide instant patience and compassion as well as equality, respect and dignity for each child.

Providers also requested numerous topics for workshops as part of their learning within the provider survey data. For example, workshops focusing on CPR, business management, stress management, crafts and activities and dealing with state agencies. Others suggested less conventional foci such as "learning to raise other people's children." This last statement attests to the role that many caregivers

assume—that of "hired parent," one consisting of absolute responsibility but little overall authority.

Moreover, providers identified childcare as one lacking in respectability. Whereas one provider interviewed spoke about how unnerving it feels to still be called a "babysitter," another mentioned that for him, he feels "put down" by others when they find out he is a caregiver. He did not feel that his work was taken seriously or viewed as important. In fact, providers at both research sites attested to this issue of lack of respect. Moreover, reverberations of this same sentiment were prevalent among respondents of the provider survey. For example, one stated that, "we are doing more than babysitting" whereas another explained the respect issue as "some [parents] treat us like the 'help.'" Others linked the respect issue to the media such as the statement, "there's no good press on we day care providers who bend over backwards to supply quality care for the children." In a final plea, one provider emphatically stated, "community education as to the importance of day care providers" is crucial, stipulating that, "many of us are making huge sacrifices to stay home and care for children." The issue of respect, however, is so intimately connected to the issue of wages that these two issues may be impossible to disentangle.

Whenever childcare is discussed, the issue of low pay is an irresistible topic. Low pay generally fosters a climate of low respectability; it also affects the quality of life for caregivers. One provider stated in the survey that "I'm a single mom who works a second job for insurance for my daughter and I." What's more, providers used many different terms to describe this same issue within the provider survey data. They used terms such as, "better pay rates," and improved "wage payment system," "higher wages," and perhaps the most tactful explanation was described as a "delicate profit margin."

As most people are aware, low pay is connected to high turn over. Thus, staff turnover is not only part of the lives of the caregivers, as was the case for Sandy's leaving to work at a bank, but also part of the children's lives when caregivers with whom they have developed bonds were forced to leave the profession. At Sunnyside turnover was not an issue. The Sylers have been providing childcare services to the community for 25 years. They are the exception relative to provider turnover. In a conversation with Karri at the Center, she explained that staff turnover is a constant at the Center. Constant turnover is the norm for childcare environments. In fact, staff turnover is so prevalent, transitional work for the stakeholders has become part of the childcare routines, i.e., the Center sending notes home to parents before telling the children so that parents can first discuss it with their child. Low respectability, low pay and high turnover are inseparable components of childcare definitions.

Finally, an additional element existed for providers who were family daycare providers because they used their home for their businesses. Rich Syler spoke of the many times he had replaced screens, doorknobs and refinished the oak table in the dining room. In contrast to this, Leslie defined childcare as one oftentimes characterized by feelings of isolation. Family daycare providers are in their home all day long and thus do not have the added benefit of outside work as a social outlet.

Because family daycare providers use their homes as businesses, however, they are also able to incorporate high degrees of flexibility relative to routine when desired or needed. For example, the Sylers were able to extend outdoor playtime when the weather was unseasonably warm without concern that they may be impinging on another group's playtime.

Concomitantly, when one is self-employed, vacations are a luxury some providers do not enjoy. For example, the Sylers' last real vacation was six years ago.

In contrast, other providers reported, in the provider survey, taking vacations as part of their normative childcare routine. The Sylers, however, explained that they carefully block off family time from business time as a way of guarding their own space and time. They explained that no matter how much money people had offered, and many have, they do not provide childcare outside their normal hours of roughly 7:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. Leslie emphatically supported this saying, "we've never wavered on that." Other providers have not been as successful erecting these same boundaries, according to the survey data. These providers explained that, "I try to keep to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m....[but] I am flexible" and another provider stated, "I have allowed children to stay past 5:30, but not particularly by choice."

As one can see, childcare is complex because it incorporates many different, often conflicting aspects for caregivers as well as for children and parents. In revisiting the initial metaphor, the returning of soft ice cream suggests that the provision of childcare was emblematic of community. Childcare providers shared in community as relationships were being built but also they contributed to a community relative to the crucial services caregivers provided.

Parents

As parents navigated between caregiver, employee and then caregiver again at day's end, they also added their own definitions of childcare. They dropped their children off at childcare each day, sometimes anxious and concerned if their child was not having a good day. It was noted during observation periods that many parents used the phrase "not having a good day" as a code word for difficulty separating and acclimating to a workday/childcare day routine. During interviews with parents, they

suggested that they used several tactics when their child was having a difficult childcare day. One parent said that she sometimes called the caregivers to check on her child who was not having a good day. Other times, she was able to rework her schedule in order to pick her son up early. It is likely, however, that most parents do not have those options available when their child is having a difficult day. The same anxiety before collecting their child at the end of the day may return again. But, the anxiety quickly turns to relief and excitement when they see their child and realize that the child likely had an easier transition than they had.

Childcare definitions first from children, next from caregivers and finally from parents were expansive in nature. That is, each group contributed to the definitions with each voice conveying a perspective that was qualitatively similar to other groups' articulations. The various definitions introduced new dimensions, however, making them experientially different from others. Thus, childcare was defined as being steeped in routine including eating, playing, arriving and departing. It was interpersonal, a business, teaching (both children and parents), and learning; it involved high turnover, low pay and often lacked respectability. Moreover, parents also suggested that childcare involved affordabililty issues, proximity issues, safety issues and structural issues such as educational and discipline policies. During interviews, parents' definitions suggested that childcare constituted "surrogate parenting," "parent partnerships," and "extension of parents." These same definitional formulations were also evident in the parent survey data. For example, parents suggested that caregivers picked up the "parenting slack" through the provider's extension of parental duties when parents were unable to do so.

The line between how parents defined childcare and what they wished for in childcare quickly became fuzzy. Without doubt, however, the single biggest element

defining childcare from a parental perspective was "trust" or, as one parent described it during an interview, "incredible trust."

The issue of trust was particularly prevalent in the parent survey data. Parents made statements such as, "...must be able to TRUST the provider" and that providers must be trustworthy. Parents also reported that, "I know I can trust my children there" (referring to childcare) and, "it's someone I know and that I can trust" for example. It seemed evident, however, that when parents were describing trust, the word was being used to mean more than just trust. The parents seemed to be conveying the idea that childcare meant trusting not just in an individual but also in the quality of care. When parents responded to issues of trust, oftentimes they also added phrases and words to the discussion such as, "I know she's safe," or in other cases, "...lack of trust that day care is safe for my child." Another parent explained that, "I know my child is safe and I don't have to worry about her...I trust my child care provider."

Other comments by parents included neither the word "trust" or "safety," but conveyed the same sentiment about trusting in quality—knowing their child's needs were being cared met. The following comment is an apt example, "[M]om is more productive at work if she knows her children are okay." This was a significant statement that reflected the role strain and confusion that are part of many parents' lives. The three o-clock phone calls, worries of sick children and other "personal" concerns about one's children are examples of the structural interference that ensues when family and work roles do not mesh. Only when mothers are released from these personal responsibilities, at least while at work, are they able to fully perform in the workforce.

Trusting in quality, according to the survey data, included more than just

safety, it also tended to be associated with love, caring or nurturing. Parents suggested that providers "really care about children," and "my daycare loves my kids," and finally, "she loves my children and they love her...they never complain about going." Thus, when parents defined childcare as trust they also meant trusting that the provider cares about the children emotionally. The emotional relationships between the provider and children were observed on numerous occasions at both the Center and at Sunnyside. For example, at Sunnyside, Courtney initiated telling Leslie that she loved her before Courtney left for the day. At the Center, Sandy initiated snuggles with Anthony as she ran the toddler down, scooped him up in her arms and cuddled with him on the couch.

Finally, trust in quality also seemed to incorporate issues of learning or education. Parents stated in the survey data that they trusted that their children were being socially and educationally stimulated. One such comment, referring to her caregivers was, "I trust them with my children, I know my children are safe and they don't sit and watch TV all day." Another parent stated that her "provider is trustworthy and fair and caring and provides an educational environment." In sum, trust incorporated the ideals of safety, caring and learning.

Summary

Childcare based on the perspectives of children, providers and parents was not simply defined as care for a child while a parent was working or in school. In fact, the descriptions from this research group tended to define childcare in personal and somewhat intimate terms. It's true that the research participants described childcare as custodial and as a business arrangement. It was quickly evident, however, that these descriptions and definitions were only the tip of the iceberg. Children, providers and

parents also reported childcare to include learning and teaching. Childcare involved positive and emotional relationships between the children, providers and parents. What's more, childcare involved trust both in quality and in safety. This research group did not identify childcare as a cold and impersonal service as it is often characterized but instead described it as one consisting of extended family and extended parenting.

