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**A Professional Teacher Disposition, Defined and Assessed
Through Peer Reviewed Literature from 1985 to 2021: A Narrative
Review**

John Hynes

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A Professional Teacher Disposition,
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GEORGE FOX
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION | EdD

“A PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DISPOSITION, DEFINED AND ASSESSED THROUGH PEER REVIEWED LITERATURE FROM 1985 TO 2021: A NARRATIVE REVIEW,” a Doctoral research project prepared by JOHN HYNES in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership.

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ABSTRACT

In education, the word disposition has been used to describe the social, verbal, and physical attributes teachers possess and demonstrate in their interactions with students. Educational theorists and practitioners alike agree that effective teachers are far more than simply well-educated individuals who have successfully completed a teacher preparation program. The concept of disposition contributes to the field of education by capturing the “more” that an effective teacher embodies; it is an enacted combination of an educator’s content knowledge, preparation, and ways of being. This dissertation examines the notion of disposition and explores how the term has evolved from the time it was formally introduced to the educational lexicon in the mid 1980’s until today. As a narrative review, the goal of this dissertation is to “tell the disposition story” in academic terms. Several key themes emerge from an analysis of relevant literature, namely, that disposition is connected to morality, and motivates teachers to professional service enacted through community, science, tradition, and social justice. Using these ideas, the paper also offers a brief examination of how disposition is practically oriented within thirteen of Oregon’s teacher preparation programs, through an analysis of these programs’ web presence. This analysis explores how various institutions have incorporated the idea of dispositions into their programmatic priorities and serves as a snapshot of how programs enact disposition in practice, compared to the theoretical ideas derived from the literature review. In this way, a future study of teacher preparation programs and their treatment of disposition is proposed.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Methods

Education has long sought to identify, understand, and support teachers in developing qualities that make them not only effective educators, but people who care deeply about their students. Even individuals who are not in the teaching profession can identify teachers who have had a significant impact on their lives; qualities of disposition are often at the center of what people identify as important (Katz & Raths, 1985). It is rare that people identify a teacher's academic preparation or content knowledge as the thing that "made the difference." Rather, it is a teacher's behaviors or ways of making a person feel special that stand out as significant. These behaviors, or ways of being, are called dispositions, and since they are one of the primary means by which people identify and discern what makes someone a good teacher, it is worthwhile to reflect on the nature of dispositions from a pedagogical perspective.

The purpose of this study is to examine "disposition" as it has been defined, regulated, and implemented into teacher preparation programs over the past thirty-five years. Since its emergence as a term within the lexicon of educational practice, it has been defined and re-defined in a variety of ways. Trends in its definition and importance to teacher preparation programs have ebbed and flowed, with the result being that most education departments today implement some form of disposition assessment in their curriculum. This study will offer a narrative review of the concept of disposition as it has been examined through peer reviewed literature. I will then offer some reflection on what consistent themes emerge within the wealth of research, and finally look at where it is at today by briefly examining the teacher preparation programs at thirteen colleges and universities in my home state of Oregon. In this way, I take the theoretical handling of disposition from published literature and briefly examine how it is applied to teacher preparation programs. It is important to note that this brief analysis is

conducted only by way of an investigation of each program's website and is not intended in any fashion to be extensive. Since most teacher preparation programs across the state include the assessment of disposition as part of their matriculation, it is of interest to examine the genesis of the term and discover its meaning through its many iterations. In my own thirty-year career as a teacher and administrator, I have conducted hundreds of hours of teacher observations. The commonality between every teacher I observed, who I would consider to be highly effective, was the rapport they maintained with their students. In very few, if any, instances did pure teacher preparation and preparation minus positive rapport produce excellence in the classroom or even student learning. Because it is a series of activities and mannerism that make up an individual's effective ability to communicate with students, the research often uses the plural form "dispositions" to describe this analysis. In this study, however, I argue that this collective whole of behaviors can be summed up in the singular form of "disposition," and that this singular ability in its most effective practice produces powerful student learning. Disposition and student learning are inextricably linked, as I have discovered through both my own experience as a professional and through the literature that is presented herein (Ritchhart & Perkins, 2000).

There has been a mass of research over the past few decades on the issue of what makes an effective educator. More often, however, the focus on these studies is centered around what Wiggins (2010) refers to as, "measuring all the things a teacher is supposed to do, rather than what the teacher is supposed to accomplish" (p.11). What the teacher is supposed to accomplish is quite simply to produce student learning (Wiggins, 2010). Student learning is produced when a student is motivated to learn, and quite often the terms of this motivation are left entirely in the hands of the instructor (Rugutt & Chemosit, 2009). Indeed, if a teacher is successful at increasing student learning, thereby preparing students for the next level in their education, they have

succeeded in their assigned duty. Yet, what a teacher is supposed to do, is often afforded too much attention. Studies on how to create a great lesson plan, how to establish a solid discipline strategy, how to integrate technology into the classroom, how to teach within a particular schedule (such as a block schedule), how to make the most of transitions, how to anticipate learning and check for understanding, (to name just a few), are everywhere. All of these, and many, many more, are terrific elements of being a good teacher that are worthy of examination and study. However, these are simply part of the recipe for what a good teacher should do, and never really address the main question of what should be accomplished through these activities. Put another way, none of these preparatory topics instruct a teacher on how to ensure student learning.

Looking into the roots of disposition as a factor in teacher assessment, one would have to begin by looking at the extensive amount of research conducted on expectation theory from the late 1960's through the late 1980's. This was a popular area of study through these years, and produced such educational concepts as *The Pygmalion Theory*, and *self-fulfilling prophecy* (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968, p. 12) as regards the manner in which teachers approach their students and form opinions of them at the start of the school year. Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) used the metaphor of *Pygmalion* (Shaw, 1994) to describe a phenomenon that occurs in the classroom. In *Pygmalion*, a professor famously takes a woman from the poverty-stricken streets of England and wagers his friends that he can turn her into a proper lady within a certain period of time. Indeed, his positive approach and high expectations for the woman result in success. In the same way, a teacher who maintains a high expectation and positivity of their students may produce the same effect and improve student performance.

Brophy and Good (1974) offer a stop and pause moment in the study of expectation theory by reflecting upon the previous two decades of research on the topic, paying ample homage to the work of Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968). They re-introduce us to the research on expectation theory by highlighting the concept of self-fulfilling prophecy, whereby a teacher forms an early assumption about a student's academic abilities and these early assumptions actually dictate a behavior on the part of the teacher which ensures these assumptions come true (Brophy & Good, 1974, p. 1). A secondary key element in the study of expectation theory is what they refer to as sustaining expectation effect (Brophy & Good, 1974, p.1). In this theory, a teacher has become acquainted with certain behavioral norms of a particular student and rather than attempting to break unhealthy behaviors, comes to continually expect a perpetuation of such behavior. Similar to self-fulfilling prophecy, this too begins to form behavioral norms on the part of the teacher that can last for an entire school year. If a student frequently turns in late work, for example, a sustained expectation effect would be that the teacher makes no effort to inspire the student to turn work in on time, and rather simply comes to accept the continued behavior of turning in late work. Brophy and Good (1974) assert that such latency of teacher expectation can occur in many areas of student-teacher relationship. These are the roots of expectation theory in education and seem to plant a seed for what would later become disposition (Katz & Raths, 1985). The connection being that a teacher's collection of behaviors with a student, whether due to expectation theory or sustained expectation effect, make up what can be referred to as their overall disposition towards that student.

Although the first use of the term disposition occurred with Dewey (1922), Katz and Raths (1985) refined the term and substantiated it as an essential element of teacher education (Diez, 2007; Freeman, 2007). In the 1980s, as a response to No Child Left Behind, a number of

educational organizations set out to establish a framework for a shared sense of what makes for a high-quality teacher (Schussler, 2006). In 1996, under the auspices of the Council of Chief State School Officers, a consortium of more than thirty states and professional organizations formed the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). Incidentally, in the same year, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was created. This agency, however, tends to focus on teacher development once they are in the field, not as preservice teachers. InTASC set out to establish Model Standards for Beginning Teachers Licensing and Development (Peterson, 2016). The standards represent a common core of teaching knowledge and skills that they recommend be acquired by all new teachers (Peterson, 2016). InTASC developed ten competencies for beginning teachers. These ten competencies were subdivided into three areas: knowledge, performance, and disposition. This would mark the first time that the term disposition emerged as a component of an advisory agency for teacher preparation programs, and in fact within this fifty-eight-page document the word disposition appears sixty-one times (Peterson, 2016). In the years that followed, many colleges and universities frequently looked to the InTASC recommendations to speak into their own program standards, resulting in a total of thirty states adopting them as state code (Diez, 2007). By the late 1990s, the phrase *knowledge, skills, and dispositions* was firmly planted in teacher education policy, and most teacher preparation programs provided information and assessment on all three (Diez, 2007).

A section titled Critical Dispositions follows each of the ten InTASC Standards (InTASC, 2013). Some of the terms used to describe an appropriate teacher disposition from these sections are that a teacher adopt, appreciate, believe, be committed to, have enthusiasm for, persist, realize, recognize, respond, seek, be sensitive to, understand, and value students as they

engage with them in the educational process (InTASC, 2013). Even so, Murray (2007) points out that such terms to describe disposition have no real explanatory value and are really simply labels for certain types of behaviors. A critical view of InTASC and others' inability to define what they mean by disposition is a theme that ensues until 2006 when NCATE comes out with a definition that can best be summed up as, figure it out and create a definition of your own. To this day, there is a vastly different approach to the term from institution to institution. Thornton (2006) argues that even though the term has been around for a long time, teaching programs still focus too heavily on content and do not delve into a solid definition of what they are after when assessing an individual's disposition and are all over the map in trying to do so.

Even though InTASC was first on the scene to establish disposition as a necessary element of teacher preparation, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was established in 1954 and had been accrediting schools of education for a much longer time. NCATE was a coalition of thirty-three member organizations of teachers, teacher educators, content specialists, and local and state policy makers. Incidentally, NCATE has since been merged with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) who is the primary accrediting agency for teacher preparation programs today. NCATE's original three areas of professional standards were to evaluate a candidate's knowledge, skills, and professional obligations. In the year 2000, NCATE changed the phrase *professional obligations* to the term *dispositions*. It appears that this transition is what prompted an increased awareness of the term in education programs. Schussler (2006) points out that in 2003 the presentations at the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) mentioned the word disposition very rarely. However, by 2006, the majority of presentations were about teacher candidate dispositions with most programs advocating it as a necessary component in the teacher

preparation regimen (Schussler, 2006). Freeman (2007) points out that between the years 2003 and 2005, the number of presentations with the word disposition in the title grew from only a few to forty-three. From the year 2000 to 2008, there was even a yearly symposium held at Northern Kentucky University on educator dispositions (Freeman, 2007).

As rapidly as the term generated research and debate, it just as quickly subsided from the published world of academia. From about 2015 to today, very few articles have been published that address this issue. When they do publish, the discussion tends to be almost entirely focused on issues of social justice and cultural competency as a key disposition in a preservice teacher's arsenal. This is a central theme that is explored more thoroughly in Chapter 3. That said, the assessment of disposition remains a part of every accredited teacher preparation program in the state of Oregon, and is no doubt prevalent elsewhere as well. The term also became political. Hines (2007) describes at least three incidents at universities where students sued over being made to possess a certain disposition. At the center of the debate in each instance was the question over what authority an institution has in evaluating what are intrinsically held beliefs and behaviors of another individual. Both the political right and the political left got involved (Hines, 2007). The political livelihood of the term was short, however, and is therefore not a central focus of this project.

Methods

The following methods were implemented both in preparation for this study and as the study ensued.

Construct, Style and Technique

Unlike a systematic review, this study does not begin with a clear, singular question to be answered or a hypothesis to be tested. Rather, as a narrative review, what is postulated here is a

topical examination of an extremely prominent and important element in the teacher preparation process, the element of disposition. Moreover, it is a component within this process that has received very little academic research attention in the past ten years or so and as such is in need of deeper examination. As a narrative, the purpose of this project is to tell the story, so-to-speak, of the term disposition as it has been defined since its inception. The study does not presume to examine every piece of literature ever published on the topic, but rather surveys key publications that represent major themes represented throughout all studies. In this way, the story of disposition emerges as it has been examined throughout the past thirty-five years or so.

In Chapter 2, the literature is examined in chronological order according to publication date. In this way, the goal is to address the term *disposition* as it progressed and was re-defined through time. This technique also allows the literature to build upon itself, as scholars interact with each other over the central topic. Because of this, a significant amount of primary research was derived from the in-text citations and reference pages of primary texts and then adopted as my own primary text. Throughout this process, works were evaluated for inclusion or exclusion. Research began with the formation of my own reference page where key publications were organized into alphabetical order. For each title, a literature analysis was conducted and key elements were listed following each entry. This document was then placed into chronological order by publication date and became the road map for the development of Chapter 2. In time, as works were evaluated, the majority of references both in-text and in the reference page of primary texts, became more familiar to me. It was at this moment that I began to have a solid grasp on the mass of literature published on disposition and became a subject matter expert.

Chapter 3, then, is a mining of the key themes that emerge from the literature in Chapter 2.

Certainly not every theme is included in Chapter 3, however, those that are represented serve as an effective umbrella under which all less prominent themes can be placed.

Inclusion- Exclusion Criteria and Scope Searches

Using the Elton B. Stephens Information Services Data Base (EBSCO) through the George Fox University Library, and occasionally Google Scholar, works on education that directly reference the term *disposition* in their title were automatically included. If the title did not examine education specifically, it was excluded from further study. Works that examined disposition as it relates to education, therefore, were the primary resource for inclusion criteria. Topics related to disposition were quite common and were also included for study as they emerged. Such topics as morality, social justice, behavior, demeanor, virtue, and reflection are amongst these themes. In each instance, the topic examined had to have a direct connection to the concept of teacher disposition. If it did not, it was excluded from the study. For example, there have been countless studies conducted on morality and education, but if the study did not specifically include the concept of morality as it pertained to teacher disposition, it was not included. It is also for this reason that certain publications on the idea of good teaching, that could be viewed as pillars in the world of pedagogy, were often not included. In most cases, these works had no definitive discussion on the specific issue of disposition. They may have addressed personality, rapport, interaction, etc., but if it was not specific to the study of disposition, it was excluded.

In addition to the mining of reference pages and in text citations, lengthy scope searches were conducted. In the same manner as above, however, scope searches eventually turned up works that I had already examined and written on. As mentioned, two primary databases were

utilized for scope searches, EBSCO and Google Scholar. The primary search term used in EBSCO was the term *disposition*. This was expanded in many forms through Boolean searches to include such searches as *disposition and morality*, *disposition and teaching*, *teacher disposition* etc. In all cases, however, the main title had to clearly be one that offered an examination of the term *disposition* in the title and the work had to specifically be connected to education. In certain cases, there are publications that do not have the term disposition in the title, such as Wenger, (1998): *Communities of practice learning, meaning, and identity*. Such titles appear in the reference list for two main reasons.

First of all, such works are typically works that emerged from either an in text citation or a reference page from another study. They were flagged because the primary text, which was examining disposition, referred to this text as one that had something to say on the topic, even though it was not in the primary title. Upon reading this related text, if indeed it had substantial information on the topic of disposition, it was treated as a primary text and was included; such was the case for Wenger (1998) as well as others. The other reason a text may be included in the reference list that does not include the term disposition is that it is a prominent text that has a great deal of impact in academics on the establishment of the term *disposition*. These are texts that are referred to frequently by authors and often lay a firm foundation on which many future studies of disposition were based. Examples of such texts are Dewey (1922, 1933), Kohlberg (1927), and Brophy and Good (1974), to name a few. Of course, since this study also discusses briefly the topic of accreditation and advisory agencies, such as NCATE and InTASC, there are some references connected to these studies.

The second platform utilized for scope searches was Google Scholar. In many cases, I was able to find a PDF version of a text that was not available at EBSCO through the George

Fox University (GFU), and this was very helpful. In such cases, the URL for the PDF of the text is included in the Reference page. When a text was neither available through EBSCO nor Google scholar, it was often ordered through the GFU library and borrowed from other institutions.

Finally, works were examined with no regard to publication date, since as a narrative review it is a survey of literature through time. However, as I came to the end of my research, I began to narrow the search to the years between 2015 and today. This is because, as was discovered, there is scant research that explicitly addresses disposition in education throughout these years. My goal was to capture everything that I could from a more modern era. It is also for this reason that I was able to reasonably conclude, as I do a few times throughout this study, that there needs to be more research in this area going forward. Works were not discriminated against if they were not published in the United States, neither did I separate studies by upper, middle, and lower grade-levels as all studies on disposition were included independent of the target grade level. Works that were not in the English language were not included.

Bias Statement

The purpose of this narrative review is to offer a bias free examination of the topic of disposition and allow its journey through literature to speak for itself. That said, along this argosy there are moments that require some reflection on the part of the author, and as such are offered. Three such areas of bias occur. First, is the pointing out of certain moments of irony in the definition and practice of disposition as it transpires though time. Secondly, is to point out that little to no research on disposition as it is reflected outside of a classroom setting has been conducted. This is subsequently identified as an area where much more research is necessary. And thirdly, is to observe the obvious absence of the term *worldview* in virtually all of the studies. In a sense, everything that is examined in this research is a function of the worldview of

the educator as a sieve through which behavior with students is funneled, and yet it is never mentioned by any researcher.

Chapter 2: Narrative Review of Literature on Teacher Disposition

Disposition in the 20th Century

Katz and Rath (1985) present what is arguably the earliest deep dive into the term *disposition* as it relates to teaching. While they certainly look back at previous studies on the issue of teacher character (Buss & Craik, 1983; Joyce, 1972; Combs, 1969), they fully confront the reality that there has been an array of terms used in lieu of disposition in the years prior to 1985. Indeed, the crux of their work is to bring meaning to the term and by doing so establish it as part of the lexicon in teacher preparation programs (Katz & Rath, 1985). In their study, skills, attitudes, habits and traits are all presented as potential alternatives to what a teacher's disposition is, and each is summarily dismissed as not being thorough enough in scope to truly define disposition. Furthermore, they are clear that a disposition is not an individual's character. For this reason, they also stay clear of terms such as honesty, ambition, courage and forthrightness in the assessment of a teacher candidate (Katz & Rath, 1985).

For the actual definition of disposition, Katz and Rath (1985) prefer the term "habits of mind" (p. 303). By this, they mean that a teacher's disposition is a series of actions taken by an instructor with an intentionality towards a positive union with a student. This can emerge in such instances as how a teacher reassures a student, encourages a student, and maintains a positive rapport with a student. Other means of defining dispositions is to refer to them as "summaries of act frequencies" and "trends in behavior" (Katz & Rath, 1985, p. 303). Using these as a reference, and harkening to the habit of mind image, dispositions are characteristics of a teacher's behavior that are predictable within varying contexts. The importance of a positive disposition is vital to the reputation and productivity of an instructor. Reflecting on a comment I made in the introduction about what attributes come to mind when an individual thinks of their favorite or

most influential teacher, Katz and Raths (1985) say something similar. They point out that when an individual who is not in the teaching profession reflects on who is a good or bad teacher, attributes of disposition are always at the forefront of their decision. Rarely if ever do individuals comment on the academic preparation or content knowledge of an instructor. It is always behavior-oriented comments that stick in one's mind, otherwise known as dispositions.

As mentioned, in addition to the vital need to be concerned about disposition, Katz and Raths (1985) mainly place their focus on what preservice teaching programs can do to identify and develop effective dispositions within young, soon-to-be teachers. It is encouraging to know that they do believe dispositions can be learned, but that certainly there are individuals who have an easier time of it than others. There are two main suggestions that Katz and Raths (1985) purport as a means to develop positive disposition-making within teacher preparation programs. The first is to assess an individual's natural disposition for teaching prior to entering the program at all. In this way, they argue, a potential teaching candidate might be enabled to make a clear decision about their future as a teacher. Secondly, they claim that teacher programs must have an overall "ethos," (Katz and Raths, 1985, p. 305) as they call it which places the disposition topic at the forefront of all that is planned within the program. Interestingly, neither of these two suggestions comes with any palpable methodology as to how to measure such things though they do assert that once a program faculty develops a theme or a conceptual base for its teacher education program, the selection of dispositions follows fairly readily.

