

COMMUNITY-GRACED RESEARCH:
THE ETHICS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC CROSSINGS

By
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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the dissertation of WINONA M. WYNN find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

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THE ETHICS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC CROSSINGS:
NORMALIZING MARGINAL WESTERN SPACES

Abstract

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The thoughts, reflections, and analyses in this work are intended to further inform those who are interested in exploring vulnerability and change, ethics and politics, and who are above all interested in the political conundrums that accompany crossing into spaces that are not our own. At the time of this writing, there was not a universal, agreed upon protocol for the inspection and critique of the “researcher persona”. Although, policies *are* in place to protect those described and labeled as “vulnerable”, (Internal Review Boards); these same policies do not demand the researchers participate in a reciprocal exposure---that of processing and making known their own histories and vulnerabilities through a public disclosure experience as intrusive and intensive as those which purport to describe the “researched”. This dissertation work, in part, argues for a individualized research pre-process, one that includes a “reciprocal storytelling”, a dialogical process through which the researcher and the researched recognize and acknowledge the “elephant in the room” ----the clash of motive, intent, bias, authority,

respect, disclosure and cultural representation. This, I argue, is only possible if we examine the privilege and power structures inextricably linked to the institutional research process and humbly bestow that same privilege and power upon community processes. In other words, dismantle structures of privilege, particularly ones that tout and promote the binary of “expert/novice”. Although Participatory Action Research, or Participatory Community Research is usually driven by a combination of researcher and community need, and the agenda is agreed upon by both parties prior to an “ethnographic crossing”, commonly, the researcher still directs the project and the community participants and their accompanying processes still remain the object of study. The main point of this work is to remind us that we remain accountable for all that transpires before, during, and long after we leave communities that are not our own. Research is not a linear process. On the ground, trickster tracks us---- circling back to critique, complicate, and challenge our claims. In the air, condors circle---viewing the remnants of what we have left behind.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A Genealogy of Grace

Henry Giroux refers to “Acknowledgements” as the “new markers indicating webs of association that place one in the pantheon of ‘respected’ company.” He goes on to say that he refuses to participate in this “trite exercise” (1993). In the context of *this* work, I am afraid the webs of association represented here, in many cases, place me in the pantheon of (dis)respected company (those who consider themselves “respected company” please do not take offense). Many of the people I will recall in this section are, have been, and will always be (in)credible people, contributing to the ways that change the world and my position in it. This is no trite exercise. In addition to your voices, I am grateful for your unspoken lines, for your patience, for your struggle to come to presence. Some of us are still invisible and voiceless in places unnamed, still subjected to and impacted by academic interpretations and victimized by “Calls to Deafness”. *They* do not see *us*, neither do they hear us. Our stories are interpreted and circulated throughout the world without our permission. However, this is to remind you and me too, that I have not forgotten wherein the *authority lies*. I hope that above the din you can sense my plea for all of them (and us) to be gifted better sight and hearing. You will find yourselves listed here in no particular order. I have left off last names purposefully. We are all related, and it does not seem reasonable to track and then highlight our points of divergence, when one love-struck ancestor or another married “outside the lines” or when some of you, replete with grief over one socio-human condition or another “crossed over”

into various contested, oppositional, arbitrary or timeless territories. We forgive us our trespasses. Surnames speak histories, and for the purpose of this section, these histories need to be conflated. I am thankful for you all, regardless of past, present or future connections.

I am hoping that this acknowledgements section titled, “A Genealogy of Grace” reaffirms and validates whatever it is in us that needs unconditional understanding. Grace, in the context of our human behaviors, simply means that we are striving to operate without ourselves (in the sense of ego-operational). We are moving in circles and with purposes that are not necessarily self-serving. Genealogy is the accounting of histories, a recognition of the sacrifice, relational contribution, as well as the designated political stances of those who have come before us. Bourdieu tell us that in genealogies the ego is as unreal as the starting point in Cartesian Space (1977). If the ego and the starting point are both unreal, could this signify the absence of a privileged position in either the context of the self or in the context of boundaries? At this passing moment in time, with this passing breath, with you as my witness, it is my political and ethical choice to believe that there indeed *can* be an absence of a privileged position in the context of self *and* boundaries. Absences are transformed into presences and vice versa only through our conscious or unconscious collective consent.

Again, I am grateful...

In Chicago in the 1950’s there was a Master Chess Player, posing as an elementary school teacher. In his current life and in his current situation—“Homeless by choice”, he

sits in front of me on various Saturday mornings, in various coffee shops around Spokane and we exchange “teacher stories”. He is concerned about my “reading list”, wants to know if I am reading Howard Zinn, if my daughter is really going to take him to hear Noam Chomsky speak at Gonzaga, if I am sending my junk mail back—writing “return to sender” or better yet, am I using their prepaid envelopes, writing on the back or front of their various solicitations, messages stating how offended I am about “being continuously invaded by marketing and consumerism.” He is both an avid reader *and* a chess player and as such, he reflects upon strategic positionings in both two and three dimensional constructs. He is slowly losing his sight. I see him at the Public Library asking about books on tape. I smile when he tells me, “I love the ‘Beck’ women.” He often tells me he carries the burden of my story-- the heaviness of hope-- that he passes on that burden when he speaks to women on the street and in other contexts. He says that I am inspirational, but I tell him that he has it backwards. It is he who inspires me. I embrace him fully and tell him as often as I can that knowing him has changed my life. Thank you, Will.

There is a professor who for the past several years has listened patiently as I spoke aloud to myself in his presence. I tell him that he missed his calling, that he should have been a counselor. He replies, “Professor, counselor...there are a lot of similarities.” We laugh. Bill, you are one incredible Quaker---reflective, patient, kindhearted, intensely intellectual, witty, and one of the best mentors I have ever had. I bring up your

“Quakerness” because I attribute your ability to sit for long periods of time and reflect on my endless stories to the training you must have received in “Meeting Houses”. It goes well with my ability to talk for long periods of time, which I attribute to my need to compensate for long periods of silence during my childhood.

The Yakima Valley contains much richness, many resources, many connections. Thank you, Patsy, for reading the newspaper that morning we were having a “breakfast burrito” at “Dad’s Restaurant.” You looked up from your paper and said to me, “There is a ‘Winona Wynn’ mentioned in the obituary section. No wait a minute, the deceased was related to her. Anyway, she *must* be one of your relatives.” I listen patiently and then explain that my relatives are in Montana, Arizona, and various other locations, but *not* on the Yakama Reservation. You are quiet, Patsy, scheming, intent on connecting me to family stories, to my cousin, to my nieces. Later in the day you make *the* call and on the other end I hear high pitched excited voices---“She has the same name as my grandmother!” Later that day, I meet the grandmother my nieces refer to. I ring the doorbell of the house in Wapato and *another* Winona Wynn appears. We immediately recognize family traits in each other and embrace. Tears well up, but do not spill over. Connection. Patsy, thank you for teaching me the traditions of the Longhouse, for supporting my efforts to “help” by using hand signals to indicate I need to be serving traditional foods from the other direction! Thank you for being my quintessential mentor in the Native Community. Thank you for your networking, for your commitment to language, children, Elders, community, and for your inclusiveness of me in all of these things. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to have a dialogue with Dr. Anaya, the

brother of Rudolfo, who wrote *Bless Me Ultima*. I was star struck. I will never forget our conversations, your wisdom, your traditional songs, our trip to Seattle to do so many things---attend meetings, have clam chowder at Ivar's, have an unforgettable day with Alex and with your A.I.M. friend on Beacon Hill. Thank you ad infinitum. Many pages of this dissertation are enriched because of knowing you.

Atwice, my dear friend, you and Sabe are true royalty. I am so honored to have you both in my life. Your stories, passed down through generations are as we have said so many times, "riveting". I feel like I am being transported back through history. You are a gifted storyteller, and you have a brilliant mind. Remember that evening at Minor's Hamburger stand in Yakima, when we were sitting in front of the showcase of beadwork, and the owners strolled over to our table? Two in that group, one of which sported an impressive handlebar mustache, were dressed in Cowboy garb. It was like a scene from a movie. They stopped in front of us, and stared, particularly at you and Sabe, and then asked as they leaned forward, "Are you *real* Indians?" Atwice, I will forever admire your composure and grace. You paused to finish chewing your hamburger bite and then quipped, "Sure are." For your stories of Chilocco, your dedication to educating Indian young people, for your many gifts to me both abstract and concrete, thank you.

Diane. I feel like every time we talk about "parental involvement" it is like we are exploring possibilities for the first time. I feel so privileged to hear you talk about projects, policies, possibilities. Although, I would be perfectly content to be your primary

sounding board, you have incredible insights that really need to be heard by larger groups of people. I love how you talk about your “volunteer” status as a parent. You value the freedom you have in that position. You tell me that you can say whatever needs to be said and you can’t be fired! “By not being an ‘official employee’” you say, “I have so much power.” You are patient and loving about Brandon’s “texting”. You are bold and fierce and committed and wise. You have a presence that is formidable in the best possible sense. I will forever be grateful for our conversations while cooking turkeys and frybread.

Simon. At the Heritage Community Dinner last year, you excused yourself from our table and surprised me by bringing back some of your prized smoked salmon. On the long drive back to Spokane that night, I ate Salmon and thought about how much I admire you and Diane, your commitment to teaching Brandon about the sacredness of Salmon, about the skills and traditions of fishing in “usual and accustomed places.”

Natalie, my first born daughter, you are a most wonderful gift. So much to be thankful for in the context of you, but for the purpose of this work, thank you for our dialogues about your participatory community vision, for sharing your brilliant and sensitive proposal with me—Your Women’s Garden/Well Project which was funded in record time! For asking questions, for reading the books I send to you in Africa. Thank you for your stories, for your insights, which were shaped, for some significant years of your life, by a single mother who consistently worked several low level jobs at a time. Our stories are not only unbelievable, but endless. But most of all, thank you for really “seeing people”

and for really “seeing the world” in an unbelievably compassionate, unique and respectful way. If I reflected upon all the ways that you have contributed to this work, and on your many, many, accomplishments, the one person that may still be reading at this point, would quit immediately. I think for now, it will suffice to say that I promise I will make you one of four important characters in a fiction novel...Aunt Boogie can be the omniscient narrator.

To Noelle, my other “Third World” daughter. To hear you and Natalie speak tribal languages is amazing. When I am attending one Indigenous event or another, and hear a tribal language being spoken, I always think of both of you. Your life vacillates between tragedy and poetry. You walk an undefined path, negotiate the liminal spaces, live in fear *and* trust. I remember you every day. Nine years in Pakistan, Noelle. I will never forget when I told you that I read *The Bookseller of Kabul*, and then asked you if you had read it yet, and you replied, “Mom, I *know* the bookseller of Kabul.” Thank you, Noelle, for working with rural women in the context of literacy. Thank you for caring about books and for believing on an intellectual *and* practical level that knowledge is power. Thank you for being a wonderful mother to my granddaughter, Bakhtawara. You, Natalie, and I are working with Indigenous, rural populations. Isn’t it a miracle, Noelle, the trajectory of our lives? When we come together again, our convergent voices will further validate our collective contribution...gathering and transforming remnants of secrets, darkness and mystery.

My darling third child, Kerri. There was not supposed to be an order to this section of my dissertation, but here it is imposing itself-- "birth order." In the context of this work, you are my "western identity" companion. How many miles did we travel this summer across the landscapes that are significant to our family? I think on this trip, as we were going through the extraordinary arid landscapes, I told you about working on that turkey ranch in the middle of the Mohave Desert when I was sixteen. I remember when I was driving back to the reservation with Grandpa last year, the same phenomenon occurred. He started telling stories when the land prompted him. Must be genetic.

"We come and go but the land is always here and the people who love and understand it are the people who really own it for a little while" (Cather, 1913).

Remember that church in "Old Town", the one built in the 1700's where we stopped to pray for Grandpa? The moments we spent in that church evoked a confluence of historical moments of identity. We are a complicated clan: full of paradoxical traditions and beliefs. The fact that you have kept a written record of your life since third grade, "The Kerri Diaries" both scares me and makes me proud. As you read me carefully selected lines from your collection of journals, I am overjoyed that you are sharing with me your past memories, some of which you have made sense of, some of which haunt you still. Thank you for valuing language, memory, reflection. You inspire me. And once again, that fiction promise...one day soon.

Thank you, Casey, for showing me what I would have been like as a "boy". To my only son, I am sorry that burden landed on you. We have been through the trials of many

lifetimes, you and I, and, sadly enough, in all of them, no one really *understood* our language. I maintain that you will be the surprise hope of the family, Casey. Too many lessons have been learned or at least processed for you to remain virtually unknown in circles of contribution. You have an incredible gift of language and an incredible mind, almost a burden. Just promise me you will at least call me before you get on a plane, bound for parts unknown, to negotiate a plan to save the world...or lead a revolution. May our creator keep you safe and bless you as you wander.

A final word to my children...

“It is our inward journey that leads us through time—forward or back, seldom in a straight line, most often spiraling. Each of us is moving, changing with respect to others. As we discover, we remember, remembering, we discover; and most intensely do we experience this when our separate journeys converge. Our living experience at those meeting points is one of the charged dramatic fields of fiction” (Welty, 1983).

Thank you to the English Department, all of you who supported my “field trips” with my students, who called and arranged vans (Jeri), and who drove vans (Beth, and Han), and who were in general excited about and supportive of freedom of movement, and the Democratic Ideal as it manifests itself through “experiential education”. Thank you, George for offering unconditional support and never hesitating, not even once, when I explained the various versions of the trips, which included taking students to the Nez Perce Interpretive Center in Spaulding, Idaho (four semesters), and then taking them on

day trips to the House of Charity in Spokane and also to the Museum of Arts and Culture (also four semesters and a summer). In the context of these trips, thank you too, to Troy of WSU's Community Service Learning office for driving and also, for helping to prepare my students for their initial contact with inner city Spokane. For Judy, a descendent of the Nez Perce Nation and an historian at the Interpretive Center, I am particularly grateful for your expert storytelling, for your presentation, "Walk a Lifetime in My Moccasins".

Thank you to Iris at the Museum of Arts and Culture who provided "Scholarships" covering entry fees to the Museum and also covering fees for a private tour of the "Campbell House" next door (80-100 students over the course of four semesters)

Katherine, my supervisor at the University of Idaho's Indian Education Outreach Project, is the person responsible for my current trajectory and return to work in Native communities in the Pacific Northwest. As I said at the beach gathering in Quinault at the final summer conference for the tribal schools in 2006, "Thank you for being the instrument that brought me home." The "Lummi" story of the "Inclusion Workshop", the follow-up to the previously unsuccessful presentation (that did not involve either of us...) well, what a happy ending, thank goodness. I will NEVER forget that experience. The day of the workshop was the day after Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans. What an omen. We must have mentioned it to the teachers when we arrived at the school, maybe as an opening acknowledgement of the chaos in the world? I really don't remember. It

seemed that teachers at that moment in time needed to talk about their own chaos. Remember, just before my presentation, we were standing in Helen's office on the second floor and looking through the window at the forty plus tired, bored faces below. Our time slot was at the end of the day. Everyone was exhausted. For some reason, I was energized and excited about the possibilities of facilitating a dialogue about "inclusion". What an eclectic group: janitors, parents, kitchen workers, para-professional teacher aids, bus drivers, the principal and the superintendent. Maybe it was the diverse representation that was so exciting. This was an opportunity for a dialogue on inclusion that went beyond the perimeters of "No Child Left Behind" and beyond the application to "Special Education" It was a unique opportunity to remind these forty tired souls that they were critical to the success of all of the children in the school. Throughout that workshop, together, we all discovered why. Katherine, your support during that presentation and throughout my year of consulting was unfaltering. I absolutely cannot thank you enough, ever.

Thank you, Alex, for supporting my writing and for wishing that you had more time to work with me on a screenplay recounting my reservation trip with my father. Our conversations about writing are *inspiring*, to the point that not to have them is *expiring*. Stories seem to live forever, but they do not wait forever to be told. This much I know. I traveled the reservation route again, as you suggested. The opportunity just came about. I completed it in two sections, and so it was a disjointed journey. In June of 2007, I drove fourteen hours to spend a week at my Tribe's Medicine Lodge in Poplar, Montana. In

August, I drove three days to see my father for the last time. This returning was significant. I will remember this trip in parts, in “quantum”, in pieces. Not abandoning my “storytelling voice” was important to me as I wrote this dissertation. I tried to isolate myself in an approach that would evoke traditional academic discourse, but there was a revolt of *my selves*. A mutiny of *me’s*. I know you understand.

