

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act:
A Noble Theory, An Ignoble Practice as Unfolded Through One
Teacher's Heuristic Inquiry**

by

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DEDICATION

To my daughters, Amy and Katherine, for their unqualified love and support, which served to anchor the lovelier aspects of my heuristic travels. Because of their sweet gifts of self, my *greatest joy* in this life--being their mother--ever buoyed my flagging spirit and kept me afloat despite the occasional undertows. I salute them for their integrity and for their honest efforts to learn from the past, to understand the ever-changing present, and to entrust the future with genuineness and faith.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Throughout my text I've attempted to consciously express both my gratitude to and appreciation for the individuals who have impacted, either directly or indirectly, the successful completion of my study. Such efforts notwithstanding, however, I now answer an internal call to identify specifically the persons whose souls, spirits, or essences sustained me throughout my heuristic journey--whose very beings motivated, uplifted, inspired, and nurtured me, often without awareness and always without guile, through bouts of frustration and self-doubt. My thanks go out especially to them.

To Dr. Robert Gryder for his ever-ready smile and Southern gentility that reminded me to meet with pride and grace those inevitable challenges inherent to keeping my optimistic outlook despite life's often-pessimistic circumstances. His infectious joie de vivre is a gift I'll treasure always.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Through a careful examination of the evolutions of *Curriculum as Political Text* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1973*, I have recognized certain contributory facets of my disillusionment as a high school teacher. I have learned that much of the joy once felt in my classroom has been supplanted by a diminishing sense of professional self-efficacy, self-empowerment, and optimism which stems primarily from the political machinations of a hidden curriculum and a misapplication of an inclusive classroom practice. I hope to demonstrate through this study that I am not unique in my feelings and that hidden political agendas have no place in the classroom, for with them mainstreaming carries potentially explosive ramifications for all concerned.

The process I use to arrive at these conclusions is *Heuristic Research* wherein the perceptions and realities outside of myself assume meaning vis-à-vis reflection and introspection within myself. In other words, an unequivocal connection between my external and internal worlds affords new awareness, illumination, and enlightenment that broadens my internal frame of reference and thus enriches my life. Such personal enrichment, however, arrives only after a journey-of-self carries me through the three phases of *Heuristic Research: Immersion, Acquisition, and Realization*.

First and foremost, this is a human study wherein I examine specific elements contributing to my disillusionment as a teacher. During *Immersion* I unwittingly respond to something within myself, something from my life experience that disquiets my soul

and that “chafes” the spirit. This is the preliminary data through which I sort and from which I extrapolate an essence or meaning through a search-of-self. Simply put, I explore, primarily through autobiographical narrative, the notion that my professional disillusionment stems directly from my profession.

The second phase, *Acquisition*, includes input from a variety of sources ranging from texts, literature, and discourses to federal legislation and law review to human subjects’ studies (see Appendix A, Note 1). As its name implies, I essentially “acquire” then scrutinize new knowledge relative to my theme of disillusionment in the inclusive classroom and especially with regard to *Curriculum as Political Text*.

Finally, it is in the *Realization Phase* that the heuristic process aggregates and synthesizes the components disclosed in *Immersion* and *Acquisition*. There is a dynamic “coming together” of seemingly disparate elements, which results in heightened self-awareness and self-perception. *Realization* ultimately affirms my professionalism and validates my search-of-self.

Primarily subjective in design, my study incorporates the elements of *autobiography*, *narrative*, *metaphor*, and *internal dialogue*, each of which is both *phenomenological* as well as *hermeneutical* in essence. The resulting characteristic of “interpretation and reinterpretation” sets up segues critical to understanding the heuristic research process. The vehicle through which I present my reflections about acquired knowledge in both this and the final phase is the heuristic component of *internal dialogue*--or *interior monologue*, as it is referenced in literary arenas. All representations of *internal dialogue* in this study appear in italicized text.

Finally, the language, including diction and syntax, purposely strays from the conventions typically adhered to in an academic work of this type. The design and essence of *Heuristic Research* negates the concept of relative time, transcends limitations of *before and after, then and now*, and assumes a circumspect view of tradition, inclusive of literary conventions. Were I to regulate, contrive, manipulate, or modify the variant tenses contained herein, I would destroy the essential magic inherent in *Heuristic Research*, as well as invalidate the tangential methods and discourses just mentioned.