Moving in a different direction than Katz and Raths (1985), Tishman and Perkins (1993) identify disposition in a teacher as a matter of the mind, though not in an emotional sense, rather as an intellectual pursuit. Their concept of thinking dispositions purports that positive and effective disposition can only be achieved by a well-ordered mind; one that is critical, reflective

and creative. They use the metaphor of an individual who is playing the piano. Indeed, anyone can sit at a piano and peck away at the keys. Yet, to make it sound good and harmonious, one must practice over a long period of time and perfect their craft. Such is the case with a teacher who demonstrates a positive and effective disposition. The three main features of a positive thinking disposition are abilities, sensitivities and inclinations. Abilities are the skills that have been developed in order to be able to carry out a behavior that develops positive rapport with students. Ability, like practicing the piano, is something that can be developed within the context of a preservice teacher program. It is also the development of an awareness to identify the right situations where proper thinking disposition can be most effectively practiced. Sensitivities and inclinations, however, are far more difficult to attain, as they come more naturally to an individual and are more difficult to learn.

In this way, Tishman and Perkins (1993) recognize that educators come to the table with a certain amount of predisposed and well-entrenched ideas of the way things work in schools. Furthermore, these predisposed ideas directly affect the manner in which a teacher reacts or behaves with students. Though they never actually mention it, this is in effect a direct reference to the work of Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968), Brophy and Good, (1986), and Good (1987) on teacher *expectation theory*. Though not a significant feature of my own study here, it is important to pay appropriate homage to these researchers, as they speak directly to the inherent tools that a teacher brings to the table prior to entering the profession. Brophy and Good (1974), for example, believe that teacher behavior which discriminates against particular students or groups of students is not necessarily intentional or even conscious, but can be linked to prior experiences and beliefs. They therefore call on educators to take a different view of the educational process by recognizing the individuality of students and the effects of a teachers' beliefs and attitudes

upon them. They promote a reasonable technique for helping teachers create and maintain a productive, honest relationship with each of their students. In essence, to have a positive and effective disposition (Brophy and Good, 1974). For Tishman and Perkins (1993), these tools are summed up as sensitivities and inclinations. Once a trained teacher has the ability to recognize a moment when a positive disposition can be displayed, their sensibility is what helps them navigate this moment. As it is a natural and innate attribute, the sensibility can be positive or negative. Likewise, the inclination is simply the actual behavior that is exhibited.

A wealth of research has been conducted on teaching and morality, (Wade, 1963; Higgins & Kohlberg, 1989; Buchman, 1993; Hansen, 1998), but my main concern here is how moral teaching is connected to the examination of teacher disposition. Though they never use the term disposition, Power, Higgins, and Kohlberg, (1989) touch on the moral behavioral intimations of an instructor through such ideas as a democratically governed school. Their six stages of moral judgment within schools includes ample references to teacher behavior, especially as it relates to what they call “universal ethical principles” (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989, p.12).

Buchman (1993) begins to make an even stronger connection between moral teaching and disposition by the way he couches his entire treatise, in that what teachers do is not natural, but rather based upon specific individual choices. These choices, he argues, emanate in behaviors and dispositions of a teacher that have strong effects upon students and their learning. Furthermore, these dispositions in their most effective form, according to Buchman (1993), should remain impersonal as they are simply meeting a certain obligation that a student has of a teacher, to be an effective and caring communicator. Teachers must be willing to act in accordance with rules, submit to impersonal judgment, and be open to change. Only in this way may a teacher develop a disposition that is effective for the business of education. Buchman

(1993) looks at a teacher's disposition as a duty or a role; one that he or she must develop as it is expected and professional to do so. In fact, according to Buchman (1993), it is wrong for a teacher to allow their personal views to tarnish their ethics when it comes to teaching. Personal feelings are nice, but the true character of a teacher is developed through reason, not through emotion. As we will see, this perspective of teacher disposition is vastly different from where it is today in all of its many iterations of definition and origination.

Yost (1997) touches directly on disposition as it relates to moral teaching. He recognizes that there is a difference between theoretical techniques and actual successful methods, and that teaching programs focus too much on these techniques rather than on the actions of a teacher that are successful at building positive rapport. To connect the dots between morality and disposition, Yost (1997) uses the concept of reflection. In order for teachers to truly inculcate a successful learning environment, they must refine the disposition of reflection on their teaching and interaction with students. What's more, this reflection, according to Yost (1997), must be of a critical nature, and assess whether a teacher is willing to be honest with themselves about their level of empathy and caring they have for students. In order to develop the skill of reflection, Yost (1997) argues that teacher preparation programs must implement clinical preparation, as well as seminars and discussions intended to evaluate lesson plans, interactions and outcomes of student-teacher interaction.

Disposition from 2000 to 2005

In the year 2000, the largest established agency that accredits teacher education programs (the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, or NCATE), announced a revised set of standards for evaluating teacher candidates' performances. Central to the focus of these NCATE standards are the "knowledge, skills, and dispositions" of teaching candidates. This

recognition of teacher disposition as an attribute that requires measurement, sparked an immediate controversy over the term within academia. However, it also brought recognition to the issue of disposition and placed it firmly into the lexicon of teacher preparation programs across the United States. The NCATE (2000) definition of dispositions is:

The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors towards students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. For example, they might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment (NCATE Standards, 2000 in Freeman, 2007).

This definition was revised in 2006.

Taylor and Wasicsko (2000) jumped on what would become a fervent search for a better and more solid definition of disposition. They also exhibit early support for the decision by NCATE to include disposition in their accrediting standards, a support that would be scarce in future publications. In their words, dispositions are “the personal qualities or characteristics that are possessed by individuals, including attitudes, beliefs, interests, appreciations, values, and modes of adjustment” (p. 2). They argue that the vast number of studies from the 20th Century on what effective student-teacher relationships look like, more than justify the inclusion of disposition in the NCATE standards. However, they fully recognize that amongst this wealth of research, there has been no consensus on either the definition of disposition or how to assess it. They conclude that “effective teachers are effective people” (Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000, p. 12), and that such an individual is one who is warm, caring, enthusiastic, and enjoys life. These

characteristics, or dispositions, are naturally carried over into the life of a teacher-student relationship when they exist within the life of a teacher outside the classroom.

Maylone (2002) agrees that disposition is a vital part of a teacher's make-up, but argues that to attempt to assess it is near impossible, she calls it "intractable" (p. 18). She points out that everyone who is a leader in education can point to an individual who was extremely qualified to be a teacher on paper, but who had no business actually being with kids due to their very poor disposition. Her first critique of disposition is to ask the question as to whether it's the business of a teacher education program to even assess such a thing? Personality and values development are personal attributes and should therefore be off limits when it comes to the discussion of assessing them. Interestingly, she reflects upon how school systems of the 19th Century used to assess appropriate teacher behavior, even in the public sector, but that we have come far from that and should not be returning to those days. If, as she points out, teacher behavior should be something we monitor and hold expectations for, then the natural question is who gets to define what those behaviors are? Who sets the standards? Maylone (2002) also makes the point that teachers with what we would define as poor dispositions, can and do teach students just as effectively as those with strong dispositions. Her suggestion is that rather than attempt to come up with a list of what good dispositions are, maybe we should focus on what the bad ones are and work from there. In this way, nobody is left with the gargantuan, and touchy, responsibility of dictating values, ethics and morals upon another individual. On the other hand, poor and undesirable dispositions are almost universally agreed upon.

Albee and Piveral (2003) contribute to the search for the actual definition through the use of an analogy to the three little pigs. They argue that the reason the third pig's house did not fall was certainly due to the brick structure, but that by analogy, it was the cement of the heart and

the mind which formed the disposition in this pig to be able to create such a sound structure. This “cement” is built up through time as a byproduct of past experiences, trials, and successes.

Interestingly, similar arguments about what makes up a moral character have been made with regard to past experiences (Hansen, 1998). Here, morality is not the main focus, but rather the disposition that is developed through one’s beliefs, values, and commitments in life. Of primary concern for Albee and Piveral (2003) is how to develop an appropriate assessment tool that successfully measures an individual’s disposition. They recognize that teacher choices when it comes to interaction can directly affect a students’ “moral justice and self-esteem” (Albee and Piveral, 2003, p. 347). Therefore, their charge is to help implement disposition measurement tools into teacher preparation programs; tools that measure more than the successful acquisition of knowledge and skills for new teachers.

Berger (2003) speaks from the position of a layman. A veteran public-school teacher and a part time carpenter, he likens the relationship of teacher-student to that of a carpenter to his project. His point is that to build something as a “craftsman” (p. 1), one must take their time and be exact. For him, disposition is established through a positive culture. In one scene, he tells the story of a speaking engagement where he was the keynote. He displayed pictures of his classroom and multiple samples of student work. He points out that the audience of teachers were stunned, as nothing he demonstrated looked anything like a normal classroom to them. This is the culture he establishes. In another scene, he talks about a weekend project where he and his sixth-grade class all came together to build a playhouse for an underprivileged family. He comments that perhaps students learned more on that single day than weeks of traditional teaching from the front of the class. Positive peer pressure, community, and excellence are all trademarks of Berger’s (2003) approach to disposition. Reading Berger (2003), one cannot help

but wish they had been in his class as a child! A heavy emphasis on collaboration with other teachers is what he believes holds people accountable, and in turn promotes excellence in every classroom. Finally, Berger promotes an aspect of disposition that is rarely, if ever discussed in the academic literature. He comments that relationships with students outside the classroom is just as, if not more important than in the classroom. His dedication to the students on weekends and before and after school is undoubtedly where the strongest bonds with students are created and where his true disposition can shine. Teacher disposition with students outside class time is of great importance and in desperate need of more research.

Wasicsko, Callahan and Wirtz (2004) define disposition as anything that is outside the scope of knowledge and skills. They fully admit that the definition of disposition provided by NCATE is nebulous at best. However, they find comfort in the idea that in its tarnished state, institutions are afforded the ability to refine a definition that best suits their organization. Unlike Berger (2003), these are academicians, and as such argue that whatever definition an organization decides upon should be one that is derived from a strong theoretical and research base. In their examination of how institutions have sought to define disposition, they identify three main categories that seem to consistently be analyzed. These three are teacher behaviors, teacher characteristics, and teacher perceptions (Wasicsko, et al., 2004, p. 3). They proceed to point out that any assessment of characteristics within these three categories can be highly subjective. The trick for an organization, therefore, is to establish objective benchmarks for a teacher's disposition analysis that can be placed into one of these three categories. Similar to Katz and Rath (1985), Wasicsko et al. (2004) believe it is important to assess an individual's propensity for a positive disposition prior to them starting a teacher preparation program. This does not mean that an individual who has a low propensity should drop out of education, but it

does provide an opportunity for an individual to at least speculate as to whether they should be going into the teaching profession. Like Katz and Raths (1985), Wasicsko et al. (2004) do believe that good disposition can be formed over time if given ample attention. This, they believe, can be established by providing both a pre and a post measuring tool in a preparation program. In this way, the post measurement may also serve as an exit ticket prior to entering the field. But how can an educational institution deny the conferral of a teaching degree upon someone who does not have a proper disposition? Admittedly, they cannot. What Wasicsko et al. (2004) recommend is that an institution “defer” (p. 7) a candidate rather than deny them. Assessing appropriate disposition can only be accomplished in the field, as it takes real-life situations to refine it. A deferral, therefore, would simply mean that a candidate would be required to put in more classroom and/or in the field preparation prior to conferral.

Similar to Wasicsko et al. (2004), Damon (2005) identifies the terms knowledge and skills, the terms adopted by NCATE, as very definable with a long history of identifiability in the field of education. However, he sees the term disposition as entering a new and potentially dangerous territory. He claims that to measure disposition is “far-reaching and loosely defined (Damon, 2005, p. 3), and that to move forward with it as a predictor of future success as an instructor will be wrought with controversy. Specifically, Damon (2005) looks to the behavioral and social sciences, as a place where the term disposition has been used for years with little to no controversy and great consistency. His argument is that NCATE’s definition (NCATE, 2000 in Freeman, 2017), strays too far from what the field of science has known for years. From a scientific perspective, disposition has a great deal to do with personality traits and temperaments. While he agrees that universally we can identify what we believe to be good and bad temperaments, NCATE ventures into the territory of morals beliefs and attitudes as a place to

derive a definition. This, he concludes, ushers in subjectivity and is inappropriate for an education program to assess. On the one hand, to assess disposition from a scientific perspective, as a psychological process would be appropriate, but to involve values judgment and assessment gives far too much power to an educational leader over the development of a preservice student. He warns that if a student teacher is assessed based upon their moral and ethical beliefs, the system can be abused, as it could empower an organization to select candidates based upon social or political beliefs, thereby manipulating the entire system. Damon's (2005) reflection on the fact that NCATE (2000) does not look to social science research on the issue of disposition is a sentiment that has been echoed throughout academia even to this day.

As the debate moves forward, there seems to be an identifiable division in scholarship over the issue of assessing disposition. On the one hand, scholars who criticize the inclusion of this term in a teacher preparation program seem to come from a more scientific and empirical perspective, similar to that of Damon (2005). On the other hand, what keeps the implementation of disposition assessment around in programs seems to be a reflection on it as it connects to a moral education. In other words, if education is a moral act, then being concerned about disposition is necessary. Hansen (2001) for example acquaints disposition to conduct, claiming that appropriate conduct is a moral action whereby one individual treat another with respect, professionalism and decorum. He reflects on what Dewey (1933) refers to as "permanent tendencies to act," claiming that "another term for permanent tendencies is disposition" (p. 30). Dewey (1933) further claims that "knowledge of methods alone will not suffice: there must be the desire, the will, to employ them. This desire is an affair of personal disposition" (p. 30). Hansen (2001) again points to this as a significant reason why a focus on a teacher's disposition is in itself a moral act and must be perpetuated.

Sockett and LePage (2002) take an interesting turn in the disposition debate and seemingly combine both the moral obligation of an instructor to develop appropriate disposition, as well as an intellectual pursuit. They argue that there are three distinct “moral dimensions” (p. 162) that a teacher confronts when they attempt to develop a disposition. The first is entirely indicative of the moral obligation of teaching and breaks down this obligation as a need to focus on both the autonomy and agency of a teacher’s moral behavior. Interestingly, these attributes of moral introspection connect directly to an individual’s moral predisposition, as they are simply a part of an individual through past experience and life formation. The second moral dimension, however, takes a turn that is more akin to what Buchman (1993) and Carroll (2005) argue and is a need for a teacher to develop strong critical reflection of themselves as an instructor and therefore a person with influence over students. Interestingly, Sockett and LePage (2002) still refer to this critical reflection as a moral act and not a purely intellectual and professional obligation. In so doing, they champion disposition development as a somewhat emotional activity. They also view this development as a communal activity. In their third moral dimension, Sockett and LePage (2002) state that “collaboration and community” (p. 162) are vital to an individual’s personal growth as an instructor and to their development towards a strong teaching disposition. This is almost entirely what Berger (2003) argues as the most vital means towards teacher development. Rejection of authority and community is destructive for a teacher, and such isolation can significantly harm the positive development of a teacher’s disposition (Berger, 2003). Sockett and LePage (2002) make it clear that “moral agency and autonomy demands critical self-reflection, which is an unfamiliar practice to some teachers in their professional lives” (p. 164).

Carroll (2005) too believes that a focus on disposition is a moral act and therefore must be defended in teacher preparation programs. Like Buchman (1993), he believes that the development of disposition should be a non-emotional activity, and should be developed in community, along with others who can appropriately assess and critique behavior. This is because he sees the development of dispositions as a “socio- cultural process” (p. 87) that happens in and amongst peers. He refers to this as a “moral community of practice” (p. 85). Furthermore, in the same way that others have argued (Katz & Raths, 1985; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Wasicsko, Callahan & Wirtz, 2004), Carroll (2005) believes that the propensity for a positive disposition should somehow be assessed at the start of a teacher preparation program. He believes that an educational program can be fairly optimistic about the development of a candidate's knowledge and beliefs, but that their behaviors and actions as a potential educator are not so easily identifiable in the onboarding process. Carroll (2005) also makes an interesting point about the difference between an individual's abilities and dispositions. He believes that since dispositions are connected to an individual's social and moral qualities, not just what someone is capable of doing, they are not just habits but rather intelligence capabilities that can be formed over time. This is what Buchman (1993) refers to as the transition one must make when they go from being a lay person to a teacher and that refining one's disposition in preparation of teaching is vital. Furthermore, this transition is the moral obligation of a new teacher who enters a community of educators. Interestingly, Carroll (2005) does believe that there are certain predisposed underlying beliefs that an individual can maintain that make it difficult if not impossible for them to make the transition into the teaching profession. Examples include an individual who is inherently racist, dishonest, insensitive, or close-minded. Such obstacles must be overcome if one expects to form a proper teaching disposition.

Disposition in 2006 and 2007

Schussler, Stooksberry, and Bercaw (2005) observe that there is a “paucity of literature directly addressing the dispositions of teacher candidates, particularly in clearly defining dispositions and offering a means by which to authentically engage teacher candidates and teacher educators in their identification, analysis and development” (p. 2). Perhaps in response to this “paucity of literature,” the years 2006 and 2007 present the largest body of published works on the issue of disposition, albeit mostly critical of the vagueness with which NCATE (2000) defines it. Also, in 2006, NCATE revised its definition of disposition and removed the term *social justice*. For these reasons, I have chosen to specifically examine the published works from 2006 and 2007.

Between the years 2003 and 2005, Freeman (2007), points out, the number of publications with the word disposition in the title grew from only a few to forty-three. Prior to the adoption of the word disposition, the prevailing focus was to examine the attitudes of teacher candidates. Freeman (2007) believes that this term was fuzzy, vague and untraceable, as an attitude is ever changing and very difficult to find any consistency behind. Thus, it was Katz and Raths (1985) who really refine the term disposition and within seven years it was adopted by InTASC as an element to examine within teacher preparation programs. Of course, as has been pointed out, it was in 2000 that the term was adopted by NCATE as well. Freeman (2007) flirts with the idea that perhaps the term temperament would be a better choice over the term disposition. After all, he asserts, temperament is what medical schools and law schools use as a means to assess their candidates’ ability to function in their respective professional environments. Interestingly, he concludes that the term temperament suggests that good teachers are born not made, as a temperament is something that is innate to an individual, and certainly,

good teachers can be formed over time. In the end, Freeman (2007) believes that disposition is the appropriate terminology to utilize for the teaching profession. He also offers an interesting philosophical treatise on why the term disposition has such value in academia, beginning with Aristotle.

Thornton (2006) recognizes that the term disposition has a rich history in the education field as well, especially from a philosophical and psychological perspective (Dewey, 1933; Katz & Raths, 1985), but that it is largely neglected as an area of concern in teacher preparation programs. Thornton (2006) reiterates a common thread in the research on disposition and is perhaps a point of frustration for many researchers; that there is no consensus about the definition of teacher disposition. After reviewing the assessment language from a variety of preservice teacher preparation programs, Thornton (2006) concludes that the language is highly pedagogical, sounding more like checking the boxes of some standards-based assessment modules. When the language does get close to sounding as if a true disposition is being addressed, the simple addition of words such as “value,” “believe,” or “committed” are implemented (p. 55). To address this deficit, Thornton (2006) proposes that we need to examine “dispositions in action” (p. 56), which is essentially to examine how one is disposed to act. This, in her opinion, moves beyond the more simplistic perspective of examining behavior expectations or personality traits. Only in conducting this type of study may we be enabled to move further into a solid connection between teacher disposition and effective teaching.