Thomas Vernon. You know my family, and we talk about you on occasion just like you *are* family. Actually, I do suspect some common ancestors. You greet me just like my brother used to greet me—with a smile, energy and a firm hug. I miss him. Although unlike him, you will still be in this world when I leave WSU, I am sure I will miss you too. Your support and advocacy of me in the American Studies Program and beyond has been one of the most important “sustaining experiences” of my graduate education. I know you actively recruit and tirelessly support students who are “diverse” in many contexts; your choice to encourage and mentor this powerful group of students is inspirational to me and I am sure to them as well. However, you do create a dependency in some cases. I remember Jennifer Mata saying to you at one point-- terror in her voice—“You can’t leave until I do!” Secretly, I harbored that dependence as well. Thank you for your willingness to listen, for your counsel, for believing in my writing. Thank you for saying to me, “We need your voice”. That statement, above all, has motivated me to finish this dissertation. I am indebted.

To Joan. When I applied and was accepted into a fine arts school in the south, I was seventeen years old and did not know my mind. At that time, I had a fantasy of marrying a professor of fine arts. I was not interested in solo performances or serious classical music. After my audition, the advisory/placement committee “guided” me into a “Piano Performance” major. My professor, Dr. Richard Kaufmann, was married and VERY interested in solo performances and serious classical music. During this year of study, this fantasy expulsion process, for comfort, I would meet other musicians in the “practice shacks” for rhythmic forays into the forbidden---My friends, Buzz Taylor and Linda Mae, both played Jazz on their respective instruments-- trumpet and tenor saxophone. The practice rooms were small and our music filled us to overflowing. In the first graduate seminar I took with you, one of the texts we read was Toni Morrison’s *Jazz*. I felt that at times the discussions in that class, accompanied by my own process flavored with memories, filled me to overflowing. In the last pages of another of Morrison’s classic texts, *Beloved*, her character, Paul D. remembers an old friend and says, “It’s good you know when you got a woman who is a friend of your mind”. The many engaging discussions we have shared both in and out of class have vitalized my intellectual process. As a mentor, you have been a “friend of my mind”. Another text we read in class, Cather’s *My Antonia* inspired me to reexamine my own western identity and seek out the richness of familiar territories I had, to a degree, previously taken for granted. Thank you, Joan for all the connections.

Father Tony, developing a friendship with you was an unexpected privilege and joy. We landed at Gonzaga within days of each other---you returning from Italy to figure out “next steps” after receiving a terminal diagnosis, me to support myself during the summer of my first year of graduate school. From the time of your arrival, people were clamoring to meet with you---“Gonzaga’s Basketball Priest”. During your short time back at the Jesuit House, you wanted to spend time with ordinary folk, not with those who were well-positioned in The Church or the world. You listened to me tell my father’s basketball stories about what it was like to be on an all-Indian basketball team. You did not even wince when I proudly mentioned their victory over Gonzaga’s freshman team way back in the day. While I talked to you about community and events, you talked to me about “isolation” and reflection, about your monastic experience in Italy. We also talked about pedagogical possibilities, about your time as a professor at Gonzaga, about the call to teach. The few times you lapsed into Italian, Mary, your secretary was present to translate. I was so grateful she was there, listening to you and passing on to me the details of your stories. A few weeks before you left us, when you were not remembering what you termed “important things”, you called in Mary, and asked for an envelope and a red permanent marker. I did not witness you writing my name on the envelope, and I did not see what you put inside until after you were gone. Mary told me that you insisted on writing “Winona” on the envelope yourself. She told me that you directed everyone to leave that envelope on top of the mail that was quickly piling up on your desk. You used it as a recollection device mostly, but it became a communication device when you became very ill, and could barely speak. Sometimes when you were very tired, you

would raise it slightly to greet me when I came to visit. And then when you passed on, it became a gift. The morning you died, I was given the envelope. Half listening to the ringing bells of St. Aloysius, I clutched the envelope and entered the room where we participated in reciprocal storytelling. I could feel your absence and was overcome with sadness. Later that day, while walking across the campus with Mary, I finally opened the envelope. Inside I discovered four Sacajawea dollars. “Father Tony blessed the coins”, Mary told me... “One for each of your children.” Thank you for believing in my dreams and for telling me over and over how much our friendship meant to you. Remnants of those dialogues we shared permeate the essence of this work.

Dear Rich, if we believe that research is a social endeavor, then dialogue necessarily becomes not only the profound sustenance of our life (Buber, 1968), but a critical element of the research process. Thank you for initiating and supporting open, thoughtful, and provocative dialogue. Overall, although sometimes I cannot put my finger on the specifics of it, I have felt supported by you throughout this dissertation process and as a result have been very happy that you are “The Chair”. You, like Bill, have been an attentive and patient listener and because you have listened carefully to me, I don’t feel the suggestions you have given me have been generic, but instead have been grounded in appropriate theoretical constructs and/or specific modes of disciplinary thought. Early on in our conversations, I have discussed my teaching, scholarship, and research and you have continued reflecting the interconnectedness of those three in significant ways. In addition, some of the early texts you suggested have been pivotal in my exploration of the

“ethics of ethnographic crossings”, i.e. Behar (1996) and Ellis (2004). I am very grateful for the graduate seminar I had with you, which gave me an opportunity to observe your process of responding to students. You were respectful, patient and astute. Yep, I thought to myself, he would survive an Indigenous gathering and most likely would be asked to return. Good work, Rich. Finally, a huge thanks for continuing to support my potential job market through your letters of recommendation. The responses from potential employers, etc. have been very favorable, and so I can only assume you have been extraordinarily articulate and positive in your assessment of my probable contribution. Working with you has been a perfectly balanced experience.

Karen, you have been the “rock” of *so* many McNair Scholars traveling through your program. Your vision of cultivating a “community of scholars” blooms into being every single summer, over and over again. I am sure that in the context of building this community, you have a “statistically significant” success rate...which is of course a “statistically significant” understatement. You have been an incredible supporter of my life in so many areas, beginning with the McNair Scholar Program. Understanding and accepting the “whole person”, has been your goal when negotiating the obstacles that every McNair Scholar faces. When distant, generational ghosts gather on the horizon to taunt us with self-doubt as we prepare our graduate school applications, you are always there to tone down their collective internal chant of “You are not enough!”.

We all suffer from the “imposter complex” to some degree, and your patience, insight, and reframing have bolstered many of us as we negotiated the formidable and dreaded

graduate school application process. When I was accepted into several schools in the east, but decided to stay west and attend WSU because of serious illnesses occurring in my immediate family, you were very supportive, and understanding of my decision. And, as it turns out, it was the best decision I could have made. It was the right thing to do in so many contexts. Thank you, Karen, for working it through with me. Your integrity and wisdom never cease to amaze me.

For my sister Rebecca who knows all of our family secrets by heart, learned them and relearned them through visceral recitation, through performing them for various institutional audiences. I wish I could have saved you like you saved me. There is a price for being a witness. There is an even greater price for being a truth-teller. I owe you no less than my life. I know you support this work. Much of the insights in this piece derive from the discourse of survival, from the perspective of *holding my breath in the dark*. Emily Dickinson said, “Drowning is not so pitiful as the attempt to rise”. I know that sometimes courage does not look as graceful as giving up. I have not forgotten. Aunt Boogie, your time as an omniscient narrator will come.

Dear Santiago, our ongoing conversations about one way bridges, dark chasms, and invisible barriers that haunt the soul continues to be good medicine for me. Walking across what appears to be a one way bridge I decided, seems equivalent to being encased in a foreign projectile, and thrust into a trajectory, bound for parts unknown. The context I am speaking of is that interminable journey to the Ivory Tower, where my funny little

Shakespearean hat and black robes with velvet trim hang neatly (albeit in the dustiest of backroom closets). Waiting. Waiting. Waiting. In their folds will I recover that other "one way" sign, the one that will lead me back over the bridge to home? Will I discover light to illuminate dark chasms? The ability to erase invisible barriers? The courage to confront the generational incubus that haunts my soul? Dear Santiago, I am afraid of "one way" bridges, of chasms and of ghosts that lurk in dark, dusty ivory towers.

Bob, you have deepened my encounters with reflective teaching practice and have increased my awareness of critical pedagogy, particularly in the context of race. The reciprocal sharing of our teaching and life experiences has been extraordinary. Your gentle and poetic prompts to work on my dissertation---a version would sound something like this---“Yes, that *is* a wonderful project, but are you putting your writing first?” have been good nudges for me. Women, as you must know are trained and nurtured to put the needs of others before their own. It is not an easy “law” to defy-- this gravitational pull toward *otherness*. Thank you, Bob, for your generosity and willingness to provide a fairly consistent flow of recommendations to those who are curious about the outer manifestations of my inner workings. Bob, you simply enrich my life.

David, you represent the quintessential lesson in your favorite pedagogical text, *The Tao of Teaching*. Your graceful movements in the classroom are mesmerizing. Your teaching space is fluid, and in your class, supported by your perceptive guidance, students never discover a rock solid obstacle that does not offer itself as permeable upon their approach.

You teach them the laws of physics and the historical processes of geology, but most important of all, you teach them the magic and power of transformation. Thank you for the honor of witnessing the craft of teaching in its most dynamic state.

Jerry, we did not visit the House of Charity on a “Service Learning Mission.” My students would have much preferred that were the case. It is easier to understand your role in a homeless shelter if it is defined for you. Hierarchical roles, particularly when you are at the top, are fairly easy to negotiate. Instead, I brought my students to “your domain” to question *their* roles, to confront *their* privilege, to simply observe, to interact, to answer questions posed to them by the folks who may have a burning curiosity about *them*, or who need to know why *they* are in their presence. I brought them to listen to someone who simply wants to share his story. You did a remarkable introductory talk in which you described some general profiles of the homeless population in Spokane. Your twenty-five years of experience as an advocate for this population was evident. Your grace in explaining that one of the roles my students could adapt was that of “listener” was wise and made sense to all of us. Time and again, we had a life-changing experience visiting you and the men. I am very grateful for your continued willingness to provide for our needs on both the day and the overnight trips. Again, this experience continues to inform and enrich my work and that of my students.

Thank you, Patty. The graduate seminar I took with you titled, “Institutions, Technology, Education, and Agency, challenged me to acknowledge and explore the fluidity of

institutional boundaries and to critique constructs of power in social contexts. Thank you for supporting my first (crude) web project! As I have mentioned to you several times, your class was extraordinary, stimulating and fun. In this work, much of my discussion regarding “boundaries” and “agency” comes from our class process and my subsequent explorations of our readings. Introducing me to theorists like Lemke (1995) and Wenger (2004) impacted my thinking in ways that directly informed my work with the Lummi Nation. In our teacher workshops we drew from Lemke to formulate a holistic, inclusive, and culturally relevant definition of “diversity” to guide our perceptions of students in our learning communities. The Wenger criteria for “communities of practice” was included on the Lummi “Engaging Teachers in a Community Context” website that I built with the help of Jesse, the University of Idaho tech person assigned to help me with the course. All in all, Patty, your seminar was a springboard into new and old territories.

Kathleen, thank you for sharing your dissertation with me. In retrospect, of course, most would recognize it as an on-the-ground, close-up and personal account of the emergence of Heritage University. However, long before Heritage appeared on the horizon, this work reflects the important work you were and currently are involved in: investigating the success and retention rates of Yakama students in higher education. Your case study, exploring perceived and real obstacles of these Native American students pursuing higher education, complemented much of the literature I read on retention and transition, and also reflected in part, the views of some Native American theorists I have consulted throughout the writing of this work, i.e., Deyhle & Swisher, 1992 and Cook-Lynn, 1998.

Mary and Mark, you are among my greatest teachers. The sociolinguistic case studies, the assessment training, the opportunity to construct lesson plan after lesson plan for ESL students. My journals of tutoring “Sparrow and Iguisu”. All of the “official” work was important, but most important was the unofficial time I spent with both of you. Your support of me has been unshakable. You told me time and again that contribution was something that I did not have to worry about. That was a welcome reprieve, if only temporary. You valued my thinking and pushed it, eyes squeezed shut, into new landscapes and territories, and then you prompted me to open my eyes and take in the view. Thank you for that dinner at *Europa*, where you sat across from me, like proud parents, and said, “Almost there”.

A Semi-Final Note of Acknowledgement:

There is an aphorism loose in the world which strongly suggests that thankfulness and radical activism are mutually exclusive. It claims, with some authority, that we cannot become or remain radically active unless we sustain a “disgruntledness”--- direct a critical and unsatisfied glower toward the context in which we find ourselves. On one hand, I understand why one would think that thankfulness and radical activism are nurtured in different worlds. We have to muster energy to sustain the scenes of extreme discontent, which steeped in individual and collective “big ideas”, seemingly explode into the public sphere--- visible, loud, bold and important. Out of the depths of our emotion comes the energy to motivate us to such action. In these circumstances, there is a sense of a collective purpose, a solidarity, an egalitarianism, a unity of heart and mind. It is a heady

experience to be included and visible on such occasions. Identified scenes of thankfulness may also be public, but they are usually cursory, temporal acknowledgements of contribution, i.e. thank you for coming, for giving money, for bringing food, etc. Thankfulness that moves beyond the public sphere and is truly integrated into the being of the person professing it becomes a sedentary emotion fed by reflective thought that moves beyond the self...*ego in absentia*. Contrary to what our human nature may desire, it transpires with quietness, softness and insignificance in the context of accomplishment or resolution. Both are important. Both matter to me. I want to believe that thankfulness and radical activism are nurtured in the same world, and that through some process of evolutionary grace they have managed to claim divergent paths.

Recently, I heard Gloria Steinem promote this “mutually exclusive” idea to a group of young women at some college in the east, and although I respect much of what Gloria stands for, I found myself resenting her for passing on her bleak view of gracelessness to young women still groping their way through the darkness of our chaotic, post-modern age. Of course I understand the nuances of her thinking--- that we need to become aware of and remain unsatisfied with the “status quo”, that it is necessary to develop a critical intellectual stance, continually question, and consistently demand accountability from those dictating actions which impact the masses. *Primo Levi reminds us that monsters exist because we do not ask questions*. I also understand that movement signifies life. I understand that vocality and visibility are critical to our human existence, but ironically, so are stillness and silence, which when called forth with discretion and understanding, historically have been keys to survival, keys to preserving the movement

that we say signifies life.

And so, this claim of mutual exclusivity---the distancing of thankfulness from public and private acts of activism remains problematic for me, but it does not lessen my desire to continue thinking about it, to wrestle with the implications and the possibilities. And so far, this is what I think---at this transient moment in time---we need to continue gravitating toward spaces that thwart the ideology of mutual exclusivity, that maintain semblances of grace, dignity and subsequently understanding.

In everything give thanks...

A significant culminating experience should always end with a note to one's mother...

After you left me, I visited your school, formerly called *The Peninsula School of Creative Education*, now simply known as *The Peninsula School*, but still located in the Coleman Mansion. I found you on the third floor in the pottery room, the only room that has remained the same since the inception of the school in 1925. I envision you at the potter's wheel, your eight year old hands forming and shaping a piece of clay...which evolves eventually into the blue glazed pitcher. The Oak tree that you described has survived and remains in plain view just outside the large white-framed window. As I stare at that old oak, that testament to persistence and strength, I imagine your voice once again emphatically quoting Josephine Whitney Duvoneck...

“We can be forgiven our orderliness, but never the taming of the free spirit of inquiry...”

FOREWARD

A Dissertation Creation Story: Subjectivities Coming to Presence

This Dissertation begins with the intricacies and nuances of my personal landscape, my contested identity, the artifacts of that contestation, and my understanding of how through this process, I continue to become someone I will never really know.

Creatio Ex Materia

Where I came from, what shaped me and who I hope to be informs my work and the essence of this narrative. It also suggests a framework capable of moving beyond the present time, one that demands recognition of histories and of the shaping moments of our lives. It seems to me that recognizing the capacity of things already in existence is critical when considering (and attempting to dismantle) structures of power and privilege. It is also critical when contemplating connections between community work, research, and academic scholarship. In all of these contexts, we need to recognize and respect those who are already inside what it is we desire to know. It is also important to realize that the interpretations we offer are "...partial, situated, and selective productions" (Ellis, 1996, p.21). This dissertation began as an examination of "otherness" outside of myself, but eventually became further complicated when I explored not only the dual positioning of "otherness" trespassing boundaries of my ontological presence, but also the subsequent implications of those acts of trespass and the complicity of my positionalities. Although through the research presented in this dissertation, I can say, "I have come home" and have (re)planted myself in intimate landscapes of historical presence and interconnection, I also recognize that I have always been home, that my intimate knowledge of the place where I belong and am *known* has never been disrupted. However, both returning to a

landscape called, “home” and establishing a familiar and harmonious “house” in relation to that landscape has been an arduous journey...