CHAPTER II

THE IMMERSION PHRASE

Several years ago, in an effort to understand where and when in my teaching career I rebelled against the traditional public high school system, I enrolled in Arizona State University's doctoral program in Curriculum and Instruction. Unwittingly, I also began what amounted to a scholar's search-of-self, a *journey* to find answers to unformed questions. Ironically, the ultimate focal point of my enigmatic scholastic travels surfaced as a significant educational issue that, without my awareness, had exacerbated my feelings of professional frustration and powerlessness in the classroom. In short, I was eventually to recognize that the misapplication of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its counterpart, Section 504 of the Disabilities Act, exacerbated and extended the already harried traditional school day. Subsequent to this recognition was a parallel realization that my days were to remain harried unless an insidious political machine, expressed primarily vis-à-vis the *hidden curriculum*, were stripped of its control over such legislation and altogether eradicated, thus affording my recall of earlier days when "mine was a noble profession."

Ignorant of what this search entailed or indeed that I had even launched on such a journey, I somehow wound up in the world of *heuristic research*, prodded by the peripheral scholastic agents of autobiography and the writing process. And now I attempt to illustrate that writing and revision is not merely a continuous interpretive process, but an illuminating and a healing one as well. Ultimate self-discoveries inherent in the heuristic research process are not simply "mindless wanderings," but enlightening disclosures that strengthen the sojourner's self-concept and, at the same time, inform the

world of scholars.

Lending strength and clarity to my heuristic research are two additional curriculum paradigms and related epistemologies, *Curriculum as Political Text* and *Interpretive Law Inquiry*. If processed together as a type of “trichromatic validation” of my research goals of transformation, demystification, and liberation, they illustrate how I arrived at a point of professional “generativity and rejuvenation” (Smith, 1991). *Curriculum as Political Text* and *Interpretive Law Inquiry*, along with peripheral applications of related theories and discourses, enhance my heuristic research, a method which, in and of itself, affords a self-renewal stemming from dialogical, interpretable, and spiritual aspects that invite the inquisitive mind to “let go and live.” It is my contention that by traveling the heuristic path, multiple self-awarenesses surfaced, which calmed a personal angst precipitated by the public school environment, thereby affirming and validating my professional life, past and present, and illuminating educational discourses simultaneously.

I first heard the word “heuristic” approximately 26 years ago while attending a private university in the Pacific Northwest. Joyce’s *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* was a favorite of my senior English professor, who used the term in conjunction with the “artist” in question and the protagonist, Stephen Daedalus. Stephen struggled with conflicting forces of his religious training and his gnawing sense that there was “something more” in life than what the Jesuits offered.

During our literary analysis of Stephen’s “search-of-self,” my professor, himself a former priest of the Jesuit order correlated *heuristics* with the Catholic process of catechism. My subsequent vision of Stephen huddled in the confessional while disturbing

“questions answered by more questions” assumed shapes reminiscent of Bosch (see Appendix A, Note 2) was probably not what my professor intended to convey; nonetheless, it remained my sole interpretation of *heuristic* application in literary analyses.

Then, while fully immersed in my graduate program at a Texas university and once more defined by the boundaries of the literary criticism arena, I heard the term used again, this time during an advanced comparative literature seminar. Again it was the professor who simplified my earlier image of heuristics by interjecting the notion of *interior monologue* and *stream-of-consciousness* when interpreting specific literary works. She suggested that classic literary characters, this time Bloom and Molly from Joyce’s *Ulysses*, found answers to life’s questions through self-questions. I processed both professors’ interpretations until I determined a reasonable image of *heuristics*, including not only the Catholic catechism, but the Socratic method of pulling answers from questions as well. At this point of scholarship, *heuristics* served primarily as a tidy literary device used to advance an author’s characterization and theme in his/her work. Such remained my understanding of the word until 2 years ago, when I heard it used again, this time in relation to *curriculum as a field of study*.

Brashly seeking both district remuneration for taking advanced graduate hours, and a distraction from a “plateau of career disillusionment,” I joined Dr. Daniels’s SED711 class and relished stimulating conversations reminiscent of my earlier graduate school days. Not only were our class discussions enlivened and invigorating, but some undefined *affirmative essence* or *mental residue* remained with me during the week. Complementing the class meetings was William Pinar’s text, *Understanding Curriculum*,

which further rekindled my long-buried “academia” mindset and elevated my former pursuits for money and distraction to a level of enthusiasm and effort my teaching persona had lost somewhere along the way.