The conclusion of Thornton (2006) is that a disposition in action of a teacher is one that involves an examination of cognitive and affective attributes. This moves beyond the simple analysis of a habit of mind (Katz & Raths, 1985) because it looks at such habits as they play out in a variety of scenarios. Furthermore, these scenarios involve relationship building and

meaning-making events that play into the success of a teacher relating positively with a student and therefore having an effective teaching moment. As is obvious, Thornton's (2006) development of disposition is one that takes time to develop. However, because of this, she firmly believes that positive dispositions in teachers may be developed and learned as they practice their craft.

Sockett (2006) expands upon this theory of disposition as a relational activity by referring to "character, rules, and relations" (p. 9) as the three most important attributes for a teacher to develop. He maintains throughout his research that for a teacher to develop their professional dispositions, they must engage in a process of moral education (p. 9), thereby also maintaining that teaching is by very nature a moral professional activity. Yet, he concedes that in order to get at what the moral imperatives are, one must engage in philosophical inquiry. In this way, Sockett (2006) continues to combine the emotionless intellectual development of disposition with the emotional activity of exploring one's moral imperatives; "when we think of dispositions, we must think of both the moral and intellectual virtues" (Sockett, 2006, p. 23). He states that this is the only way we have a chance of interpreting NCATE's "opaque" (Sockett, 2006, p. 27) definition of teacher disposition.

Sockett (2006) concludes that the combination of these two pursuits can be summed up in three categories. The first is a disposition of character. Character, he argues, involves a self-knowledge of one's own temperament. He expands the definition to include such self-realized arenas as justice, integrity, courage, and wisdom. For an instructor to develop their disposition of character, they must be keenly aware of all of these aspects of themselves, how they have formed over time, where they are at today, and in what areas they may require development. His second area of development is that of intellect. He further defines this as an "ethic of rules" (Sockett,

2006, p. 17) and purports that such development results in the growth of wisdom. Fairness, open-mindedness and justice are some of the attributes developed through a strong intellect. Finally, the third element necessary for dispositional development is that of care. He defines care in a bit of a different manner than one might expect as it is not self-care, but rather care of others. He views this as a responsibility in relationships that happens over time and is a disposition that is formed through being actively engaged with students, as Thornton (2006) suggests. Specifically, he claims that the disposition of care is developed through being receptive, relatable, and responsive to others.

The morality baton is furthered by Dottin (2006, 2009). Dottin (2006) takes a deep dive into the work of Dewey (1922, 1933) as a backdrop for why forming an appropriate disposition is a moral act. In fact, the “development of moral dispositions” (Dottin, 2006, p. 27) is a rephrasing of the term that cements its identity as a moral activity. He spends a great deal of time focusing on “professional judgment” (Dottin, 2009, p. 28) as a necessary tool for a professional educator. While this judgment is subject to various interpretations based upon circumstances, he argues that having an appropriately formed disposition results in a sound professional judgment. He concedes that at least part of a teacher preparation program's goal is to develop intellectual prowess and virtues about the field of education, but that developing moral virtues are equally as important. When a moral virtue is developed, it adds to an appropriate disposition that in turn dictates professional judgment. He lays out four main facets of professional disposition that should be adhered to in order for an individual to appropriately form their disposition. First, he believes that a professional disposition should have a clear purpose, that is a view of exactly why a behavior should be the way it is. Secondly, he believes that professional judgment and professional disposition should be intricately linked. Third, he steers clear of a definition of

disposition as something emotional and argues that the development of such is a cognitive act that will result in a variety of professional habits or reactions to various events within the classroom (Dottin, 2006). And finally, he believes that dispositions must be nurtured and assessed by well-equipped individuals. For Dottin (2006), dispositions are naturally in place, but in order for them to be formed into something that is impactful in an educational setting, it takes time and practice.

Dottin (2006, 2009) makes an interesting comparison between competence and ability as it relates to disposition. In this, he points out that an educator who is not competent in their performance as a teacher may be so due to their disposition. Educators develop a great deal of knowledge and skill throughout their education programs. Indeed, one may be highly trained and educated in the mechanics of education. Yet, the ability to deploy these skills takes a strong and well-developed disposition. In this way, he believes that disposition cannot be possessed, in the same manner as knowledge and skill can, but rather it is more about performance. In order to refine this performance disposition, an educator must exercise mindfulness. Here, Dottin (2009) hearkens back to Tishman and Perkins (1993) and Katz and Rath (1985) by reiterating that it is mindfulness, or a habit of mind, that truly develops solid dispositions. Moreover, he believes that individuals must develop a habit of mind through outside observation and critique, and not rely fully on their own self-assessment. He points out that institutions tend to rely too much on self-assessment techniques, as cautioned by Wasicsko, Callahan and Wirtz (2004), and students who are “dispositional misfits” (Wasicsko, Callahan & Wirtz, 2004, p. 5) may not have the skills necessary to overcome their dysfunction and appropriately cause change.

Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2006) ask some very introspective questions regarding teacher disposition. Observing the dilemma that teachers face when they discover a disconnect

between their own dispositions and those of more effective teachers, they often do not know how to acquire the tools necessary to improve. Like Dottin (2006), Koeppen and Davidson-Jenkins (2006) do not advocate for self-assessment as the means by which a “dispositional misfit” (Wasicsko, Callahan & Wirtz, 2004, p. 5) may improve. Rather, they turn their attention to teacher preparation programs and ask if they can even possibly teach such a thing within the confines of one semester or even one year? If such a program claims they can do so, then to what extent do the results of such assessment play into a student's ability to matriculate? These are questions that have been asked before (Yost, 1997; Albee & Piveral, 2003) but to varying degrees of conclusion.

For Koeppen and Davidson-Jenkins (2006), therefore, the answer has to come honestly from a preservice teaching candidate prior to their making the decision to venture into a career in education. A personal inventory of sorts is what they advocate. To self-assess your disposition for teaching means looking at how you act, see, and live when envisioning oneself in front of students. Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2006) design a tool for just such an activity and encourage preservice teaching programs to adopt similar tools of self-assessment. Integral to the discovery of one's disposition is to “understand the reality of students in order to give them the best care possible” (Koeppen & Davison-Jenkins, 2006, p. 17). This is a somewhat empathetic approach to assessing disposition in so far as it is a measurement of one's ability to feel empathy for others. Interactions with others is in fact a cornerstone in their definition of disposition because dispositions are intricately linked to who we are (Koeppen & Davison-Jenkins, 2006). Furthermore, it is not enough to simply recognize our dispositions, we must also be prepared to consciously act upon them in a positive manner whenever a situation arises in the classroom that requires it.

Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2006) identify a second important pillar of disposition discovery, that of professionalism. We must act professionally and appropriately in every situation that calls upon an effective disposition. If it sounds as if this theory is at least in part saying nothing more than to have a positive disposition one need only be a nice person; that's because it basically is, as is advocated by Taylor and Wasicsko (2000) when they point out that "effective teachers are effective people" (p. 12) and that such an individual is one who is warm, caring, enthusiastic, and enjoys life.

A teacher education program cannot and should not dictate how a prospective teacher should feel about any given situation, nor should a teacher education program attempt to guide preservice teachers' feelings; such manipulation of emotions resembles indoctrination. Such is the view of Schussler (2006) as she addresses the issue of teacher disposition from both a conceptual and a practical perspective. On the practical side, Schussler (2006) identifies teaching as a series of behaviors that are exhibited by a teacher from a well of past experiences. Conceptually, these behaviors must be tended to in order to identify what their point of inception was, why they are expressing themselves in the manner they are and what effect they are having upon the student who is experiencing them. Furthermore, Schussler (2006) argues that behavior can be so rote in nature, that teachers often lack the opportunity to reflect upon their disposition. She agrees with Katz and Raths' (1985) distinction between skill and disposition whereby skill demonstrates some form of mastery over a type of interaction but that disposition is further defined as that skill becoming a pattern of behavior.

Katz and Raths (1985) define disposition as the trends that are developed by a teacher as they interact with students over time. They argue that teacher education programs should foster skill acquisition and dispositions, as skills and dispositions are tightly coupled. Schussler (2006)

points out that it is often difficult for an observer to identify the true disposition of a teacher candidate, because what an observer may see at the time they observe is simply the parroting of some skill that was learned previously. In the end, Schussler agrees with Katz and Raths (1985) that assessing effective disposition should be a part of the entrance process to any teacher preparation program. Yet, little is offered as to how this may occur.

What Schussler (2006) does offer is a very interesting definition of what disposition is. She points out that until academia agrees on some common definition, that the term, and the assessment thereof, will remain elusive. She begins by indicating that disposition is difficult to define because it represents an aspect of teaching that occurs “internally” (Schussler, 2006, p. 258). Moreover, this internal activity is a place of convergence. This convergence is where the external occurrences and activities of the typical teaching environment, classroom activities if you will, meet face-to-face with an individual’s “schemata” (Schussler, 2006, p. 259). Disposition, therefore, is the definition of how an individual teacher behaves in this moment of convergence. Interestingly, Schussler (2006) turns to a wealth of previous studies on disposition to define what she believes makes up an individual’s schemata. Cognition, beliefs, values, culture and prior experiences are just a few. Furthermore, because all of these elements are different for each individual, no two teachers will have the same schemata.

Because of these varying schemata, dispositions are fluid and there can be no single definition, but rather an ever-changing picture of how it is defined for each individual teacher (Schussler, 2006). There are generally agreed upon parameters for what is a good and a bad disposition for a teacher, there is no need to derive a single definition; what works for one might not work for another and vice-versa (Schussler, 2006). What is important is that a young teacher attempt to identify what makes up their own schemata. To do this, Schussler (2006) argues, a

teacher must employ self-awareness, inclination towards positive interaction, and self-reflection. Teacher education programs must therefore encourage teacher candidates to develop their awareness, inclination, and reflective abilities in addition to refining their knowledge and skills about the field of education.

Murray (2007) calls the definition of teacher disposition “superfluous” (p. 381). He points out, in the same way as Damon (2005), that there is already a clear scientific definition of disposition handed down from the social sciences, but that no effort on the part of InTASC, NCATE, or any other educational body has chosen to pay homage to this research in their collective definitions. Nonetheless, he does not consider an effort to seek a definition entirely useless as it may provide a guiding hypothesis for further investigations. Like Maylone (2002), Murray (2007) reflects upon the days, primarily from the late 19th century, when teaching qualifications were all about beliefs and behavioral attributes. Assessing such elements as character, values, personal beliefs and even faith were once staples in the process of selecting a candidate for the teaching profession. Today, however, to engage in such assessment would be fraught with legal challenges. Turning to science, therefore, to derive a solid definition of disposition would take considerably more scholarship than has been presented thus far in the debate. This approach would also be almost entirely quantitative in nature. Until more quantitative research on the relationships between a teacher’s private beliefs and intentions and his or her overt actions can be conducted, “disposition remains a superfluous construct in teacher education because it is largely tautological with the teacher’s behavior that it seeks to explain” (Murray, 2007, p. 385).

Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2007) return to the debate on disposition and in so doing dig their heels in a bit more on the definition as one of self-reflection. Previously, these authors

advocated for self-reflection, but were wary of leaving such activity to the individual alone, and rather advocated for a teacher preparation program to adopt some form of assessment tool to help teacher candidates. While such activity is still advocated for, in this piece Koeppen and Davidson-Jenkins (2007) sound a lot more like Schussler (2006) in their view of disposition. Rather than something that can be assessed, they now refer to disposition as intangible and difficult to pin down. To them, defining a disposition is to examine an individual's own values, commitments, and professional ethics and as such is a deep activity of the soul which emerges from teacher candidates in vastly different ways. They refer to Palmer (1998) and support his theory that there are a series of human ingredients that are a part of our makeup and which manifest themselves in our classroom practices. They encourage teachers to follow Palmer (1998), where he advocates for teacher candidates to "recognize and reflect on the manifestation of their own personal attributes" (Palmer, 1998, p. 1) and in so doing can turn the corner from being a good teacher to being a great teacher. Moreover, this activity is highly personal, but when undertaken will support a professional educator in their journey towards what they call their "teacher identity" (Koeppen & Davidson-Jenkins, 2007, p. 33). Should an individual successfully undertake this journey of self-reflection, they will emerge as a professional and in fact this is the very definition of professionalism in the transition from student teacher to teacher (p. 48). Finally, like many other theorists, Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2007) firmly believe that disposition development takes time and can be learned through efforts such as these.

Wasicsko (2007) jumps back into the debate by doubling down on something that he said in 2000, that "effective teachers are effective people" (Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000, p. 12). He begins by reflecting on a non-scientific study he conducted himself whereby he asked hundreds of individuals about who they felt their most effective teacher in life had been. He concludes, as

would be expected, that their answers had nothing to do with what the teacher knows or does, but it is who the person is that makes the difference. These natural dispositions are what make teachers great and allow them to transform student lives. Wasicsko (2007) points out that past attempts to define and nurture positive disposition have been somewhat successful, but fall short of the deeper meaning behind what disposition is made up of. These past efforts involve observable teacher behaviors and characteristics which on the surface are good to examine, but are changeable depending upon the situation in which an individual is being observed. Some efforts dig a bit deeper and ask candidates to self-reflect upon their core values, attitudes and belief systems. While he agrees that evaluation systems to diagnose all of these features about an individual's disposition can be effective, Wasicsko (2007) feels that in order to truly determine an individual's disposition, one must examine their various perceptions, specifically, a teacher candidates' perception of themselves, others, and the teaching profession as a whole. He calls this a perceptual model of discovering disposition and refers to it as the Occam's razor for determining whether or not an individual is well suited for the classroom. At its core, this is a model that is purely relational. Whereas other models ask individuals to reflect upon themselves, this model asks an individual to reflect upon themselves as they relate to others around them. In this way, disposition is defined largely through relational efficacy. Wasicsko (2007) understands that positive dispositions can take a lifetime to develop and that his model should not disqualify a potential teacher candidate from entering the profession if they perform poorly. However, he does believe that if such perceptions are examined prior to a candidate's entry into a program, it could provide a solid foundation for where the candidate needs to grow the most in their journey towards being an effective teacher.

Although he does not present it as such, the work of Hines (2007) can be viewed as a warning to Wasicsko (2007) and others who dabble in attempts to assess disposition based upon internally held beliefs or values. He identifies such a practice as similar to what teacher preparation programs used to do fifty years ago, and maintains that there are many similarities between then and now. He quotes Damon (2005) who said that to examine disposition "opens virtually all of a candidate's thoughts and actions to scrutiny...[and] brings under the examiner's purview a key element of the candidate's very personality" (p. 4), and that such activity wanders into shaky legal territory. Interestingly, he also calls out teacher preparation programs as places where left-leaning professors have placed an over emphasis on social justice issues. This has yielded a one-sided approach to teacher education and the certification of teachers based on ideology, rather than teaching skills or mastery of content knowledge (Hines, 2007).

Hines (2007) emphasizes that critics of disposition assessment accuse education schools of acting as ideological gatekeepers to employment in public schools. This is a sentiment that is shared by Borko, Liston, and Whitcomb (2007). To demonstrate his point, as do Borko et al. (2007) he refers to a legal battle that occurred at Washington State University in 2004, where a conservative student was denied matriculation because he disagreed with many of the disposition benchmarks that the university mandated, such as an agreement with affirmative action and the ability for gay couples to adopt. The University had implemented into its disposition assessment an emphasis on race, power, gender, class, and sexual orientation, and was therefore discovered to be a tool of political thought and ideology rather than a true assessment of a candidate's internal dispositions. The student sued and was allowed to continue in the program (Hines,2007).

Hines (2007) is clearly not a fan of disposition assessment. He states that no research has ever linked with any certainty particular personality traits with effective teaching. He points the

finger at NCATE who in its original definition of disposition included the definition that “dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice” (NCATE Standards, 2000). In 2006, NCATE deleted the term social justice as an aspect of the definition of disposition, but Hines (2007) argues that it was not enough and that teacher preparation programs at universities all over the United States have adopted social justice issues as a major feature of their disposition assessment.

Damon (2007) carries this theme forward by pointing out that to assess disposition affords the ability of the evaluator to practice a subjective bias. He revives an argument that has been made before (Buchman, 1993; Damon, 2005), that the only means by which disposition should be assessed is through a clear definition from the social sciences which will provide a rigorous and unambiguous view drawn from science and other systematic areas of scholarship. In the scientific sense, primarily from psychology, disposition is a “trait or characteristic that is embedded in temperament and disposes a person toward certain choices and experiences that can shape his or her future” (Damon, 2007, p. 367). From this perspective, disposition is a deeply rooted attribute of a person and cannot be assessed simply. Like Hines (2007), Damon (2007) too points his finger at NCATE as having created a potentially impossible and certainly unethical dilemma in asking a teacher preparation program to assess an individual’s disposition. He argues that science was completely ignored in the development of these standards and that an examination of an individual's “beliefs and attitudes” (NCATE, 2000) is a moral act and has no place in the hands of an evaluator. People who feel passionate about a belief often have a strong desire to want others to adhere to their belief. In the process of evaluating personal beliefs, therefore, the evaluator is given too much opportunity to abuse their power.

Johnson and Reiman (2007) agree with Damon (2007) and point out that what is attempted through an examination of disposition is to create an environment where the exploration of past experience is produced. In this light, it is therefore important for educators to focus on and seek a definition for disposition. In a manner that somewhat marries the scientific and the moral, Johnson and Reiman (2007) develop what they refer to as “moral imagination” (p. 209). “Moral imagination is our capacity to see and to realize in some actual or contemplated experience possibilities for enhancing the quality of experience, both for ourselves and for the communities of which we are a part” (Johnson & Reiman, 2007, p. 209). In this way, they argue that one cannot possibly escape an assessment of disposition without a consideration of the moral. An individual's disposition is made up over time through the trends of behavior that form after a series of contexts. Since there is always more than one way to solve a dilemma, these disposition trends vary widely and are often rooted in one's personal, moral, and even religious beliefs. This, they argue, is inescapable and problematic, as it ushers into the debate very personal and non-quantifiable elements (Johnson & Reiman, 2007).

Burant, Chubbuck, and Whipp (2007) echo this sentiment and advocate ditching the term entirely and reverting back to what has been an established educational and pedagogical theory for over a hundred years; a focus on teaching as a moral activity. The attempt by many researchers to define disposition on terms other than moral, according to Burant et al. (2007), have been flawed, and while they may pass legal muster, fail miserably at defining true disposition. They categorize these attempts into three major arenas: belief statements, personality traits, and inference from behaviors (Burant et al., 2007). Belief statements, they argue, are nothing more than content filled propositions and are existential in nature. While it is important to focus on belief statements, they very often have little connection to actual behavior and cannot

be relied upon as a guide for how a teacher will successfully interact with students. It is also pointed out that little research has proven that belief statements and teacher efficacy have any positive correlation (Burant et al., 2007). Personality traits, they argue, are too fluid in nature, changing constantly and therefore lack the ability to be relied upon for the assessment of teacher disposition. And finally, inference from behavior as a means to assess or measure disposition is difficult because of what Burant et al. (2007) refer to as a “muddy linkage that exists between a person’s interior values and his or her behavior (p. 402). Furthermore, the authors point out that to even engage in such assessment absolutely ushers in significant legal issues over what is appropriate and what is not when it comes to evaluating an individual’s personally held values and beliefs.