A Mere Reflection

Most importantly however, is the recognition that the impetus for the inclusion of an intensive subjective analysis, namely one that attempts to dissect and make translucent my research persona, is to offer further challenge to conventional wisdom validating the practices (for 200 plus years) that offered “the other” as object(x) of desire. It is my hope that those of us who call ourselves researchers, for the next 200 years, will turn the myopic lens of scrutiny upon ourselves.

Part of the process of turning the scrutiny upon ourselves is the acknowledgement that we too have a story, one that is worthy of consideration. Many times our personal research story is entangled with and complicated by institutional rhetoric, but the story nonetheless remains an important tool to claim at the various borders we hope to eventually and respectfully cross. Henry Giroux says this in his Preface to *Living Dangerously: Multiculturalism and the Politics of Difference*:

Somewhere Gramsci mentions that our lives consist of traces that we need to take an inventory of once and a while. This book is dedicated to the traces that have always made me aware of where I come from and what it meant to live dangerously, and to know that one can never be alone with such memories.

The traces that Giroux refers to in his life are more like raging rivers in mine, ones that cannot be easily ignored or forgotten. I am aware that I continue to return to places I have abandoned, and that coming full circle is a miraculous event, one that should be continually celebrated. Much of what is represented in this dissertation represents various

journey elements of the “full circle” phenomenon. My conviction that research, teaching and scholarship should be community driven and relational derives from my intimate knowledge of the effectiveness of Participatory Community Research. Throughout the literature outlining various forms of Participatory Research, the descriptor “mediating discourse” emerges again and again. It is also described as a bridge between academic institutional interests and community desires for change.

For me, this dissertation narrative serves as both a “mediating discourse” and a bridge between my personal experiences and the expectations of the Academy. I have included both directly and indirectly pieces of my story, and have attempted to clearly connect critical aspects of my historical and present day experiences to concrete applications of theory.

A Confession

I come to this work as an unbeliever, doubting my own presence, skeptical of the work that indicates that I have made it this far. I also come to this work as a believer, one who understands the transformative power of narrative that opposes a meta-language of intricate secrecy, but supports the outspoken truth of lived experience. “The question of signature, the establishment of an authorial presence within a text, has haunted ethnography from very early on, though for the most part it has done so in a disguised form. Disguised, because it has been generally cast not as a narratological issue, a matter of how best to get an honest story told, but as an epistemological one, a matter of how to prevent subjective views from coloring objective facts. The clash between the expository conventions of author-saturated texts and those of author-evacuated ones that grows out of the particular nature of ethnographic enterprise is imagined to be a clash between

seeing things as one would have them and seeing them as they really are” (Geertz, 1989, p.9)

A Struggle

With an open mind, a knit brow, and every good intention, a corporeal being approaches the computer with a small armload of books, articles, notes, and a cache of embedded subaltern voices, destined at any moment to rise up in mutinous discontent...“Where are you taking us? What is this place?” Whispered words emerge, evolve, struggle ...riding an alternately silent and flaming tongue. The being responds, “To memory, to history, to spaces beyond the seventh generation.”

Research that is community-graced is known to be interrupting of and resistant to Western constructs of “time”. It is not enough that people go spend days or weeks in a community, clock themselves, and then add up the hours that will somehow constitute ENOUGH. That then becomes a quantitative endeavor. How many hours make me ethical? How many hours does it take to truly know someone, some practice? How many hours can I be “present” in a community before I become credible, trusted? How many hours would it take for me not to become visible, because that is a validation tool or Western thinking? Think of pictures of Indians validating that they once were “parts of the landscape”. Visible in a moment in time. But how many hours does it take before I become transparent? How many hours does it take for *them* to see right through *me*. Transparency is not measured in hours. It is ephemeral and fleeting and resists time constraints. It is valued beyond the amount of time it takes to become....see-through. See-through is a dangerous place to be because then all of your elements can be blended. The parts of the whole become dependent upon one another for being. How can a

researcher claim to be politically astute and emancipatory when she is operating within the confines of a construct that erased identities and cultures---time. Time and ego are closely connected. I am not exactly sure how they are, but they are. Both need to be absent, to a degree in “ethical” and graceful research that has the community’s interest at the core of its purpose.

A Breath (of transparency)

First and foremost, the name “Winona” which translated means, (First Born Daughter), along with an identifying surname to track both bloodline and blood quantum, is listed, as it has been for generations, on the official government rolls of the Ft. Peck Assiniboine/Sioux Tribe, a group currently hailing from Poplar Montana, but formerly associated with the entire landscape of the Great Plains of the North American Continent.

Secondly, my birth record indicates that I was born in proximity to the landscape that sustained the Rancho Petaluma Adobe where the Miwok Indians, along with numerous other local and regional California Tribes, participated in the confinement of colonization and the freedom of survival by laboring at the Adobe until its closure in the 1850’s. Additionally, my birth document (artifact) also implicitly states that in the event of adolescent angst, I could blame failures and deficiencies in my genetics on two distinct people-- Margaret Ann Elizabeth Howard, formerly of Menlo Park, California, and Harold Dayton Simons, formerly of Poplar, Montana. This is my legacy. From my mother: I am a fifth generation westerner, a marginal elitist suspicious of life east of the 100th meridian. From my father: I am a storyteller, buffalo dreamer, keeper of prairie secrets, an ordinary Indian with memory to spare.

I took my first steps in Yellowstone National Park in a pair of moccasins my father bought me at a trading post in Montana, and crossed Poplar Creek on the RY trail on the Ft. Peck reservation to visit the ranch house where my father was born.

An Edge, A Border, A Brink

Originally, my thinking in the context of this dissertation emerged from my life experience, from confluences of my teaching, scholarship, and research, from personal reflections and frustrations, from my intimate knowledge of how the personal information (intimate histories and present day circumstances) of the disenfranchised becomes public and quantified, many times without their permission or consent, and is interpreted in various ways by people who have never “been there” nor care to “go there”.

In my early thinking, I was (and still am) concerned with the concrete and perceptual realities of personal and public borders and boundaries, and with the power and privilege involved in negotiating those constructs, and I remain intrigued by the language we choose to describe our various relationships with them-- The “border” in its most authoritative sense, represents an official line of demarcation. As Anzaldua (1987) and other scholars have noted, “We have crossed it and it has crossed us.” We have considered it, resisted it, broken it, blurred it, redefined it, negotiated it and requested its removal, but in spite of requests, pleadings, arguments, violence and death, it has been (re)appropriated, extended, expanded, inflated, penetrated, and finally impregnated and birthed into “othered” zones and lands. (think global context and “demilitarized zone”). In some circles, the border as a definitive construct of argument has become passé. In the spirit of western expansionism, and academic progress, scholars and others have moved from the “line” (border) into the “spaces: zones and lands that the line frames. We now have “Contact Zones”, “Zones of Significance”, “Cultural Zones”, “Vanishing Zones”,

“Zones of Trespass” in addition to borderlands and various constructions of physical and meta-physical landscapes.

Metaphorically speaking in the context of what I am calling “community-graced” research, I am still standing at the border, not enough past to keep me on one side and not enough future to move me to the other. I hover above it and plant myself in histories beneath it and wonder about these words from a book by Amy Tan titled, *Saving Fish From Drowning*---“Just because you have left one space doesn’t mean that you have entered another.” It is privilege that allows us to assume that we are welcome in communities that are not our own, and power that keeps us there. My work is about the ethics of ethnographic crossings, about how diverse representations of power attempt to *normalize* marginal Western spaces.

Through each exploration of the possible contribution of this work, my goal, in part, is to present what Lorraine Code in her book, *Rhetorical Spaces* terms, an “epistemology of everyday life.” My hope is to enrich the theoretical and practical locations of my research with stories and reflections from my everyday experiences as a writer, a researcher, and a teacher, stories and reflections gleaned from and informed by, dialogical exchanges grounded in diverse learning communities, ongoing and dynamic conversations that inspire my perpetual inquiry into historical structures of privilege, rooted in class, race, gender, and other social divisions, and help me to as Dorothy Holland says, “ground these perspectives in local, situated practice”(2001).

A Revolution

This past summer, when I was traveling the west, I visited a Pueblo Indian museum in Overton Nevada, and remember that one of the museum’s descriptive

narratives talked about the “theory of continuity” as being key to understanding nomadic native peoples. I remember thinking---the Native People of *this* particular desert did not “disappear”. They did not “vanish”---their descendents intermarried, relocated, adapted to what was termed “progress” and survived with a greater understanding of their ability to navigate the changes in their (and our) world, which are ongoing, incessant and ubiquitous. Somehow, they were able to visualize and act upon a possible existence beyond drought, pestilence, or even colonization, By focusing here on the survivability of Native Peoples, my intention is not to enter into, interpret, or validate some privileged, supremacist version of Rousseau’s “Noble Savage” paradigm. I am aware of and recognize the impact of “First Contact” with its racist, genocidal violence, accompanying pestilences and disease. However, I am also aware of how these constructs transcend historical boundaries and continue to inform and haunt Native Communities today, and how the phrase “First Contact” impacts my subjectivity and positionality as a researcher. I am simply saying, that as a researcher, my view of Native communities needs to move beyond generalizations and dualisms of good/bad, beyond constructs that promote generalized, “white guilt” and attempt to understand through the voices of indigenous people the contested spaces of specific multi-dimensional historical constructs which are saturated in language and grounded in landscape.

Throughout this work, I struggle with voices of representation, and challenge the binary constructs of the lines that frame them as well as their operating zones, those material and ephemeral spaces through which I envision myself simultaneously suspended and drowning--- in western spaces of earth, water and sky. The fire of this

project, its passion, emerges from a sense of traveling, a sense of movement, a dynamic interaction with the material and ephemeral. In the context, of the academic landscape, I am ungrounded, in unfamiliar territory, confined and confronted by institutional belief systems---powerful, pretentious, mysterious, disconnected---not enough air or sky through which to interpret the smallness of my human knowledge or the infinite connectedness of my human presence. My hope is that through this presentation you will gain entry into the (dis)located sense of my distraction and the messiness that defines an emergent research method. I hope you will recognize the difficulty and responsibility of navigating collective voices over diverse landscapes of inclusion. And finally, I hope you will embrace the cognitive dissonance involved in engaging a polyvocal presence.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Ethical, Epistemological, and Political Considerations

This Dissertation work reflects my struggle with method: ethical, epistemological, and political. It also reflects my efforts to teach myself the elements and nuances of various research methods: the good, the bad, and the ugly. What it may not thoroughly reflect is the extent of my efforts: reading, dialogues, conferences, community work, teaching, scholarship. Some of these unrecorded and unaccounted for events have significantly impacted my thinking, and there is not enough space or time to provide a context for all of these experiences. My interest in and fascination with qualitative methods, particularly Ethnographic Methods, was stimulated through presentations I experienced at a Qualitative Institute Methods Conference in Canada a few years ago. It was there that I heard John Creswell speak about his scientific research and preferences of data collection, and it was there that I was stunned by the brilliance of Arthur Frank.

Also, I must have attended at least five Ethnographic Research Presentations ranging from “The Social Construction of Illness in Native American Diabetes Populations” to “Flying by the Seat of My Pants: The Ethical Considerations of Carnival Worker Interviews”; these are a few of the titles I circled on my program. I was riveted by the possibilities and potential of ethnographic considerations and explanations. Then I began to work in Native Communities. Entering into Native American communities is simple. Privilege is our passport. Sustaining meaningful relationships in Native Communities is a complex enterprise. This dissertation tracks my dialogical journey of

discovery---considering the ethics of ethnographic crossings. My intent at the beginning of this project was to objectively gather data and then objectively interpret it. As you will see, the data became less important than the process of its collection. I came to realize that remaining objective is not an option; in fact the very concept of “objectivity” is a myth. My official research protocol deteriorated and disappeared into the complexities of relationship....and for this I am grateful.

Although a discussion about the competing cultures in rural reservations communities (Hip-Hop, Popular Culture, Poverty, etc.), would be beyond the scope of this work, it is important at least to mention them in passing; they certainly exist and impact the permeability of access to life beyond the present. In the Scientific American Article by Oscar Lewis titled, “The Culture of Poverty” (1966), he states the following:

The culture of poverty is not just a matter of depravation or disorganization, a term signifying the absence of something. It is a culture in the traditional, anthropological sense in that it provides human beings with a design for living, with a ready-made set of solutions for human problems, and so serves a significant adaptive function. This style of life transcends national boundaries and regional rural-urban differences within nations. Wherever it occurs, its practioners exhibit remarkable similarity in the structure of their families, in interpersonal relations, in spending habits, in their value systems and in their orientation of time.

At various points during research explorations, it will be difficult to tell the “cultures” apart. Is it poverty or Native values that dictate a lack of interest in materialism? Do

families live together out of necessity or because they value intergenerational contact? In addition to the competing cultures to be determined, defined, filtered and examined, work in Native Communities is further complicated by inter-generational traumas such as Boarding School experiences, Paternalism, First Contact, Economic Viability, Isolation and attempts to preserve culture, traditional and sacred protocol, language, and the ever-present and competitive basketball obsession.. There is also the point that Native Communities are not necessarily “tribally homogenous”. Native Americans consider any reservation “home” and many emigrate continually.

Researchers working closely with Native Communities have to negotiate not only their research objectives, but all of the above-mentioned potential interruptions that these competing cultures bring to the table. Additionally, and most importantly, we cannot forget that landscapes and those who colonize and negotiate them for purposes steeped in progressive ideologies are landscapes that become poisonous to all of us on many levels. What I said above bears repeating: Sustaining meaningful relationships in Native Communities is a complex enterprise.

In *Chapter One* I trace the evolution of my dissertation proposal, from the original plan to engage in a case study of four tribal schools in four states in the Pacific Northwest, to my final plan of realizing that the thread throughout my work would focus on the ethical, political and epistemological complications of crossing into communities that are not our own. My own experience serves as a process guide to begin thinking about the implications of research and the responsibilities of the researcher, as well as the

challenges researchers face regarding institutional expectations, mandates and time constraints.

Additionally, this chapter outlines my responsibilities and discusses my ethical conundrums as an Indian Education Consultant (Advocate for Professional Development) with the University of Idaho. In this context, the “expert-novice” binary is challenged and paradigms of authority are challenged. The benefits of a relational method of approach are also highlighted.

Finally, I discuss my own subject position and vulnerability when working with Native Populations. In this context I discuss the roles of insider/outsider and the various constructs of participant observation. A brief overview and definition of the “chaos narrative” is included to show how validation of tragedy and disruption is overlooked when traditional research methods steeped in objective processes and severe time constraints are imposed upon a community.

Chapter Two brings specific elements of Participatory Research into the discussion, listing various forms of PAR, such as feminist research, cooperative inquiry, emancipatory praxis, collaborative action, etc. The common element of all of these participatory practices is the fact that they are not done “to” or “on” a particular community, but instead are done “with” and “for” a community, with the community participants leading the effort with voices that are heard and heeded. Participatory forms of research subvert the paradigm of expert/novice and disseminate power to those previously deemed “powerless” and in need of assistance. Practitioners move away from self-serving goals and validations and move toward a blending of their own voices with

those of the community. Ideally, motive is as transparent as the researcher. The critical researcher perspective notes the complexity of a dense and interconnected network of understanding and dialogue dependent upon time, history and memory. Essentially, the main point of this chapter is the holistic nature of participatory research. It is not a fragmented or compartmentalized enterprise, with data being either held separate from community process or worse yet, withheld altogether. It demands accountability and an ethical and inclusive process from the researcher.

Chapter 3 speaks to the emergent nature of my research method, how a dynamic approach to method can be unsettling, how a research question can be shaped by collaborative community interactions, or in some cases even negated. Vulnerability is the call to action in this chapter. A transparent method is inextricably linked to a dialogical process, one that is inclusive of all who have a stake in the research and its potential outcomes. I also present a metaphor, using the western construct and relationship of “man and horse” to describe the intimate nature and necessary connection of “theory and practice”. One should not be present without the other. Research landscapes are too rough to go it alone.