Much of my pleasure in arriving at this new elevation was realizing that, although *the way* was not identifiable or discernible, I knew the future ironically whispered a promise of something. What that promise was and when it would arrive, I had no idea. I simply felt an enigmatic “presence” more meaningful and certainly more gratifying than my “real world” experiences in the public school system.

My final action-research project submitted to Dr. Daniels in December 1997 both precipitated and perpetuated these feelings of anticipation and optimism, but not for their tangible aspects of title, organization, or presentation. Rather, it was through “living the process” in all its stages that, in some undefined manner, lent significance and credence to the project, to my *journey*. Albeit paradoxical in that *the means justified the end* and not the other way around, some internal *capacity* allowed me to trust my own efforts to find a unity in and an articulation of the *individual* parts of self-discovery (Moustakas, 1990, pp. 20-21).

It was the *essence* of the process that beckoned and challenged me to continue my journey, elusive yet in both content and purpose, until I had reached this current place in my academic life. To identify--let alone articulate--just where my “current place” lies requires that I assume the multiple roles of interpreter, inquirer, and storyteller; and that the reader assumes the subsequent roles of listener and reader as we embark on our pilgrimage.

I begin my heuristic research with the first of three components, *immersion*, wherein *interior monologue* (see Appendix A, Note 3) and an “inverted perspective” set the stage for the start of a scholar’s journey. Here I remind the reader of my curriculum class with Dr. Daniels. The fruits of my labor—my determination to travel some magnetic, obscure direction—led me to yet another doctoral course, this time taught from a legal perspective. It was in Dr. James’s school law class that I discovered yet another “pool of enlightenment” that stripped away a murky layer of dissatisfaction from my world in the high-school classroom.

I immersed myself in this new curriculum, finding over a period of time an intense identification with what I really knew nothing about. Here is where I *saw*, albeit tentatively, with an “inverted perspective.” Before I knew what I was doing, I was nonetheless “doing it”; I somehow *became* part and parcel of what I was attempting to define in my professional life. Through a process described by Salk (as cited in Moustakas, 1990), I engaged in an internal dialogue (henceforth synonymous to and interchanged with *interior monologue*) that led to certain self-discoveries (Moustakas, 1990, p. 16).

While researching a viable topic for my law course, I looked for legal cases that bore some semblance of relatedness to my world as a high-school teacher, no small challenge when considering the minimal knowledge I had was drawn from episodes of *Law and Order*. Additionally, I was intimidated by the marked difference between my novice bumbling about in the law library and the polished investigative techniques used by my classmates, most of whom were seeking either administrative or law degrees. With the distinct feeling that I had entered an educational minefield of sorts, I selected as

my research topic a case involving The Individual With Disabilities Act which, I discovered, actually impacted my role of classroom teacher, both past and future, more than I had imagined possible.

Instead of adhering to the presentation guidelines used by my colleagues, I followed the familiar road of literary criticism and “wrote where I was led.” Instead of seeing black and white “administrative absolutes,” I sought purpose and meaning in my professional life through “chiaroscuro lenses” (see Appendix A, Note 4). I wrote not a straightforward exposition of legal cases, histories, and briefs, but, rather, an unfolding narrative about familiar people who had vicariously or actually *lived* the cases. Specifically, I told about disabled students and their often-thwarted efforts to survive in a mainstreamed academic environment.

Even as I read aloud anecdotes from the very real lives of Nathan, Ann, and Jason, I intuited my colleagues’ reticence to *hear* my self-disclosures. Based in a classroom teacher’s realm of reality, my unfolding narrative about unsuccessful inclusion of special-needs students into my regular classroom environment clearly discomfited my listeners. My anecdotal recounts of unhappy students, unattained objectives, and destroyed learning environments created by IDEA’s 1973 implementation chafed against my listeners’ images of a democratic, largely unmarred inclusive classroom environment. And while their cool reception should have reduced me to a state of further frustration and humility, I admit to an evocative, albeit subdued, classroom ambience and tone generated by my presentation.

Why? Why should I remain secure despite their obvious non-validation of my experiences? Why, in fact, should I gain self-confidence *because* of their resistance?

Moustakas explained the paradox by drawing from the works of Rogers and Maslow, who validated my “internal locus of evaluation” and emphasized the value and purity of my experiences (as cited in Moustakas, p. 17). In essence, then, I unknowingly progressed in my search-of-self, delighting in my invitation for others to join what I believed was a *universal* commitment to lend meaning to life through self-doubt, self-disclosure, and risk (see Appendix A, Note 5). That my invitation was rejected was of no impact or detriment to my forward movement.