Despite the warnings put forth by authors such as Buchman (1993), Damon (2005) and Hines (2007) that the use of the term disposition in teacher preparation programs can engender bias and promote specific ideology, there are authors who specifically look at this as a desirable outcome of examining disposition. Eberly, Rand and O'Connor (2007), for example, point out that there is a great deal of research on the fact that dispositions are difficult to change. If, therefore, one has a predisposed leaning towards say racism, this is something that must be rooted out at the very start of a program. Villegas (2007) believes that predisposed beliefs significantly affect how a teacher teaches, and as such must be explored. In fact, certain programs, such as Montclair State University, directly assess an individual's disposition towards people of color prior to entering their program (Villegas, 2007). For Villegas (2007), strong disposition entails the ability to teach all children equitably. If, therefore, there is any predisposed leaning towards inequity based upon race, it must be called out. Eberly et al. (2007) believe that dispositions are manifestations in behavior that come from deeply held attitudes,

values and beliefs. Because of this, they argue that dispositions cannot necessarily be controlled, demanded, or guided. It is therefore vitally important for Eberly et al. (2007) that these deeply held attributes be examined early in the teacher preparation process. Like Villegas (2007), their main purpose for doing so is to identify any leanings towards issues of inequity. Ironically, this brings the discussion right back to what I discussed much earlier regarding the *Pygmalion Effect* as it relates to education (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Both Villegas (2007) and Eberly et al. (2007) would no doubt agree that individuals have predisposed views of their students based upon a variety of factors, including race. These presuppositions emanate into what Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) call “self-fulfilling prophecy” (p. 12), whereby teacher expectations of students are met based upon their predisposed view of that student. This theory was later revived by Brophy and Good (1974), but has largely been abandoned as a research focus.

Disposition from 2008 to today

NCATE has revised its definition of disposition twice since 2000. The first iteration was in 2000 when the authors chose to include disposition as a third main pillar to the already established areas of knowledge and skills. The second major revision was in 2006 when they chose to delete the term *social justice* as an element of disposition that must be assessed by a teacher preparation program. It is argued that the deletion of this term was out of political pressure, and that by removing it “the accreditor caved in to its critics” (Johnson & Johnson, 2007, p. 3). This second, 2006, revision defines disposition as follows:

Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development.

NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable

behaviors in educational settings. The two professional dispositions that NCATE expects institutions to assess are fairness and the belief that all students can learn. Based on their mission and conceptual framework, professional education units can identify, define, and operationalize additional professional dispositions (NCATE, 2006).

In this version there is the introduction of a new approach. Perhaps in response to the flurry of criticism over NCATE's definition in the previous few years, the addition of the final sentence essentially instructs education programs to define it as they see fit based upon the "mission and conceptual framework" (NCATE, 2006) of their organization. This is an interesting twist in the dispositions debate. While it may perhaps get the scholars off of NCATE's back, it certainly does not end the discussion in academia over the definition of the term and how to assess it. While there are a good number of articles published on dispositions between 2006 and 2007, from 2008 until today, there has been a significant decline. Nonetheless, what follows is a survey of the key literature from 2008 to today.

Sockett (2002, 2006, 2009, 2012) contributes a great deal to the debate on disposition. Shortly following NCATE's (2006) revised definition, Sockett (2009) continues his quest to define dispositions as a combination of both moral and intellectual attributes. His use of the term virtue is an example of this. As a virtue, a teaching disposition is one that is developed through responses to outside obstacles over time (Sockett, 2009). These obstacles, which are most often presented by students, should inspire a teacher to ask some essential questions. At the core of these questions is to reflect on how a teacher learns from the students they teach. More specifically, a teacher should pay attention to how their students are acquiring and interacting with the material they are being taught and ensuring that they are never deceived by the classroom narrative or presentation of material. Truthfulness and transparency in this act of

reflection is an example of teaching virtuously (Sockett, 2009). Furthermore, this level of virtuosity, practiced over time, will develop a powerful teaching disposition.

Sockett (2009) spends a great deal of time addressing what has become a very active debate in academia over how to define disposition, and that is to ask the question as to whether we should even be assessing it at all? Indeed, disposition is at least partially an assessment of an individual's character and to assess character through some ideological scale may enter into adverse legal territory. Even moral assessment, which has been discussed as an integral aspect of teaching, can enter into legal and contractual issues (Sockett, 2009). Sockett further points out that attempts at defining disposition have steered clear of any discussion of character assessment because of this very reason and have instead ventured into pedagogical, institutional, philosophical, and psychological discussions rather than emotional or moral ones. Damon (2005), for example, prefers to encourage the development of disposition as a reflective practice; an intellectual pursuit that is based in social science research and theory and not in moral assessment. Yet, Sockett concludes that the intentionality and friendliness aspect required of an individual to develop their own disposition cannot be ignored, and that to reflect on these attributes necessarily brings the debate into the moral sphere. The expressive and emotional task of developing disposition is never devoid of intellectual activity, but certainly involves morality (Sockett, 2009).

Johnson (2008) also believes that at the core of any disposition is a moral judgment, but not of the emotional kind. Logical, moral judgment, in fact, must be at the core of any classroom resolution and in this manner only can a resolution be equitable. Yet, the challenge for Johnson is not in the definition of disposition but in the assessment of it. How can we begin to evaluate an individual's disposition when they are so transitory? To measure growth in this area is almost

impossible, according to Johnson (2008), as moral judgments are tied to a complex schema within an individual that changes drastically over time and through each individual situation. In other words, we cannot presume that a teacher is going to react the same way every time across a spectrum of situations within the classroom. What Johnson (2008) champions, therefore, is an education for teacher candidates that includes exposure to a solid base of secular ethics and morals. Johnson (2008) believes that the social sciences offer a thorough explanation of what basic moral judgment is. With this knowledge, therefore, teachers can make decisions that offer some consistency in moral judgment. Because of our changing world with increased diversity and issues regarding equity, it is vitally important that preservice programs include this as a feature of their coursework (Johnson, 2008).

Schussler, Bercaw, and Stooksberry (2008) refer to the concept of thinking dispositions as set forth by Perkins, Tishman, Ritchhart, Donis, and Andrade (2000). Thinking dispositions are when someone's intelligence or ability is put to use through the sensitivity to know when a situation calls for a certain skill. Thinking on one's feet might be another apt way to define it. Every teacher has a disposition which is put to use in various situations throughout their day. This filter is shaped by a teachers' experiences, beliefs, culture, values, and cognitive abilities and is therefore foundational for a teacher's thinking and actions. In order for an individual to identify what their disposition is and to develop it in a positive manner, Schussler et al. (2008) posit that one must examine three main domains of their life. The first is their intellectual domain which entails the learning of basic pedagogical methods as well as the content of what they are teaching. A cultural inclination is second, and calls upon a teacher to be sensitive to the diversity of learners in their classroom. And lastly is a moral awareness which they define as "the inclination to think through the assumptions and ramifications behind one's values, considering

desirable ends and the processes to achieve those ends, and the responsibility that one has to care for others” (Schussler et al., 2008, p. 40). The development of these three areas ensures that an individual forms a sophisticated and effective thinking disposition.

Stooksberry, Schussler, and Bercaw (2009) double down a year later on their theory of examining intellectual, cultural, and moral arenas, ICM as it is called, as a way to develop and define an individual’s disposition. They contend that the development of an individual teacher’s disposition is imperative because disposition is a direct link to a teachers’ behavior with students as they forge through a school year with its myriad situations. Awareness of one's ICM will facilitate deliberate actions to improve behavior and response in a variety of contexts. Furthermore, behaviors can be either explicit or implicit, and only through a contemplation of ICM can one distinguish between the two and exact change. Lamberth and Opalinski (2008) agree with this idea and refer to it as disposition discrepancies. The discrepancy occurs when there is a disconnect between how a teacher actually feels when they are interacting with students, their explicit state, and what their latent opinions and emotions are that are hidden or implicit. Discovering the implicit for Lamberth and Opalinski (2008) is vitally important in a teacher’s growth. Stooksberry et al. (2009) contend that their ICM model is entirely unique to the assessment of disposition, as it does not focus on behavior. Neither does it assess an individual by way of rubrics or observations. Rather, the ICM heuristic, as they call it, is an activity of the mind through thinking and reflection. In fact, the primary feature they suggest for a teacher preparation program is to implement journaling with specific topics to be explored by teacher candidates.

Again, in 2010, Schussler, Stooksberry, and Bercaw reflect further on this concept. They begin by observing what they consider to be a problem teachers have with connecting what they know to the variety of teaching situations that arise in the classroom. They posit that while most teachers can creatively problem solve, the situations where they are called to do so are so abundant that there is often a lack of sensitivity to know when to employ what they know and when not to. They refer to this as a “problem of enactment” (Kennedy, 1999, p. 70 as cited in Schussler et al., 2010). They further identify that since all teachers possess a cultural identity (Villegas, 2007), a vital aspect to developing and defining one’s disposition is to explore their assumptions and perceptions that have developed over time. They believe that “dispositions involve the inclination of a teacher to achieve particular purposes and the awareness of the self and the context of a given situation to employ appropriate knowledge and skills to achieve those purposes (Schussler et al., 2010, p. 2). Of course, they also look to their ICM model as a means by which an individual may do this. What’s different about this publication from the previous ones by Schussler et al. (2008, 2009), is that for the first time the issue of culture is addressed. This introduces yet again into the disposition debate the concept of teacher expectation theory (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968; Brophy & Good, 1986; Good, 1987) whereby a teacher comes to a classroom with predisposed opinions and expectations of their students which are played out and come to fruition. This extensive value system (Sockett, 2006) dictates how one acts and what disposition will be exhibited with students.

Feiman-Nemser and Schussler (2010) believe that “conceptualizing disposition is as much about a process as it is about an end product” (p. 177). They argue that teacher preparation programs should start with three basic principles regarding disposition. First, they should offer a solid definition of what they believe disposition is for their program. Secondly, they need to

enumerate the specific definitions of disposition that the faculty wish to espouse. There are as many definitions of disposition out there as there are education programs and each program is tasked with refining what they believe are the most pertinent issues for their specific goals according to their mission and values. And thirdly, programs need to justify why they choose the specific factors of disposition that they do. Additionally, in this choice, these factors must meet a “moral imperative” (Feiman-Nemser & Schussler, 2010, p. 184) that suits the needs of the university as a whole as well as the program's specific goals. There is, as they state, “a moral and ethical obligation to prepare teachers to educate all students” (Feiman-Nemser & Schussler, 2010, p. 184). The dispositions that are required to carry out this obligation, are therefore the most important factors to examine and engender in a preparation program.

The “obligation to prepare teachers to educate all students” (Feiman-Nemser & Schussler, 2010, p. 184) is echoed by Amos (2011) in her analysis of teacher preparation programs. Amos advocates for a wealth of social justice preparation in preservice teacher programs. She points out that recruiting future teachers of color is a positive step, but that the graduation rates of minority students is so low, that there isn't a large pool to draw from. Amos argues that an individuals' teaching disposition is guided by predisposed beliefs. Furthermore, these beliefs drive action. Therefore, one's beliefs towards racial and ethnic diversity strongly affects how they interact with students of color. She says, “it is essential that white teacher candidates analyze their unexamined racist beliefs and recognize the possibility that their negative beliefs may lead to their discriminatory behaviors toward minority students (Amos, 2011, p. 490).

She points out through her own studies that most teacher candidates enter into programs with self-proclaimed non-racist views and a desire to treat all students with equity. Amos (2011)

does not deny these individuals their sincerity, yet believes that intrinsic beliefs that are often unchecked result in a different experience for students of color at the hands of white teachers. To this, Amos asks the question, can we have unique and authentically separate beliefs that do not dictate our actions? With this question, Amos suggests that an individual may have a natural disposition towards racism in a latent fashion, and that it must be addressed. She identifies white privilege as a key component to the predisposed nature for white teachers to be racially insensitive. The answer is to implement a large amount of coursework that addresses cultural competency. “Dispositions such as critical cultural consciousness, intercultural sensitivity, caring, and commitment to social justice are desirable dispositions, particularly when teaching racially/ethnically different students (Amos, 2011, p. 482).

Berkowitz (2011) returns to the theme of disposition and hails Kohlberg (1927) and his establishment of just community schools as a role model for how to implement virtue into teacher preparation. His focus, like many others, is a philosophy whereby teachers model a behavior that can be learned and mimicked by students. He alternatively refers to values as both moral education and character education, emphasizing the need to look internally, to the heart, as a place from whence dispositions are formed and displayed in the classroom. Berkowitz (2011) cuts to the chase in his advocacy for a positive disposition and offers a well-studied set of fifteen categories of educational strategies that place the development of a positive disposition at the core. Moreover, these strategies span a great swath of the educational platform and include such explorations as classroom practices, parenting strategies, professional development, and even community involvement. His interest in the inclusion of parents, which is actually a first in the literature on disposition, is centered on the belief that parents will care more deeply about their child’s schools if they feel that their child’s school cares deeply for their child. He refers to this

interaction as one of nurturance, where a school takes on the role of loving, caring, and exhibiting a positive regard for each and every student.

Berkowitz (2011) claims that education in America tends to lean too much on an authoritarian and hierarchical model where those in charge lord their authority over students and faculty and engender an environment of tense structure. In such environments, it becomes very difficult for a teacher to naturally develop and explore their appropriate disposition, as they are often denied the freedom to explore internally. For this reason, Berkowitz advocates for the Kohlberg (1927) model of a just community school that includes voices from all stakeholders within the school environment. In this more democratic school environment, where everyone feels free to express an opinion, teachers are freer to explore their internal motivations for action, rather than feel there is some universal behavior that they must adhere to. Finally, Berkowitz points out that most professional development opportunities for teachers are far too focused on pedagogical content and do not address issues of disposition development, emotion, and character development in children.

A breath of fresh air comes from Bullough (2011) who asserts that virtually everything a teacher does, including lesson planning, grading, organizing the structure of the year, and assessment options, comes first and foremost from the relationship that teachers have with students. This places the concept of disposition overtly into the day-to-day operations of a teacher in that how they view students directly affects how they teach. For Bullough, how a teacher cares for students in every possible way is far more important than anything else they are tasked to do, and is of the utmost importance in their professional life. Nonetheless, Bullough maintains that a teacher must develop a sense of self-exploration as they define their disposition. This is because teachers have a wide-range of life experiences that speak into their current self,

and their moral and ethical sensitivities may be flawed by certain past events that diminish their ability to understand others.

Virtue and morality are the themes of most of the central literature on teacher disposition from 2011 to 2014. Carr (2011) starts it off by pointing out that individuals are principled beings, disciplined might be another way to describe this, and that this expresses itself in a variety of ways in an individual's life. Commitments and professional values are amongst these principled areas that an individual often embodies, but to be principled in one's disposition is not something that is focused on enough. Carr argues that we need to "extend beyond principled commitments to the cultivation of principled dispositions" (p.175). Principled dispositions are necessary for all teacher candidates in order to develop their virtue in education. In Carr's mind, professional practitioners in education who adhere to a virtue of principled disposition, develop a loyalty to student development that extends far beyond the experience of performing a duty as prescribed by some organizational tenant. Carr highlights two examples of such behavior in professional environments. He points out that quite often a nurse who lacks any empathy or care for a patient is observed simply going through the motions and while taking care of business, lacks any compassion for the patient who is being served. Likewise, he describes a religious leader who is hypocritical in that they preach, pray and minister to their congregation, but do so out of some duty, and lack the true deep spiritual empathy and love for their congregants. In the same way, a teacher quite often goes through the motions of teaching as prescribed by their organization, but lacks the desire to try to refine a disposition of care. "Good teachers are not those who have found ways of psychologically manipulating pupils or of managing them via externally imposed rules, but those who have succeeded in gaining the trust and respect of pupils in a climate of positive 'other-regarding' moral association" (Carr, 2011, p. 175).

Schussler and Knarr (2013) have a sense of urgency in their plea to prospective teachers to be individuals with a deep sense of wanting to help students. This, they affirm, is a moral activity, and without it, one should not enter the teaching profession. They cite Ritchhart (2002) where he says that “teachers do not merely implement programs or apply instructional practices, they interpret them through the filter of their own values and beliefs” (Ritchhart, 2002, p. 49). For too long, they argue, teacher candidates have been assessed by way of a behavioral checklist to analyze their teaching dispositions. This method, while somewhat telling, falls far short of the goal of truly exploring the interior impetus for one’s actions. Behaviors are temporal and can be easily manipulated based upon the moment and the situation. However, how one truly feels about a situation can only be known through intense self-reflection. Reflection of this nature is to explore one’s moral sensibilities and is necessary for a prospective teacher in order to create an extensive value system by which to operate (Sockett, 2006). When teacher candidates have highly developed moral sensibilities, their values are the result of systematic, reflective thought combined with their personal beliefs (Schussler & Knarr, 2013). This is “sound professional judgment in action” (Dottin, 2009, p. 85). Interestingly, Schussler, and Knarr (2013) point to the decision by NCATE (2006) to remove the term *social justice* from its list of dispositions as a major blow to the exploration of internal motivations and that it relegated many education programs to nothing more than a checklist of behaviors as a way to explore disposition.

Moral principles are real in the educational process, despite what some may argue. Buzzelli and Johnston (2013) point out that to ignore this fact is to travel down a very dangerous road as an educator. The argument against this is one that relegates the educational process to a set of behaviors and duties that must be carried out in a somewhat scientific manner (Buchman, 1993; Burant, Chubbuck & Whipp, 2007). These duties and behaviors are for Buzzelli and

Johnston (2013) moral absolutes that should be known and adhered to as individuals. What is more, these moral absolutes are mediated by an individual's personal beliefs. The important thing to remember in the process of discovering one's moral sensibilities is to recognize that we are all a part of a larger community and must be attendant to the needs of others as well as our own. In this way, morality is both personal and cultural. Buzzelli and Johnston point out that when we teach, we change someone, and that this alone calls for a very high set of moral principles. Prospective teachers must be aware that through their language and their power, they have the ability to make significant changes in their students. As such, a deep exploration of one's ethics and values are vitally important.

Classrooms are ambiguous and complex. For many years, the concept of morality was relegated to a set of rules where there is a right and wrong way to do things. Yet, for Buzzelli and Johnston (2013), morality is far more than this. Because classroom dilemmas are constantly changing, morality is the differences in how a teacher reacts to these changes with care and sensitivity. It can never be a one size fits all activity with a singular right and wrong answer. This type of behavior on the part of a teacher brings to the forefront some topics that are not common to teacher education programs. Such concepts of kindness, love, spirituality, soul, and religion have to be a part of this discussion, and the vehemence with which these issues are not embraced in some circles is damaging to the development of a new teacher (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2013). The authors sum up their approach to moral teaching by stating that teachers must adopt a disposition that includes respect, dignity, and caring for students as they navigate the many obstacles they confront in their daily professional lives.

Cooke and Carr (2014) explore the place of virtue, practical wisdom and character in teaching. They point out that virtues are very different from disposition when it comes to teaching. Virtues are a set of behaviors that one expresses that are expected of them, such as to be just, fair, resolute, self-controlled and compassionate. The expectation for a professional educator is that these would be commonplace and secure within the day-to-day behavior of a teacher. Disposition on the other hand is the success with which an individual can maintain these virtues over a long period of growth as a teacher (Cooke & Carr, 2014). Like Buzzelli and Johnston (2013), Cooke and Carr (2014) identify the fact that teachers have a formative impact upon students; they change them. The dynamics of teaching are such that situations are different from day-to-day. Therefore, a set standard of virtuous behavior is not enough to adapt to the changing environments. Disposition is the art of refining how one behaves in various situations while keeping virtues intact. Honesty, fairness, and compassion, for example, will be expressed in different forms depending upon the situation a teacher is in at the time. Because a teacher can have a negative impact upon students if they are not nimble enough to alter their behavior, it is important for a teacher candidate to explore their disposition prior to entering the field. Cook and Carr (2014) look to Sockett (2012) to help define how virtues as dispositions can be altered for productive decision making in ever-evolving situations. Sockett reflects on the work of Aristotle and his distinction between practical wisdom and epistemic virtue. Cooke and Carr (2014) identify this as an important distinction through which a teacher should filter behavior. Epistemic virtue is a virtue of the mind. It is what we know to be virtuous and is unchanging. However, because we live in ever-changing environments, practical wisdom dictates how to behave and what decisions to make while maintaining the sanctity of the epistemic virtue. The effective interplay of the two is, for Cooke and Carr, essential to a productive disposition.