The following section will continue the examination of childcare by exploring the final research question. This area of childcare focused on how stakeholders envisioned or imagined a "perfect" childcare situation without no restraints.

Childcare Utopias

Childcare utopias were the wish lists relative to childcare. They enabled the research groups, children, caregivers and parents to think about perfect childcare environments without restraint. They were starting points in which stakeholders could begin to conceive of novel formulations of childcare. These utopias are presented in the same fashion as the prior sections with children, caregivers and parents responses to the waving of a magic wand about childcare.

Children

Children's responses to how they envisioned childcare if they were in charge were very simple and honesty realistic. Children's wishes centered on play and toys. For a youngster, sharing a toy can be a social experience but also can be a traumatic experience. Children most wished they did not have to share their favorite toys. Colin, for example, was devastated when he was asked to share his blocks. At the thought of it, his body stiffened and he looked panicky. Myriad times the dinosaurs at

the Center were a subject of great dispute. Children would literally spend an entire play session eagerly hoping they would get a chance with their favorite dinosaur before it was time to begin another activity.

In addition to sharing toys, children simply wanted to play and be in charge of play. They wanted to be busy, almost constantly engaged in some activity whether it was solitary or group oriented. Most often, the children would choose outdoor play rather than indoor when the weather was pleasant. One three-year-old, Jessica, expressed that she would "play outside" all day long. Not only do children wish to play, but they also wish to be engaged in activities where they felt they had some control. One child explained that if she were in charge, she "would tell everyone what to do." Although her comment was a bit extreme, she seemed to be suggesting that she did not want to be a docile participant of activities but wanted to be involved in constructing and directing those very activities.

Most children viewed childcare positively or at least neutrally. As one mother put it during an interview, "that's the way it is." Her son doesn't really evaluate childcare as good or bad because he doesn't know life without childcare—he doesn't know life differently. Even though many children viewed childcare at least somewhat positively, parents and providers alike indicated that most children would wish for shorter days in childcare. As one provider explained during an interview, some very young children "put in some very long days." Comparatively, caregiver wish lists tended to be, in part, similar to those of the children for whom they provided care

Caregivers

Caregiver's responses to utopias in part mirrored what children had offered. They too would like additional resources for play equipment. Karri, the lead teacher

at the Center, during an interview, described a particular slide she would like to have for the Center if the resources were there. In addition to resources, she also identified increased physical space as a high priority on the wish list. The wish for more space was also identified in the provider survey. One caregiver stated, "...we need a bigger center for the children. It's small and children have a hard time getting away from each other when necessary."

During a provider interview, a caregiver's personal utopia centered on always being a childcare provider; she could not fathom retiring from the profession. She added to this saying that her utopia would be the provision of a "safe haven" for children where they have a hands-on environment, learn, have fun and have a place which is also affordable for parents. She wants children to feel safe in her home or wherever children are being cared for. In the survey data, another provider described safety in a similar way, arguing that, "[w]e need to find better ways to incorporate a sense of security to the children in daycare..."

Other caregivers, within the provider survey data, suggested that along with issues of pay and support groups referred to earlier, communities also needed to respond to the needs of childcare providers. Providers suggested, "funding for educational materials [and] field trips" as well as "community volunteer" bureaus offering services such as "storytellers and clowns." They also suggested having retired community residents visit and assist at childcare settings. Still others articulated the incredible need for, "temporary backup support" for providers when they were unable to provide childcare including, "substitutes to take my place," and "a list of people who are available to help out in certain circumstances..." Others simply stated, "...help us," when referring to community involvement.

Coupled with issues of resources and affordability came the wish to meet the

needs of parents generally. One caregiver, while being interviewed, explained that his adult daughter comes home from work describing each lunchtime as filled with parents complaining about what they are not receiving from their childcare. Moreover, he wished that mothers could find a way to shed negative emotions he termed "mother guilt." Mother guilt involves the strong, negative emotions connected with leaving a child with a caregiver—that is, anyone who is not "mother." He said that one woman quit her job to stay home with her child because she felt she "ought" to even though, in her estimation, the child most likely received a higher quality of care at Sunnyside than what she herself could offer.

It is interesting to note that father guilt was not described by caregivers or by parents for that matter. This omission would support Chodorow's (1978) argument regarding motherhood and its reproduction. As Chodorow argued, motherhood with all the roles, emotions, etc. typically attached to it is successfully reproduced generation after generation because motherhood is imbued with a sense of naturalness. That is, "motherhood" is what it means to be female and caregiving responsibilities are the expectations based on that role. Males, on the other hand, are not constructed as "natural" with regard to fatherhood. Thus, fatherhood is not understood in caregiving terms; hence, feelings of guilt stemming from daycare use do not seemingly exist.

Moreover, Chodorow (1978) described the gender identity acquisition process based on caregiving. Chodorow suggested that motherhood is constructed based on two separate identity periods in which females engage, first as children and later as adults. Females initially receive mothering from their mothers but do not separate from their mothers as do their male counterparts. The prevalence of daycare use, however, alters this process because in many cases, females are also receiving mothering from childcare providers. This research revealed that childcare is

articulated as "mothering" and children are receiving caregiving from childcare providers who are not their mothers. Thus, it would seem that the advent of supplemental childcare arrangements has transformed gender acquisition and the naturalness of mothering relative to females.

Whereas girls do not separate from their mothers (Chodorow, 1978), boys are expected to do so, so that they may identify with males. As with the issue of father guilt discussed earlier, males are not constructed in the same caregiving terms as females. Hence, it is feasible that gender acquisition for boys would not be subject to those changes referred to above. Childcare would, however, alter the male's vision of what being female means. That is, a boy's mother would not necessarily be characterized in caregiving terms. For both boys and girls, this situation offers possibilities that relationships with their mothers can be constructed in more individualized ways.

In sum, provider utopias included resources, safety, affordability, the meeting of parental needs more completely and the elimination of the strong guilt women feel when they are not providing all the day-to-day care for their child(ren). While considerable overlap of childcare utopias existed among children, caregivers and parents, parents tended to also wish for additional items relative to childcare.

Parents

Parents echoed the wishes of children and caregivers as well but expanded on those ideas suggesting within the survey data that in order to better understand childcare, "listen to parent's comments." Thus, we began to listen. Parents mentioned the affordability issue not just geared toward parents but also toward caregivers suggesting that caregivers also needed to be paid better. Affordability issues were

prevalent in both the survey data and during parent interviews. One parent, during an interview, suggested that this could be realized through government subsidy. She wished that all families could "afford quality childcare" such as the childcare she used. During another interview, a parent responded to the problem of limited resources saying, "...having to get recycled paper from a business in order to be able to do an art project...[is] just ridiculous that those resources aren't there in abundance."

It was noted in a parent interview that another wish was the development of some system that would ensure trustworthiness of caregivers. Moreover, mother guilt was also addressed when a parent explained while being interviewed that, "I am very comfortable in the fact that that [referring to using childcare] doesn't make me a bad mom but just a different mom." Some wishes centered on policy such as childcare that was open for longer hours; others focused on a system addressing childcare for sick children.

Within the parent survey, the most prominent wish parents had, however, was what I have labeled, "structured flexibility." Structured flexibility is inclusive of several key childcare wishes. First, parents overwhelmingly argued that they wished for flexibility within childcare arrangements. For example, parents responded to flexibility relative to childcare providers with statements such as, "flexibility in hours and last minute changes," and "flexibility with my schedule." Moreover, comments about existing childcare and flexibility were explained in these terms, "work just doesn't end for the day at 3:30" and wishes of, "not having to feel stressed about getting there right on time." Other parents' comments, however, combined issues of flexibility with dependability or reliability such as, "[s]he is flexible, she is always there when I need her," and, "she's always there and never takes days off."

The idea of structured flexibility is important because parents were responding

to the demands they have relative to employment. Employers expect structured flexibility from employees. So parents need to receive this from caregivers so that they can be dependable and reliable employees; employees who can deal with last minute deadlines, meetings, etc. when necessary. Parents, however, wished for more than structured flexibility; they also wished for community commitment. Community commitment to childcare was prevalent in the parent survey.

Based on the survey data, community commitment encompassed several key aspects of childcare. First and foremost, community commitment included the ideal that community is responsible, in part, for all children who reside there. Communities are comprised of people—families and children. Thus, parents felt that communities ought to be involved in childcare at several levels.