A pivotal self-discovery lay in my recognition and subsequent labeling of what had been frustrating my efforts to achieve a lost satisfaction in my profession: teaching. I *experienced* this vital recognition, saw it as a *process* that made discernible what theretofore were simply obscure questions. In short, I isolated a *reason* behind my queries and that such isolation was even possible was invigorating and satisfying in and of itself.

At the approximate time of Dr. James’s law class was Dr. Matthews’s Trends and Issues in Secondary Curriculum, wherein I found unexpected fortification of my journey. Consisting mainly of entrance-level teachers and/or master’s degree students, the class composite induced further self-evaluation and self-discovery. Relishing in Dr. Matthews’s nonthreatening approach to controversial issues, I attempted to mimic his diplomacy and subtle “extraction process” of both debate and assuming a stance. Herein was the quintessential example of heuristic inquiry, for not a day passed without some self-revelation, self-doubt, or self-conviction precipitated largely through his questions.

By asking us questions relative to every level of Bloom’s Taxonomy, he solicited responses to Noll (1997) and charged me with further investigation of both my

professional beliefs and my teaching methods. The myriad questions without answers taunted my self-perceptions and further agitated my self-discoveries made in Dr. James's law course.

I digress momentarily to remind the reader of my earlier comments about consequential offshoots of methodology inherent in the heuristic inquiry process. I refer specifically to another element of the immersion phase of heuristic research, that of identifying theories, discourses, and literature relevant to the process. Parallel to accepting my "internal locus" is my effort to expand and learn from a *broadened foundation of this locus*. In other words, I cannot enhance my journey without first recognizing the validity of "theoretical threads" that inherently interweave with the heuristic design.

Prompted by my heuristic encounter in my course, and compelled by Dr. Matthews's gentle caveat to "solidify my professional persona," I sought further clarification of IDEA. Recognizing that its application in my classroom was not simply weak, but was potentially damaging to all concerned, I *immersed* myself totally and uncompromisingly in those elements relative to understanding IDEA, thereby elucidating my journey. My immersion resulted in comprehensive and intense research into *interpretive law inquiry* processes, into *theoretical approaches* to public school curriculum, and into the multiple aspects of *interpretation* critical to questionable issues innate to IDEA.

I relied predominantly on Hazi's (1992) research on *interpretive law inquiry* and on Haggerson's multiple studies of interpretation, demystification, and phenomenological applications. Specifically, I relied on Haggerson (1986, pp. 1-33), on Haggerson (1993,

pp. 49-55), and on Haggerson and Bowman (1992, pp. 3-17). Additionally, I drew upon Smith (1991, pp. 187-203], as well as on endless archives relegated to the federal government. I further immersed myself in both prior and acquired knowledge about *narrative, literary criticism, existentialism, Pinar's curriculum as political text, and self-discovery*, following a *natural* course, an *intuited* direction which implies that “there is no substitute for experience, none at all” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 17).

And so, thus fortified by intuition, personal experience, and renowned research, I embarked on a *search-of-self* that yet gains illumination and momentum from my consistent application of heuristic research methods. So, too, must the reader accept heuristic research as “an organized and systematic form for investigating human experience” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 17), for without such acceptance, subsequent peripheral references to related methodologies and discourses in my heuristic inquiry will fall short of the desired ends--elucidation and enhancement for the reader. Embracing this methodology affords my assumption of the role as investigator, subsequently allowing the reader to experience, appreciate, and ultimately understand my unfolding journey as his own (Moustakas, 1990, p. 11).

CHAPTER III

THE ACQUISITION PHASE

Heuristics, as described by Moustakas (1990), include processes that inherently “incorporate creative self-processes and self-discoveries.” Asserting that heuristic inquiry is a process within a process is imperative, as is the assertion that, like Moustakas, “I am searching for qualities, conditions, and relationships that underlie a fundamental question, issue, or concern” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 20). Specifically, I seek a causal relationship between my school’s misapplication of IDEA and not only my diminishing professional self-efficacy, but my capacity to enjoy and derive pleasure from teaching as well.

So that the reader might better grasp my “process of internal search,” I include several subsets that function within the heuristic process and that further explicate certain turns in my journey. First is *tacit knowledge* or “knowledge that can’t be put into words,” itself a combination of subsets ranging from *subsidiary* to *focal*. Essentially the former factors “attract immediate attention . . . essential to knowing but of secondary importance,” while the latter are the “unseen and invisible aspects of an experience” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 21). My job as interpreter is to create for the reader a satisfactory union between these two types of knowledge.