Peterson (2016) acknowledges the fact that dispositions in education have been consistently difficult to define while other factors of the educational process are fairly easy to pin down. He points out that the efforts to define disposition that have been undertaken by such organizations as InTASC and NCATE are vague and include terms that in and of themselves are challenging to define, such as enthusiasm, appreciation, and persistence. For answers, Peterson harkens all the way back to the work of Dewey (1933) who he points out was one of the first to champion the role of reflective practice as a means to develop dispositions for teaching. Systematic logical analysis is what we already engage in on a regular basis in life, and therefore, to put this into practice as one develops their teaching disposition is an easy cross-over skill (Dewey, 1933). Peterson believes that more than ever, now is the time for teachers to adopt a habit of reflective practice as a means to develop their disposition. Not only is this important for teachers to practice as they engage with students in the classroom, but equally important is for teachers to examine their disposition with students outside the classroom. This marks the second time in all of the literature that anyone has mentioned the importance of disposition as it pertains to students outside the classroom (Peterson, 2016), the first being Berger (2003). Arguably, the interactions with students outside the classroom are going to be more unpredictable, more real, and potentially more impactful in the life of a student and studies in this arena should be much more prolific.

Palmer (1998) states that “teaching, like any truly human activity, emerges from one’s inwardness, for better or worse” (p. 2). It is in this spirit that Hare (2017) begins her examination of disposition in teachers. She uses the analogy of a flower pot to describe what she feels is an appropriate definition of disposition. On the top of the pot, the outer soil, lay our disposition for students to see and engage with. There is then a series of layers that make up this disposition.

These layers are “thoughts, feelings, values, and beliefs,” (Hare, 2017, p. 143) in that order, until we reach the bottom of the pot which she describes as “the ground on which we stand” (p. 143). This is the basis from which all our dispositions are formed and are subsequently what must be explored if we are to come to an understanding of who we are as teachers. Her main advice for teachers is to recognize that “we teach who we are,” (Hare, 2017, p. 143) and as such our task is to identify the “self that teaches” (p. 143). Once we make this identification, we will find out our true disposition and can work from there. In turn, teacher preparation programs must integrate methods by which prospective teachers can develop a strong sense of identity and integrity. Finally, in order for all of this to happen, Hare (2017) advocates for preparation programs to provide a great deal of space for teacher candidates to reflect on these issues in order to discover what it is that forms their ultimate disposition as an educator. This space comes primarily by way of extending the freedom to explore on their own terms, and the time to do so.

Warren (2018) highlights the fact that classrooms across the country are increasingly becoming more ethnically and racially diverse. As a result of this, Warren considers social justice as the primary factor one should explore as they develop their disposition for teaching. Warren cites Villegas (2007) as a preferred model for a definition of disposition where she states that dispositions are the “tendencies [for] individuals [to] act in a particular manner under particular circumstances, based on their beliefs” (p. 373). He also points out that one of the earliest and most respected conceptions of teacher dispositions characterize them as “summaries of act frequencies” or “trends in behavior” (Katz & Raths, 1985, p. 301). Given the historical perspective on disposition as a summary of our deeply held beliefs and behaviors, Warren (2018) logically connects this to the potential for racist intimations. These preconceived opinions about a certain race of people can leak into our current disposition and disaffect our interactions.

The goal for Warren (2018) is to produce what he calls a culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), where an instructor is fully aware of the diversity of students before them and can empathize with their various experiences. Empathy is a key factor in CRP, as it is what allows a teacher to fully engage with students and is necessary in order to overcome wrongly formed opinions or beliefs. Empathy also expands a teachers' knowledge of different cultures, as it allows a teacher to peek into the lives of not just their students, but their families and communities as well. In this manner, a teacher may begin to form positive beliefs, values, and attitudes about other cultures. Since empathy is both an emotional and an intellectual activity, it is important for a teacher preparation program to not only allow for a candidate to explore their past, but to offer coursework that promotes cultural awareness and responsibility.

Butler and Young (2021) believe that amongst all the research that has been conducted on a teacher's disposition, not nearly enough has been conducted on being socially just as an important feature. If candidates are to become effective teachers of all students, especially racially, ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse learners, they must adopt and apply justice-oriented teaching dispositions. These dispositions should include such elements as empathy, critical consciousness of privilege, and a sense of responsibility to address injustice in our society (Butler & Young, 2021). They refer to a practice called culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) as the most effective vehicle by which a teacher cultivates justice awareness. "Teacher candidates who readily adopt justice-oriented dispositions have a heightened sense of awareness of and critical sensitivity to the social and political inequities that exist among marginalized students and are more inclined to model practices closely aligned with the principles of CSP" (Butler & Young, 2021, p. 194).

Butler and Young (2021) use Villegas's (2007) dispositional framework to conduct a case study that seeks to identify how successful teacher preparation programs are at implementing social justice into the curriculum. From their research, they identified three levels of implementation. The first is what they call the "additive approach" (Butler & Young, 2021, p. 220) and is when a program allows the individual instructor to identify which readings or projects they wish to implement in order to develop social justice awareness. This is a good approach, but is fully dependent upon the success of a single individual, the instructor, for its success. The second approach is called the "transformation approach" (Butler & Young, 2021, p. 221) and is when both an individual instructor as well as other members of the teacher preparation program come together to determine how to implement social justice elements. Collectively, as a team, they decide what readings, projects, field trips, etc. should be included in the curriculum in order to produce cultural competency. Again, this approach is good, according to Butler and Young (2021), but can still fall short of a fully immersive experience. The preferred approach by Butler and Young (2021) is called the "social action approach" (p. 221). In this approach, the entire education department looks to the community as a partner in how to form their socially just curriculum. It is fully immersive, as it allows teacher candidates to be involved with culturally diverse families and communities as they begin to build empathy for other cultures. Butler and Young (2021) offer no details on what this might specifically look like, warranting that it could take on many different forms.

Summary

While the next chapter will examine central themes that run through the literature on disposition, it is important to reflect upon a few structural elements that emerge from the inception of the term as defined by Katz and Raths (1985) until today; the thirty-five-thousand-

foot view, if you will. The literature can essentially be placed into two main categories: those with a focus on how to define disposition, and those with a focus on how to assess the disposition of prospective teacher candidates, with much of the literature attempting to do both. Underlying this duality is a further demarcation between those who believe it should be defined through science exclusively, and those who believe it should be defined through introspection, emotion, and reflection. Not surprisingly, the science advocates also promote the idea that perhaps teacher preparation programs have no right to assess disposition at all. It is important to note that no researcher disregards science entirely, as they are professional academicians. Yet, some stray from the scientific only approach and favor an exploration into areas that are less measurable.

The science leaning advocates (Buchman, 1993; Damon, 2005; Carroll, 2005; Burant, Chubbuck & Whipp, 2007) maintain that disposition has been defined through the social sciences and therefore a definition is readily available. Moreover, it is a definition that has very little to do with exploring one's personal and emotional past, but rather forms around an obligation that one has professionally. They allow that past experiences definitely speak into one's disposition, but that these are a separate matter entirely, and cannot be relied upon as a means to define your disposition. The reason for this is that these are unique to an individual and often contain elements of personally held beliefs or faith systems. Personal issues such as this have no place being ushered into a classroom as it is not fair to promote these beliefs with impressionable students. Assessing a disposition, therefore, must be an empirical activity that is based upon a very detailed and concise analysis. This approach does not advocate self-reflection as a means to discover or analyze a disposition, but is tied entirely to what the tenets of a professional educator should embody and what is expected of them by society and students.

The researchers who allow for some non-purely scientific elements in their definition of disposition (Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Albee & Piveral, 2003; Wasicsko, 2007; Koeppen & Davison-Jenkins, 2006, 2007; Buzzelli & Johnston, 2013), who include elements of what I call the heart, are far more abundant. These researchers will define disposition as a composition of past experiences beliefs, and intimations. Some explicitly mention issues such as faith and religion, while others stay more secular and refer to morality, virtue, or social justice as key to the discussion. All of these researchers advocate for elements of deep self-reflection as a part of teacher preparation programs. To develop a positive disposition is an internal activity that requires an individual to explore and make sense of their emotions, beliefs, and general view of the world of education as a whole.

Chapter 3: Analysis, Summary and Application of Central Themes

In addition to the apparent bifurcation in the approach towards a definition of disposition, there are a variety of common themes which emerge within the research. In many cases, as is true of examined research over time, scholars build upon each other's ideas and revive previous discussions and theories. As such, many major themes emerge in the study of disposition from the mid-twentieth century until today. Chapter 3 presents an analysis of these major themes, and while it does not address every single theme presented through time, it does touch upon the central themes under which all others might adequately and logically be placed.

Morality and Disposition

The concept of teaching as a moral activity has been established in educational theory for quite some time. There seem to be two camps that emerge from the literature as regards morality in teaching. On the one side is a somewhat impersonal perspective that relies heavily on the obligatory aspect of being a professional educator. I do not say this to imply that this is an ineffective method, but rather to simply point out the impetus from which this position emerges. This view sees the infusion of morality as a professional obligation and is displayed most effectively when motivated by outside forces. The three most common sources, as derived from the literature, are the social sciences, tradition, and community. In this perspective, in order for a teacher to adhere to their profession as a moral practice, they must look to one of these outside sources as both the pool from which they draw to help define their practice, as well as the entity that must be served by developing as a moral educator. Moral action is not a personal internal affair, but gets its animus from somewhere else as a motivation to serve. As it relates to disposition, this type of moral development has the collateral advantage of helping a teacher identify their teaching persona, which of course is what I am interested in for this project.

On the other side is a view that quite often pays attention to the factors of social sciences, tradition, and community, but that also introduces an element that is much more difficult to capture in a scholarly research platform, even though the vast majority of literature written on disposition posits this viewpoint. This perspective includes the intimations, morals, ethics, and even, I daresay, the heart of the teacher as they explore what their disposition is and from whence it has been developed. Morality in teaching is for these scholars a deeply internal activity that must be worked out first and foremost by oneself. Arguments on this side of the fence will call for a teacher to explore their disposition through reflective practice, arguing that a disposition is something that is developed over time and is formed by past experiences, beliefs and values. Both arguments will be explored below.

Moral Disposition as a Professional Obligation Through Community and Tradition

The early proponents of teaching as a moral act were largely in the camp of it being some form of professional duty or obligation. This is a somewhat impersonal search. By impersonal, I only mean that through these methods, morality as a means to guide disposition is one that looks to outside sources for its definition and refinement, and does not reflect upon the intrinsic values or ethics of the individual instructor. While many outside sources might be considered as important forces towards the development of moral disposition, the two most common sources can be summed up as community and tradition.

Kohlberg (1927) was one of the first to align the duty of a teacher towards morality by considering it a democratic activity. That is, to teach in a moral fashion is an obligation of an individual who wishes to work professionally with young people in a democratic society or a community of learners (Power, Higgins & Kohlberg, 1989). As educators, in order to form a deliberate approach to educating from a moral perspective, he believes there are three areas of

concern (Power et al., 1989). The first is what he calls a “romantic” (Power, et al., 1989, p. 16) concern and is designed to help students develop values and skills that will assist their psychological health as well as their ability to maintain a “self-fulfilling life” (p. 16). Secondly, teachers should promote a “cultural transmission” (Power et al., 1989, p. 16) whereby students are taught behaviors and attitudes that reflect the traditional values of their society (p. 16). And thirdly, is to be focused on the developmental work promoting positive student “cognitive, moral, and emotional functioning” in the world they are about to be launched into (Power et al., 1989, p. 16). As a professional, it is the obligation of a future teacher to work on these three central areas (Power, et al., 1989). As his initial work was established in the 1920’s, there is no current discussion of what “traditional values” were then, are now, and how they have perhaps drastically changed over time. Nonetheless, Kohlberg (1927) sets the stage for teaching morally as a democratic duty and all three of these tenets speak to the communal mandate that he proposes as a focus for teachers.

His schools, some of which he established personally, promoted what he called “just communities” where the school is treated as an entire community with every member having a voice (Power, et al., p. 223). In instances such as discipline, to name one example, communities would gather and discuss the options before them. This community would include members of the faculty as well as the student body and the details of each situation would be described and discussed. Final decisions would be voted upon. In one instance offered as an example, a student named Lisa was being considered for expulsion. To address her infractions, a community meeting was called and in lieu of expulsion, she was placed on probation for the remainder of the year (Power, et al., 1989, p. 225). Interestingly, this community meeting pitted the faculty against the student body representatives who ultimately got their way with the decision to not

expel her. Placed into the realm of examining teacher disposition, this is extremely problematic, as it strips authority from a teacher which has been demonstrated on more than one occasion to be a key ingredient to developing one's disposition (Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Berger, 2003). This must be considered as an important potential flaw to describing moral disposition as a communal affair, at least in this instance.

The cohort model in most schools of education was established in direct response to the idea that moral disposition is formed within a community (Fallona & Canniff, 2010). Fallona and Canniff (2010) adhere to the communal approach to moral disposition development by way of what they call “internship cohorts” (p. 109). The goal of these cohorts is to create a space where individuals may become close with each other, foster trust, and begin to be honest about how their moral disposition is presenting itself with students. If any self-reflection is to occur at all, it must be centralized around the question of educational philosophy, not personal values or deeply held spiritual beliefs. The cohort is for the community, and personal values that stray from the team only serve as a distraction. Another phrase used to describe this activity is to develop a “disposition of collegiality” (Fallona & Canniff, 2010, p. 110). There must be a “shared understanding of the moral dispositions we believe all teachers should express and only within this universality can we truly grow in our own moral disposition” (Fallona & Canniff, 2010, p. 115).

Carroll (2005) also looks to community as a key factor in the development of disposition. For Carroll, the development of one's disposition is a non-emotional activity and is therefore nothing more than a professional obligation on the part of the instructor. Self-exploration of past events, beliefs and values is of little consequence, as the result paints a rather selfish portrait of the teacher that may serve their personal needs, but may not serve the community within which

they teach (Carroll, 2005). Furthermore, left to their own devices, an individual may not see themselves fully enough on their own to be trusted as a member of a larger community. He calls the development of dispositions as a “socio-cultural process” (p. 87) that happens in and amongst peers. Differently from Hansen (2001), Carroll (2005) defines community as only those with whom one teaches and works professionally. Unlike Hansen’s (2001) or even Powers et al’s. (1989) community perspective, which includes all parties within a school building. By focusing solely on one’s peers, Carroll (2001) believes that elements of trust are built up over time, and that the development of disposition can therefore be refined through the years. Hansen’s (2001) community model is ever-changing, as students come and go, as do opinions and viewpoints. Carroll (2005) would argue that consistency must be valued in the development of a disposition, as changing inputs can confound the process very quickly. Of course, the end result for any approach is to develop a disposition that is most effective whilst interacting with students, the community that is ultimately being served.

Looking back at Hansen (2001), he does agree that one’s “moral sensibility” is developed over time (p. 39). However, he does not believe that an instructor should regard their moral sensibility as an act of “self-absorption,” (p. 39), where an individual attempts to build their moral disposition by reflecting upon personally held beliefs. Rather, these sensibilities should be examined as they present themselves in a public sphere, attempting to “conduct oneself well, both in one’s dealing with others and oneself” (Hansen, 2001, p. 39). Here we see yet another example of disposition development being something that is refined communally. And, this also ushers in a second very important feature of moral development, that of tradition.

How, one may ask, can a teacher candidate develop their moral disposition through a focus on tradition and not include a self-inventory of personally held beliefs and experiences?

Recall that the second major feature of Kohlberg's (1927) deliberate approach to educating from a moral perspective is that teachers need to teach student behaviors and attitudes that reflect the traditional values of their society. Therefore, it can be surmised that at least for Kohlberg, tradition is not a personal affair, but rather a collection of values and events that are developed by and within a community. Herein lies the tie between community and tradition. Hansen (2001) concurs, and looks almost entirely to the need of recognizing communal tradition as a means of developing moral teaching. Hansen states that "the sense of tradition embodies a feeling for human time and for human aspirations that span the generations (Hansen, 2001, p. 155). Like Kohlberg (1927), he offers no definition or framework for how tradition changes or which traditions should be adhered to over others. In fact, one might argue that the educational world has been hard at work to delete certain traditions from the classroom, certainly religious and important social ones such as Christmas, or Constitution Day. But one thing about tradition as described by Hansen (2001) is for sure, it does not address traditions that are sincerely held by the individual instructor, or those which are developed intimately through reflection, but rather traditions that play out publicly in the communal educational environment.

Finally, Dottin (2006, 2009) contributes heartily to the debate on disposition as an activity that is moral but must exist within pre-determined guidelines set forth by science. In doing so, he reflects upon the work of Dewey (1933) as a backdrop for why forming an appropriate disposition is a moral act. In fact, here the "development of moral dispositions" (Dewey, 1933, p. 27) is a rephrasing of the term that cements its identity as a moral activity. He spends a great deal of time focusing on professional judgment (Dottin, 2009) as a necessary tool for a professional educator. While this judgment is subject to various interpretations based upon the circumstances, he argues that having an appropriately formed disposition will result in sound

professional judgment. He concedes that at least part of a teacher preparation program's goals is to develop intellectual prowess and virtues about the field of education, but that developing moral virtues are equally as important (Dottin, 2009). When a moral virtue is developed, it adds to an appropriate disposition that in turn dictates professional judgment. He lays out four main facets of professional disposition that should be adhered to in order for an individual to appropriately form their disposition. First, he believes that a professional disposition should have a clear purpose, that is a view of exactly why a behavior should be the way it is. Secondly, he believes that professional judgment and professional disposition should be intricately linked. Third, he steers clear of a definition of disposition as something emotional and argues that the development of such is a cognitive act that will result in a variety of professional habits or reactions to various events within the classroom. And finally, he believes that dispositions must be nurtured and assessed by well-equipped individuals. For Dottin, dispositions are naturally in place, but in order for them to be formed into something that is impactful in an educational setting, it takes time and practice.

Moral Disposition as a Professional Obligation Through Science

Many authors champion moral education as nothing more than a professional obligation. The ones examined thus far are some of the more common ones that look to community and tradition as the main text from which to learn and grow in one's disposition development. While community and tradition are part and parcel of many studies, there is a certain trend that focuses more robustly on the issue of science as the main source from which all discussion of moral disposition ought to occur. As can be seen in Chapter 2 most of the literature written about disposition in the early part of the twenty-first century favored a more holistic approach to defining disposition. By this I mean an approach that involved a look into a prospective teacher's

personally held values and beliefs, as well as a look to moral development, community and tradition. Self-reflection was also a key element in much of this literature as an activity towards developing one's disposition. Perhaps as a result of this approach, it should not be surprising to find that most of the publications that champion science as the sole arbiter of disposition development, present a rather retaliatory and often aggressive tone.

Burant, Chubbuck and Whipp (2007) is one such example. Burant et al. believes there is a "muddy linkage that exists between a person's interior values and his or her behavior," (p. 402) and therefore dismisses the works that have made such efforts. Furthermore, this "behavior," according to Burant et al. (2007) is tied to disposition and therefore has a direct effect upon how an instructor relates to a student. When this happens, the "interior values" (p. 402) of an individual are being foisted upon a young and impressionable student. They categorize the studies of disposition development that have been most prominent into three areas: belief statements, personality traits, and inference from behaviors (Burant et al., 2007). Belief statements, they argue, are nothing more than content filled propositions and are existential in nature. While it is important to focus on belief statements, they very often have little connection to actual behavior and cannot be relied upon as a guide for how a teacher will successfully interact with students. It is also pointed out that little research has proven that belief statements and teacher efficacy have some positive correlation (Burant et al., 2007). Personality traits and inferences from behavior, they argue, are too fluid in nature, changing constantly and therefore lack the ability to be relied upon for the assessment of teacher disposition. Their answer to the problem is to ditch the term disposition all together, as it is impossible to define. What they suggest instead, is to revert back to what has been established educational, and pedagogical theory for over a hundred years; a focus on teaching as a moral activity. Furthermore, they iterate

that the moral act of teaching has been defined through social sciences and has specific, identifiable, and measurable attributes. In short, it is a scientific approach to defining the act of teaching behavior that is consistent and devoid of personal values or beliefs.

