

AN ORAL HISTORY CASE STUDY ON THE CO-CONSTRUCTION OF
SCHOOLING
AT THE CHEFOO SCHOOL AND IN WEIHSIEN INTERNMENT CAMP

A Dissertation

Presented to the Widener University Committee Members of

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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by

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Center for Education

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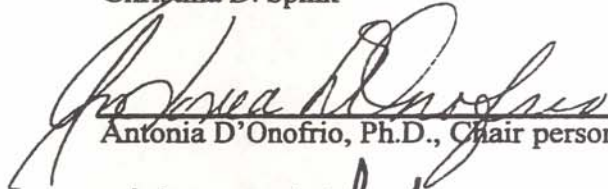
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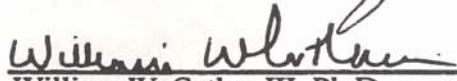
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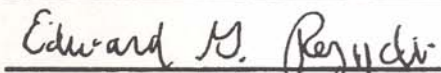
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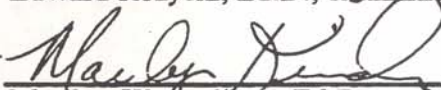
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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education.**

This work is dedicated to the glory of God

and to my parents

Harry and Mary

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Abstract

This study explores how two students interpreted the implicit moral aspects of schooling during a time of duress. Two questions arise from this investigation. How was schooling co-constructed by the staff and students to preserve the curriculum's moral component while living in a culture created by military rule? And, how do the students perceive the influence of this unique schooling experience upon their lives? This case study is an interpretation of how a specific group of students and teachers co-constructed schooling to preserve the moral underpinnings of their curriculum from external threats. The intent of this work is to provide insight as to how students interpret and internalize the implicit and explicit moral components of a school's curriculum.

The setting for this study is occupied China during World War II when the China Inland Mission Schools, colloquially known as Chefoo, were placed under Japanese occupation forces and then interned as a school body, along with 1,000 other Westerners, in the Weihsien Civilian Assembly Center. These events of war separated the students from their parents for over five years and created a dependency upon the school staff for their academic, spiritual and emotional needs.

From the 24 interviews of Chefoo students, two women were selected for more in-depth oral histories. A descriptive case study was used to analyze the women's stories so as to present a recollected account of their schooling experiences as students. The interviews were structured around the themes of *schooling* and *separation* and then divided further into sub-themes grounded in the research. The oral histories were also triangulated with historical documents and interviews with other classmates. The term co-construction means that it is the interactions between the teacher and the student, that ultimately decides what the student culturally, morally and academically retains.

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