Additionally, I view this chapter as a plea for a systematic study of both Qualitative and Quantitative approaches to research, accompanied by a community process---in other words a system of fieldwork whereby students and others engage in the difficulties and rewards of an “emergent methodology” first-hand. Too often, as I mention in this chapter, critical researchers will tout “I am against method”, but will not be familiar with the institutional protocols they are objecting to. In this chapter, although

most likely common knowledge to some, I do discuss the positioning of Quantitative and Qualitative research on a continuum, that one is not the mutually exclusive representation of the other. The point I am considering here is that although I do critique a purely quantitative approach to data, I do recognize its place in the larger scheme of the research process. I am encouraging, I think, a qualitatively based reflection component when it comes to processing quantitative data.

The confluences of Teaching, Scholarship, and Research, and I should also say, Civic Engagement, make up my last chapter. Through the writing of this chapter, I discovered some significant parallels related to the Participatory Action Approach to research and my own teaching method. Processing information through three perspectives (Reason and Torbert, 2001), creates permeable boundaries which allow the researcher to become an integral part of the process. In my teaching, particularly in the Research Writing courses I teach, my students and I consistently discuss the value of functioning through the “three perspective process”. I remind them that research is a dialogue, not a solitary and isolated activity, but in order to prepare for participation in the dialogue, you have to understand your own subject position related to any given topic. So we look at the “I” perspective to begin our process, “the first person perspective”. Reason and Torbert of course refer to this as “self-reflexivity and inter-subjectivity”.

When we move to the second person perspective, we are moving beyond, or at least are aware of our biases and the history that shapes our perspective on any given topic. We know try out our ideas on another person in a dialogical exchange (Buber, 1968). *I think I know and feel about this subject, tell me what you know.* This second

person perspective means we are moving toward a larger view and into a community process, opening our topic and our ideas about our topic up for further scrutiny. Finally, the third person perspective brings our topic, dialogue, and new connections out of our community of practice and into the larger stage, where our ideas, thoughts and beliefs are further challenged. There is significant value in critically thinking through a topic using this type of process. It aligns itself with elements of critical process embedded in qualitative approaches to research. Additionally, processing topics or questions through these perspectives enhances any anticipated Civic Engagement Project that students participate in. In fact, in the context of “Service Learning” or “Civic Engagement”, I think it is crucial to impose a self-reflexive process on students *before* they emerge to serve a larger community about whom they are ignorant.

I include my piece, “A Charter for Civic Engagement *and* a Holistic Academic Process in this chapter because it speaks to this idea. Examining who we are and how we fit into and impact the various “worlds “we wish to serve is the first step to creating an ethic for Civic Engagement.

My conclusion attempts to reinforce and justify the nuances of my title, “The Ethics of Ethnographic Crossings: Normalizing Marginal Western Spaces”. The intent of my work, as described in the conclusion, is to stimulate thinking about the consequences and conundrums involved in crossing into communities that are not our own, and to encourage us to examine our own histories, biases, and questions, before we step over boundaries and claim knowledge we do not own. Another purpose of this work was to model transparency, to let the reader into the secrets of my process, and to explain the

context of those secrets. If there were another chapter titled “The Conclusion to the Conclusion”, I would simply write this: The most impressive stance you can assume when approaching a community that is not your own is “hovering”. Suspend yourself over the border like a curious alien from another planet, because that is what you are.

CHAPTER 2

The Evolution of my Dissertation Research Proposal

“A constant that changes is by definition paradoxical, and therefore messy. The idea of an inconsistent constant so bothers some physicists that they proposed a new kind of funny stuff in the universe, called quintessence. The term comes from the fifth essence that ancient philosophers believe permeated the universe---in addition to the four fundamental essences of earth, air, fire and water.”

(Los Angeles Times, “Missing Pieces of the Cosmic Puzzle,” Monday, June 15, 1998, p.1)

A Beginning

In this chapter I will discuss the history and evolution of my dissertation research proposal as it relates to the current focus of my work in Indian Education. As with all beginnings, this one is steeped in years of formulation, both definitively strategic *and* spontaneously eruptive. Because early on I was advised to choose a dissertation topic that “I could remain passionate about”, I knew from the beginning that the focus of my research would be related, somehow to Native American populations. I also knew that the work would need to be contributive on a very recognizable level, recognizable not necessarily to everyone involved or to those watching from a distance, but recognizably contributive *to me*.

When I began to think of ways I could become involved in a project, I considered first and foremost roles of advocacy. Through the years of voluntary *and* imposed active participation in spheres of disability, I learned the nuances of parental powerlessness in the context of advocacy in a state system. I wanted to help other parents by using the knowledge that I had gained through my years of struggle, advocacy and resistance. I began researching Native American advocacy groups and discovered *Native American*

Families Together (NAFT), a national advocacy network which provided local training for those interested in supporting Native American families whose children were placed in special education programs. My interest led me to the local chapter of NAFT in Moscow, Idaho. Also housed in the Center for Disability and Human Development was the Indian Education Outreach Project (IEOP) of the University of Idaho, which at the time of my exploration was interested in interviewing Native American Tribal Members who were interested in consulting with the Tribal Schools located in the Pacific Northwest and surrounding areas (Wyoming). For two years, the IEOP had been laying the groundwork for accomplishing the goals of the grant. They were now ready to hire a consultant to implement workshops and support the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) mandated “Comprehensive School Reform Plans” currently underway in each of its tribal schools in the Northwest (also underway nationally).

Proposal History: Consultant Work for the Indian Education Outreach Project

The Pacific Northwest, encompassing a four state area, is home to over 40 Native American Tribes. From 2003 until 2007, the Indian Education Outreach Project, a subsidiary of the non-profit Center for Disabilities and Human Development and the University of Idaho served tribal school administrators, teachers, para-professionals and students living in the rural and remote areas of this region (<http://ieop.idahocdh.org/schools.html>). In 2003, the University of Idaho was one of six universities nationwide who entered into a contract with the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ Office of Indian Programs (recently renamed, “Bureau of Indian Education”) to provide training to address their “Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)

objectives specified within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (<http://idea.ed.gov>). One portion of this contract required the creation and implementation of a program that would enable tribal school teachers to achieve dual certification in special education to meet the high needs of critical numbers of Native American students labeled with various learning, social, behavioral, emotional and physical disabilities. The University of Idaho and the Indian Education Outreach Project satisfied this mandate by delivering innovative Special Education Certification/M.Ed. programs to tribal schools which included an on-site and distance degree component. To further support the unique social, economic, and educational needs of tribal school teachers, students, and community members, including access to further training on *inclusion*, an on-going system of training was established to specifically address the needs of students with disabilities as well as their families. The consulting work I engaged in involved guiding and assessing the work of teachers who were working toward special education certification and developing workshops which contributed to the system of training to address the needs of special education students and their families (Appendix A).

The Office of Indian Education tribal school statistics for the school year 2005/2006 reflected a critical number of students enrolled in special education programs. The Indian Education Outreach Project actively served twelve tribal schools with a combined enrollment of 2,433 students; out of this group, 1,084 (45%) were enrolled in “Special Education” and approximately half of those enrolled in Special Education were categorized as “Learning Disabled” (LD). Throughout the past five years of service to tribal schools in the Pacific Northwest Region, several challenges have emerged in the context of *inclusion*. Although parental involvement is a mandate of the Individuals with

Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), teachers, staff and administrators, as well as family and community members struggle with their motivation to engage in comprehensive educational partnerships that effectively serve all parties connected to and invested in the special education child's school and home experience. A large portion of this lack of motivation centers around historic and inter-generational trauma, namely, boarding school colonization/assimilation experiences, curriculums and pedagogies which are not culturally relevant or responsive, the culture of poverty, social problems in the community, and a lack of knowledge and/or belief in the value and benefits of traditional, western education (Reyner, 1992). In addition, because so many students present with high needs, classroom management is a primary concern of teachers, who often feel frustrated, isolated, and unsupported in their efforts to include special education students in mainstream classroom protocol and activities.. There is little time during the school year to strategize with colleagues to critically think through situations that impact the learning not only of the special needs children, but of the entire classroom community.

Because of the recent federal mandate of *No Child Left Behind*, scheduled workshops for teachers during the school year focus on specific curriculum and assessment needs and spend little time on teacher concerns of inclusion and collaboration in the context of school and community. To address teacher support in the tribal schools and to help develop functional and cohesive communities of practice, the Indian Education Outreach Project delivered numerous culturally relevant workshops and trainings, the most recent of which was a "Peer Mentoring Professional Development Course" (See Appendix B), which from its inception reflected the needs of the tribal community in which it was taught. Details of this specific teacher development course,

along with lessons learned, replication challenges, and general discussion of its significance will be analyzed in a further chapter.

Originally, my dissertation proposal articulated a plan to complete four comparative tribal school case studies deriving from my work as an “Advocate for Professional Development and Growth” with the University of Idaho’s *Indian Education Outreach Project* (See Appendix C). Although, the scope of the University of Idaho’s project included service to fourteen tribal schools in four states, my intent was to limit my focus to four of those schools: *Two Eagle Tribal School*, in Pablo, Montana, *Lummi Nation Tribal School*, in Bellingham, Washington, *Chemawa Indian School*, in Salem, Oregon, and *Shoshone-Bannock Jr. High School* in Ft. Hall, Idaho. My thinking was that representative schools from all four states would yield some particularly interesting data, given their histories, the differing laws related to culturally relevant curriculum, tribal diversity, allocation of economic resources, and advocacy at the state and federal levels of government.

The approach to my research would involve methods derived from both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Through exploring possible research approaches, I became fully conscious that, “Quantitative” and “Qualitative” did not denote mutually exclusive ways of exploring subjects and interpreting data. Instead, I realized, it was important for me to recognize their existence on a continuum. Both would be necessary at times and both could be equally exclusionary depending upon the depth of my purpose, process and skill at bringing forth and fleshing out various versions of “the facts”. Interviews and observations would provide ethnographic data, and surveys, as well as “needs assessments” and other data gathered throughout various trainings and workshops

enacted by myself and/or other consultants involved in the *Indian Education Outreach Project*. In addition, because my role as a consultant was primarily focused on the data collected from a “needs assessment” in which school administrators stated areas of focus for improvement, a more specific area of focus would be “parental involvement” and “inclusion” as it was defined through the recent *No Child Left Behind* legislation (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/reports/no-child-left-behind.html>). In this context of “parental involvement” and “inclusion” mandates, I was hoping to engage seven families who would be open to a reciprocal sharing of their struggles with Special Education. Dialogues that family members engage with in the area of school-based Special Education are multi-layered and involve specific areas of practice including educational, legal, political, ethical, historical, and most importantly relational or personal areas of practice. Involving the families in a dialogue where the researcher herself becomes an intimate and practical element of the interaction would have positioned the narrative as a tool of making sense of shared experiences (Bruner, 1986; Rosaldo, 1989; Bal, 1997).

When considering and enacting research in the arena of Special Education, it is important to identify, recognize, and analyze the traditional over-representation of minority children, particularly African-American and Native-American children, in Special Education (Harry, Kalyanpur & Skirtic, 2000; Losen & Orfield, 2002; Harry & Klingner, 2006). This in conjunction with additional stressors, i.e. poverty, family violence, substance abuse, etc. informs and impacts any and all educational data collected from these specific communities (Payne, 1996). In the context of these critical considerations, several intersections of my human path-- my status as an enrolled member of the Ft. Peck Assiniboine/Sioux Tribe, as well as my personal experiences and

advocacy in the area of Disability and Special Education throughout the past nine years, would necessitate, inform, and enhance my involvement in this area of research. My intent for this research then, was to use histories, the differing laws related to culturally relevant curriculum, tribal diversity, allocation of economic resources, etc., to frame the specific focus of Special Education and the mandates of “parental involvement” and “inclusion” within my case studies. My preliminary research questions had already been “discovered” and formulated by the *Indian Education Outreach Project*, and had been agreed upon by the tribal schools they/we intended to serve.

The questions with which I would enter the community (See Appendix D), although more complex, subtle, and diverse than I represent them to be here, were nevertheless grounded in the foundational thinking of the positivist paradigm (See Appendix E) and could essentially be reduced to a binary representation of “How can I (the expert) help you (the novice)?” Brettell (1993) tells us that “[r]esearchers who claim special competence to devise and design research and to analyze and interpret data may be regarded as authoritarian. Their claims ‘to know’ are inappropriate in a post-colonial world.” Although, I do agree that colonial constructs of authoritarianism are inappropriate when they exclude or silence Indigenous ways of knowing and practice, I also recognize the complexity of reducing or abandoning authority when working with communities who remain immersed in constructs of Paternalism. Negotiating authority in the context of Native communities is a tricky enterprise. Paternalism empowered by Positivism or vice versa is formidable. Generally speaking, Native People express a desire for autonomy and agency, but this desire is complicated by their close relationship with the Federal Government and the dependence that relationship sustains through its

various agents, laws, and economic policies. Issues of power are negotiated and renegotiated in Native Communities ad infinitum (Bordewich, 1996; Robbins, 1992).

Not only did I begin to realize the complexity of negotiating power relationships within the Native American community in the context of my dissertation proposal, I also noted an emerging desire to move away from quantitative methods and predetermined operational questions, fully realizing that “a human being is not...a specific point in space and time within the net of the world; nor is he a nature able to be experienced and described, a loose bundle of named qualities” (Buber, 1958). I found myself willing, at this point, to take a risk in purposefully sharing whatever authority I was assigned or was perceived to possess toward the end of participating in a “mutual shaping rather than a linear causation” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, given the imposing presence of time constraints complicated by approved and accepted statistical methods of data collection, I became aware that moving away from quantitative methods completely was not realistic.

At this point, I simply noticed incongruencies within my philosophical belief/cultural system and the institutional, philosophical belief/cultural system under which I was working. I began formulating critical questions about the designated paradigm of authority that was intended to guide interactions in the context of my work with Native Communities. I will discuss these questions later in this chapter when I explore my ethical and political choices in the context of this work. As a researcher, at this juncture, it was important for me to acknowledge that the infrastructure for working with tribal communities was already in place, and I was responsible for working within the designated framework prescribed by the Education Department of the University of Idaho.

Proposal evolution: Narrowing the focus

Although during the year of my consulting work with the *Indian Education Outreach Project*, I did become involved, to varying degrees, with all four of the schools intended as subjects for case study, the most memorable and significant experiences that shaped the direction of this dissertation work, came through the relationships I developed within the Lummi Tribal School community in Bellingham, Washington which I will discuss further in a future chapter. As a result of working with Lummi teachers in both a Special Education Inclusion Training, and also throughout a three month professional development graduate course (See Appendix F) I created and implemented both on the reservation and through a distance learning format, my focus shifted from questions grounded in special education experiences to questions about “teacher knowledge(s)”-- what teachers bring to their learning communities from their own personal experiences, what they bring from their professional education experiences, and how the confluence of those knowledge(s) inform and impact their teaching and their ongoing professional development (Cochran-Smith & Little, 1993). As I began a dialogue with teachers at Lummi, both formally within the context of the course I was teaching, and informally through my observations of their classroom interactions, participation in teachers’ meetings, contract negotiations with the tribe, and also during various “before and after” school events, I realized that in order to “do-conduct-facilitate”, these teacher dialogues and address issues in a meaningful way (face-to-face), I would need to reduce the number of schools I would become involved with for the purpose of this work.

From the four schools previously mentioned, I chose one. The work with Lummi was already established and my rapport with teachers and administrators there was very

connected, open, and mutually respectful. Lummi was an obvious choice. Then as a result of my networking efforts, a second school emerged as a solid second choice. Through my attendance and participation in two Washington State Indian Education Conferences, I met several key educators in the Yakama Community, and became involved in grant writing for the tribe and the Toppenish School District.

In addition, my community connections were enhanced through my contracted service to the Toppenish School District from February through May of 2007. Working as an Indian Education consultant during these months and working closely with Patricia Whitefoot, the Yakama Nation Liaison to the local school districts, helped facilitate introductions to teachers from the surrounding areas of Wapato, White Swan, and Toppenish, Washington.