Parents strongly supported business within communities to pick up the slack in childcare and offer programs and childcare benefits as employment benefits. For example, parents suggested in the survey that, "community [needed] to help monitor proper child care," and, "[b]usiness and industries should be more involved," as well as "companies should have child care on premises," and finally, "business' in the community need to support child care." With these wishes, parents were suggesting that the male model of work doesn't fit their needs any longer. The public and private spheres have intermingled and do not exist as separate and freestanding structures. The overwhelming use of non-custodial childcare has transformed the private sphere. The public, work sphere needs to be updated to reflect the familial needs of workers.

What seemed evident with these suggestions was that parents tended to believe that community involvement would also address other concerns such as childcare cost, provider pay, increased availability and childcare proximately. Oftentimes, community involvement was directly linked to these other issues parents wished for. Comments

such as "corporate subsidies would make child care salaries higher," and "daycare at or close to work," and "campus child care for all three shifts," resonate this linkage within the survey data. Parents felt that community involvement, especially business, would also, in part, address issues of locating childcare during atypical hours, increased wages for providers leading to increased quality, reduction of cost for parents and childcare that existed closer to work; these concerns could be addressed within the community.

It was particularly compelling within the survey data that parents often commented about having their children not close to their home but instead, close to their place of employment. The importance here was that parents were not so concerned about traveling or ease in getting to or from childcare with this suggestion. If this were the case, parents would suggest childcare either close to home or work, as either one would suffice. The wish that childcare be close to work may have involved practicalities such as getting to the child quickly in case of an emergency. There may have been an emotional element involved as well. Parents may have been suggesting that they wanted to feel closer to their children when they were not with them. Perhaps parents needed to feel close to their children and took comfort in that closeness. It would seem that this wish is one that could be granted.

In sum, based on interviews and survey data, parents reported that they wished childcare could be both flexible while also being dependable. Often parents cannot control their work schedules and needed options for dealing with these issues. Furthermore, parents also suggested that they needed community involvement (not federal or state) to assist them with childcare costs, availability, quality and proximity issues. This analysis focused on the issue of community with the ice cream metaphor suggesting that childcare definitions are inclusive of community. With this in mind,

one cannot contemplate childcare utopias without also considering community. And finally, one cannot fathom families, children and work and not immediately also connect community. These issues will be fully addressed in the following chapter. First, however, the following section will present my own perspective of childcare based on my research experiences.

The Research is Personal—the Personal is Political

It is not inconsequential nor coincidental that many of the issues explored in this research also mirrored those issues that are or have been experienced in my own life both as a researcher and as a mother. Oftentimes, research agendas are motivated by those areas that are particularly relevant to the researchers' themselves. Thus, in keeping with a true feminist-designed research framework, the following section will disclose my own experiences as a mother conducting childcare research as well as a researcher observing mothering environments.

During this process of observation and interviewing for this research, I found myself experiencing many of the concerns that I was also researching. For example, two times either during my observation appointments or interviews, I found myself without childcare for my own son. I find this particularly telling and ironic. On one occasion, I was able to enlist the assistance of a friend to get my son on the bus one morning. That solution felt comfortable to me because my son's morning routine was not interrupted thus my work did not interfere with his life. Good moms work around their kids not vice versa. This was the lesson Jennifer Ireland had not learned and for which she was being punished when she chose school over daycare.

On the second occasion when I had to deal with lack of childcare, I had to make alternative arrangements for him to take a different bus home from school to his

part-time daycare center. I personally met this challenge with instant guilt and also anger at having to be in this situation. I felt guilty as a mother that I was not mothering. This is precisely what Chodorow (1978) was describing when she examined the constructions of motherhood as being both socially reinforced but even more significantly, self-imposed. I also felt angry that I, as a mother, had not done a better job in my own childcare backup system because these were some of the very issues I, as a researcher, had been exploring. Moreover, I also felt incredibly disappointed with myself that I continued to conform to bad mother/good mother formulations as a mother while I simultaneously attempted to deconstruct them as a researcher.

What's more, my son's reaction to his routine being interrupted even for a day was met with a fleeting look of panic as I calmly explained the day's change to him. My son's panic was quickly replaced with a look of competence as he quickly realized he was acting immature for his eight years. Thus, both of us played our expected roles, he as a mature schoolager and me as a researcher. All day long, however, my mind continued to focus on whether he would remember to take the correct bus and if he forgot, how he might react to arriving to his locked home. Many times throughout the day I chastised myself for not being "there" for my son as I recalled his look of panic. I recall the feeling being so intense, as though I had utterly betrayed my child. The anxiety I felt continued and affected my entire day until I picked my son up from daycare and saw he was fine. Surprisingly, neither of us mentioned the break in the routine but resumed our normal routines as though the interruption never occurred.

In sum, this childcare research was motivated by issues that affect my life personally. Thus, the research experiences were associated with my status as mother and vice versa. Moreover, this study involved personal experiences centering on

misplaced authority, pleasure and monotony referred to in Chapter IV. I also sometimes felt voyeuristic because of my intrusion as an observer, observing private work. And finally, I found that I formed reciprocal positive, relationships with the stakeholders. The following section, based on the analysis presented, summarizes the three main research questions. These include, what childcare is—both in routine and definition and what the stakeholders wish for relative to childcare.

Summary

When evaluating childcare from the perspective of children, childcare providers and parents, experiential knowledge was utilized. That is, these stakeholders described childcare based on their own experiences relevant to childcare. A plea from the stakeholders was, "listen." When listening, the words heard tended to fall within three dominant categories. Children, providers and parents were observed or described what they were doing, feeling and wishing of childcare. For simplicity, I have provided a graphical representation of these categories. Figure 1 represents the summarized version of those groupings. The categories were constructed based on the stakeholders' words together with the observations of childcare that were conducted. These articulations seldom completely or easily fell into categories as significant duplication and overlap existed. Overall, however, the childcare articulations based on experiential knowledge describe three dominant dimensions of childcare from the perspectives of children, providers and parents (see Figure 2).

It is important to note that for simplicity only, I separated the dimensions, which I refer to as routinous, emotional and discursive, of childcare graphically. Only the three dimensions *in totality* (see Figure 3), however, fully represent childcare from

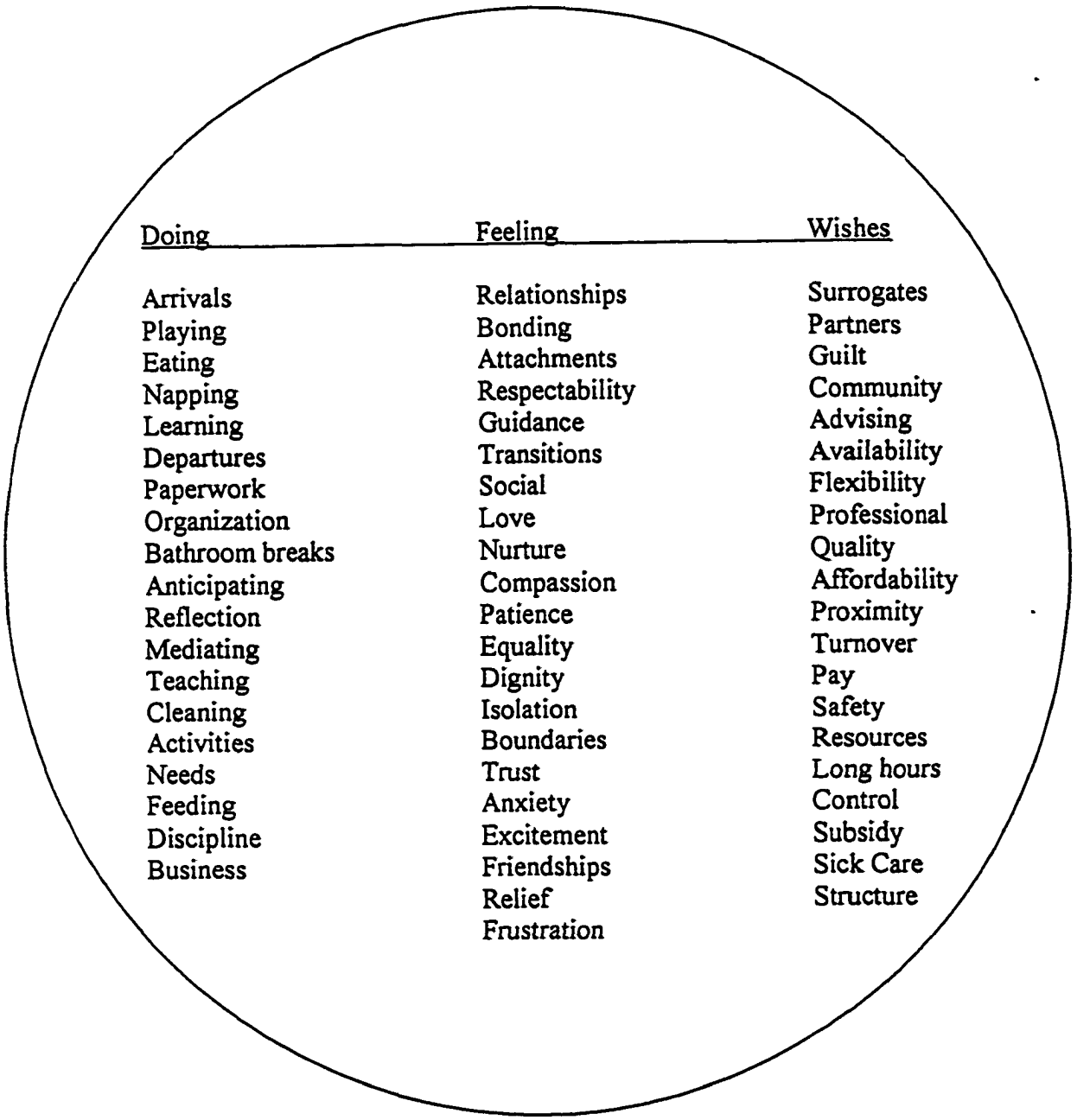

Figure 1. Childcare Experience.