Johnson and Reiman (2007) developed a theory that, not unlike Burant et al. (2007), marries the scientific approach to teacher disposition with the call for teaching morally. They refer to this activity as a “moral imagination” (p. 209), and is what they see as the manner by which an individual’s disposition should be examined. “Moral imagination is our capacity to see and to realize in some actual or contemplated experience possibilities for enhancing the quality of experience, both for ourselves and for the communities of which we are a part” (Johnson & Reiman, 2007, p. 209). While they do imply that a moral imagination explores aspects of self, it is clear that the main thrust of developing this activity is for the community within which one teaches. They do assert that one cannot possibly escape an assessment of disposition without a consideration of the moral, but it must be approached through science, and applied to the whole, not the individual.

Later, Johnson (2008) continues with this theory and expands his definition of moral judgments as being tied to a very complex set of schemas. These schemas are what an individual brings to the table as a teacher and include values, beliefs, and overall views of the teaching profession. The transition from sifting through an individual’s schema to developing a universal moral judgment is the act of moral imagination. To be sure, the goal here is to arrive at a plateau where universality in judgment can occur within a community and personal schemas are not driving the motivation behind behavior (Johnson, 2008).

Certain authors move so far into the realm of science, that even a discussion about morality is off limits, as morality by its very nature ushers into the arena elements that cannot be scientifically and empirically assessed, and necessarily include personal views (Buchman, 1993). Buchman (1993) believes that a teacher's disposition should be impersonal. This is because the teaching profession calls upon an individual to fulfill certain obligations. These obligations include meeting the expectations of a student that the instructor be an effective and caring communicator. Teachers must be willing to act in accordance with rules, submit to impersonal judgment, and be open to change. Only in this way may a teacher develop a disposition that is effective for the business of education. Buchman looks at a teacher's disposition as a duty or a role; one that he or she must develop as it is expected and professional to do so. In fact, according to Buchman, it is wrong for a teacher to allow their personal views to tarnish their ethics when it comes to teaching. Personal feelings are nice, but the true character of a teacher is developed through reason, not through emotion. To delve into reason as a place to develop disposition is to act in a purely scientific manner, as tenets for professional behavior are well researched and easy to discover.

Damon (2005) specifically takes aim at NCATE as the culprit behind initiating the debate over how to define disposition. Explicitly, he blames them for the inclusion of such elements as morals, beliefs and attitudes as things individuals should explore in order to appropriately develop their disposition. To do this, according to Damon, ushers in subjectivity and is inappropriate for an education program to assess. On the one hand, to assess disposition from a scientific perspective, as a psychological process, would be appropriate, but to involve values judgment and assessment gives far too much power to an educational leader over the development of a preservice student. Damon therefore looks to the behavioral and social sciences

as a place where the term disposition can most adeptly be defined. While he agrees that universally we can identify what we believe to be good and bad temperaments, he warns that if a student teacher is assessed based upon their moral and ethical beliefs, the system can be abused, as it could empower an organization to select candidates based upon social or political beliefs, thereby manipulating the entire system.

Murray (2007) calls the definition of teacher disposition “superfluous” (p. 381). He points out, in the same way as Damon (2005), that there is already a clear scientific definition of disposition handed down from the social sciences, but that no effort on the part of InTASC, NCATE, or any other professional body has chosen to pay homage to this research in their collective definitions.

Tishman and Perkins (1993) identify disposition in a teacher as a matter of the mind, but not in an emotional sense, rather as an intellectual pursuit. Their concept of thinking dispositions purports that positive and effective disposition can only be achieved by a well-ordered mind; one that is critical, reflective and creative. Furthermore, these tools are summed up as sensitivities and inclinations. Once a trained teacher has the ability to recognize a moment when a positive disposition can be displayed, their sensibility is what helps them navigate this moment. As it is a natural and innate attribute, the sensibility can be positive or negative. Likewise, the inclination is simply the actual behavior that is exhibited.

Summary

What has been highlighted above is a collection of key publications that echo a central theme in the debate over disposition. This theme is that in order to examine one’s disposition, they must recognize the role that morality plays in the process of education. Yet, this collection of authors all view the moral element as one that is purely scientific, as a communally based set

of universal guidelines to behavior. At no time do any of these authors, and many others like them, champion any sense of internal exploration as a means by which morality should be defined. In fact, such behavior is openly excoriated by a few of them. Rather, morality is defined universally, not personally. Personal views and beliefs have no place in the formation of disposition when discussing it in these terms.

And yet, even within this realm there is a slight demarcation of thinking on the subject. For those who are overtly scientific, even the discussion of morality is often to usher in too much of a not scientific perspective. For these researchers, a disposition is to be purely professionally refined with no regard to personal beliefs or even universal morals, simply to behave in a manner that is professionally expected of them, as teachers. Interestingly, this is the realm of thinking that one would most expect from researchers within the social sciences. Quite often, the less empirical and not easily packaged elements of education are relegated to some scientific measure that might work well within a lab, but that in real life does not stand up. This is why researchers in social sciences often take another route. In this next section, researchers who do just that when it comes to seeking a definition of disposition are examined in detail.

Disposition and the Heart

Nowhere in any literature on disposition is there mention of the heart. I find, however, that it is the best description for all definitions of disposition that discuss the internal and reflective elements in the debate. As mentioned, the vast majority of published works on disposition champion a definition for it that entails heart issues. Heart issues are such things as personal beliefs, values, past experiences, commitments, and even spirituality. Palmer (1998) comes close when he describes teaching as an act of depth or an exploration of the human ingredients that are a part of our makeup and which manifest themselves in our classroom

practices. These are heart issues and entail an exploration of one's interior ingredients, if you will, in order to discover what the main motivations are for how one behaves in front of students.

Disposition and Reflective Practice

Wasicsko, Callahan, and Wirtz (2004) actually caution against self-reflection as a significant tool in a new teacher's development. They argue that left on their own, new teachers have a propensity to form wrong conclusions about themselves, and therefore may inaccurately assess their disposition as a teacher. Nonetheless, many institutions rely on student self-reflection to assess dispositions (Wasicsko, Callahan, & Wirtz, 2004). In fact, self-reflection as a tool for teacher development has a rich history. Early in the disposition debate, the most commonly used term to describe an exploration of disposition was the word reflection (Dewey, 1933). Dewey (1933) is often considered the first to promote reflection in teaching. Dewey wrote about the need for reflective thinking as early as 1903 and dealt with the role of reflection extensively (Dewey, 1933). He claims that individuals have what he calls "permanent tendencies to act," (Dewey, 1933, p. 30) and that these tendencies are what make up an individual's disposition. Furthermore, Dewey claims that "knowledge of methods alone will not suffice: there must be the desire, the will, to employ them (p. 30). For Dewey, the will to employ them comes from reflection, or a logical analysis of self. He argues that in a systematic form, a teacher must assess themselves critically and explore their past experiences as a resource to describe how they behave with students. Dewey concludes that reflective practice for a teacher is vital towards their growth and professional status.

Much later, Yost (1997) refers to Dewey (1933) and fully agrees. He terms what he calls the disposition of reflection as a necessary tool in order for an instructor to become an effective teacher. In fact, he argues that only through such honest reflection may a teacher begin to

develop an empathy and caring for students that is truly impactful. Yost specifically identifies the need to explore past hurts and wrong assumptions about the teaching profession. He identifies that in many cases students may have been hurt emotionally by a teacher from their past and therefore form an inaccurate view of the profession. These hurtful experiences must be explored and an individual must come to terms with them if they are to emerge as an effective communicator and educator.

Ritchhart and Perkins (2000) posit that we must teach students to be active agents in the world, helping them construct meaning through all that they experience. As educators, therefore, we too must practice a disposition of mindfulness in all that we do. Mindfulness, for Richhart and Perkins is a type of reflective practice necessary for an individual to come to terms with who they are as a teacher and how to most effectively interact with students. They look at three main forms of reflection as necessary in order to produce the most effective clarity. These are to look closely, explore and introduce ambiguity. In a sense, what they call for in these three fairly simple activities is to engage the mind in higher level thinking activities so that new ideas and discoveries may emerge. Ambiguity, for example, forces an individual to contemplate and to not settle for what is the easiest and most comfortable conclusion about oneself. Furthermore, Ritchhart and Perkins argue that a state of mindfulness is something that a teacher should always seek out and even live in, as it is not a practice that is taken up sporadically, rather it should define how an instructor interacts with students at all times. Not only is this practice beneficial for the instructor to employ, but such behavior exacts change within students as they observe and model the behavior (Ritchhart & Perkins, 2000). Katz and Rath (1985) noted a few years earlier that modeling a reflective disposition can have a powerful effect upon students as they observe and learn productive behaviors for their own lives. When teachers are reflectively curious,

creative, imaginative, caring, inventive, and innovative, they effectively motivate students to mimic those same behaviors as they mature as individuals (Katz & Raths, 1985).

Within the “moral dimensions of their work” (Sockett & LePage, 2002, p. 162), teachers must confront their past through critical reflection. Sockett and LePage (2002) argue that a teacher has a certain “moral agency” (p. 164) and that within this agency is the need to explore past experiences and events that make up who they are today as a teacher. They espouse that “moral agency and autonomy demands critical self-reflection” (Sockett & LePage, 2002, p. 164). However, they also recognize that such practice might be foreign to teachers in their professional lives, as they often simply create a persona which aligns with how they feel a good teacher should behave. Sockett and LePage dig in a little deeper by way of quantitative studies of new teachers in the profession. Through conducting self-analysis writings, they discovered that teachers have a tendency to be egocentric in their approach to their profession and that this can result in a rejection of authority. They believe that a teacher must start with an exploration of these tendencies first, as it is vital that they see themselves as part of a learning community. Critical self-reflection is the primary tool through which this can be achieved.

Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2006) ask teachers to “recognize and reflect on the manifestation of their own personal attributes” (p. 1). Since we all have values, commitments, and professional ethics, it becomes vitally necessary for a teacher to adopt deep self-reflective practice in order to sort out who they are and what their teaching disposition is made up of. Disposition is intangible, and very difficult to pin down. As such, it emerges from individuals in vastly different forms. For this reason, self-reflective practice is a practice of the soul, deep within an individual, as they work through their past experiences and belief systems. The later work of Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2007), digs even deeper into this concept of the internal

work an individual must undertake in order to define their teaching disposition. It is important to note here that the mention of the soul as a place to which an individual must retreat to make meaning of their disposition is rarely mentioned in the literature. That said, Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2007) fall short of establishing self-reflection as some type of spiritual activity. Rather, the soul for them seems to be an internal place within an individual which contains clues as to who they are becoming as a teacher, and therefore is a place that must be explored.

Schussler (2006) describes teaching as a constant act of perceiving. Specifically, situations are constantly being presented to a teacher, and they are left to perceive them in some fashion. The point of perception and the subsequent action to that perception, is what Schussler calls a teacher's disposition. This filter through which a reaction to experiences occurs is a behavior that is built around many things, such as cognition, beliefs, values, culture, and prior experiences, and can be damaging to students if it is not properly explored. Therefore, a teacher's self-awareness and inclinations to act can only be refined through self-reflection. For Schussler this is an activity that not only helps a teacher develop a positive disposition, but by examining their own filter system, they are developing strong levels of self-efficacy; learning more about why they do the things they do.

Buzzelli & Johnston (2013) begin by establishing that when we discuss the idea of morality and self-reflection in teaching, it ushers in concepts that are often very difficult for teacher preparation programs to address. They would argue, however, that it is impossible for an individual to fully examine their disposition without examining such issues as love, spirituality, the soul and religious faith. In fact, what Buzzelli and Johnston are advocating is that an individual examines their worldview as part of their exploration into what makes up their disposition. For reasons, perhaps political, worldview is never mentioned in any of the literature

thus far on disposition. There are many different worldviews, epistemological, cosmological, theological, anthropological, etc. and Buzzelli and Johnston (2013) correctly point out that in order to properly and thoroughly examine one's disposition, it goes without saying that an individual's worldview would have to be examined. This is because one's philosophy of the world, if you will, matters significantly to how we interact with others, form opinions on various issues, and, as teachers, treat students.

While it is good for an individual to explore their worldview when determining what their teaching disposition is like, once a teacher enters a classroom, they must adhere to a certain set of ethical principles that are agreed upon and shared by all. As we know, it is not allowed that say a Muslim or a Christian in a public classroom feels free to preach their faith. While their faith may have been what helped them determine their disposition, it cannot now be the thing that dictates their behavior with students. This is because, as Buzzelli and Johnston (2013) note, a teacher must be attendant to their language, power, and culture with students and that these are powerful forces within the grasp of a teacher. Teaching involves changing people. Buzzelli and Johnston identify this as a very serious event that must be hedged by proper ethical barriers when practiced. This is also why a poor disposition can be extremely destructive in education, a model that sadly many of us have seen as students.

Since disposition is a very difficult entity to assess and discover, Peterson (2016) confirms that reflective practice and reflective thinking are integral dispositions necessary for today's teaching profession and that more than ever, it is imperative for teachers to develop a disposition of reflective teaching. Like Katz and Raths (1985) and Ritchhart and Perkins (2000), Peterson (2016) sees self-reflection as not only important in the professional development of a young teacher, but equally as important for students to observe and hopefully model in their own

lives. Indeed, students who are themselves self-reflective, often contribute more fully to course content and become stronger and more self-efficacious learners (Peterson, 2016). She calls for critical self-reflection to be part of the culture of any teacher preparation program as “professionals who are pro-actively engaged in intelligent decision-making through critical reflective practice is necessary to ensure children of today are actively engaged in the learning process and will be ready to enter college or the workforce upon graduation from high school” (Peterson, 2016, p. 25). In her very thorough exploration of critical practice, Peterson touches on something that is rarely if ever seen in the literature on disposition. She proclaims that while a teacher must explore their disposition as it presents itself in the classroom, that equally important is how it emerges outside the classroom. A teacher’s behavior and interaction with students outside the classroom is a powerful moment of trust building and camaraderie (Berger, 2003), and is in need of a great deal more research within academia.

Disposition and Virtue

Misco and Shiveley (2007) reviewed statements about the definition of disposition in teacher preparation programs across the country. Amongst the commonalities in the various definitions was the idea that disposition is a personal virtue. A study of virtue in teaching would indeed be a gargantuan task. Yet, virtue as it relates to disposition is certainly worth examining here, and is in fact a central theme throughout the literature on disposition. The two main voices in the literature on the issue of virtue are Sockett (2006, 2009) and Carr (2011), though it certainly comes up as an ancillary subject in many other writings on disposition.

It is important to point out that my interest in virtue here is as an element of a person's teaching disposition that can be developed through reflection. As such, this is not a philosophical treatise of the history of virtue. Neither is virtue the same as morality in this examination. You

will recall that the interest in morality as a disposition is one of obligation. That is, to teach is a moral act that requires an individual to be attendant to their community, their traditions, and even science. Moral disposition is a duty-bound activity, where an individual plays out their teaching as a professional citizen within society. Virtue, as it is examined in the literature on disposition, is much more of an internal activity, an activity of the heart. While an individual may be virtuous by nature, as far as the connection to disposition goes, it is something that must be formed through time.

Although the mention of virtue as an element in teacher disposition can be traced back to Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (Freeman, 2007), it is not a significant aspect of the study of teacher disposition until well into the 21st century. Sockett (2009) is probably one of the more vocal advocates for the idea that an examination of virtue is an integral part of forming a teaching disposition. He identifies virtues as qualities achieved by an individual's initiative as they confront various obstacles in their teaching experience (Sockett, 2009). In this way, he identifies virtue formation as an intrinsic activity that must be undertaken by a teacher in order to form a proper teaching disposition. For Sockett, there are three main areas where virtue as a disposition must be formed by a teacher. These are the areas of character, intellect, and care (Sockett, 2006). Expanding upon these three attributes, Sockett defines the key element of character to be truthfulness. Truthfulness as a virtue is vitally important to the development of a solid disposition and is equally important for students to observe and model as they learn and grow. Open-mindedness is the key ingredient to the intellect of a teacher and is an important part of a disposition. To approach every situation, however challenging, with an open mind is a virtuous act, and is necessary for a teacher to be fully accessible to students. Finally, Sockett defines care as the level of compassion one has for students. Compassion is a virtue that takes

internal work, as it is not always something that we feel like exhibiting. Nonetheless, as a virtue in our disposition, it is something we must always practice with students. Sockett is clear to point out that these virtues are not personality traits, but are activities that require active effort and which are formed over time.

The belief that virtues are formed through time and effort is echoed by Carr (2011). Carr refers to these “principled dispositions” (p. 172) as virtues. Professional educators are not those who merely pay lip service to principles of professional responsibility and accountability as they are taught in some preparation programs. Rather, good instructors have a certain loyalty to these principles as they progress in their profession and in fact are continually refining these virtues as they grow. Carr expands his call for principled disposition to other careers, where he claims that most people have principled commitments, not dispositions. Dispositions take much more focus and effort and are far more than just some agreement one makes to their employer. He uses the example of a nurse or a preacher. In both cases, these individuals are supposed to care for others and do so with a certain level of joy. Yet, as many have seen, there are nurses and church leaders who seemingly just go through the motions that are required of their trade. They have a commitment to their profession, but they have never refined their disposition to be virtuous about what they do. The same, he argues, is true of teachers (Carr, 2011). This is also why such practices rise to the level of a virtue, as it is a concerted effort undertaken with zeal on the part of the practitioner. Carr further defines what these virtues entail, as he points out that the teaching profession is full of both inter and intra-personal relationships. In these moments with students, a teacher who has refined their disposition as a virtue, exhibits elements of sympathy, compassion, caring, empathy and personal example (Carr, 2011). An effective teacher, therefore, does more than just adhere to some externally imposed rules about their trade. Rather, they have, through

their disposition, “succeeded in gaining the trust and respect of [students] in a climate of positive ‘other-regarding’ moral association (Carr, 2011, p. 176).

Cooke and Carr (2014) address the concept of virtue in teaching as it relates to morality and wisdom. They cite Sockett (2012) who delves into the separation of virtue and wisdom from an Aristotelian perspective. Virtue, according to Sockett (2012) is that which is within us and drives our actions. Virtue is different for every person, as some have higher or lower levels according to their past experiences and beliefs. The teaching profession, claim Cooke and Carr (2014), is replete with many challenges that are in constant flux. Each day is different from the next for a teacher, and no two situations are the same. Therefore, to presume that one size fits all on every occasion is foolish. Often, say Cooke and Carr, teachers allow their virtues to dictate the decision or outcome of every situation, yet they recognize that to be just, fair, and resolute means expanding the range of their moral virtues. Sockett (2012) reflects upon this activity through what Aristotle called practical wisdom. A practical wisdom is that which is able to change with each situation. Yet, as Sockett also maintains and that Cooke and Carr (2014) agree with, this must never come at the sacrifice of one’s core virtues. The key, according to Cooke and Carr is to be nimble enough to change with each situation, often arriving at different conclusions, and yet to keep one’s virtues intact. This activity and interplay are what Cooke and Carr say makes up an individual’s disposition.

Disposition and Social Justice

Examining disposition as a social justice issue essentially means that a teacher must exhibit a sensitivity to every student regardless of their racial, ethnic, or socio-economic background. Most recently, sexual orientation would be included in this discussion (Amos, 2011; Butler, Coffey & Young, 2021). Through the myriad iterations of defining disposition over the

past fifty years or so, examining it in terms of a social justice issue remains the most prevalent theme. The irony of this is that in its original definition of disposition, NCATE (2000) included social justice as a necessary feature! In 2006, however, they deleted this term from the definition and opted for a safer harbor, whereby they essentially instructed teacher preparation programs to develop their own definition based upon their own mission and values. Today it remains a central feature of most disposition assessment tools. Of every university program in the state of Oregon that prepares educators for the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission of Oregon (TSPC) license, for example, social justice concerns are included in their teacher preparation programs either overtly through the program's description, or internally by way of at least one class in social justice or diversity. Yet, some schools tend to lead with this objective as a primary feature of their preparation program, while others are more concerned with issues of disposition that align with heart or faith issues.