The Toppenish School District is located within the boundaries of the Yakama Indian Reservation, and as such serves a population that is marginal in the context of the location, which is rural, and the economic status of the majority of the population in the district, which is poor. Families with incomes at or below 130% of the poverty level are eligible for the free lunch program, and families with incomes between 130% and 180% of the poverty level are eligible for reduced price meals (approx. 40 cents). Created with information derived the 2008 Health and Human Services Guidelines, the following chart shows household occupant/income ratios used to determine levels of poverty in the United States:

2008 HHS Poverty Guidelines

| Persons in Family or Household | 48 Contiguous States and D.C. | Alaska | Hawaii |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|
| 1 | \$10,400 | \$13,000 | \$11,960 |
| 2 | 14,000 | 17,500 | 16,100 |
| 3 | 17,600 | 22,000 | 20,240 |
| 4 | 21,200 | 26,500 | 24,380 |
| 5 | 24,800 | 31,000 | 28,520 |
| 6 | 28,400 | 35,500 | 32,660 |
| 7 | 32,000 | 40,000 | 36,800 |
| 8 | 35,600 | 44,500 | 40,940 |
| For each additional person, add | 3,600 | 4,500 | 4,140 |

SOURCE: *Federal Register*, Vol. 73, No. 15, January 23, 2008, pp. 3971–3972

The “Free and Reduced Lunch Program” serves 82% of the students attending Toppenish High School, 577 out of 701 (PublicSchoolsReport.com). This number is significant in that it is an indicator of other needs present in the community, i.e. jobs and/or education and training for higher paying employment, trickle down effects of poverty such as inability to afford quality childcare, parental presence and guidance, mental health issues which can be exacerbated by families and communities who are struggling, and the temptation to participate in various “escapes” such as alcohol, drugs, and in many cases, tragically---suicide, which on American Indian Reservations occurs at rates that have reached epidemic status. According to the Surgeon General, “Indian and Alaskan Native Youth from 15-24 years of age are committing suicide at a rate more than

three times the national average for their age group” (www.hhs.gov). Another significant statistic existing in the schools I worked with is the percentage of students who are categorized through one of the 14 available labels which constitute the identity “disabled”. As I mentioned previously, during the year of my association with Lummi Tribal School, the number of students labeled “Special Ed” was 50%.

The positioning of a deficit-oriented identity is political and complex. Through my exploration of (dis)ability literature and through my own experiences, I have come to understand that a “disability identity”, represents more than a label assigned and manipulated for the purpose of garnering appropriate and comprehensive support services. Its representation moves beyond the individual and the perceived deficits into the spaces of family and community histories, which are always political, social, cultural, *and* simultaneously individual and collective. In other words the interpretations and implications of living with and through a “disability label” are inextricably woven into the complex webs of our humanness. Between conflated layers of historical and present-day constructs, a “disability” identity is wedged, and the implications of that wedging are far-reaching and damaging. However, these implications are also paradoxically validating in the sense that they have caused tribal people, and those who advocate alongside them, to take a second look at federal mandates which invade tribal communities and redefine family life, assess family and community competence, and suggest methods to improve how children are educated, according to western ideas which are steeped in ideologies of individualism and capitalism. In this context, history then becomes an endless process of repetition, unless a significant disruption occurs.

This disruption can take the form of assuming a position, a research identity, that understands as Howard Becker points out, that theory is necessary to “guide inquiry, to communicate our insights and experiences and understandings coherently and intelligibly, [and] to allow for generalization and learning from experience...”; however, a disruptive research identity also recognizes that expending too much energy hypothesizing from privileged spaces leads to a static representation of ideas that do not connect either to practiced reality or to specific community needs (2000, p.257).

Obviously, there needs to be a balance. Most of the time an unintentional imbalance created by a nascent or experienced researcher may not be dramatic enough to send a Tsunami of aggravated discontent reverberating through a particular community. However, I would argue that in rural, marginalized communities that are already, in a sense, “feeding upon themselves”, the impact of this imbalance, intentional or not is potentially devastating. Considering the previous point that individual, family, and collective histories are always steeped in political, social and cultural ideologies, it is critical then for researchers to consider these histories, examine positionalities and subjectivities within this context (both theirs and ours), and hover indefinitely above the border of the inevitable ethnographic crossing, defying time (deadlines) and space (authority) for the purpose of ethical reflection.

Tribal communities already impacted by their struggle to maintain an identity paradoxically integrated with and independent of the protocol of the United States Government and its bureaucracies, are further challenged by internal strife and the subsequent recording and dissemination of that strife to the broader public as researchers,

journalists and others negotiate the consumption of culture. However, in spite of poverty and the challenges it imposes on rural, marginalized communities, Tribal Peoples have survived, and the Theory of Continuity which maintains that adaptation is the key to survival has long remained the call to action throughout historical, generational traumas.

When an individual or a collective of people *survive(s) attacks* upon their language, their culture, their traditional ways of being in the world, history and memory become critical elements of the transference, changeability and sustenance of identity. In the context of “Indian Thinking”, there is continuous movement between what mainstream thought terms the *past*, *present* and the *future*, a dynamic representation of time that serves to link internal coherence and external vision.

Although I agree with contemporary scholarly thinking which suggests that identity is dynamic, contested, changeable, and fluid, I believe that the structures of time in which this argument is steeped emerge from western ways of thinking and are definitely delineated. In my mind, it also limits the multiple dimensions of identity as well as the camouflage and masquerade of identity i.e., forced adaptation to boarding school identities. I would argue that Native Peoples consistently return to a well-defined and indelible identity construct that moves intact across borders of time; this unchangeable identity, this essentialist notion of identity, linked to spiritual beliefs about the specifics of creation, serves as an internal coherence steeped in memory and historical truths universally held in their specific communities.

The external vision to which I refer is grounded in internally coherent constructs of history and memory, but is simultaneously and continually shaped by the increasing

momentum of a changing world. Whereas the internal vision originates from the past and moves through the future and back again, the external vision originates from the future and moves through the past and back toward the future again. One cannot deny the power of the technological age, and its accompanying access to knowledge, power, and egregious values and modalities of modernity. So then, recognizing and respecting the dynamic aspects of time i.e., the continuous seasonal cycles of life representing the significance of renewal, are key to supporting a collaborative and cohesive balance of theory with reality, learning with teaching, and cultural ways of being in the world with mainstream thoughts of value and meaning. Hopefully this discussion of identity and Native Communities offers some insight into my thinking as to my approach and exploration of “ethnographic crossings” in the context of my work with the University of Idaho.

My work for the Indian Education Outreach Project became less about delivering predetermined solutions—theoretically objective and universalized through proven trials and replications, and more about discovering what particular administrators, teachers, staff, parents, extended family, and community members invested in the “success” of education, thought about those predetermined solutions. In other words, how did these theoretical suppositions hold up under the scrutiny of specific and unique perspectives of real people and how did they hold up under the stress and unpredictability of everyday practice---real life?

My navigation of delivering what I promised I would deliver----workshops and consultations, also became entangled in the complexities of language representation. For

example, when speaking of adequate parental involvement and student achievement, a phrase like “First Contact” and a word like “competency” transported Native minds into spaces of historical violation and misrepresentation. In this context, parents and extended family caregivers would feel attacked when teachers complained of parental negligence (competency) in the context of attending various introductory meetings set up by the school personnel (First Contact). In addition, parents and extended family caregivers were also troubled by standardized tests which measured and imposed judgments regarding the “competencies” of their children. Although, a thorough exploration of these language connections and negotiations will not be the primary focus of this paper, there is an idea represented here that language in all of its complex manifestations remains central to the discussion of any cultural context. Language and culture are inextricably linked and as such cannot be interpreted in separate realms. The research process brings to this interaction a language all its own, a language that draws from multiple contexts, but one that is grounded in institutional rhetoric. Research language in its most effective form should challenge its own claimed objective context as well as defy its own rhetorical history.

Epistemologies: theirs, mine, and ours emerged as a critical focus of my work. I realized that in the context of communities previously constructed dialogues, master narratives of both history and culture would not be accepted at face value, but would instead always become a point of contention, a point of contact, multiple points of process as well as multiple points of departure. We would never completely understand each other because my time was only invested for the short term. As a researcher, I could

leave and not look back. My data would be collected. I would disseminate that data and then extricate myself from it and move on. They could also leave, but they would always look back---histories are not easily eradicated. Politically, my position was seen as interpretive----I would interpret them, their actions, their practice, their thoughts, their vision, their goals, their perceived successes and failures and then report my findings, return it to the institution, to the data collection bank to be filed away for further reference or in a more realistic scenario, would disseminate my findings without checking back with the community from which it derived.

As an ethical human being, participating in the context of community (a temporal and pseudo-belonging), I would not tell all of what I heard, the whispers of dysfunction, the confessions of not wanting to participate in the Theory of Continuity, the desire to escape and resist somehow, turning around to view the past. Whatever my “ethical human being desires”, in my position of power as an institutional researcher, the ultimate decision of what would be reported would not necessarily be negotiated, but would rely heavily on my discretion. Ethical considerations of course would be guided consent, but how I framed or negotiated that consent could potentially become *my whispers, my secret, my dysfunction*. I could escape and resist, somehow, looking back. What would I do then when faced with the quintessential research dilemma of “telling the whole truth?”

A Final Shift: The process of enlightenment

Choosing to Distance myself from quantitative approaches and aggregate data collection necessarily moved me closer to *subjects* previously semi-objectified through the tools/instruments of analysis: i.e., surveys, interview transcripts, observation narratives, etc. As I moved closer to and gain a better understanding of qualitative

methods, I began to understand that my role in this work involved positioning myself as a “human instrument”, a primary data-gathering tool in the research inquiry (Janesick, 1994; Ladkin, 2005). I had to accept myself as a less than objective, less than perfect, yet unified, holistic, and dynamic “human instrument” and as such I had to display a willingness to be shaped, impacted, distressed, taken off-balance, asked questions, and probed as to intent, motivation, purpose, interest level, authority, interpretation, commitment to community history and process, dissemination plans, etc.

Naming the process through which the “human instrument” would operate and from which conclusions and/or further questions would derive was a thought-provoking process. Although *theory*, gleaned from exposure to and interaction with the intimate aspects of practice is an important inclusion for any scholarly exploration, I decided not to pair that word with its natural (in the context of academic research) counterpart--- *framework*. A framework connotes a real or imaginary structure, which occupies a static existence in space and time. It can also be referenced as an organizational tool, or as a mental construct. The surrounding supports can be enhanced or reduced, but the core of the structure remains the same. Without action or challenge, it simply remains static, present, in an unaltered state. When one pairs the word, *theory* with *concept*, on the other hand, the static nature that is inherent in the compound term, *theoretical framework* changes and becomes more dynamic and more pliable, open to change and shaping.

Merriam Webster Online (www.merriamwebster.com) presents two definitions for the English term *concept*: as a noun and as an adjective. The etymology indicated that the term came from the Latin, *conceptum*—conceived—a neuter past participle of the Latin verb *concipere*-to conceive. The word “conception” in the context of physiology

presents an active and joining motion, as when a child is conceived. In this context it also takes into account *creatio ex materia*---that which is already in existence. The genetic code from both the sperm and the egg, the history of life, ancient predispositions to thought and process, and ways of seeing the world---a more base descriptor would be “wiring”, come together to form a structure for a continued as well as a continuing life---the paradox and miracle of conception. Therefore using the term, *Theoretical Concepts* seems like the natural and right choice to describe a process that is grounded, shaped and formed by historical moments, but that is also challenged by the joining of those histories with a contemporary procedure of intellectual life, imagination and everyday processes.

Theoretical Concepts

As I contemplate my scholarly work, I am reminded by John Dewey that “every experience is a moving force [and] its value can be judged only on the grounds of what it moves toward and into” (1938). So then dissecting and bringing to light the foundations of my experiences, personal interpretations of my ontological groundings are particularly necessary as this critical, rhetorical experience/event gains momentum. In this context, it is important to acknowledge that every experience traverses multi-faceted landscapes. My method then is informed and shaped by the intricacies and nuances of my personal landscape, my contested identity, the artifacts of that contestation, and my understanding of how through this process, I continue to become someone I will never really know. My identity, in flux and in conflict with itself, paradoxically becomes and remains both visible and invisible throughout this project. As a researcher I am labeled, “Participant/Observer” (Behar, 1996; Murray, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Geertz,

2000) a privileged outsider, a non-community member appearing and disappearing, spiraling into the intimate negotiations of community.

Locating Myself: The Ethics and Politics of (dis)Covering

The final considerations in the context of my proposal for dissertation research moved from looking outward toward something I could rationally analyze and report on, toward the uncomfortable spaces of being----something raw, exposed, intimate, somewhat irrational, a search for something I could reflect upon *and* analyze, something I could return to myself to see if any of it mattered or even made sense. In other words exploring the ethical and political choices related to my research meant that I would need to move recursively through my process, never resting, always examining, toward the end of introducing a processed observational truth to my words and motive. My scholarly focus then necessarily returned to dissect its evolutionary beginning: my nascent and naïve research persona...

In his text, *The Wounded Storyteller*, Arthur Frank describes the “chaos narrative” as one in which the “modernist bulwark of remedy, progress, and professionalism cracks to reveal vulnerability, futility and impotence” (1997, pp. 97, 98). Behar (1996), Geertz (1989), and others present similar notions. However, Frank presents the “chaos narrative” as something that is difficult to hear, a narrative positioned through and trapped by the breathless utterance of “then and then and then”, word repetition that allows no room for reflection, but instead functions as a winding path, moving the reader at a breakneck pace through a litany of excruciating happenings. Additionally, Frank offers a juxtaposition of the “chaos narrative” and the “restitution narrative”. In the restitution narrative everything may look bleak for the moment, but eventually hope and the vacant promise

of a happy ending will lull the listener into a state of numbness, complacency and cliché. It follows the familiar structure of *Once upon a time, and happily every after*.

Conversely, the chaos narrative is immediate and located in the present. It does not offer a sequence of events which eventually lead to resolution: a troubled past to be overcome, a plethora of possible solutions weaving through a present-day orientation, and then finally, to solidify a future of contentment well-earned, a happily-ever-after ending. Instead, the chaos narrative transports the reader *and* the listener into spaces of painful reflection without the benefit of filtering-- one event quickly follows another, not unlike a journalistic representation of war....and then, and then, and then. No solutions. No reprieve. No escape. To further propagate a disorienting effect, it does not necessarily follow a linear progression. Past, present and future often conflate or exchange spaces of annihilation in undefined moments of time. A perfect (to use an Aryan term) example of the chaos narrative are the interviews of Holocaust Survivors. Although any of Primo Levi's texts would represent an appropriate reference here---*The Re-Awakening* (1995) for example; however, I prefer *The Drowned and the Saved* (1988), with its binary title tease, which in my opinion, provides the most complex examples of intricate sufferings and the weaving (literally as in design and figuratively as in unsteadiness) of the storytellers. A more personal example would be the stories of my daughter in Niger, particularly the medical background informational interviews she facilitated in her voluntary role as "translator" for a medical team from Mount Cedars Sinai, who were there to set up a M.A.S.H. unit for "fistula repair". Chaos narratives become worlds to be navigated, gently interpreted, but most of all, simply listened to and accepted.

Although in *The Wounded Storyteller*, Frank locates the “chaos narrative” in the context of illness and provides an expansive historical foundation for the key elements of this disturbing form of “storytelling”, there are some comparisons to be drawn that apply to a smaller world and to people less affiliated with unspeakable suffering and perceived imperfection: *research and researchers*. The act of research, like the chaos narrative, locates itself in the present. It also becomes trapped in the furious pressure of needing to account for one discovery, event or *happening* after another. Also like the chaos narrative, a self-critical reflection and analysis of both the research and the researcher (the story and the storyteller) is not immediately welcome, and an in-depth discussion of the researcher’s emotional connection to or distance from the data may never be accepted or approved. Additionally, the research itself can be referenced as renegade, running amok among the less disturbed data surrounding it.

On an intimate note, the act of research and subsequently the formation of *my* research persona have some things in common (although to a lesser degree) with several elements of the “chaos narrative”. At times, both my “acts of research” and my research persona experienced the distressing interruption of proprioception (equilibrium—the body and mind’s way of making sense of the world). Typically, in place-based research, inquisitive scholars travel to a location where they will begin a study of their chosen subject. Well-read and well-fed, they embark of their journey of discovery. Proprioception intact, the arduous task of “collecting data” through participant-observation begins. Researchers enter into communities with pre-conceived notions about the realities of existence and the practices of everyday life, the histories, the objectives, goals, and dreams of people, and view these phenomena through the lens of sociological

constructs: systems. In other words, going back to the words of Arthur Frank, we (researchers) hide behind the “modernist bulwark of remedy, progress and professionalism”.