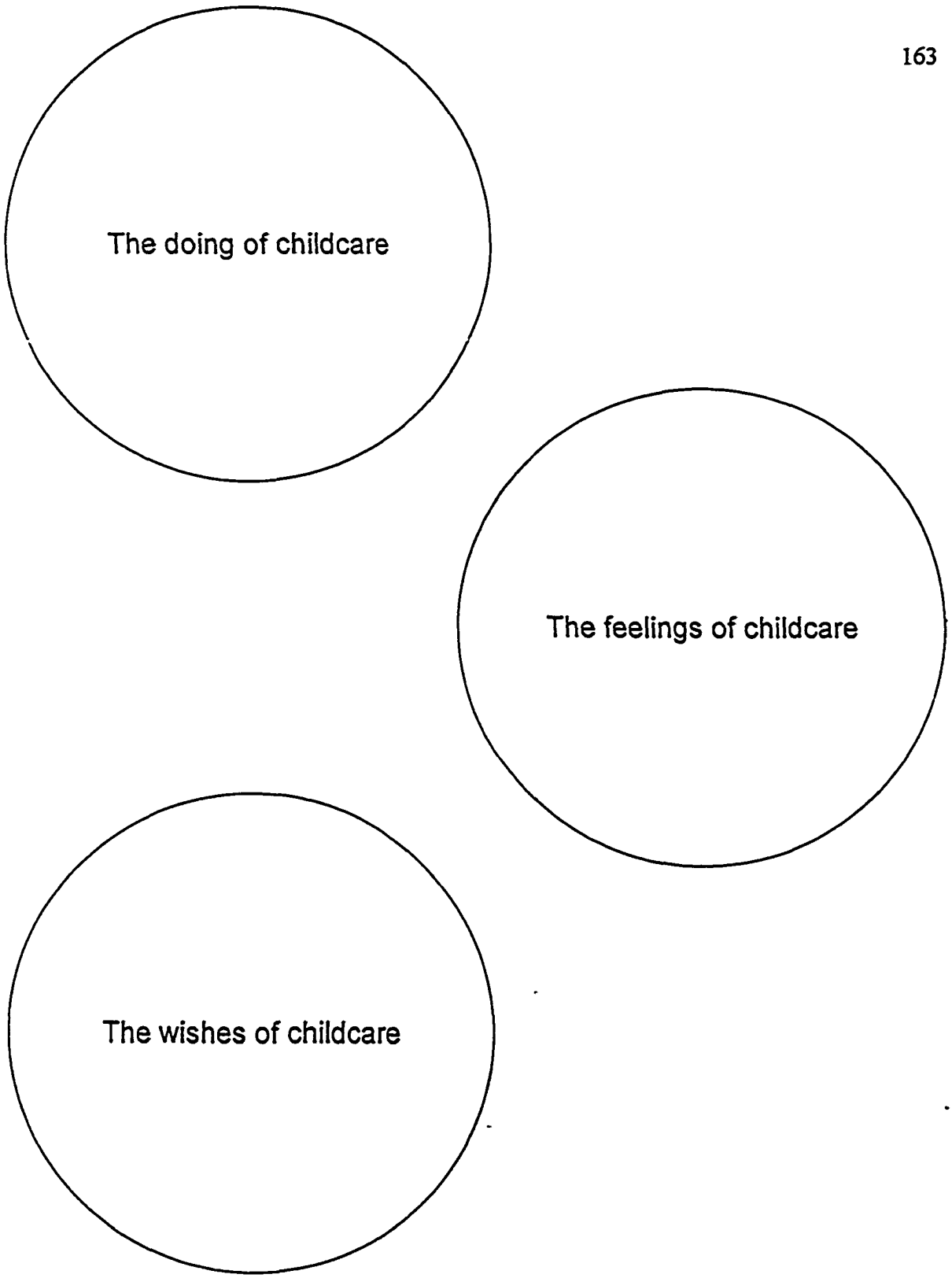

Figure 2. Dimensions of Childcare.

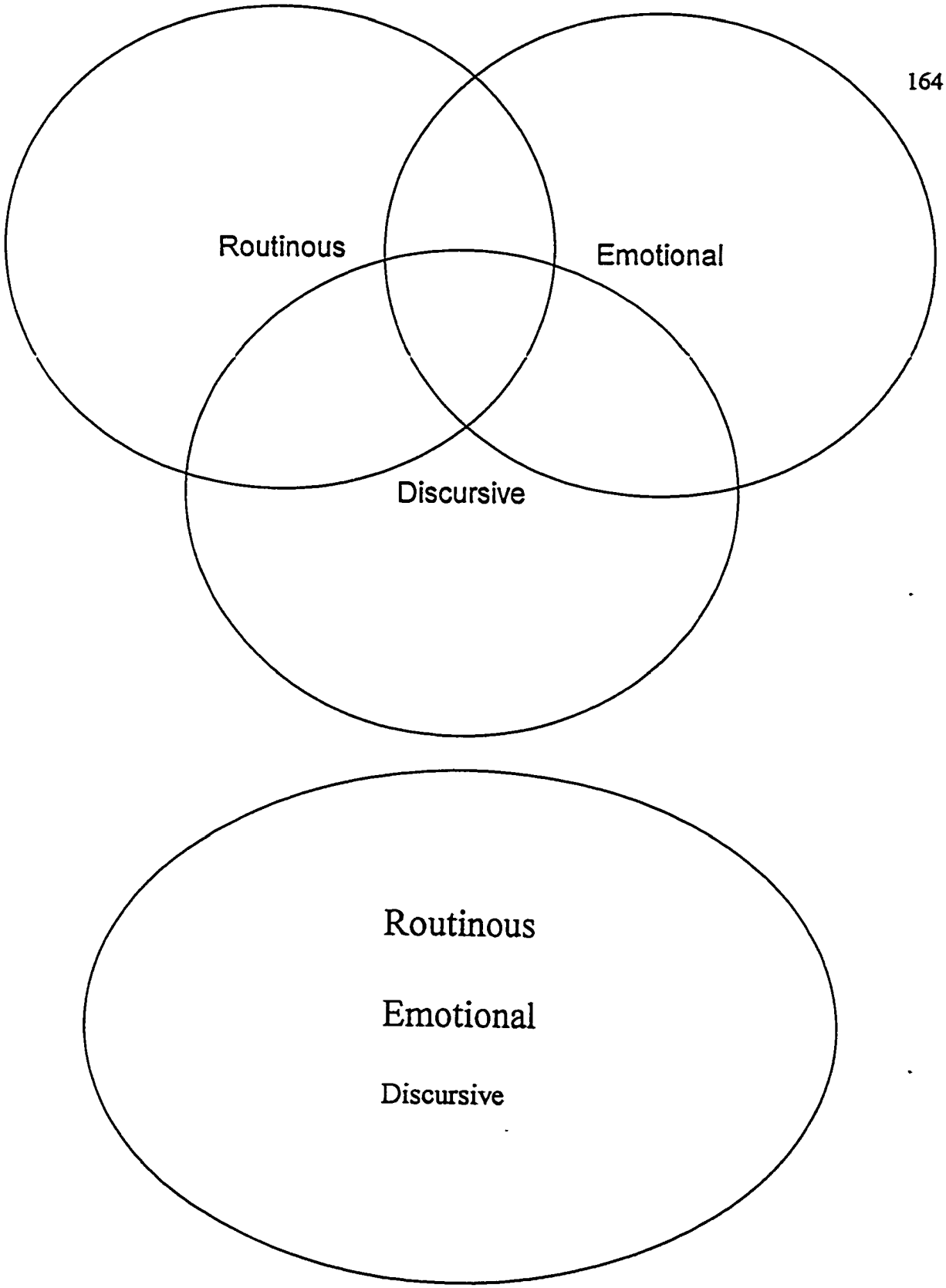

Figure 3. Definition of Childcare.

the perspective of children, providers and parents. Hence, the dimensions illustrate the construction of childcare based on the stakeholders' experiential knowledge. The top portion of Figure 3 represents this overlap between the routinous, emotional and discursive dimensions. Whereas the routinous and emotional dimensions of childcare are predominant, the discursive dimension is currently emerging directly from the routinous and emotional dimensions.