The other ironic factor to the inclusion of social justice is that to examine it takes us right back to the concept of expectation theory and the Pygmalion Effect (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Brophy & Good, 1974). As specifically regards social justice, expectation theory asks the question: to what degree is a teacher forming performance expectations of their students based upon their race or ethnicity? And furthermore, how much is this expectation resulting in a self-fulfilling prophecy of performance for this student (Brophy & Good, 1974)? Much of this is answered in contemporary publications on disposition as it relates to social justice.

Garmon (2004) believes that many teacher candidates bring with them predisposed, strong biases and negative stereotypes about diverse groups. As such, Garmon believes it is vital that teacher preparation programs implement a significant amount of self-awareness preparation so that these biases can be rooted out and exterminated. He identifies the often lack of a white

teachers' cross-cultural experiences as a major reason for this predisposition. Interestingly, with the teacher subject that Garmon studied, while she definitely maintained some strong predisposed opinions about people of color, she herself was not predisposed to treating these students differently. In fact, in her case, her religious faith promoted a universal empathy and love for such individuals that drove her to treat all students equitably. Garmon identifies four main activities that must be promoted within teacher preparation programs in order to develop social justice awareness. These four traits are openness, self-awareness, self-reflectiveness, and a commitment to social justice. When prospective teachers are observed practicing these traits, a clearer picture will emerge as to whether or not they will be able to overcome predisposed biases and develop a disposition for social justice.

Villegas (2007) takes a fairly general perspective of disposition and defines it simply as tendencies for individuals to act in a particular manner under particular circumstances, based on their beliefs. Furthermore, these predisposed beliefs play a significant role in teacher behavior. It goes without saying, therefore, that if a teacher candidate holds certain beliefs that pertain to a specific people group, then these beliefs may interrupt the formation of a fair and equitable disposition. A strong disposition, according to Villegas is one that teaches all students equitably.

In an earlier study, Schussler, Bercaw, and Stooksberry (2008), identify that facilitating teacher candidates' critical examination of internal aspects of the self is challenging. They point out that quite often, teaching programs satisfy the need for an awareness of social justice by simply adding a single course to their curriculum. Through the use of their Intellectual, Cultural, and Moral (ICM) domains preparation in schools of education, they concluded that in most cases students demonstrated little to no increased awareness of cultural sensitivities, despite the fact that ample coursework on such topics had been completed.

Stooksberry, Schussler, and Bercaw (2009) returned to this subject a year later with a renewed focus on teacher candidate assumptions. They claim that only when a teacher candidate uncovers their assumptions about students and the teaching profession as a whole are they able to clearly identify their disposition (Stooksberry et al., 2009). Perhaps in response to their earlier study, they tackle the issue of whether or not dispositions are static and unchangeable, or if indeed a disposition can change over time. They refer to the work of Diez (2007) as a resource for championing the stance that they are indeed changeable. They believe that “the logic is that because dispositions equate to behavioral patterns that are contextual, they are predictive of future behaviors and thus useful to address in teacher education” (Stooksberry et al., 2009, p. 724). As regards social justice, it is particularly crucial that we adhere to the claim that dispositions can change, as to not believe so would be perilous for education. They point out that the “paucity of teachers’ diverse cultural experiences can lead to cultural disconnects in the classroom between teachers and students, negatively affecting student achievement” (Stooksberry et al., 2009, p. 726). Since teaching is an activity that involves the whole self, a disposition of cultural awareness must be developed in order to discover deeply held cultural untruths. Interestingly, Stooksberry et al. avoid the use of the term social justice and prefer terminology such as cultural awareness. Sockett (2009) points out that the use of the term social justice had taken on political overtones and was viewed by conservatives as a threatening approach by the political left to force ideology. Much of the literature during this time, therefore, prefers other terminology, though the same goal is at play.

A fairly consistent, and accurate, claim throughout the literature on disposition as social justice from the early 21st century, is that the diversity of students in schools is growing rapidly. Mills (2009) looks to the United States from her native country of Australia, and makes just that

observation. As populations in contemporary Western societies grow more diverse, says Mills, the need for teachers to better understand and work with differences productively becomes increasingly critical. Teachers who do not understand the cultural difference of their students create what she calls a “cultural discontinuity” (Mills, 2009, p. 277) which results in many misunderstandings between students and teachers. Like Australia, she points out that the United States, with its growing number of students of color, are being taught by a predominantly white population. In addition to recruiting more teacher candidates of color, Mills advocates that teacher preparation programs must target candidates that have a “recognitive view of social justice” (p. 286) prior to entering a program. Without this, she claims, a teacher will struggle to connect with a diverse population of students.

Amos (2011) also advocates for a wealth of social justice preparation in preservice teacher programs. She points out that recruiting future teachers of color is a positive step, but that the graduation rates of minority students is so low, that there isn't a large pool to draw from. Amos argues that an individuals' teaching disposition is guided by predisposed beliefs. Furthermore, these beliefs drive action, and one's beliefs towards racial and ethnic diversity strongly affects how they interact with students of color. She says, “it is essential that white teacher candidates analyze their unexamined racist beliefs and recognize the possibility that their negative beliefs may lead to their discriminatory behaviors toward minority students (Amos, 2011, p. 490). The answer for her is to implement a large amount of coursework that addresses cultural competency. “Dispositions such as critical cultural consciousness, intercultural sensitivity, caring, and commitment to social justice are desirable dispositions, particularly when teaching racially/ethnically different students (Amos, 2011, p. 482). Amos points out that most students who enter a teacher preparation program identify themselves as non-racist and that they

will be able to handle cultural diversity adeptly and with fairness. It would be shocking, I suspect, to find an individual entering the teaching profession who did not believe this about themselves. To this, Amos asks the question, can we have unique and authentically separate beliefs that do not dictate our actions? With this question, Amos suggests that an individual may have a natural disposition towards racism in a latent fashion, and that it must be addressed.

In one of the first places to suggest what is today a common term, Amos identifies white privilege as a culprit to a white teachers' poor disposition towards cultural diversity. She claims that for a white teacher to begin to understand their white privilege is the first step towards becoming a culturally competent teacher. However, she does warrant that certainly not all white people benefit from white privilege to the same degree. In order to achieve this, she advocates for a measurable focus on emotional interrogation within schools of education. That is, she feels that dispositions are "affective domains of human personality," (Amos, 201, p. 488) and that as such, the undesirable dispositions will stay intact if the approach of teacher preparation programs is purely cognitive. One example of an emotional approach towards awareness is for students to explore their unconscious beliefs in order to deeply integrate their emotions with their beliefs. In this way, an individual seeks to align their beliefs and actions in an effort to erase inconsistencies between the two. This, she says, will build up empathy, which is an important element of cultural awareness (Amos, 2011).

Warren (2018) reflects on the works of Villegas (2007) and Amos (2011) as regards the existence of a disposition towards cultural incompetency. His answer is to introduce what he calls culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). This, as an element within teacher preparation programs, will include an active commitment to social justice, anti-oppressive, and antiracist teaching (Warren, 2018). The main goal is that teachers account for a student's culture in their

teaching orientations, habits, and tendencies. Like Amos (2011), Warren identifies empathy as a key feature within his model. He defines empathy as both a cognitive and an emotional activity, and refers back to Katz and Raths (1985), where they define a disposition of empathy as a teacher's "summaries of act frequencies" or "trends in behavior" (p. 301). Warren believes that the implementation of empathy expands a teacher candidates' knowledge of students, families, and communities. This expansion of knowledge results in a teacher's ability to make necessary shifts in their beliefs, attitudes, and values determining their teaching dispositions. Warren also believes, like Amos (2011) that current preparation programs are too impacted with pedagogical and cognitive studies and that such studies do nothing to promote a solid CRP. As a result, Warren (2018) calls for a much greater degree of social and emotional activities and coursework in teacher preparation programs.

The most current study to address social justice and disposition that will be examined here is that of Butler, Coffey, and Young (2021). They begin by claiming that within the wealth of research conducted on teacher disposition, very little of it has been focused on "socially just dispositions" (p. 194). It is clear through the research that a positive teaching disposition is a vital element to the success of a teacher's relationships with students, and often dictates whether or not they stay in the teaching profession or not. Knowing this, Butler et al. state that "if candidates are to become effective teachers of all students, especially racially, ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse learners, they must adopt and apply justice-oriented teaching dispositions" (p.194). They go on to state that these dispositions must include a heightened awareness of one's empathy, critical consciousness of privilege, and sense of responsibility to those from marginalized communities (Butler et al., 2021). Whereas Warren (2018) advocates a culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), Butler et al. (2021) refer to a

culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP). The difference between the task of a teacher to promote a social justice disposition as a response to that of sustaining is telling about the work of Butler et al. This reflects the view they have of where teacher preparation schools are in addressing of the issue of social justice. They argue that a course or two in cultural competence is far too little to exact change within a teacher when it comes to cultural awareness. A response would fall short of what needs to be accomplished, as a response can be temporary and may change over time. Rather, the need to sustain cultural competence is the preferred route. In this way, teachers may adopt a justice-oriented disposition. They go on to say that “educators who hold justice-oriented dispositions tend to value advocacy over assessment, relationships over rules, and togetherness over tolerance” (Butler et al., 2021, p.194).

Villegas (2007) suggests that assessing teacher dispositions in relation to issues of social justice is necessary, but not enough as a key component in teacher education programs. She believes that there should be the inclusion of “a broad approach to education that aims to have all students reach high levels of learning and to prepare them all for active and full participation in a democracy” (Villegas, 2007, p. 372). Butler et al. (2021) agree with Villegas on this fact, and support Villegas’s (2007) proposal to increase opportunities early in teacher preparation programs for candidates to critically examine stereotypes and beliefs about themselves as teachers if they are to effectively teach all students. Butler et al. (2021) explore three levels of multicultural curriculum integration that they have seen in various teacher preparation programs. The first is what they call the “additive approach” (p. 220). This approach is the least effective at achieving cultural competency amongst teacher candidates. In this approach, the professor is left to choose on their own certain readings and/or exposures to issues of race, class and gender. It is not a true integration of multicultural content because it is simply one element, amongst many,

within the curriculum. The next level is the “transformation approach” (p. 221). Like the additive approach, this includes the adoption of various readings and curriculum that promote cultural awareness. The difference, however, is that rather than being left to just the professor, this approach advocates for the entire education program to be involved in the decision. “The transformation approach requires complete/holistic and sustained integration of varied multicultural content. The goal is not assimilation, but rather acculturation (Butler et al., 2021, p. 221). Yet, even this approach is not the most desirable.

The final, most desirable and subsequently most effective approach for teacher preparation programs to adopt for cultural competency is what Butler et al. (2021) refer to as the “social action approach” (p. 222). In this model, the professor, the program, and the surrounding community all come together to form a curriculum that promotes a powerful social justice disposition. According to Butler et al., this approach integrates multicultural knowledge that extends “beyond the boundaries of the school building” (p. 222), and achieves the highest level of cultural competency within teacher candidates. The authors do not advocate this as the only path for schools of education to take towards increased cultural competency, and that many other models have been implemented with great success. Yet, they do advocate for some form of community involvement, as only through real world examples may a candidate truly discover what the reality of discrimination is about.

Summary

Reflective practice, virtue and social justice are the three main categories for what I call dispositions of the heart. The myriad definitions of disposition of the heart from all the literature can easily be placed within one of these three categories. Each of them involves an element of self-reflection and emotional exploration that boils down to the discovery of what an individuals’

internal ingredients are that make them who they are and how they teach. In this way, I suppose self-reflection is an integral element to the other two, as it is an important part of forming virtuous and socially just behavior. Ritchhart and Perkins (2000) refer to it as mindfulness, and is an important part of the everyday life of a teacher. Interestingly, there is never any mention of how an individual practices self-reflection; what methods do they employ? I suppose this is left to the individual as they think, meditate, pray or journal their way to self-discovery.

Another missing element in the literature on disposition of the heart is a discussion of worldview. Only Buzzelli and Johnston (2013) touch on it briefly, and even in their case it gets very little attention. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, how a person views the world is of vital importance when entering the teaching profession. One's viewpoint of the origins and purpose of life certainly plays into how one interacts with others. This is perhaps why virtue is so important, as it demands good, pure and professional behavior no matter what other elements might be at play within an individual. To be virtuous as a teacher requires that you examine yourself and align your behaviors with those that are beneficial for all. Likewise, to be culturally aware and sensitive, one must reflect upon their predisposed prejudices and beliefs about people of other cultures than their own. Worldview drives each of these activities and is of vital importance in the formation of a teaching disposition (Buzzelli and Johnston, 2013).

Finally, teaching is both a profession and a vocation. To be in one's vocation is to be in what Csikszentmihalyi (2014) refers to as their "flow" (p. 227), which is performing at peak levels of performance in a rigorous environment and in so doing finding joy. This is after all what a positive disposition will bring to a teacher who truly loves what they do and is why it is so important to delve into self-reflection as a means to sift through the past and find one's flow. Perhaps one of the more poignant observations throughout all of this literature is that which

comes from Buzzelli and Johnston (2013) when they recognize that the act of teaching changes people. This is a powerful statement and naturally prompts a serious approach to how a teacher should therefore behave with students. When embarking upon the act of changing a person, such as a parent to a child, it is vital that such an activity is carried out with the utmost fidelity. In this way, teaching is no less important.

The Application of Disposition in Teacher Preparation Programs

To conclude this chapter, I wish to conduct a brief examination of the function of disposition as it is applied at thirteen teacher preparation programs in the state of Oregon. I find this important, as now that we have derived what the central themes of the term are through research, it is interesting to identify how these central themes are addressed in the world of practice as opposed to the world of academia. This is a brief analysis and is conducted only through an examination of each program's website. An interesting future study awaits by way of a thorough and deep analysis of a few or even a single teacher preparation program. Admittedly, not everything about a program is posted on their website, however as a marketing tool, one would expect that the main features that are highlighted should champion what is most important and most unique about their program. What is more, these highlighted features should produce at least some indication of what teaching dispositions are most important to the program; what they most want their graduates to exemplify. For this reason, I have chosen to play the role of a prospective candidate for their program, curious about what they see as an important feature for the development of my teaching disposition. I have chosen to categorize these colleges and universities into three sectors; public, private secular, and private faith-based.

Public Universities

There are six public universities in the state of Oregon that have teacher preparation programs and recommend candidates for a teaching license through the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC). The two most well-known are the University of Oregon and Oregon State University. The others are Western Oregon University, Eastern Oregon University, Southern Oregon University, and Portland State University. They all recognize that we live in an increasingly diverse world that is reflected in our schools. To address this diversity, they all identify the need to graduate candidates who can make change in the world. What they mean by change is often vague, and certainly interpreted differently from institution-to-institution.

The University of Oregon. The University of Oregon is a research university that wants their graduates in the education program to portray a sophisticated understanding of the social, cultural, and political dimensions of teaching and learning. According to their website, teacher candidates must take coursework in five major categories: teaching and assessment, curriculum theory, equal opportunity, literacy, and technology (University of Oregon, 2021). While these categories represent a fairly broad platform of concerned areas, most of their self-described language makes it clear that equity and inclusion are at the forefront of their mission. Central to their mission statement on their website, in fact, is that they will promote “transformational scholarship, integrated teaching, and collaborative practice designed to enhance individual lives and systems within a culture that values diversity and promotes respect and inclusion” (University of Oregon, 2021, para 6). True to form, their course topics are almost entirely dominated by such topics as poverty, racism, patriarchy, homophobia, colonization and diaspora, and immigration. Graduates must be prepared to exact meaningful change in local, national, indigenous, and international communities. Nowhere in their descriptions on the website does it

specify what that change should be. From what they say, it can be presumed that they are referring to changes in social justice and therefore this is the primary disposition they wish to develop in their graduates. This is not to say that is all they want, but it is clearly the central focus as seen through their primary coursework, mission statement and vision statement for the school of education.

Oregon State University. Oregon State University is a public research university. The first thing to notice about their teacher preparation program is that they have a two-page explanation sheet of what the specific dispositions are that they wish to engender in their graduates. While most of the dispositions are tied to professional practice, such as being on time, being prepared, following rules and regulations, etc., there is a section that includes reflective practice. This section lists six standards for reflective practice that are desired dispositions in a teacher candidate (Oregon State University, 2021). However, of these six, only one is actually about reflective practice, the others are more professional expectations such as being responsive to feedback, collaborating with others, and being a lifelong learner. There is also an entire section in the framework that addresses diversity and equity. This section has some fairly broad standards that are all connected to social justice.

Oregon State seems as if it looks to develop a variety of dispositions amongst its teacher preparation graduates. Unlike other public universities, they offer a bit more detail for what they mean by the word change. They claim in their mission that they want their graduates to become “change agents who make a difference by promoting innovation, social justice, and lifelong learning” (Oregon State University, 2021, para 3). This is important considering that in large font on the top of their education page is the phrase *Change the World*. When observed closely, their program does develop an array of dispositions in teacher graduates. Yet, if one were to assess

their program entirely from their front page, it is clearly a program that champions social justice as a main disposition focus.

Eastern Oregon University. Eastern Oregon University is a public regional university. EOU offers a Master's in Teaching and is specifically equipped to train individuals in trauma informed certificate programs. They claim that they are against the idea of trying to "fix" kids, but rather prefer to accept them where they are (Eastern Oregon University, 2021, para 2). Central to their goals are curriculum and program development, initiatives in new certificates and curricula. They want their graduate students to be ready for life and career and to maintain a good quality of life.

As a public university, Eastern Oregon seems to embody a different vision for the disposition of its graduates. To be sure, there is no mention of anything spiritual in their mission statement, as would be expected. However, they definitively deal with spiritual issues in their desire to minister to a populace that is in crisis. For them to walk the line of being purely scientific in their approach to disposition (Tishman and Perkins, 1993; Damon, 2005; Murray, 2007), would be a challenge when it comes to individuals in crisis. Crisis and trauma call for a degree of spiritual intervention (Weinberg, 2020). The disposition they call on for their graduates, therefore, is one that looks to the internal attributes of an individual (Koeppen & Davison-Jenkins, 2006; Davison-Jenkins, 2007) which are both personal and exploratory, but do not venture into issues such as faith and religion.

Portland State University. Portland State is a public research university in an urban setting. They offer four tracks within the education department and promise that the staff in each department will place equity, diversity, and inclusion at the forefront of what they do. This would imply that their primary disposition they wish to develop in their graduates is one that

focuses on social justice. This is perhaps not surprising for an urban setting. For this university, change is clearly one that focuses on creating greater equity for people of color in an urban setting, what they call “transformative practices” (Portland State University, 2021, para 3). They wish their graduates to emerge as collaborative leaders in a school that has both the mindset and the toolbox to promote inclusion and equity. They believe that teaching is a political action that can either promote or inhibit equity and that the teacher must be in a position to promote equity in any setting. A slight mention of non-political, non-social justice disposition is touched on when they address what becoming an innovative teacher looks like. Here, they say, a teacher candidate must develop a disposition that is somewhat reflective, though they do not use that term, in that they must envision themselves as a collaborator and a consultant (Portland State University, 2021).

Southern Oregon University. Southern Oregon University (SOU) is a public regional university. SOU does not overtly promote an agenda of social justice, but when looking deeper into their program, it is clear that a disposition for social justice is what they favor. They focus on developing teachers who can address the unique stages in a students’ life and be able to communicate effectively with students from diverse backgrounds. Their outcomes for their graduates are that they communicate effectively, become active researchers and learners, engage with their community, and explore their personal attitudes, values, and assumptions about diverse cultures (Southern Oregon University, 2021). This is an interesting mix here, as while the focus is clearly one of social justice, they promote a disposition of reflective practice as a means to develop a disposition of social justice. This follows exactly the method prescribed by Butler, Coffey, and Young (2021) where they promote what they call a “social action approach” (p. 222). In this approach, an individual must engage with their community in order to fully

understand their place in the social justice landscape. SOU promotes a disposition development of engagement and reflection so that their graduates can better understand the world they are entering as educators. They make it clear that in their formal observations of candidates, they adhere to the dispositional aspects set forth by InTASC.