Of course this discussion of the chaos narrative is simplified to draw out just one point: transparency. This, I decided is what I needed my “research persona” to accomplish, and this is what I am suggesting all researchers do---chip away at the “modernist bulwark of remedy, progress and professionalism” and create cracks that will reveal “vulnerability, futility, and impotence”. Returning to my research persona for the purpose of interrogation has been a critical process for me, one steeped in chaos and disorientation. I have had to examine my own history, dynamic identity, bias, competence, orientations of time, values of interdependent *and* solitary reflection, and most of all the incessant and interruptive generational voice touting shame and failure as a theme for my thought process and writing: *You are not enough of anything to be anybody. Remain invisible and survive. Don't betray us. Preserve the lies. Keep our secrets.* I think that in addition to the cultural nuance, this voice can also be perceived as an interruptive academic, institutional voice, particularly for students who are labeled “diverse”. These voices, however, flushed from the shadows of secrecy and shame can be dismantled and then powerfully reconstructed to serve the purpose of transparency, thereby creating or contributing to authentic spaces of research.

My work as an Indian Education consultant taught me the value and the risk of transparency. Too often, when you enter a community as an “expert”, you quickly become inundated with an immense load of “problems to be solved”. This was the case when I visited three of the proposed tribal school locations I was considering as subjects

for case studies---my original proposal plan. Reflecting on my initial site visits with Shoshone-Bannock Tribal School, in Ft. Hall, Idaho, Two Eagle Tribal School, in Pablo, Montana, and Lummi Nation Tribal School in Bellingham, Washington brings me to the brink of a chaos narrative.

When our Indian Education Outreach Project (IEOP) project coordinator, Katherine Sterling, accompanied me to the Shoshone-Bannock Tribal School, her purpose was to introduce me to the new (just a week on site) superintendent, the high school principal, and several of the teachers. The plan changed immediately upon our arrival due to the following happenings: the non-Indian director of a large grant aimed at supporting after-school programs for Native Americans was being escorted off the premises by tribal police, the high school principal excused himself to deal with some “excessive and dangerous” students who he termed “on-going behavioral problems”, and the superintendent was not interested in any “proposed programs, consultations, or other advice from anyone outside of his immediate circle.”. In short---he had his hands full. We thanked him, wished him luck, and left. This was the most dramatic introduction to the tribal schools we attempted to serve. We never made it to Chemawa in Oregon. They were struggling with the death of a student, one whose family lives in the community I now serve. In the case of Lummi Tribal School, I was able to work with administration, faculty, parents and students successfully, but not in the way I had anticipated. And finally, at Two Eagle Tribal School in Montana, I facilitated a resistant dialogue and presentation centered on “Peer Mentoring” and faculty support, and discovered that what they really wanted were some really detailed handouts on “how to make students learn

what they were not interested in”. They had their hands full and so I thanked them, wished them luck, and left.

If I valued the notion that qualitative study is “forged in the transaction among what is done and learned and felt by the researcher” (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner, & McCormack- Steinmetz, 1991, p.1), then I needed to rethink my project and my proposal, review its purpose and diversify the narrative. And so did. I decided to include my experience as a researcher, provide explanatory and open discussion on my experiences in working with Native American People, and focus on the question of “How do we respectfully enter into communities that are not our own?” Qualitative researchers (and others) can begin by thinking through the following list (Wolcott, 1988 p.202), and then adapting it to accommodate not only the specific research protocol we follow, but the communities we intend to serve through that research process:

1. Events can be understood adequately only if they are seen in context.
Therefore, a qualitative researcher immerses his/herself in the setting.
2. The contexts of inquiry are not contrived; they are natural. Nothing is predefined or taken for granted.
3. Qualitative researchers want those who are studied to speak for themselves, to provide their perspectives in words or other actions.
Therefore qualitative research is an interactive process in which the persons studied teach the researcher about their lives.
4. Qualitative researchers attend to the experience as a whole, not as separate variables. The aim of qualitative research is to understand experience as unified.

5. Qualitative methods are appropriate to the above statements. There is no one general method.
6. For many qualitative researchers, the process entails appraisal about what was studied.

If our research process were a door, it would have a sign on it saying: *Do Not Disturb*. Instead, what I am proposing through this *dissertation manifesto* is that the door remain open even when we are exposing ourselves and others to the discomfort of a chaos narrative. In the spirit of inclusion, we need to let the public process of research work out its struggle through a rigorous and omniscient, panoptic, community vision.

CHAPTER 3

Participatory Research Traditions

All ethnography is part philosophy, and a good deal of the rest is confession.

(Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*)

Background

This chapter attempts to define and put in a critical context, *Participatory Research Action Traditions*, which move away from defined and controlled institutional research protocols. The key informant in the development of these categories of research is Paulo Freire. His work inextricably links forms of social justice, community participation and voice with various methods of participatory inquiry. One critical descriptor/mantra of Practice Action Research repeated or implied throughout the work of several theorists, expresses the idea that a participatory worldview is a political statement as well as a theory of knowledge.

As Herr and Anderson (2005) have noted, there are “many faces of Action Research” i.e., collaborative action research, cooperative inquiry, emancipatory praxis, community-based research, appreciative inquiry, feminist action research, etc. Essentially all of them offer alternatives to traditional, institutional forms of research inquiry, particularly in the context of positionality. Theorists and practitioners true to action research tenets would agree that the major difference between participatory methods and traditional research is that inquiry is initiated and implemented *by* or *with* insiders, and not *to* or *on* them (Ebbs, 1996; Bray, Smith & Yorks, 2000; Dickson & Green, 2001).

Participatory Action Research and Participatory Community Research methods, both derivatives of the qualitative approach are Freirian in all of their manifestations. They follow the protocol of “plan-observe-act-reflect” and move away from structures and dictates of traditional institutional research which is steeped in the Positivist Paradigm. These methods offer researchers a potentially transformative alternative which is continuous, collaborative, reflective, and consciously committed to contribution at the local level. Action research acknowledges the existence, complexity, and potential conflict of multiple subject positions and identities in the primary researcher, those she engages in collaborative work, and community members and others who are directly impacted by this research process. In traditional research, the objective knowledge process strives to maintain a “context-free” orientation facilitating possibilities for replication in other settings while a major goal of Action Research is immersion in context to the end of generation of local knowledge, which after being subjected to a collaborative analysis, returns to the setting, enhancing the ability of community members to examine, alter, or completely restructure processes that are critical to sustain their culturally relevant determinations and definitions of “success”.

A Personal Participatory Process

Qualitative research allows us to present social constructs in the closest authentic representational form---one that closely mirrors reality—at least in its dimensional presentation---3 dimensions---social reality not scholarly artifice. First of all in the role of “interpretive researcher” we try to understand the meaning particular social actions have for “the actors whose actions they are” and then relate that to the larger context, and then relate it again to a larger context, not to displace those realities in the process of

transitioning them to a broader context, but to expose them to areas of critique they are facing anyway, with or without their representation. So, the process resembles “bottom up” rather than “top down”. We read from a context not from an extricated scientific observable hypothesis we are trying to prove using “data” from a source smaller than the context the observable hypothesis was constructed in.

In the context of this specific community-based research project, moving toward a valued recognition of knowledge-in-production (epistemology) necessitates internalizing the value of tribal-knowledge bases, (ancestral ways of knowing), but this only constitutes a beginning (Harrison, 2005). Although ideas and thoughts are processed, given, and received through an indigenous filter, my contribution to any dialogue is still complicated by present, situated localities: mine, theirs, ours---three critical perspectives. In addition, the complex and interwoven relationships of language/culture are immersed in connections that surpass binary constructions (for example, the confines and dictates of chronological time in its varying combinations—past/present, future/past, present/future). In the context of traditional cultures, the three distinct, periods of our human experience: past, present, future-- feverishly coalesce and translate into various displays of language, oral traditions, storytelling, into complex and contested inter-relationships of community, memory, visions, and dreams. Entering into Native American communities is simple. Privilege is our passport. Being vulnerable enough to abandon master narratives and mainstream cultural norms in order to cultivate meaningful, respectful, and reciprocal relationships in Native Communities is a complex enterprise (Grandin, 1996; Lassiter, 2000; Lawrence & Tatum, 2004).

In my own experience of community-based work, I recognize that both tribal and non-tribal people working and living on the reservation share stories of intimate violation---being defined ad infinitum not only through pervasive historical and present day stereotypes (Mehesuah, 1998, pp 37-54) but additionally through institutionally mandated or sanctioned research studies primarily utilizing what I call the “extraction method” which as you can imagine would be both painful and disrespectful. These research ventures rarely return “findings” to the community, or result in invitations of community experts to presentations of said “findings”. There is much at stake here, both for the community members being represented and for the integrity of academic research. The bridge between theory and practice needs to incorporate in very literal ways the voices of those who are being represented (Dejong, 1993; Cook-Lynn, 1998; Fixico, 2003; Cruddas, 2007; Eagleton, 1990). The methodology of “Participatory Community Action Research” which provides my work with a tentative and evolving conceptual framework, emerges through many days and months of dialogue as well as through silent reflection, through listening to landscapes speak, through the stories of teachers, elders, ancestors, caretakers of children, i.e. community members of all ages, but most importantly the critical (quint)essence of this methodology emerges from the realization that the Participatory Action Research Method presents as a mediating discourse and also a bridge between academic institutional interests and community desires for change.

In the introduction to *Community Building in the Twenty-First Century*, Hyland and Bennett (2005) suggest that researchers involve “...community members in a way that is meaningful.” From the inception of a proposed project, community residents

should be involved in setting out the "...objectives, design, and procedures". Utilizing community members as ethnographic informants is not enough, in fact the involvement, in some cases could be construed as controversial at best, and unethical at worst. Finally, one of the most critical points of providing research that is mutually beneficial is to make sure that those situated at the top of policy-making institutions understand something about those they are mandating "be researched" for purposes of inclusion in diversity programs, projects, and data. Consider the words of Francis E. Leupp, a former Indian Commissioner in the late 1800's:

"Do you know anything by actual contact and experience of the Indian Country and the conditions there?" I once asked a distinguished Attorney General of the United States whom I had been vainly trying to induce to make a special inquiry into an Indian case then before him. "God forbid!" was his fervid response, as he raised both hands and extended their palms toward me with the gesture of pushing away an unwelcome suggestion. This man was a highly bred product of the East. I doubt whether he had ever traveled a thousand miles inland, and, if so, whether he had seen anything of the country except through the window of a director's car. Yet if I mistake not he was a member of a philanthropic society which made a specialty of Indians" (1910).

In the hundred years following this commentary of "observation from an institutional vantage point", it does not seem we have significantly progressed. Commonly, (with some exceptions in the context of anthropological research) time constraints limit the institutional researcher's sustained or ongoing participation in

community life, and this is problematic when trying to create a collaborative bond and “buy-in” to a proposed or in-progress research project. Short-term projects that are discussed, planned and strategized before even entering into a community may be further complicated by publication and grant deadlines, or numerous other institutional demands. The metaphor of seeing the world through the “window of the director’s car” is as real in the twenty-first century as it was in the nineteenth century and speaks to the aforementioned problem of history repeating itself unless there is a significant and sometimes violent interruption.

These interruptions sometimes come in the form of natural, local or global disasters. Government agencies sometimes view communities for the first time when these critical situations are brought to their attention (think Reagan in the 80’s declaring an impoverished, violent section of the Bronx, called “Mott Haven”, a “war zone”, and the more recent example of Hurricane Katrina and the Ninth Ward in New Orleans). “Communities not privileged with information on how global or national and social economic policies are affecting them are forced into reactive rather than proactive positions” (Schensul, 2005). Isolated communities or those plagued by various social problems become vulnerable and are open for exploitation. Riding on the coat-tails of a government or media “invasion”, opportunistic researchers often penetrate and critique the histories, conditions of life, and temporary or permanent hopelessness of the people encased in these scenarios without considering anyone’s legacy or future but their own.

Defining Participatory Traditions

Challenging the institutionally led opportunistic forays into fertile research territories, participatory research traditions are grounded in principles and beliefs that

research endeavors involving oppressed and marginalized populations should be connected with social justice and distanced from self-serving goals and/or validations (Gitlin, 1994; Hall, 2001). Advocates of participatory research argue that the structure of power and knowledge monopolies and the ways that they maintain power is a primary issue in research methodology. As Gaventa, Cornwall (2001) and others have suggested, “Power and Knowledge are inextricably intertwined.” Traditional research interprets data as a resource that will mobilize public debate and inform public policy. The expertise of researchers in a field is continually challenged or expanded upon by additional current data collected by new and emerging experts. Gaventa and Cornwall also argue that creating a more participatory oriented research, means “...not only challenging expertise with expertise, [but] expanding who gets to the table in the first place.” They further posit that participatory discussions of research and knowledge become those that involve strategies of “awareness building, liberating education, promoting a critical consciousness, overcoming internalized oppressions, and developing indigenous or popular knowledge”.

It is also important to emphasize the positionality of the researcher in the participatory conceptual framework. The researcher not only shares the authoritative voice for the duration of the research project, but shares the authoritative voice in all further manifestations of that project, i.e. dissemination of data in all of its forms, and all presentation opportunities to speak about the work. A collaborative presence and voice should always be the highest priority in all contexts of participatory action research.

Tammy Schwartz, in her dissertation titled, “*Write Me*”: *A Participatory Action Research Project with Urban Appalachian Girls*” (2002) notes that participatory projects “run

the gamut from academic imperialism disguised as PAR to truly participatory work” and referencing the work of McTaggart (1997), she describes what participatory work is not.

Participatory action research:

1. ...is not the usual thing social practitioners do when they think about their work.
It is more systematic and collaborative in collecting evidence on which to base rigorous group reflection, and in planning change.
2. ...is not simply problem solving. It involves problem posing, not just problem solving...It sees values and plans problematized by work in the real world and by the study of the culture and nature of the work by people themselves.
3. ...is not research done on other people. It is research by particular people on their own work, to help them improve what they do, including how they work with and for others. Participatory action research is research that treats people as autonomous, responsible agents who participate actively in making their histories and conditions of life by knowing what they are doing, and collaboratively potent
4. in the construction of their collective history and conditions of life. It does not treat people as objects for research, but encourages people to work together as knowing subjects and agents of improvement.
5. ...is not a ‘method’ or ‘technique’ (although often referenced as a ‘method’)...It does not accept truths created outside that community or truths created by researchers working inside the community who treat the community as an object for research...
6. ...is not the ‘scientific method’ applied to social work...it is concerned with changing situations, not just interpreting them... (pp. 39-40). Again, to provide a

summation of the attributes of PAR, one could argue that as a form of inquiry it is first and foremost, participative, as well as experiential and action-oriented.

Moving Beyond PAR

Although the above five criteria describing what PAR is *not*, engage the most common points of oppositional argument as to its true nature, they do not touch upon what I most concerned with: the *suspension of ego* as a key action in the participatory mode of research. To my thinking, PAR does not go far enough in its examination of “researcher motives”. To the extent (in years and intensity) that former *object(x)* of research were scrutinized and analyzed, (and to some extent, their identities erased), the “research identity” needs to be reciprocally challenged--- to the point of discomfort, which may yield a humbling, as well as an appropriate awareness---or may nurture a desire to abandon a preconceived notion of what a particular project may entail and/or yield. The transparent and open critique and infusion of post-critical ethnographic and auto-ethnographic elements complicate the remnant power disequilibrium of PAR effectively, and continue to challenge the presence of institutional and personal ego which includes the motivation of researchers who protect (or secretly harbor) institutional and/or careerist interests.

Post-Critical Ethnography

Simply stated, ethnography has shifted from representation and critical analysis based on information gleaned from close observation or participant-observation to “critical” ethnography, where the focus moved beyond the representation of interesting or emerging themes from “fieldnotes” and providing rich, “thick description” (Geertz, 2000)

to the enhancement of a thematic context for the reader which considered and analyzed positionings of power within those representations and the various levels of voice struggling for recognition within the work.

Additionally, as Thomas (1993) has noted, voices of critical ethnographers function in an advocacy role, interpreting and communicating community needs, desires, goals and visions to those “outside” who may be able to assist in creating and sustaining support networks, toward the end of social justice outcome. They move beyond the traditional modes of representation, which may have in their intent or motivation, trusted that the descriptions and interpretations provided, particularly those depicting social, political, and/or ethical states of disarray would “move” readers of the text to action with or without specific prompting, dictate, or accountability. This of course is to assume or posit that human beings are altruistic, and would never exploit or participate in the consumption of textual and visual representations presented by the ethnographer. Adkins and Gunzenhauser (1999) further complicate the idea of representation when they suggest that a “...mere description of oppressive conditions is inadequate for change, because merely to describe is to fail to question the status quo”, an empowered vantage point from which compassion and possible action would most commonly emerge. The interrogation of the norm must include a distancing of oneself from it. Paradoxically, it must also include an immersion in it, submerging oneself in normalizing strategies while at the same time engaging in critique. When participating in the interrogation of the norm, maintaining validated and approved modes of questioning only perpetuate oppressive

conditions. So, therefore, the entire framework and paradigm of questioning needs to be dissected, analyzed, and openly debated.