A discursive space is a "free space" where new knowledge can potentially be created (Harding, 1998). It is not a social movement but may be a precipitation to a social movement triggered by the stirrings of an emerging group in producing new discourse. At this point in time, children, providers and parents are witnessing gaps between their expectations and reality—defined as relative deprivation (Freeman, 1975). Moreover, they are also taking this gap to the level of cognitive liberation realizing that these inconsistencies and frustrations need not be tolerated (McAdam, 1982). That is, stakeholders are aware that not only are many aspects of childcare unjust, but that these injustices must be addressed. For example, one mother's statement concerning resources and how it was incredulous that they did not exist in abundance, supports the prevalence of cognitive liberation. Another example is the many statements from providers attesting to the high quality service they deliver for extremely low pay. Thus, the discursive dimension of childcare is now being formulated, and, I argue, is stemming from the routinous and emotional dimensions of everyday childcare experience.

The following chapter, Chapter VI, will offer a summary of this research project. The summary will be followed by conclusions addressing the very issues raised both within the extant literature regarding childcare and also within the data analysis itself. Finally, Chapter VI will address issues of research limitations and will

conclude with future research recommendations.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This case study of childcare began by questioning extant definitions of childcare. Utilizing descriptions of childcare experiences from the literature suggested that childcare involved much more than the normative definitions postulated. Those definitions tended to describe childcare as non-custodial care for children under thirteen years of age. Definitions also centered on care for children while their parents/guardians attended work or school. It seemed likely, however, that childcare included much more than what the above definitions stipulated when evaluated from the perspective of those most intimately connected to it—children, caregivers and parents. Thus, this research commenced with evaluating childcare based on daily experience while, in effect, problematizing the more traditional definitions.

Several theoretical frameworks were used for this research. First, Susan Harding's (1987) work on standpoint theory was presented in order to inform this alternative perspective of childcare based on "experiential" rather than "expert" knowledge. Harding (1987) suggests that a single "truth" existing in the world is limiting in that it negates other truths. Traditionally, experts define a perspective as the only perspective. Hence, the inclusion of the "other" perspective when coupled with the dominant perspective gives a wider view of reality. Thus, this research sought that view of childcare reality.

Upon evaluation of the daily giving and receiving of childcare, the most

significant aspect was found to be the childcare routines themselves. Childcare was steeped in routines and the routines drove the entire childcare experience; they were at the heart of the childcare experiences. Routines offered stakeholders a climate of affability. That is, children, caregivers and parents "knew" what to expect based on the childcare routines. I argue that the knowledge of the routines instilled a sense of permanence within the stakeholders. The stakeholders took comfort in the permanence and familiarity.

In order to fully capture childcare experiences, an understanding of the meanings attached to the routines was necessary. Routines framed childcare experiences and were routines imbedded with transitional cues. They served as signals that a transition, oftentimes involving emotional work, was eminent. Thus the routines acted as triggers easing the stakeholders toward this important and sometimes challenging transitional work. Conversely, a break in routines signaled a change in the familiar. The change meant that stakeholders must prepare for potential discomfort.

What's more, this research sought definitional articulations of childcare based on experiential knowledge. Erving Goffman's (1961) role theory[12] was used, in part, during this examination. Goffman argued that a "role set" includes all actors connected to a situated activity—the activity in this case was childcare. The exclusion of role set members when defining a particular situated activity redresses that very definition as partial at best. Since roles are mediated through daily experience, those experiences lived through the role set members are a critical component of childcare conceptions that have not been thoroughly examined in the past. This research examined the roles of these members.

Childcare experience was found to be shrouded in complexity. Childcare

[12] Bateson and Mead (1942) introduced the initial concepts of role theory but Goffman's (1961) version of role set and role activity were used to direct this research.

served the role of extended parenting and of extended families. As such, caregivers provided parenting services while they performed various duties, but the stakeholders were also involved in building important relationships. Children formed attachments with other children in daycare and caregivers formed attachments with children and parents. The attachments were the emotional adhesive that bonded children, caregivers and parents together. The various roles performed, i.e., teacher and employee, were not anonymous or temporary ones. That is, they consisted of particular children, caregivers and parents whose very presence within the role set defined that set. The stakeholders were familiar people engaged in emotional caregiving and care receiving. These were intimate, but negotiated, relationships.

Participation in childcare served to fuse the stakeholders to each other through the relationships they built. What's more, home and childcare, however, were also fused based on the emotional attachments. The world of home and the world of childcare did not exist as wholly separate entities. Occurrences from home spilled over into the childcare setting, for example, "my daddy got an ouchie." Childcare spilled over into home in the same manner. The emotional attachments stemming from childcare did not simply subside with day's end.

While researching childcare, it was evident that motherhood and the roles attached to it were crucial to this work because issues of motherhood and childcare could not be disentangled and easily separated. Many times when definitions and articulations of childcare were examined, they mirrored those same constructions of motherhood itself. Motherhood roles and meanings were examined using Nancy Chodorow's (1978) classic study, The Reproduction of Motherhood. Chodorow (1978) describes the acquisition of motherhood based on a sense of naturalness attached to that very subject position. The naturalness is imbued with a sense of

destiny. Women, in this view, are destined to define themselves based on motherhood roles because this conception is constructed as biologically-ordained. Thus, the natural order operates as an unquestioned belief system reproduced generation after generation instilling hegemonic boundaries within our culture.

The tension between natural mother and unnatural provider,[13] relative to women, was also examined during this research. It was found that caregiving crossed familial and gender boundaries. Parents involved in the childcare settings were both male and female. Both mothers and fathers participated in this "personal" work. Moreover, childcare providers were both male and female. The caregivers were defined by the care given, not by biology. Experientially, caregiving was not gendered.

Childrearing did not only exist in a traditional family milieu, it also occurred in childcare settings. The terms used by stakeholders in describing caregivers, such as "parent partners" and "extension of parents" support this argument. The image of "passing the parenting torch" aptly describes childcare work. Thus, motherhood and the roles attached to it, are being redefined along these experiential lines because traditional definitions don't neatly fit daily life, in many cases.

This redefinition work is likely due to the absence of the identity process Chodorow (1978) articulated. That is, young girls do not readily identify with their mothers as caregivers precisely because they do not, in many cases, consistently observe their mothers in the caregiving role. Thus, the institutionalization of caregiving deconstructs what motherhood means while also serving to construct childcare definitions based on experiential knowledge. For example, if motherhood does not always include childrearing, then caregiving must be understood based on

[13] Unnatural provider is being used in this sense to convey the notion that motherhood, in the United States, involves caregiving as its primary focus rather than employee or financial provider.

some of these duties.

By problematizing traditional childcare definitions, other formulations were exposed. The exposition enabled the possibility of childcare definitions that more fully described childcare. What's more, this practice invited the formulation childcare programs that accurately reflect the needs of families. These will be discussed in the section entitled, "Recommendations for Further Research."

Conclusions

The goal of this research was not only to describe childcare experiences but also to identify patterns based on that experience. It was evident that childcare involved more than a place to "put" children while their parents/guardians were engaged in work or school. Experiential knowledge articulated by children, caregivers and parents suggested that the issue "childcare" incorporated a myriad of activities, feelings and wishes.

As suggested in Chapter I, childcare included an emotional aspect whereby all the stakeholders were involved in intensive emotional work while they transitioned throughout the entire day. Some emotional work was mediated through a "waving window." The waving window is just beginning to appear within childcare literature albeit literature of the more nontraditional type. This powerful image symbolized this emotional dimension encapsulating it as a pivotal point at which stakeholders were involved in role work. The work was instantiated by role transferal, distance, confusion and strain, as well as others, relative to each person's subject position within childcare.

The emotional work relative to childcare was found to be steeped in routine. The daily rituals of arriving, playing, learning/teaching, napping, eating and departing

structured the childcare day. The stakeholders were cognizant of the structure, i.e., they knew when naptime, lunchtime and playtime would occur, which in effect provided a sense of security for them. Sometimes the structure was so routinized that one could be lulled into a day of tedium while other concurrent work as part of the childcare day became conceptually invisible.