A second subset, *intuition*, is “the bridge between the explicit and the tacit.” Much like Hazi’s (1992) *intuitive leap* of educational law inquiry (discussed later in the chapter), this subset “makes immediate knowledge possible without the intervening steps of logic and reasoning” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 23). As with the preceding subset, my job is

to build that bridge for the reader, thus smoothing the road of apparent heuristic wanderings.

The third subset, *indwelling*, requires turning inward to seek a deeper, more extended comprehension . . . of human experience” (Moustakas, 1990, pp. 24-25) and is one of my most valuable tools available as an interpreter. As the reader will eventually surmise, indwelling relates not only to subsequent analogies with *interior monologue*, *search-of-self*, *stream of consciousness*, and *internal dialogue*, but with *Others*, *universal*, and *universal man* as well. Without an interpreter who honestly turns within for answers to questions that affect all, the reader is blindsided and crippled at a critical point in the heuristic journey.

Causal to indwelling is *focusing* (recognized as both process and concept), which leads to personal insight and depth as well as to the final and previously discussed subset, the *internal frame of reference* or the “medium or base” for “deriving knowledge” (Moustakas, 1990, pp. 25-26). The reader is already aware of what precipitates the formation and maintenance of this subset, so as the interpreter I need only predict the subsequent references that will surely resurface throughout this heuristic study (see Appendix A, Note 6).

Acquisition, the second phase of heuristic research, requires an explication of what came before. In other words, I now attempt to explain, illustrate, and clarify the “key ingredients” of my *Immersion Phase* from Chapter II. Aside from the heuristic components addressed in the previous paragraph, I also offer the following guidelines necessary to fully apprehend my own respective designs, methods, and applications contained herein.

The *initial engagement*, or my entrance into the doctoral program, immediately preceded my *immersion* into my topic through Dr. Daniels's class. I then entered the *incubation stage* wherein I considered "new possibilities" that arose from both Dr. Matthews's and Dr. James's classes. The more deeply I researched topic-related issues like *curriculum as political text* and *interpretive law inquiry*, the closer I moved toward an illumination, an epiphany delineating both a cache of professional concerns and a specific, focused thesis.

Now, in *acquisition*, I prepare to "fully examine what has awakened in consciousness, in order to understand its various levels of meaning" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 31). I attempt to acquire a better understanding of the principal elements leading to my thesis, an understanding that emerges only through further self-discoveries and directed research. *Acquisition* promises my eventual familiarity with data, theories, and discourses relative to The Individual with Disabilities Education Act, while simultaneously providing vehicles through which I might process and synthesize new knowledge.

One such vehicle (previewed in Chapter II) is *interior monologue*, wherein I essentially talk myself through levels of consciousness, ultimately discovering attitudes and self-awarenesses that hint of full-blown depth and meaning at some later stage of my journey. As predicted, I rely heavily on this vehicle to illuminate the heuristic path, and I encourage the reader to pay particular attention to monologue whenever it appears in italics.

Defining the Phase

Although subjective in nature, heuristic research allows me to incorporate objective, quantitative research data. I can pull from substantial realities, including interviews with participants as well as self-dialogue and conversations; and from my own research, including concepts and theories as my basis for methodology, until I have stock-piled fodder for my heuristic evaluation and interpretation. Basically, then, what I attempt in this phase of my research is to enhance my understanding of specific “objectivities” as they relate to my subjective research methods. I search for a process—and the end result—in order to apprehend the questions and concerns that precipitated the start of the journey itself (Moustakas, 1990, p. 37). Specifically, by combining both the qualitative and quantitative components of process, design, and method, I validate my determination that mandated implementation of IDEA has resulted not only in a disparity of quality education for both special-needs and regular students, but in my own disenchantment and disappointment as a classroom teacher.

Moustakas (1990) sustained me during this phase by asserting that heuristic inquiry research is exhausting, demanding, frustrating, and often frightening. Throughout the entire *immersion phase*, and now, as I describe the *acquisition phase*, I have vacillated between self-assurance and self-doubt and between keen perceptions and murky interpretations. Often experiencing moments of what I believed were *clean, sharp visions of awareness* and earth-shattering revelations of insight, I forbore many moments of indecision, isolation, and defeatism throughout the heuristic process. That this was inherent and inevitable in the scheme of heuristic research was perhaps the most critical and invaluable motivational tool I drew from Moustakas.