Embedded in a critical theoretical point of view is the belief that “the very act of research, critical or otherwise, is inherently political and value-laden...” (Adkins & Gunzenhauser, 1999, p. 66). These authors further suggest that critical ethnographers are the first to acknowledge this explicitly. In most critical academic circles, it is now common knowledge that the “big three”---teaching, research and scholarship are all included in the premise of the political act. These assertions simply restate the contemporary challenge to the Descartes mind/body split by further reinforcing the idea that a distinct and notable separation of the body and the mind is not credible, at least to a rational thinker. We own and are accountable for our humanness--- what our mind tells us and what our heart believes is true and just, is not separate from where our feet take us and what our hands do once we are there.

Additionally, the “reflexivity” of the critical ethnographic perspective is culturally responsive, meaning that it engages one of the key conceptual frameworks of cultural, (particularly Native) communities: the complexity of a dense and interconnected network of understanding and dialogue rather than separate and discreet domains of thought and process. The dialogical process is not only inclusive; it is dependent upon understandings of time, history and memory. The act of sustaining “reflexivity” is also dependent upon those constructs. In the reflexive realm of critical ethnography, boundaries appear more fluid and contentious, less like lines to be crossed or studied and more like impressionistic brushstrokes to be interpreted and questioned, in the context of research inquiry and in the reflexive collaboration that occurs in the examination of the

multiplicity of selves involved and immersed in the research process (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994). Reflexivity involves negotiating complex structures and dialectics--- overarching structural theories and the applications of those theories (their lived reality), as well as the oppressions, dominations, and exploitations emerging as struggles within those practical locations.

Some Final Reflective Inquiries

Finally, the critical ethnographic perspective is culturally responsive in its willingness to juxtapose its key elements against traditional constructs and standards. The oppositional nature of the critical ethnographic perspective aligns itself, if not directly, then philosophically with Native Cultures who in order to participate in the theory of continuity have had to define and position themselves against mainstream norms violently opposed to their survival.

So, what does it mean to move beyond critical ethnography and the advocacy it provides? For this researcher, the “post” placed before the category of “critical ethnography” means that I continue to participate in a collective opposition to forms of domination, oppression and exploitation, but will focus less on outcome and more on process: What role do I play? Who is positioning me in that role? Why am I allowing this positioning? When is it best to immerse myself in the process to such a degree that I am compelled to abandon what I consider to be an ego-driven directive of closure and “success”? These to me are representative critical questions which need to be confronted and analyzed at the micro-level of lived reality.

CHAPTER 4

An Emergent Methodology:

If Methods Were Horses then Theorists Would Ride...Complicating the Value of Western “Thoroughbreds”

At the present time, the “methodological being” which gently and sometimes forcefully guides my dissertation research reflection is a dynamic and holistic entity which surrounds, embraces, and safeguards the contested voices and stories that are its (quint)essence. It also provides a foundation for epistemological, ethical, and political choices I have struggled with during this season of work, the semi-conclusions I have come to regarding these negotiations, and what questions still beg astute observation and dialogue in these contexts. Formerly my methodology posed as an illusive, isolated and ill-fated incubus, an entity which haunted a house called, “Impossible” situated precariously on the corner of “you-don’t-know-what-you’re-doing” Street. It wasn’t until I returned to familial western landscapes and began to immerse myself, in community work involving Pacific Northwest Tribes, that words, in search of sanctuary from polemical prefixes like “pre” and “post” began to insistently tap against the windows, like fragile tree branches manipulated by a forceful gale.

There is an implied relationship, particularly in the context of the “Old American West”, of man and horse being mutually interested in one another. The horse viewed as “companion species” (to use Haraway’s term) served as an important enhancement to the landscape west of the 100th Meridian. In some circles, a man without a horse was suspect. The horse was perceived as an extension of the rider and vice versa. Both possessed a unique set of interdependent, instinctual skills that could facilitate the negotiation of food,

shelter and companionship. I offer you one interpretation of my sub-title which positions itself within this western construct of “horses.” That if methods were smart, powerful, evolving, and could be directed properly toward the end of respectfully exploring landscapes, while avoiding chasms and poisonous snakes, or were at least beautiful to admire from afar, then theorists would more often be tempted to develop meaningful relationships with them, guide them to greener pastures, admire their beauty, companionability, and functionality. In other words, “If Methods Were Horses, Then Theorists Would Ride”.

Additionally, the phrase, “Complicating the value of ‘Western Thoroughbreds’ in my title, infers that academic scholars and researchers need to rethink, reflect upon and inevitably complicate tried and true, defined and validated, institutionally accepted and pervasively disseminated “thoroughbred” approaches to research such as Quantitative and Qualitative and closely evaluate and not abandon methodologies related to and dependent upon, these approaches. I recognize that there are far-reaching implications for participating in institutional structures, practices, policies and protocols. In addition, there are also far-reaching implications for underestimating the power of these same structures, practices and protocols.

Opting to challenge these structures without full disclosure of the methods used to perpetuate their influence is neither scholarly nor wise. We need to acknowledge and intimately understand as well as interrogate the nuances of the powerful institutions through which we operate. To this end, it is imperative that clear strategies for methodological approaches be shared among scholars, and that they connect in meaningful ways to communities rhetorically represented in scholarly circles. Theory and

method at the very least need to be mutually interested in one another, and at best, need to engage in a relationship that is mutually defining. In fact, if one is to survive the inhospitable landscapes, chasms, and snakes, that appear without warning in academic research, then theory and method must be perceived as *Chimera*, differences sharing the same body, mutually informing and mutually reinforcing.

Moving on from the relationship of theory to method, the “Thoroughbreds” evoked in the title refer to the traditional qualitative and quantitative approaches to research. Possibilities for a methodological framework emerged from my struggle with these two widely accepted research practices. These methods, used to gather data for scholarly analysis, interpretation, discussion, application, and ultimately dissemination, contain many subcategories, which specifically prescribe techniques to facilitate data collection, i.e. scientific observation, questionnaires, focus group interactions, various styles of interviewing, textual analysis etc. Of the two, quantitative research remains *the* preferred institutional approach and is rewarded accordingly. Scientific rules emerging from a positivist paradigm are used to declare the knowledge of some groups more valid than others, for example, ‘experts’ over ‘lay people’, etc. “Asymmetries and inequalities in research funding mean that certain issues and certain groups receive more attention than others; clearly established methods or rules of the game can be used to allow some voices to enter the process and to discredit the legitimacy of others” (Gaventa, Cornwall, 2001).

To this researcher, in the context of community-specific work, statistically oriented quantitative methods, for the most part represent a limited, reductionist, non-critical analysis that encourages or worse yet validates and officializes hegemonic forms

of (mis)representation. Quantitative research methods encourage context-free generalizations which provide the foundation for a “p priori hypothesis”, embedded with binaries which eliminates or at least limits the possibilities for multi-dimensional research questions and contexts. I am not interested in a debate which privileges qualitative research over quantitative or vice versa. These approaches are not binaries, but are positioned on a continuum, and as such are not completely separate; however, their histories are very different and serve very different purposes. My method, is not part of an ongoing refinement of quantitative approaches and does not assume or hope that “somehow [more sensitive, descriptive data] will be assimilated into the structure” of this approved method (Shank and Villela, 2004) Although in the context of this project, I choose to deflect quantitative thinking and its subsequent approach, my thoughts also transgress boundaries of defined quadrants and paradigms of research represented in qualitative frameworks.

The terms, “Quantitative” and “Qualitative” do not denote mutually exclusive approaches to research. Instead, it is important to realize they exist on a continuum. Both are necessary at times and both can be equally evil and exclusionary depending upon the depth of the writer’s purpose, process and their skill at bringing forth and fleshing out various versions of “the facts”. The categories of Quantitative and Qualitative represent traditional *approaches* to research and should not be confused with *method*.

Complicating the value of both these approaches enters into the discussion when we consider institutional views and representations of community subjectivities in the context of this work. Driven by data collected from identified categories on a “Needs Assessment” form, individual information gleaned from interviews, questionnaires, etc.

from 14 tribal schools served by the University of Idaho's Indian Education Outreach Project Grant for which I was consulting (2005-2006) differed greatly from "whole story" accounts of specific situations in the context of behaviors, educational achievement, motivation, parental involvement, teacher competencies, etc.

Particularly in the context of "Needs Assessment", determining what it is that the community desires as outcomes for any proposed research or grant implementations, the descriptors provided by Shank and Vilela (2004) continue to inform my work with tribal communities. They suggest four critical areas of consideration in the context of Qualitative Research:

1. Investigative Depth: essentially, the cultivation of an awareness that "for any phenomenon in the empirical world, there is much below the surface". A qualitative researcher, they say, "will not be content to stay on the surface and deal with familiar perspectives and preconceptions."
2. Interpretive Adequacy: "How do we look at things in this new light? How can we form a more complete and more complex understanding of those things we now see and yet still maintain an intelligible and manageable grasp of the phenomena under examination?"
3. Illuminative Fertility: "All worthwhile understandings and insights are illuminative; they shed light not only on new ways of looking at the world, but also on new ways of being in the world."
4. Participatory Accountability: "Qualitative researchers participate in a variety of procedures, and they must be accountable for any and all forms of participation. Furthermore, researchers must document their efforts so that one can see how

they have interacted and what some of the anticipated and unanticipated fruits of such participation might be.”

These four research values and objectives reflect my thinking in various chapters of this dissertation and reinforce attributes of the research process that need to be present if a researcher is to remain ethical and respectful in their interactions with community. “Investigative Depth” that remains ethical can only be accomplished through participatory sharing---through what I am calling a “reciprocal vulnerability”, the open sharing of stories, values, motive, biases, histories and personal struggle.

In this sense, “investigative depth” will easily lead into the next category of “Interpretive Adequacy” which will build on the details and depth of “reciprocal sharing”. Then “Illuminative Fertility” in that new ways of looking at the world will have emerged from the “clash of shared worldviews”, the power of stories intertwining and the subsequent validation of diverse experiences and histories.

I think that the building process and the interrelatedness of the previous three values and objectives described by Shank and Vilela, take some of the pressure off of the fourth element of “Participatory Accountability”. It moves from a legalistic account of actions in the community, to a more collective interpretation of guidelines of effectiveness, a map for future researchers to consult. This sets the groundwork for contemplation of a new collaborative theory, one that is shaped by the process of open and deep interactions in communities of practice and one that is inextricably linked with everyday lives.

In the past, traditional dissertations presented “new knowledge” by creating or expanding upon, and subsequently altering “theory” or “method”. Now, it is understood

(in most circles) that Theory and Method are not mutually exclusive, but dependent upon one another, and at their best present and negotiate some form of interdependence (Eagleton, 1990). Critically thinking in “Theory” and “Method” contexts currently involves the question of “Praxis” –reflective, thoughtful action that suggests ways to close gaps and establish reciprocity between theory and method.

A word of caution: If we choose to adapt the post-modern stance of being “against method”, then to remain credible we should still abide by the basic rules of argument and *know* what it is we are against. This will help us and our audience understand our position more deeply. For us and for them, *knowledge is power*. Whereas traditional dissertations in the past were able to keep their disciplinary boundaries intact and imagine an audience of knowledgeable “experts” in a specifically identified and closed “field”, current dissertations (given our post-modern global context), particularly those based in the “Social Sciences” and “Humanities” recognize that disciplinary boundaries are being challenged and blurred, that although instruments and resources of science do impact, for example, the AIDS crisis in Africa, addressing that crisis successfully involves a holistic consideration of social, economic, sacred, personal, educational, etc. contexts. “*People*” and “*Disease*” in the ontological sense are mutually exclusive.

The perceived boundary, the Descartes “split” between mind and body, (subjective and objective) is arbitrary and represents a fragile and contested construct. My thoughts transgress boundaries of defined quadrants and paradigms of research represented in qualitative frameworks. I embrace certain aspects of Ethnography, particularly its history and movement beyond objective and distant “observation” to critical spaces of self-reflexive analysis and subjective accountability.

“There are these stories that just have to be told in the same way the wind goes blowing across the mesa”

Leslie Marmon Silko, *Stories and their Tellers*

The following provides an illustration of not only self-reflexive analysis and subjective accountability, but also of the positionality of my research persona as sharing the dual role of insider/outsider in the context of my interactions with Native People.

I attended the Nespelum Longhouse’s “First Foods Feast” last year at invitation of my Yakima and Nez Perce friends, Atwice Kamiakun and Sabe Red Thunder. At the longhouse, I was seated with tribal people from Yakama as well as Colville. Directly across from me sat a respected elder I had contact with previously. I knew her to be a root gatherer, an artisan, an historian, a storyteller, a mother, a grandmother, a contributive community member. Several women who had been root gathering in various traditional places had been discussing their experiences, and one of the women mentioned that recently there seemed to be more questions raised by non-Indians regarding areas chosen by the root diggers. Then the elder previously mentioned, spoke. Her group had been confronted by a landowner who questioned their right to be digging on his property. She told the story in great detail, mentioned that she was embarrassed about the confrontation, and that it was not good for the young girls to experience such a situation. She also mentioned that she chose not to respond to his query, his questioning of her “rights”. *Knowing* that treaty language is very specific and guarantees, “...fishing, hunting and gathering in usual and accustomed places”, I spoke up and said, “He can’t do that. That isn’t right. The treaty states...” and before I could finish my knowledgeable, scholarly,

and appropriate defense of her situation, she turned her head toward me and stated softly, simply, slowly and with great conviction, “I *know* my treaty.” Then she looked away. Everyone was silent. I shrank in humiliation, not because of her assertion, but because at that moment, I recognized my own imposed authority, my *knowing*, my privileged, epistemological grasp of specific treaty language. Additionally, there was also a dim recognition that my delivery of that *knowledge-wound* was embedded with a subtle implicit assumption that she did not *know* treaty language. Worse yet, my assertion/defense of her right to dig in “usual and accustomed places” was weeping with paternalism. It is important to recognize that the difference of our “knowing” lies in origins. This elder *knows* her treaty through oral histories passed down for millennia, through inextricably linked contexts of language, landscape and culture, through intimate interaction and struggle, through the collective experiences of the women who gather roots, through recognizing the importance of sustaining cultural traditions. On the other hand I became aware of treaty language through the literate tradition only, not through oral histories passed down for millennia, not through inextricably linked contexts of language, landscape and culture, not through intimate interaction and struggle, etc.

Speaking from the context of my own tribal enrollment and history, I have never had to defend my right to hunt buffalo. However, should I wish to provide a context for my dreamscapes, the *Fort Laramie Treaty, 1868, Article XI does give tribal members “the right to hunt on any lands north of North Platte, and on the Republican Fork of the Smoky Hill River, so long as the buffalo may range thereon in such numbers as to justify the chase.”* Although I have seen buffalo meandering in various locations throughout the west, I have few significant connections-- one being my awareness of the government

sanctioned slaughtering of the buffalo between 1870 and 1883, designed to force Plains Indians into submission. (hauntingly similar to the slaughter of 800 Palouse horses on September, 8, 1858 near Spokane) The other, my awareness of our Ft. Peck Buffalo herd, and my father's words as he proudly scanned the prairie and noted them for the first time. "Buffalo" he said with a slight nod, "are smarter than cows."

In closing, when I visualize an "emergent method", I think of an evolutionary process, one that is dependent upon and informed by climate change, human impact, genetic diversity....survival of the fittest. Some of these elements we perceive to be under our control, i.e. human impact, but in reality, all are interdependent. In the context of our pursuit of qualitative research, only our strongest practices will rise to the surface if we continue to examine ourselves and them in vulnerable and ethical ways, through committing to "investigative depth, interpretive adequacy, illuminative fertility, and participatory accountability." The research process defies a linear construct. It is messy and unpredictable at times. *It is a story to be told in the same way the wind goes blowing across the mesa.*

CHAPTER 5

Auto-Ethnography in Three Voices: Teacher, Researcher, Scholar

“When conceptions of the person, the self, and community are not continually called into practice, reified and reductionist concepts emerge as common practice, creating new forms of “common sense” within a profession.”