Western Oregon University. Western Oregon University is a public regional university. Western Oregon offers a Master's Degree in education. They claim that their MEd degree responds to the well documented need to develop professional educators who demonstrate advanced knowledge in standards-based education and who are capable of assisting others to reach the professional level of teaching. The outcomes for their graduates include the ability to effectively apply the professional content expertise, knowledge, skills, and dispositions of their education profession (Western Oregon University, 2021). It is difficult to identify what dispositions they prefer, but they do follow the InTASC standards; it is therefore presumed that the dispositions listed in each of the seven standards are adhered to.

Private Secular Universities

There are only three private secular universities in the state of Oregon that offer teaching licensure. A significant difference between these three is that one, Lewis and Clark, is more urban, and has a very strong social justice disposition element. The other two, Linfield and Pacific, are in semi-rural areas, and while they offer a great deal of field experience, do not champion social justice as a main feature of their programs.

Lewis and Clark College. Lewis and Clark College is a private liberal arts college. In their description, they make it very clear that they focus on social justice principles and a desire to empower candidates to address issues of equity in schools. As a result of preparing teacher candidates for the classroom, they separate students out by their content passion. Once

established, this passion is examined alongside adolescent development and instructional skills. Again, they make it clear that this is carried out in order to most effectively meet the unique learning needs of diverse populations of young people (Lewis and Clark, 2021). The program at Lewis and Clark focuses almost exclusively on a disposition that fosters social justice awareness. They advocate that their graduates become change agents in the world, though they really never define exactly what needs to be changed. Their students will be “uncomfortable, challenged, and wrong” (Lewis and Clark, 2021, para 1) throughout their studies, as they foster a depth of knowledge, as evidenced by their coursework, on inequity, diversity and inclusion. This would closely align with the work of Garmon (2004), who believes that every new teacher brings to the profession a set of wrongly formed prejudices and that such elements must be rooted out and reformed.

Linfield University. The Linfield Teacher Education Program also wants to develop teachers who will “make a difference in the educational system” (Linfield University, 2021, para 1). Once again, there is no mention of what that difference will be, what dispositions are necessary for this change, and why it is even necessary. There is a bit of Butler et al.’s (2021) community approach in that their program is very hands on. Candidates spend a great deal of time in classrooms with seasoned educators learning the trade. This would imply that a disposition of community involvement is necessary and important to Linfield. They claim that their graduates are successful and passionate about education and that the small class sizes and hands-on approach is what makes them this way. While there is coursework in diversity and inclusion, social justice disposition does not appear to be a major focus of their program.

Pacific University. Pacific University offers a great deal of hands-on experience as well as study abroad programs for teacher candidates to experience education systems around the

world. They believe it is important to develop a solid foundation in their candidates in order to teach a wide-range of students from all settings. A direct reference to dispositions cannot be found on their website. I suppose if one were to ascertain what teaching disposition is favored at Pacific, it would be that their graduates are nimble and able to adapt to whatever environment they find themselves in.

Private Religious Universities

There are a total of five private religious universities that offer teacher licensure in the state of Oregon and all are Christian. Corban is a Christian university with a Baptist heritage, though it does not have a strong Baptist connection today and is mostly independent. Bushnell University is also an independent Christian university with historical connections to the Church of Christ. Bushnell used to be called Northwest Christian University and changed their name to Bushnell in 2020. Warner Pacific University is firmly a Church of God affiliated university. George Fox University (GFU) has roots in the Quaker tradition, but does not identify overtly as a Quaker organization today. The University of Portland is Catholic. While the denominations of each are interesting, and no doubt help in the formation of who they are as universities, what's important to note is that all five come from a distinctly Christian, and therefore biblical worldview.

This is an important observation because at some point, every teacher preparation program has to come to a conclusion about why human beings are here and what they should do while they are here. A teacher needs to know this, as it changes how they approach their students. To think this through, consider if a university comes from a naturalistic point of view and believes that students are products of evolution. Without the consideration of God-likeness, eternity, and purpose, these students are one's who will live their lives out and contribute to

society in some fashion. A teacher preparation program who believes in this way, might focus more on producing good citizens who can help create a just world, as that is all there is. Not that these are bad ambitions, but the added element in a religious university is that these students were created by God for a purpose. Christian universities will certainly attempt to form good citizens, but more important to them is to focus on a student fulfilling their mission on earth as dictated by God. Furthermore, it is not beyond consideration that Christian universities actually want their teacher candidates to be Christian, or perhaps become Christian while in their programs, as this is a central feature to their teaching disposition. There is such a thing as a missional disposition whereby part of the goal for the teacher is to convert students to Christianity.

Bushnell University. Bushnell is a private Christian university. Their program seeks to recruit candidates who wish to utilize their God-given gifts in order to teach others. On its face, this implies that the Bushnell teacher training program is looking for candidates who hold a Christian worldview. Bushnell, at least partially, believes that being a good teacher is a gift that one is given at birth. This view is no doubt derived from at least four sections in Holy Scripture (Holy Bible, New International Version, Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 12:7; James 3:1). In each of these passages, the fact that teaching is a gift that is bestowed upon an individual is addressed. They do not post these verses, but their belief statements about who a teacher is clearly refer to scriptural authority. Yet, Bushnell also recognizes that skills and knowledge are necessary to become a great teacher. Central to their mission is to develop students who will learn to implement strong classroom management, best teaching practices, well-crafted lesson plans, and useful assessment tools.

The disposition that Bushnell seeks to engender in a teacher candidate is clearly one that is of the heart. As a university that seems to prefer only candidates that have a faith in God, they are clearly after a very specific individual. This individual will hold a Christian worldview, and as such will view all human beings as created in God's image (Holy Bible, New International Version, Genesis 1:27). This would align with Buzzelli and Johnston's (2013) theory that it is impossible for an individual to fully examine their disposition without examining such issues as love, spirituality, the soul and religious faith. In fact, Buzzelli and Johnston (2013) are the only theorists that come close to the suggestion that an examination of one's worldview is important in their exploration of disposition.

Corban University. Corban University is also a private Christian university. Corban claims that their graduates are passionate, knowledgeable, and well-equipped for the classroom. There is a heavy emphasis on practicum as necessary prior to graduation. There is also an emphasis on prospective teacher graduates as being servants of God and being a light for Christ in the lives of students.

The main disposition that a Corban graduate should possess, according to their mission, is one who is both knowledgeable and passionate. The knowledge no doubt comes from a series of courses that include such topics as psychology, classroom management and discipline, and adolescent development. The passion aspect of their graduate is very clear, like Bushnell, one that is derived from a Christian worldview. In this light, Corban no doubt looks to scripture as an authority for the knowledge and edification on what a teacher should be. What emerges as a different aspect of Corban, at least as it is advertised on their webpage, is that they are a university that is interested in practicum as a major feature of their graduate experiences. To be sure, practicum is likely a feature of every program in Oregon. However, to lead with this as a

main feature of the program is telling. It means that Corban sees experience in the real world as an important feature to a teacher training program. This seems to confirm what Butler, Coffey, and Young (2021) say about a “social action approach” (p. 222) to inclusivity, however the goals are entirely different. What Butler et al. (2021) posit is that in order to promote cultural literacy, it is necessary to implement aspects of community involvement into the curriculum. What Corban desires is definitively community involvement to be sure, as they promote teacher candidates experiencing real life teaching experiences. However, their main mission, no doubt in addition to social justice and equity, is to display a spiritual embodiment of Christ through their teacher candidates. Their desired disposition for graduates is one that, like Bushnell, seeks to promote a Christian worldview.

The University of Portland. The University of Portland is a Catholic, urban university. They prepare teachers to teach the whole person of a child and their educational philosophy is that education is inherently a matter of justice. Finally, here is offered a definition of what is wrong by way of justice and an explanation of what type of change must occur. They identify that there is a gap in student achievement based upon social opportunities (University of Portland, 2021). What teachers must do, therefore, is to close this gap by being socially aware and skilled at what they do. They attempt to identify an ethos for their program (Katz & Raths, 1985) that embodies the belief that everyone can learn and that dignity and justice are achieved through education. They also believe that education is a community-oriented activity and all members of the community must be involved in order to make it successful.

U of P promotes an array of knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for their teacher candidates. They are life-long learners, exceptional communicators, knowledgeable of both theory and practice, and have a broad and deep knowledge of students, so that they might

meet the diverse needs of all learners. As an urban school, the charge for social justice is certainly important at U of P, but it does not appear to be the main focus of their program. InTASC largely drives their dispositional efforts, which offers a broad array of dispositions over seven standards. In fact, the only element of disposition that seems to be missing from U of P is any focus on the need for self-reflection, though I am certain it is promoted, it is not a disposition that appears in an initial search of their program.

George Fox University. George Fox University (GFU) emphasizes both theoretical and practical teaching concepts which can be directly applied to classrooms. They implement a great deal of field experience as part of their program and strive to connect prospective teachers with schools and the community. They focus on disposition right from the start, as they refer to teaching as a “career of influence” (George Fox University, 2021, paras 4-5) and ask the reader to reflect upon a past teacher who had a significant impact upon their life. GFU talks about change as well, yet their focus is not on changing the educational system, but changing the life of a single student. In this way, they ask their teachers to be influencers with the students they teach and to be agents of good in their lives. They refer to the call to teach as a calling by Christ, which clearly establishes their biblical worldview approach to the educational process. They also refer to teaching as a joyful profession.

GFU stops short of advocating for a disposition of seeking to convert prospective students to Christianity, but they clearly advocate a disposition of Christian calling for their teacher candidates. For GFU, a teacher candidate is one who feels called by God to the profession and who, in meeting this call, will find a career filled with joy. These are deeply contemplative actions, and reveal that GFU clearly advocates for a reflective disposition for its teacher candidates. Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins (2006) ask teachers to “recognize and reflect

on the manifestation of their own personal attributes” (1). This seems to be exactly what GFU is asking its teacher candidates to do. Taking it one step further, GFU believes that in this reflection, one might find their overall purpose in professional life, and choose teaching as a vocational act and a calling.

Warner Pacific University. Warner Pacific University (WPU) teaching candidates gain knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions as well as cultural competencies (Warner Pacific, 2021). That cultural competency is emphasized as a feature amongst dispositions is likely due to the urban setting of WPU where most of their field work takes place. They recognize that schools are comprised of diverse populations and that teachers must be ready to serve these populations with fidelity. That said, a disposition of social justice, while important, does not dominate their language. They see teaching as a mission, and as a Christian school, this relates directly to the fact that teacher candidates must have a disposition that emulates Christian values. They view educators as being amongst the most influential people in the world, and therefore the calling to take it on as a profession is extremely important and must be taken up with great seriousness. I suppose you could say that for WPU, and other Christian schools, they ask for their candidates to have a Christlike disposition. This is perhaps the best way to describe what many of these private faith-based universities are after.

Summary

It appears that the divide that exists in the literature on disposition, as discussed earlier in this Chapter, is emulated in these Oregon teacher preparation programs. Secular private and public universities have clearly adopted the disposition for social justice as a predominant element in their programs. Although to varying degrees, their required

coursework and subsequent language used to describe their programs, is heavily tilted towards an immediate need for change. While many of them never truly define what needs to be changed, it emerges from their pleas for social justice as one that needs to bring greater equity to the classroom. Everyone agrees that our classrooms today are more racially diverse than ever before, and in a secular teacher preparation program, it appears that the need to address this as an equity issue is of the utmost importance.

This is not to say that private religious universities do not advocate for social justice. Knowing the increase in diversity, I think it is safe to say that every teacher preparation program in the country implements social justice awareness as an element of their program to some degree. This is because it is the right thing to do! We must create educational environments of equity and justice. Yet, what private religious universities, in this case all Christian universities, introduce is a spiritual element to the discussion. This element ushers in a focus on such things as purpose and mission, and as a result promotes a much greater emphasis on reflection, values, beliefs, and past experiences (Koeppen and Davison-Jenkins, 2006). For secular programs, these beliefs and values must change, as *Lewis and Clark College* put it, you must be “uncomfortable, challenged, and wrong” (Lewis and Clark, para 1). The “god” for these programs is social justice, and every part of you and your past must seek this with all your heart. The “god” for Christian universities is Christ, and a disposition that emulates Him is of the utmost importance. These universities believe that when this is achieved, social justice will automatically be produced.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

This dissertation has sought to define disposition in education as presented academically from the mid-20th Century to 2022. Because there is an extremely incongruent treatment of the term through this time period, further work was presented that organizes the various definitions around key themes. A disposition is formed through a set of culminating behaviors exhibited by a teacher as they interact with students. The reason this is important to examine is because the goal of education is to produce the most effective student learning possible. Behavioral interaction between student and teacher is often where student learning takes place (Wiggins, 2010). Therefore, to identify the most effective behaviors, or disposition, is an important endeavor.

While researchers produce an array of varying definitions of what disposition is, there are at least three universal agreements on how a researcher approaches the study of disposition and why such a venture is important. First of all, it is agreed upon that educating young people in society is a necessary activity and is a moral and virtuous practice that any sophisticated culture must engage in (Katz & Raths, 1985). Indeed, morality and virtue were central to virtually every work examined on the issue of disposition, though for many it is the central theme of exploration, it is always a base upon which other theories are formed. In fact, there is not a single published work that makes an argument that education is not at its core a moral activity, at least not one that was discovered in my research.

Secondly, there is universal agreement that as a moral action, a teacher must engage in an activity of being honest and truthful with themselves prior to delving into an exploration of their disposition toward teaching. This has also been referred to in the literature as developing an epistemic virtue (Sockett, 2012; Cooke & Carr, 2014). At its core, epistemic virtue is an

exploration of finding out what is true and ethical, and must be the starting point for any teacher who is about to launch into an examination of their own disposition. Granted, there is a larger philosophy surrounding epistemic virtue, but at least for the purposes of studying disposition in education, researchers agree that it is a logical starting point for every teacher in the journey towards developing and defining their disposition (Sockett, 2012; Cooke & Carr, 2014).

Finally, given that teaching is a moral act and that to begin to discover one's disposition takes epistemic virtue, the third area of agreement is that prior to delving into a deep exploration of their disposition, teacher candidates must explore their predisposed view of the educational process. This is referred to in the literature as a set of "schemata" (Schussler, 2006; p. 259). As Johnson (2008) and Schussler (2006) point out, schemata are the set of predisposed attributes an individual possesses regarding the field of education. They are the basic canvas on which one will begin to form an understanding of their own disposition. These schemata are formed through time and experience and whether one places great value on them or seeks to dismiss them, the fact that they exist is not debated. It is therefore vital that a teacher candidate recognize this and pay attention to them prior to entering into the development of their disposition.

Scholars agree that approaching a definition of disposition is to recognize that teaching is a moral act, requiring truthfulness on the part of the teacher and a recognition that they bring to the profession a predisposed set of ideas about education. They also agree that defining disposition is necessary in order to produce the most optimal final product which is student learning. Therefore, somewhere between why we approach a study of disposition and what we wish to produce as an end result is where the debate on disposition lives. This "middle-space" is the space that attempts to define what the best disposition is and how it should be developed and assessed. It is this "middle-space" that is examined in this study.

This study submits that the “middle-space” where the debate is taking place can be categorized into two major perspectives by the many authors who have researched the topic. The first is the view that the development of disposition must be a purely scientific endeavor. These authors believe that teaching is a moral activity. They concede that teacher candidates come to the profession with a set of schemata, but that to explore these schemata is not appropriate. To do so ushers in personal beliefs, feelings, and unique experiences, all of which turn the development of disposition into a personal affair and not one for the common good. Such activity is selfish and does not contribute to the collective aspirations of the teaching profession, which is an obligation with universal goals. In the effort to be honest with themselves, these authors contend that a teacher must be attuned to both community and tradition as the two most important components of a disposition. Personal intimations have no place in such self-discovery. Finally, these authors believe that a definition of disposition has been offered to the professional community through the social sciences, and that this definition has never been proven inaccurate.

The other perspective believes that a disposition can only be developed through a critical self-reflection of one’s schemata. For these authors, to not explore this area is a violation of duty, as it prevents an individual from truly identifying who they are and how they can become the best possible communicator with students. In an individual’s schemata are latent beliefs that must be rooted out, such as racial intimations, bad experiences with past teachers, and ideologies that are contrary to science on what good teaching is. If not explored, an individual runs the risk of developing a flawed disposition. This approach champions an exploration of beliefs, values, and even faith as a means to define how to develop behavior that produces the most effective student learning experience. This is not a universalist or “one size fits all” approach, as authors in

this arena believe that a disposition is as unique and as different as are personalities, and that no two teachers will have the exact same disposition in the classroom.

As pointed out in the introduction, a very strong argument for why a study of disposition is important surrounds its prominence within the standards for teacher candidate assessment. In 2014, The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) merged to form the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). CAEP and InTASC remain the two most prominent authorities for teacher preparation programs in the United States (CAEP, 2022). In 2017, the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) entered the scene and although a newcomer, as of 2022 is being utilized by one-hundred and seventy teacher preparation programs in twenty-eight states (AAQEP, 2022). The InTASC model includes ten standards that should be addressed by a teacher preparation program. For each of these standards, three content areas are examined. These are: “performance, essential knowledge, and critical dispositions” (InTASC, 2013, p. 6). CAEP proposes seven standards. Their model is much broader with six of the seven standards addressing facets of a program that do not deal with direct educator preparation. The standard that does, Standard 1: The Learner and Learning, addresses “professional responsibility” as a component and in so doing, refers to disposition standards in the InTASC document (CAEP, 2022, para 4). AAQEP offers four standards. Like CAEP, only one of the standards they recommend focuses directly on teacher performance. The purpose of this standard is that a “candidate ... exhibit the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions of competent, caring, and effective professional educators (AAQEP, 2022, para 1). They go on to amplify this statement by saying that a candidate should exhibit “dispositions and behaviors required for successful professional practice” (AAQEP, 2022, para 3).

As evidenced in this brief analysis of standards for teacher preparation programs, disposition remains an integral part of the assessment tools used in the accreditation process. Additionally, the brief analysis of website data on teacher education programs in the state of Oregon reveals that at least in these thirteen colleges and universities, disposition is an important element of their program development. It is very likely that the same would be true of virtually every teacher preparation program in the country.

There are certainly some very interesting observations that can be made about the historical livelihood of the term disposition in education. Had the importance of disposition died out, much the same way say teaching *cursive* has done, this study would be mildly interesting at best. Yet, as has been established, the main reason for this study is to reflect on an aspect in teacher preparation that has been around for many years and remains a significant part of every current teacher preparation programs' outcomes. What is more, it has been terribly under-examined from a research perspective in the past five or more years, and the debate on how it is defined has never been settled universally. To be sure, NCATE recommended in 2006 that the term disposition be defined individually, program-by-program. Yet, it was never removed as a main area of examination and assessment for every standard that NCATE proposed.

That a professional educator ensures such behaviors as, being on time, being prepared, turning work back in a timely fashion, being respectful, understanding their content, implementing appropriate assessment, and achieving the teaching objectives for each year, are not at all negotiable and are universally agreed upon. Yet, the component of disposition, what it is, how it is defined, and what it looks like in its appropriate practice remains fluid and changes from program-to-program. It is probably safe to say that very few significant features of teacher preparation programs live such a vague and transitory existence in their practice. There are not,

for example, twenty different definitions of what it means to be on time, or to turn work back in a timely fashion. Yet, as unique and as different as are the personalities of individuals, disposition remains extremely diverse. The definitions and development of disposition in a teacher candidate remains a personal and intimate journey. No matter how an instructor arrives there successfully, a strong disposition is what produces effective student learning, and changes a student for the better.

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