Once entering the acquisition stage, I began recalling bits and pieces of acquired knowledge garnered from my various doctoral classes. Beginning with Dr. Daniels's Curriculum as Theory class, I investigated specific discourses and methods that were relevant in my journey. It was at this point I identified, in particular, with the field of *phenomenology* and what to me were its apparent parallels to heuristic research. To assist me in my processing, I relied heavily on Stewart and Mickunas (1990), from which I acquired new knowledge, as well as new questions. I delighted in the former and simply ignored the latter.

Feeling I was now equipped to "brighten a scholar's path" with some sort of illuminating insight relative to my phenomenological identity, I began to write. But my desire to articulate the rampant and myriad aspects of this identification was not fulfilled. Despite yet another draft submission, I fell short of my mark and again believed my *enlightening message* was not now, nor ever would be, forthcoming. I tried desperately to buoy my spirits vis-à-vis Moustakus, but even his caveat that the heuristic journey is wrought with disappointments did little to soothe my growing frustrations.

It was also at this point that Dr. Daniels, once again trusting his intuitions about how best to surmount the immediate obstacle, presented to me a copy of Moustakas's (1990) *Heuristic Research: Design, Methodology, and Applications*. Ever nonplused by my occasional dramatic outbursts of frustration, he knew just how to respond to my "I know there's something here, *something* that wants to come out, but I don't know how to *find* it because I don't know *what it is!*" By introducing Moustakas, Dr. Daniels triumphed--we were back on track, and I released self-perceptions of ineptness and the inability to articulate.

Feeling somewhat re-stabilized, I read not only Moustakus but returned to sections of text from *Exploring Phenomenology*, delighting that the authors substantiated my notion that *the scientific attitude* and its presumptive role of *quintessential method of investigation* were over-rated (Stewart and Mickunas, 1990, p. 24). Compelled by intuition and this newest “positive I.D.,” I continued researching phenomenology until I eventually validated that my path, albeit strewn with the aforementioned obstacles inherent to heuristic research, yet promised further self-discovery as well as a favorable impact on scholarship.

Consequent to further research of the phenomenological field were two self-realizations. The first was that my initial parallels to heuristic research were hastily generalized, and the second was that from my generalizations I could better apprehend what heuristic *tools* were at my disposal. From Stewart and Mickunas I gained a supportive, well-articulated *springboard* wherefrom I left a *detached and objective world* to enter the *natural world of subjective relationships* inherent in phenomenology (Stewart and Mickunas, 1990, p. 25). Once aligned with the subjectivity of the natural world, I followed what I now call the “inevitable detour,” expecting the unexpected in heuristic research. Of the many detours was one that begged clarification between phenomenology and heuristics. That I needed to delineate for both the reader and myself the appropriate traits of each was paramount, so I set about with the singular intent to find the missing link--to find, identify, and apply respectively the closely related yet unique characteristics comprising both phenomenology and heuristics.

Moustakas delineated four contrasts between phenomenological and heuristic research. First, the former allows impartiality in the investigation while the latter

embraces “connectedness” and identification with relationships. Second, the former invites definitive descriptive conclusions while the latter recognizes manifestations of “essential meanings.” Additionally, phenomenological research often lends “distilled structures of experience” while heuristic research actually precipitates an enlightening synthesis of intuition, tacit understanding, and acquired knowledge. Finally, phenomenological research essentially curtails with the investigated experience, unlike the ongoing universal essence of *both experience and person* in heuristic research (Moustakas, 1990, p. 38).

If I am to capture the essence of how and why the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act is falling short of its mark from the practical standpoint of my high school classroom, I must now turn to certain objective issues which assume meaning only through subjective interpretations inherent in heuristic research. What follows are moments when I step out of the *distilled structure of experience* and assume a role of detached objectivity, presenting related discourses, methods, and applications contained in this and subsequent chapters. A caveat reminds the reader that enveloping the apparently insular character of each discourse, method, or application, however, is the anomalous relationship between them all.

It is precisely at this juncture that I have come full circle; I have arrived in *practice* to what has heretofore been clarification of *theory*. In other words, I have no other recourse but to continue my heuristic inquiry, ever mindful of its distinct phases that depend solely on indistinct essences. Perhaps now the reader can better appreciate both the phases and the essences, knowing that they ultimately serve a purpose and provide a direction for the evolution of the heuristic research process.