Part of the research goal was to expose that invisibility. The process used for the exposition was the examination of the routine itself as a starting point. It was clear that childcare could be defined, in part, as one containing a routinous dimension. But childcare also was defined, in part, by an emotional dimension including, for example, attachments, respectability and trust. The combination of the routinous and emotional dimensions produced yet a third dimension, the discursive dimension. The discursive dimension existed as a potentiality—a possibility that the childcare boundaries could be reframed to produce a new language and new ideas describing childcare. The discursive was a free and safe place to envision those wishes and dreams focusing on childcare utopias.

Some stakeholders described the discursive dimension as consisting of surrogate parenting or parent partnerships. Others suggested that it included resources, subsidy, living wages and respect for the childcare profession. Almost all stakeholders, however, also suggested that this dimension involved community commitment in both a supportive and a financial role.

This research argued that childcare could not adequately be defined as a social problem as it has been in the past. Indeed, childcare was defined as necessary but those who used it did not describe it as evil. Instead, women's caregiving role was consonant with her role as provider. One formulation did not negate the other as it had been suggested in the mid-twentieth century. These roles were co-joined; that is,

they existed in tandem forming a dialectic based on emotional, routinous and discursive childcare reconstructions.

Based on a theoretical analysis of childcare together with my own experiences and emotions that became part of this research, I would like to contribute to this discourse by commenting on the childcare definitions. I witnessed and personally experienced much of what the stakeholders articulated. That is, childcare can be understood in routinuous, emotional and discursive terms. Moreover, as suggested earlier in this chapter, I believe that childcare is located between a public and private sphere. The interplay was that the provision of childcare is often considered a private matter, but often it occurs in a public setting.

The interplay between a private matter and a public setting, in part, postulates childcare as one imbued with a "temporariness." The childcare stakeholders do not describe childcare as temporary based on experiential knowledge, to be sure; instead, this is a cultural view. I suggest the term, temporariness, because childcare, based on this research, does fit into either the public or private sphere. Thus, not only do we not have an adequate discourse pertaining to childcare, it has no home in our structure.

What's more, the very fact that childcare resources and options do "not exist in abundance," as one parent pointed out during an interview, attests to the perceived temporary status of women in the workplace. That is, as a country we have not made stable, financial commitments to childcare programs. Thus, sick care, backup systems and livable wages for providers, just to name a few, do not readily exist. Their absence also supports the temporality of childcare as an issue.

The lack of resources and options seem to indicate that women's place in the workforce is likely viewed as temporary and nonessential; thus, childcare reflects this view. The myth that women are "returning to the home" is just that, a myth. Women

are in the workforce in larger numbers than ever before (Hofferth et al., 1991). Our country, however, still has not produced stable childcare programs in any significant way which indicates that childcare continues to be viewed as temporary. The historical analysis presented in Chapter III clearly reflects this argument. Yet, experientially, childcare was articulated as long term and with some degree of permanence and work was essential.

Childcare, however, is also a business arrangement. Childcare includes the purchasing of services. Parents purchase a service and providers provide one. In this case, parents are purchasing "parenting" services and caregivers are providing "parenting" for a price. All stakeholders clearly defined and described childcare in the ways similar to the ways parenting would be defined. For example, parenting includes issues of caring for and about children, parenting also includes teaching as well as meeting the needs of children. What's more, stakeholders also defined and articulated utopias using terms such as "surrogate parenting" and "parenting partners."

Based on these formulations, I would like to suggest that the term, "contracted caregiving" captures the notion of childcare in this research. I use this phrase for several reasons. First, the idea of a "contract"[14] encapsulates several key aspects of childcare. "Contract" includes the business element discussed above but also implies a temporary status to which I referred. The term also incorporates the expectations often associated with childcare, for example, the expectation of the time children will be collected from childcare. A contract also suggests that the services are essential. In this case, childcare is a necessary part of most family's lives. Finally, "contracted" constitutes choice. Childcare providers choose to engage in this childcare service. That is, they are not required to provide care based on their family affiliation or

[14] Contract is being used in both the business and social sense.

gender. Thus, contract incorporates the notion of consent and of mutual obligation between the parties involved.

The word, "caregiving," includes other aspects of childcare uncovered in this study. To care about something or somebody denotes the emotional component including the intimate aspects of childcare. Thus, the giving of care involves those emotional elements such as compassion, trust and love. To give care, also implies a sense of familiarity that is prevalent in childcare; that is, those involved must "know" what is required. Finally, caregiving includes the meeting of needs. Needs not only include physical care but also educational and social as well as others. Hence, I suggest that the term "contracted caregiving" represents the stakeholders articulations of childcare. The following section addresses the research limitations of this research.

Research Limitations

This work is but a small piece of a very large social issue. It only represents the voices of those contained within these pages. Many other perspectives and voices have gone unheard and thus this research does not purport to represent the voices and perspectives of all children, caregivers and parents relative to childcare. Its purpose is only the inclusion of the actual voices not a statement of generalizeability to all childcare experience. Moreover, the design of this research and framing of the argument assumed that children, caregivers and parents were atypical, but knowledgeable, experts in defining childcare. Thus, this work did not significantly incorporate the perspectives of groups typically involved in this debate such as childcare agency representatives or individuals involved in childcare policy.

This research may potentially have been restricted by design limitations. It was determined that children who spent significant amounts of time in childcare would be

the best research subjects. The rationale was that this group of children would have a keen sense of childcare and what it entailed. Although an apt assumption, these children were very young. Because of their age, oftentimes, they did not have the vocabularies to articulate their viewpoints. Hence, it was sometimes necessary to use observational data in place of the children's own words. This action could have potentially led to misinterpretations when the children's actual words were unavailable. Every effort, however, was taken to use children's words when possible and only with caution were observational data used for other interpretative purposes.

Another design limitation was that it is feasible that a larger number of research settings would have increased the research reliability. For example, increasing the number and types of family day cares and daycare settings may have strengthened the results. Inner city and subsidized childcare settings, for example, would offer different childcare experiences and thus different descriptions. Additionally, this increase may have yielded a more diverse sampling of research subjects. Finally, an increase in parent interviews may have also strengthened the research. Parents' perspectives were not as strongly represented in this study as were the caregivers' and children's. This was so because both children and caregivers were interviewed as well as observed while comparatively parents were observed for relatively short periods of time. Nonetheless, these limitations did not substantially detract from the empiricism of the research whereas the data gleaned from it significantly contributed to the understanding of childcare from this unique perspective.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several possible research directions could be employed so that childcare can be better understood. With understanding, policy and programs could more accurately

reflect childcare conceptions and definitions. As people continue to engage in childcare discussion, let us continue to listen. A likely beginning point for future research would be the observation and articulation of additional research subjects and perspectives as well as childcare settings. Although this was not meant to be generalizeable research, increased numbers of subjects and settings would allow for a more complete understanding of childcare as more data makes its way into childcare discourse.

Another possible direction may be an evaluation of current childcare initiatives that would be valuable in formulating childcare programs and offerings in similar communities. Many community childcare initiatives exist that are innovative and successful. For example, a predominant corporation in this research community purchases emergency slots from family daycare providers so that if the regular childcare provider of an employee is ill or unable to care for their child(ren) for some other reason, this slot can be used to fill in the gap.

Moreover, it does seem evident that a particular social readiness (Galinsky, 1999) relative to childcare does currently exist. Almost each day, one hears about some aspect of childcare within the media either on television or in newspapers. People discuss the issue of childcare whether or not they, themselves, require childcare services. The timing in addressing childcare seems to be better than it has for quite some time in our history. Timing or social readiness are crucial elements to any social change (McAdam, 1982). This research contributes to this change. Additionally, childcare is beginning to be addressed not simply as a personal trouble but as a collective one. Thus, childcare may also be in the process of being transformed from an individual to a collective issue.

Childcare literature as well as the data collected in this study suggest that

people, collectively, are identifying discrepancies between what they want or feel they need and the childcare offerings that are available. This gap is referred to as "relative deprivation" (McAdam, 1982) within social movement literature. Collective relative deprivation combined with social readiness are good indicators that a change is feasible.

Another important ingredient necessary for change is taking relative deprivation to the next level of cognitive liberation. Cognitive liberation refers not only to the acknowledgement of a gap between expectations and reality but also the understanding that the gap need not exist (Freeman, 1975). These examples resonate in the section entitled, "Childcare Utopias." For example, stakeholders suggested that community needed to be committed to the provision of care for the children who reside there. Therefore, the realization that a childcare system that more fully reflects the needs of stakeholders is required. This work contributes to that mission.

