

INSIDE TEACHING

**How
Classroom
Life
Undermines
Reform**

MARY KENNEDY

Harvard University Press
Cambridge, Massachusetts
London, England
2005

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the Pew Charitable Trusts for providing financial support for this study. Their generosity paid for research assistants, for videotaping equipment, for transcribing expenses, and for time, the most valuable of commodities in research.

Throughout this book I rely on the rhetorical convention of using “we” whenever writing about anything a researcher saw in a classroom or anything a researcher asked a teacher in an interview, even though no more than one person directly witnessed any classroom or interviewed any teacher. These observations and interviews were conducted not only by me but also by my colleagues Rachel Lander, Paula Lane, and Brenda Neumann. They not only gathered data but also contributed in numerous ways to the design of the study, the sample selection, the interview guides, and the analytic strategies.

Teachers demonstrated a generous willingness to participate. Because we not only interviewed them but also entered their classrooms and videotaped their lessons, the study was much more invasive than most research projects. Some teachers were accustomed to being videotaped, but many had never seen themselves on tape, including one teacher who had taught for 30 years. The prevailing norms of privacy in teaching make it all the more impressive that

these teachers were willing to allow a stranger to enter, videotape, and then interrogate them about their teaching practices. I am indebted to them all.

Once teachers were interviewed, audiotapes came streaming into Michigan State's College of Education, where an extremely organized person, Kathy Lessard, trained and coordinated a pool of transcribers who converted the tapes to transcripts. Although I don't know the names of all the transcribers, I thank them and Kathy for their contributions.

Richard Elmore, Paula Lane, Brenda Neumann, and Alan Shoenfeld critiqued earlier versions of this book. Their comments were enormously helpful in moving my thinking and in helping me find better ways to present my ideas. Adam Gamoran commented on one section and provided helpful insights. I am grateful to them all.

Earlier versions of parts of Chapter 2 appeared as "Reform Ideals and Teachers' Practical Intentions," in *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 13, no. 13 (April 7, 2004). Earlier versions of parts of Chapter 7 appeared as "Knowledge and Teaching," in *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice* 8, no. 3–4 (2002), copyright © 2002 by Taylor and Francis Ltd.

Contents

1. The Mysterious Gap between Reform Ideals and Everyday Teaching	1
2. How Teachers Think about Their Practices	31
3. Creating a Tranquil Environment	63
4. Managing Conversations about Content	95
5. Constructing the Day's Agenda	125
6. Sources of Problems in Teaching	157
7. Sources of Improvements in Teaching	201
8. The Problem of Reform	225
Appendix on Method	237
Notes	269
References	271
Index	277