In this research, it was within the discursive dimension that social readiness, relative deprivation and cognitive liberation were detected. Statements suggesting that sick care or emergency care need are not being addressed were examples of these indicators. Concomitantly, statements requesting community commitment were also prevalent. This inclusion, together with those referred to previously, potentially provides resources as well as the possibility of local empowerment. These elements in totality reframe childcare, placing it in what Snow, et al. (1986), refers to as an injustice frame. The exclusion of stakeholders' voices, as well as the realization that the issue itself is an injustice, constitutes this framing. An injustice frame, coupled with discourse, can shift interpretation away from childcare as personal to childcare as a public issue. Alternative frameworks and discourse are tools stakeholders can employ locally.

The interpretive shift is represented by the concept of "prefigurative politics" (Gamson, 1992). Prefigurative politics seeks the union of the public and private spheres described as "a network of relationships more direct, more total and more personal than the formal, abstract and instrumental relationships characterizing state and society" (Gamson, 1992, pg. 62). Thus, perfigurative politics seeks to bring the personal and political onto the same discursive plane. Examples of this union are the worthy wage work being performed by many caregivers within their communities and the many pleas regarding community support as part of these data. These suggestions center on community that works for people instead of people working for community. A common problem of initiatives such as the worthy wage is that there have not been resources or organization enough to sustain them. One way that would address this lack of sustainability may be the co-option of sustainable communities initiatives.

The sustainable communities movement seeks social reforms with local control. Sustainable communities purport three guiding principles to healthy communities. They include equity, sustainability and civic engagement (Korten, 1998). This movement gives voice to all its members while also serving the needs of the community and simultaneously, the needs of society at large. One component of this grass roots movement is the placing of power in the hands of the people instead of corporations. Its underlying premise suggests that healthy communities first serve people's interests rather than serving corporate or economic interests. The local bridging of the childcare issue frames with sustainable community frames services these dual efforts by utilizing current platforms and, to some extent, resources. For example, local living wage initiatives could be fused with worthy wage initiatives. This framing process not only extends and expands the childcare frame but it also would, in effect, rekey childcare not only as a personal problem but also as a public

concern (Snow et al., 1986).

In serving people's interests, sustainable communities are concerned with topics such as full employment, workers rights, community investment and redevelopment, shorter work hours, corporate accountability and child caring (Sklar, 1995). By child caring, Sklar (1995) is referring to the notion that since parents are working outside the home, quality childcare must exist. By quality, Sklar (1995) also includes livable, reasonable wages for providers, school days that coincide with a typical workday and extended maternity leaves with increased salary benefits. Moreover, Auerbach (1979) adds that a community childcare system would contain before and after school services, drop-in service, emergency and evening childcare and increased options surrounding back up systems. These same or similar suggestions were also made in this research project. What is crucial at this point is that community residents demand accountability of their childcare needs and then take action (Auerbach, 1979). Taking these issues directly to the community begins the task of normalizing childcare (Steinfels, 1973) based on its reframing.

While childcare in this study has been defined as part of the community using the metaphor of returning soft ice cream, traditional experts have often charged that childcare is an example of market failure (Brown, 1998). It has been described in these terms because, normally, free markets force high-quality goods and services that are readily available. This has not been the case for childcare. Free markets have not produced high quality childcare services on any consistent basis over time. The problem may be that childcare can more aptly be described in social rather than in economic terms. Thus, reframing childcare in terms of a community commitment calls the expert description of childcare into question. Moreover, providing childcare that is high quality, readily and equally available to citizens, and that promotes the profession

as one that is honorable and important, cannot so casually be dismissed as a failure of any sort. Conversely, the absence of these crucial services can be construed as a social failure—to children, families and communities as well as to the general public.

Appendix A

HSIRB Approval Letter

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008-5162
616 387-8293

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Date: 23 February 2000

To: Paula Brush, Principal Investigator
Lori McNeil, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Sylvia Culp, Chair Sylvia Culp

Re: HSIRB Project Number 00-01-05

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Childcare and Experiential Knowledge: Expanding Definitions of Childcare" has been approved under the expedited category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may only conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: 23 February 2001

Appendix B

Children's Assent Form

Over the next few days, a woman will be spending part of the day with us. Her name is Lori. Lori wants to find out what we do here during the day. Lori will watch what we do during the day. She may also ask you questions about what we do here. You do not have to answer any of the questions if you do not want to. Is it okay if Lori comes here and spends some time with us?

Children present and giving assent:

Children present and not giving assent:

_____

Caregiver's signature date

Appendix C

Children's Interview Guide

Hi, my name is Lori. (Provider name) told you I would be coming to see what you do here during the day. I may also ask you questions about what you do here. My son also comes to a place like (name of childcare) and I learn a lot about what he is doing by talking to him. Do you have any questions about why I am here?

1. Discussions on issues such as what are the children's favorite foods and toys as a general conversation starter and rapport builder.

2. Where are you today? What do you call where you are today? (here trying to find out the names of childcare that children use)

3. Why do you come to (based on the answer from question 2)?

4. Being at (based on answer from question 2) makes me feel...?

5. The first thing you do when you get here (based on answer from question 2) is...?

6. My favorite thing to do at (based on answer from question 2) is...?

7. What one thing do you not like to do or do not care for at (based on answer from question 2)...?
   Naptime?

8. Before I leave (based on answer from question 2), I...?

9. When my mom/dad (or whoever picks them up) picks me up from (based on answer from question 2) , I feel...?

10. If you were in charge at (based on answer from question 2) what would you do differently...?
    Role play with the child—child is caregiver, investigator is child

11. What do you think adults should know about (based on answer from question 2). Tell me what you think adults should know about being here at (based on answer from question 2).

Appendix D

Parent Interview Guide

Hello, my name is Lori McNeil. I am involved in research as part of my education at Western Michigan University. I am hoping to better understand childcare by observing childcare situations firsthand but also by talking to children, parents and childcare providers. I too use childcare for my son so I am aware of some issues surrounding childcare. I feel that by talking with you about childcare, this will, in part, increase my knowledge of it. Thank you for agreeing to this interview.

1. How many children do you have? How many in childcare?

2. How many days per week are children in childcare? How many hours per day?

3. Why did you choose the childcare you currently use? Words you might use to describe.
   Trust?
   Quality? Define quality.
   Safety?
   Proximately?
   Flexibility?
   Cost?
   Care emotionally about child?

4. Have you used other childcare arrangements in the past? If so, why do you no longer use them?

5. What does the word "childcare" mean to you?

6. Describe the process prior to taking your child to childcare.

7. Describe feelings relating to this time (from Q6). What feelings relating to childcare and your child do you have during the day?

8. Describe the process in picking up your child from childcare. Routine/process right after pickup.

9. What happens during the day with your child in childcare (routine)?

10. What are your child's feelings concerning childcare? What are yours? Guilt?

11. Describe the relationship between your child and the childcare provider you now use? Between the provider and yourself?

12. What do you do for childcare backup (support systems), for example if your child is ill either before work/school or during the day, school vacations and during snow days?

13. What strategies have you used to navigate work and family life?

14. Without any kind of restraint, how would you image a "perfect" childcare? Comment on providers, children, environment and self.

15. Do you have anything else you would like to share regarding childcare?

Appendix E

Provider Interview Guide

1. How long have you been a childcare provider (worker)?

2. How many children do you provide care for? Part-time? Full-time?

3. How many hours do you work a week?

4. What made you decide to become a childcare provider?

5. What does the word "childcare" mean to you?

6. Describe your feelings and the process you go through prior to the children arriving.

7. Describe a "typical" childcare day. What are the routines?

8. What do you enjoy most about your work? What do you like least? Most rewarding childcare experience? Most difficult? Most stressful?
   Pay?
   Parental relationships?

9. Describe how you feel after the last child leaves at the end of the day. End of the
   week?

10. Do you become emotionally attached to the children you provide care for? Their
    families?

11. (If relevant) If you have children of your own at home, what is their relationship to the children for whom you provide care?

12. Do you have backup systems (support system) for yourself, if you are ill, need a vacation, etc.?

13. Generally, how do others, not in the childcare profession, view the work of childcare providers (workers)?

14. Do you wish you could change anything about childcare? If so, what would that be?

15. Without any kind of restraints, how would you image a "perfect" childcare setting to be including comments on the provider, parents, environment and children?

16. Do you have anything else you would like to share regarding childcare?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acker, J. (June, 1990). "Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: a theory of gendered organizations." Gender & Society, 14:2, pp. 139-158.

Auerbach, S. (1979). Confronting the child care crisis. Toronto: Beacon Press.

Babbie, E. (1992). The practice of social research. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Bartkey, S. L. (1990). Femininity and domination, studies in the phenomenology of oppression. New York: Routledge, Chapman, and Hall, Inc.

Bateson, G. and Mead, M. (1942). Balinese character. New York: New York Academy of Sciences.

Beer, E. (1938). The day nursery. Richmond, VA: The William Byrd Press, Inc.

Berg, R. (1995). Qualitative research methods for the social sciences. Needham, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Blank, H. (1997, January). Helping parents work and children succeed: a guide to child care and the 1996 welfare act. Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). Outline of a theory of practice. Cambridge: University Press.

Bradley, H. (1996). Fractured identities: changing patterns of inequality. New York: Norton.

Brown, H. (1998). The goodbye window: a year in the life of a day-care center. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Brush, P. S. (January 11, 1999). Lecture. Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University.

Carambula, K. (December, 1999). Written communications. Kalamazoo, MI.

Center for the Child Care Workforce. (1998). "Parents can't afford to pay." Brochure. Washington, D.C.

Chafe, W. (1972). The American woman: her changing social, economic and political role, 1920-1970. New York: Oxford University Press.

Chafetz, J.S. (1997). "Feminist theory and sociology: underutilized contributions for mainstream theory." Annual Review of Sociology, 23, pp. 97-120.

Child Care Resources. (1989). It's about children. Video recording. Kalamazoo, MI.

Children's Defense Fund. (1999). "Michigan: child care challenges." http://www.childrensdefense.org/childcare/challenge.html

Chodorow, N. (1997). "The psychodynamics of the family" in Second wave edited by Linda Nicholson. New York: Routledge.

Chodorow, N. (1978). The reproduction of mothering, psychoanalysis and the sociology of gender. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Committee for Economic Development. (1993). "Why child care matters: preparing young children for a more productive American" statement by the Research Policy Committee of the Committee for Economic Development. Washington, D.C.

Daly, M. (1978). "The metapatriarchal journey of exorcism and ecstasy" in Gyn/ecology. Boston: Beacon Press.

Denzin, N. (1994). "The art and politics of interpretation" in Handbook of qualitative research. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, Eds. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (1994). Handbook of qualitative research. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, Eds. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Evans, S. (1979). Personal politics. The roots of women's liberation in the civil rights movement & the left movement. New York: Vintage Books.

Faludi, S. (1991). Backlash: The undeclared war against American women. New York: Anchor Books.

Ferree, M and Martin, P. (1995). "Doing the work of the movement: feminist organizations" in Feminist organizations: harvest of the new women's movement. pp. 3-26. Myra Marx Ferree and Patricia Yancey Martin, Eds. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Foucault, M. (1977). Power/knowledge. New York: Pantheon Books.

Freeman, J. (1975). The politics of women's liberation. New York: Longman, Inc.

Friedan, B. (1963). The Feminine Mystique. New York: Norton Press.

Galinsky, E. (1999). Ask the children: what America's children really think about working parents. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc.

Gamson, W. A. (1992). "The social psychology of collective action," pg. 53-76 in Frontiers in Social Movement Theory, edited by Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg-Mueller. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Goffman, E. (1963). Behavior in public places. Notes of the social organization of gatherings. New York: The Free Press.

Goffman, E. (1961). Encounters two studies in the sociology of interaction. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing.

Goffman, E. (1959). The presentation of self in everyday life. New York: Doubleday, 1959.

Gordon, L. (1994). Pitied but not entitled: single mothers and the history of welfare, 1890-1935. New York: The Free Press.

Harding S. G. (1998). Is science multicultural? postcolonialisms, feminisms, and epistemologies. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Harding S. G. (1987). "Epistemological questions" in Feminism and methodology. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Hayes, C. D., Palmer, J.L., & Zaslow, M. J. (Eds.) (1990). Who cares for American's children: child care policy for the 1990s. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Hefler, M. and Kempe, R. (1997). The battered child. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Hochschild A. (1997). The time bind. when work becomes home and home becomes work. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Hofferth, S. L., & Brayfield, A, Deich, S. & Holcomb, P. (1991). National child care survey, 1990. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press.

hooks, b. (1984). Feminist theory from margin to center. Boston: South End Press.

Hughes, J. and Baker D. (1990). The clinical child interview. New York: The Guilford Press.

Joffe, C. E. (1977). Friendly intruders: childcare professionals and family life. Palo Alto, CA: Ramparts Press.

Joining Forces Child Care Initiative. (1997). Allegan County Child Care Survey. Allegan, Michigan.

Klein, A. (1992). The debate over child care 1969-1990: a sociohistorical analysis. Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Korten, D. C. (1998). Globalizing civil society. Reclaiming our right to power. New York: Open Media Pamphlet Series, Seven Stories Press.

Lofland, J. and Lofland, L. (1984). Analyzing social settings: a guide to qualitative observation and analysis. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Lubeck S., & Garrett, P. (1988, Spring). "Child care 2000: policy options for the future." Social Policy, V18., pgs. 31-37.

Lukes, S. (1974). Power, a radical view. London: Macmillan.

Mansbridge, J. (1995). "What is the feminist movement?" in Feminist organizations: harvest of the new women's movement. pp. 27-34, Myra Marx Ferree and Patricia Yancey Martin, Eds. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

McAdam, D. (1982). Political process and the development of black insurgency. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

McNeil, L. (Spring, 1999). "Assessing child care need under welfare reform." Vol. 5, No. 1, pgs. 5-19. Journal of Children and Poverty.

McNeil, L. (1998). Assessing child care need in Niles, Michigan. Thesis. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Western Michigan University.

Nicholson, L. (1997). "Gynocentrism. Women's oppression, women's identity, and women's standpoint" in Second wave edited by Linda Nicholson. New York: Routledge.

Niles Child Care Project. (April, 1999). Worthy wage day celebration. Niles, MI.

Peters, C. (January, 1998). "Parenting: A progressive approach to caring for children and community. Is more institutionalized day care the answer?" http://www.zmag.org/zmag/jan98peters.html.

Peters, J. (1997). When mothers work: loving our children without sacrificing ourselves. Reading, Massachusetts: Perseus Books.

Reinharz, S. (1992). Feminist methods in social research. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rich, J. (1968). Interviewing children and adolescents. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Roby, P. (1973). Child care—who cares? Foreign and domestic infant and early childhood development policies. Student edition. New York: Basic Books.

Roiphe, A. (1996). Fruitful: a real mother in the modern world. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Rose, E. (1999). A mother's job: A history of day care 1890-1960. New York: Oxford University Press.

Scarr, S. and Dunn, J. (1987). Mother care/other care. Great Britian: Pelican Books.

Schutt, R. K. (1996). Investigating the social world. The process and practice of research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Sidel, R. (1986). Women and children last: The plight of poor women in affluent American. New York: Penguin Group.

Sklar, H. (1995). Chaos or community? Seeking solutions, not scapegoats for bad economics. Boston: South End Press.

Southwestern Michigan Day Care Association (November 1998), monthly meeting, personal communication.

Staggenborg, S. (1998). Gender, family, and social movements. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Stahl, S. (December, 1999). Personal communications.

Steinfels O'Brien, M. (1973). Who's minding the children? The history and politics of day care in American. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Snow, D., Rochford, E., Worden S. and Benford R. (1986). "Frame alignment processes, micromobilization, and movement participation." American Sociological Review, vol. 51, pp. 464-481.

Swidler, A. (1986). "Culture in action: symbols and strategies." American Sociological Review, 51, pgs. 273-286.

Tiger, L. & Fox R. (1978). "Mother-child bonding." In A. Jagger & P. Rothenberg Struhl (eds), Feminist frameworks: alternative theoretical accounts of the relations between women and men. Pgs. 214-218. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Tizard, B. (1991). "Employed mothers and the care of young children" in Motherhood meanings, practices and ideologies. London: Sage.

Tower, C. (1996). Understanding child abuse and neglect. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Trad, P. (1990). Conversations with preschool children: uncovering developmental patterns. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

U.S. Women's Bureau, (1976). "Employed mothers and child care," 1953, in America's working women: a documentary history-1600 to the present. New York: Vintage Books.

Vardell, R. (Spring/Summer, 1996). "Worthy wage day: May 1, 1996—vote smart!" Rights, Raises, Respect. Vol 1:1. The National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force.

Weedon, C. (1997). Feminist practice and poststructural theory. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

Willer, B., Hofferth, Sl. L., Kisker, E. E., Divine-Hawkins, P., Farquhar,E. & Glantz, F. B. (1991). The demand and supply of child care in 1990. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Young, D. (December, 1999). Personal Communications.