(Witherell & Noddings, *Stories Lives Tell*)

In Carolyn Ellis’ methodological novel titled, *The Ethnographic I* (2004), her process is described as an “experimental form of qualitative writing that blurs the boundaries between [the] social sciences and humanities and experiments with novel forms of expressing lived experience, including literary, poetic, autobiographical, multi-voiced, conversational, critical, visual, performative, and constructed representations”. When specifically addressing the inclusion of “Auto-Ethnography” in her text, she incorporates the idea of “writing therapeutically, vulnerably, evocatively, and ethically” (p.3). The previous descriptors describe much of Ellis’ contemporary work, but when she recounts her graduate level work---an ethnographic study of isolated fishing communities, she says she learned to “observe from a distance” to keep herself out of the story and “dispassionately record what I saw and heard.” This exhibition of objectivity was my intent when I began the work of this dissertation project. However, the connections between myself and my subjects, between my history, my experiences, my emotional and ethical selves were too intense and present to ignore. Every interaction tempted me with a depth of process---if only I would depart from the “distance format” and enter into the circle of dialogue to become a nuanced and vulnerable presence.... I

relented and gave in to temptation. I found that my enculturation as a Native Woman, one who sees the world not in disparate parts, but in landscapes of connection---my experiences, my knowledge, my thinking, my questions were embedded in a circle representing both the *unknown known* and the *known*, that which I know I do not know, and that which I know at both the level of intuition and experience. Writing “therapeutically and vulnerably” about the lives of others whose histories were entwined with my own, meant that my story—*the known*, would function as a foundation of knowledge that would delve underground, through mists and across borders to facilitate a dialogue and validate a common experience whose future value lay in the recognition and quest of the *unknown known*.

Relational Teaching

Western epistemology supports the notion of fragmentation, of breaking down knowledge into manageable pieces, units---succinct and understandable parts. It also propagates the idea of distance---we understand the world by not attaching it to ourselves. Observation can be close, but not too close. We must maintain a distance that prevents our humanness from connecting to *otherness*. In direct opposition to this thinking is the philosophy of Buber (1970) who suggests that a commitment to reciprocity is the ultimate expression of meaningful connection. He posits that the “I-Thou” relationship is based on a commitment to reciprocity and that the alternative “I-It” (objectifying) relationship is not. The latter is in fact steeped in constructs of an unequal power representation---suggesting an exploitive relationship. Additionally, Parker Palmer---

Quaker, educator and philosopher, eloquently explores the “I-Thou” relationship and defines the spiritual quest for connection as “the external human yearning to be connected with something larger than our own egos” (1998). The goal is not to objectify but to experience, understand and take action through relational and phenomenological inquiry.

From an institutional point of view, I am a nascent teacher, one who could be considered a classroom newcomer, an untested lecturer, a novice, someone who needs experience, someone who needs to learn the art of delivery, projection, argument, closure and assessment. From the perspective of my family tree, from the vantage point of years of experience, I am a natural born teacher, a classroom interactionist, one who has been tested by a diverse group of well-seasoned lecturers, still a novice maybe, but one who has learned that the art of survival is dependent upon acute observation and experience as well as on effective delivery, projection, argument, closure and assessment. As my teaching persona grows and is challenged, I am always reminded that many locations of learning exist beyond the classroom, and my primary goal as a facilitator of learning is to recognize and validate those critical spaces the moment my students and I begin to engage in a teaching-learning relationship. Students enter the educational arena holistically---with memories, visions, dreams, hopes, expectations, despairs, losses, ways of dealing with and putting off the burdens of the world.

In the spirit of continuity, I recognize that many teachers have come before me. My students are not new to this process of learning, this art of engagement. By the time they arrive at our interaction, they have either learned to love and trust knowledge, or

they have learned that knowledge is exclusionary, unnecessary, and/or insignificant. My first ethical responsibility as a teacher is to let my students know that I trust their experience. When previous learning experiences are validated and not rejected, students then are able to sense my passion for and commitment to collaborative knowledge-making and engage with the learning process, realizing that our progress is interdependent, that sharing thoughts, ideas, and interpretations of truth, are necessary for our growth as a learning community. My first epistemological responsibility as a teacher is to present options beyond the dualistic representation of modern thought that has influenced monologues and structured dialogues in the Academy for hundreds of years, and continues, although ruptured, to be the grand narrative for many schools of thought and practice. Moving beyond previously prepared and expected dialogues, teaching is about developing a relationship with students and reflecting on the implications of this relationship in the context of student learning. Particularly in diverse learning communities, what is needed is a relational stance guided by ethical principles that support the development of a caring and respectful, yet reflective and critical learning community. Donald Macedo in his introduction to Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) suggests "[t]he fundamental goal of dialogical teaching is to create a process of learning and knowing that invariably involves theorizing about the experiences shared in the dialogical process". To facilitate this teaching and learning process, teachers interested in meeting the needs of students across cultures, need to function as "Ethnographers" and participate in reciprocal and holistic assessment by writing fieldnotes, interviewing parents, community members and students, engaging in

participant-observations to discover, learn about, and appreciate cultural identities, specific learning styles, and patterns of communication. In *Stories Lives Tell: Narrative and Dialogue in Education*, (Witherell & Noddings, 1996), Madeleine R. Grumet tells us that the ethnographic perspective “sees the narrative as a cultural symbolization that contributes to the continuity and shaping of the life of a community” (p. 68).

Additionally, teachers, particularly those who serve in diverse communities need to complicate the role of “Ethnographer” and be willing, in the spirit of reciprocity, to have fieldnotes written about *them* (in the context of ongoing assessment of their practice as offered by students), be willing to be interviewed and questioned by family, extended family and community members, and then to change and transform their teaching practice as needed.

Civic Engagement

A Charter for Civic Engagement and Holistic Academic Process

Rejecting the conventional academic wisdom that tells us to “put community-based programs and partnerships on hold or on the side until we achieve tenure”, I resolve this day to hold my multiple subjectivities together by remaining holistic, committed, concerned, connected, and compassionate, but most importantly centered in the constellation of my community. I will not be (re)moved. I will not be situated in an Academic Siberia---cold, isolated, alone, without connection, without story, without experiential memory. Upon traversing the borderlands of the Academy, I cling to my bundle--- the intricacies and nuances of my personal landscape, my contested identity,

and the artifacts of that contestation, recognizing that validation and reward lies in the confluence of Civic Engagement and Holistic Academic Practice---the meta-language of significant contribution.

Contemporary paradigms of civic engagement sanction a one-way storytelling trajectory which disrupts a potentially holistic mosaic of academic experience. Through institutional mandate, researchers and scholars become expert interpreters touting the value of hierarchical constructs, imposing and validating various versions of the binary: *us and them*. Progressive paradigms of civic engagement translate community-based programs and partnerships into rich landscapes of potential data to be mined and then integrated into our academic experiences and those of our learning communities.

Researchers and scholars who accept the Charter for Civic Engagement *and* Holistic Academic Practice and subsequently, a post-progressive paradigm of Civic Engagement will avoid the affirmation or denial of any experience or knowledge, but will instead embrace a collective space of disequilibrium understanding that "...we will arrive at every encounter shaped by our pasts and betrayed by our assumptions" (Bateson, 2000).

Challenging contemporary paradigms of civic engagement involves a form of reductionism, negating ourselves as *the* experts. Redefining progressive paradigms of civic engagement involves infusing our process with reciprocal storytelling--- negotiating vulnerability, blurring the boundary between *us and them*. Embracing the confluence of civic engagement and a holistic academic process involves recognizing that our rapidly changing world requires an ever-changing script, one that demands improvisation and

grace, one that reveals both the full range of our human potential and the interconnectedness of our experiences.

In the interest of exploration and connection, incorporating “field trips” into my freshman composition classes, during my graduate fellowship teaching years, quickly became a critical process of community-based work that sustained my scholarly process. These trips deeply informed my thinking of what it means to engage in “ethnographic crossings” and what it means to guide “strangers” into landscapes well-known to me. For two years (four semesters), students in my English 101 classes participated in two very specific, yet related field trips during which they pondered and applied the same research queries to both spheres: What constitutes a history? How are collective and/or individual histories preserved? Through what means are these specific histories preserved? In preparation for these field trips, students participated in small reading groups in which they discussed texts that would familiarize them with the context of our excursions. At both The Nez Perce Interpretive Center and The House of Charity (a homeless shelter for men), my students were challenged to be listeners, silent and vulnerable processors of story. I asked them to be prepared to share their own experiences, to share previously held beliefs if asked, to take risks, to offer up as a sacrifice to community, their version of the human experience. These opportunities for Civic Engagement were not framed as typical service learning activities. We did not go to serve the populations into whose communities we were invited. Instead, we went to participate and to silently consider and witness the inevitable clashing of cultural spheres:

We were going to eat lunch with these people. I entered the serving line and realized I needed to be humble. This was not difficult; I didn't hold myself in a higher regard than any of the people there. I was more afraid of hurting someone's pride, of infringing on their privacy. This was their life, not mine. What right did I have to ask questions and eat with them? I was going to go home to school, a job, and a soft warm bed after this. They were not...A middle-aged man approached my table. I listened attentively and he watched me eat. He told me that he owned a pair of old football pads which he wore to feel good. He told me he was lonely.

Field Trip to *The House of Charity*--- Student Reflection, 2006

Although, dialogical interactions with community may contradict validated and/or academically represented histories, particularly those emerging from a “no-contact” theoretical position, they may support a *presence* respectfully negotiated in the first person: the primary research experience---the story of *us and them*. To further complicate this story, an interesting dimension was added to the “House of Charity Field Trip”--- the inclusion of a guided tour through the Campbell House (www.northwestmuseum.org) operated by Spokane’s Museum of Arts and Culture. The inclusion of the Campbell House tour was not to offer students a visual/cultural reprieve from the sights and sounds of the “House of Charity.” Instead the purpose was to intensify the experience, offering no reprieve or release from thinking about the varying contexts that accompany and complicate basic human needs. The trip was set up as a comparative civic engagement research process, one which would create a cognitive dissonance and contribute to an

unforgettable and significant experience. The purpose of including both locations was to expose students to two very different representations of social class---two completely different socio-economic contexts with two very similar sets of everyday needs: food, shelter, clothing, and social connection.

Prior to our trip to Spokane, students read (among other texts), the “homeless rag”, *The Rising Times*, which although published by Gonzaga University Students, reflects many primary voices of the homeless in the Spokane area. The paper also provides some of the homeless with a modest livelihood. Those who are interested in distribution and sales wear badges which designate them as official vendors. They sell the papers in the vicinity of the House of Charity.

Students also read various articles and texts on the political and social plight of the homeless in our state and around the nation..

Stimulating the imagination and intellectual process of my students are critical components to both my relational teaching and research. In the context of engaging with others beyond the realm of their everyday experience, an additional project stands out as an example of a significant, connective, community process. This project posed a question to an audience beyond the WSU community; to the high school students of Toppenish High School in the Yakima Valley area of Washington State: “Moving on? Where are you going next? Where are you headed? We suggest Washington State University”. My students were then asked to imagine a diverse group of rural high school students who live and work in an area that is primarily agricultural, students who have not have the chance to travel away from home, and who come from homes with

limited resources. They were asked to “invite them to consider WSU as a college choice”.

We discussed components of the students’ lives that may cause them to not embrace the idea of a relatively expensive college education, and then we talked about what tone, diction, style, and message may appeal to this group of young people. In class, I asked my students to openly share their thoughts of “the college experience” from their own personal experience, their 1st person perspective. Then I asked them to talk to each other about their thoughts and finally, they were to frame these thoughts for a larger audience, the “high school community of Toppenish”. They proceeded to record their thoughts with great energy and excitement (See Appendix G). I then took the flyers over to Toppenish into a high school class and asked students to read and respond to the words of the WSU students. I functioned as the “moccasin telegraph”, communicating responses from diverse ethnic students, who are removed from the privileges of the mainstream to my students, many of whom reflect mainstream values and lifestyles. My communication traveled a direct route from one community to the other with no filtering mechanism. This exercise in connection and community was a growth experience for both groups and stimulated further discussion about difference, rural isolation, and economic opportunity. A university culture that acknowledges, accommodates, and encourages civic engagement will defy the constraints of space and time, will encourage and embrace an erasure of boundary, will strive to be known as a “community university” not as a “university community”, will respond to the crescendo of diverse voices, will be known for its innovative commitment to a *holistic academic process*...

Relational Research

As a researcher, I recognize that I can never fully extricate my humanity from my official scientific data collection, no matter what form it takes. This is disconcerting to some, but highly comforting to me. Expert extrications require distance, are painful and have a low success and/or survival rate. By this I mean that seeking information out of a community context is painful to someone who is inextricably linked to the concept and reality of *community*. When researchers extract information and data from communities with or without the consent of those who will eventually become recipients of a distant assessment and interpretation, the replication success rate of that data in a meaningful context will be low and the survival rate of that data in the context of “to the seventh generation” will be abysmal. When collecting and processing data, I prefer to remain fully present surrounded by an aura of transparent imperfection. However, I am aware that granting excessive authority to emotional responses related to data collection can reduce the mainstream perception of validity and reliability of the study. Definitions of validity and reliability in the context of Participatory Action Research depend more on the Freire Model (1970) of “plan-act-observe-reflect” than on the model of replication success. The assessment of validity comes from the voices of the community in which the research is taking place. The same is true of reliability. This is a community and researcher critique and decision.

As was mentioned in an earlier chapter, I was engaged by the University of Idaho’s, Center for Disabilities and Human Development as a Professional Development Advocate. In this role, I was expected to work with the 14 tribal schools in our western

region, but my contact was primarily with three or four schools. The most significant experience I had while consulting for the Indian Education Outreach Project for the University of Idaho, was at Lummi Nation School. At this juncture, it would be redundant for me to discuss my work *and* then refer you to the Appendices, and so I will review a few highlights that directly related to the idea of the ethics of ethnographic crossings. Prior to implementation of the Peer Mentoring Course, a conversation took place over a period of several months. I met with then superintendent, David Tomlin (Sioux Nation) and then principal Cheryl McBride (Lummi Nation). The goal was to listen to what they needed, to discern how I would function as a facilitator of this proposed course, and to engage them in collaborating on the design of the course.

The following modules were developed as a result of our conversations:

- Classroom Management: Building Successful Educational Spaces
- Ethnography as Pedagogy: Exploring Your Classroom Dynamic
- Peer Mentoring Support: Sharing and Reflecting on Observations
- Research Tools: Creating an Individualized Teacher Survivor Kit

(See Appendix F)

Professional development at Lummi Nation School as implemented by the Indian Education Outreach Project had not been very successful up to this point. My role as a consultant was to assure teachers, parents, and students and staff of my “insider status” as a Native Woman, an enrolled tribal member; subsequently then, I would share my intimate understanding of the difficulties and challenges of teaching Native American Students. During the first presentation I did at the school, I experienced some resistance.

As I met with a group of forty people consisting of parents, staff, teachers and administrators for the first time to present my “Lummi Nation School Professional Development: Peer Mentoring Objectives and Goals”, I was met with comments like, “You do NOT know what it is like here.” I did not disagree. Instead I became acutely aware that I was “interloper # 100”, another person coming from a distant, authoritative place with a pre-packaged plan, one that contained all of the answers to *their problems*. The details of my professional development plan can be viewed in Appendix H. What you need to know at this point is that I developed an ethic related to an ethnographic crossing: I needed to believe what they were saying to me: I knew nothing. And so for the following three days, I taught in a second grade classroom (and was shouted down with the disparaging remarks so commonly known to substitute teachers), a third grade classroom, and a fourth grade classroom, and then spent several hours simply observing additional classrooms and at least one full day talking with teachers and eating lunch with students, etc.

During my classroom observations of several teachers at the Lummi Nation School, I maintained a field notebook, each page divided into two columns: subjective/objective. At the bottom of each page I summed up my observations in both categories. Later in the day I reflected upon those summations and wrote the journal entries---some excerpts follow.

Journal Excerpt: Classroom Observations, Day One

I began observations at the grade school principal’s request in a very specific first grade classroom. Based on conversations about this particular teacher, I had a feeling that the strongest bias I would be facing regarding this classroom would not be

my own.

I was right. The experience was already framed for me... so much for objectivity. Teacher Rick is not having a good week according to “teacher vents”, and if I take into consideration other reports, more directly negative, he is simply not having a good career. Today, I simply tried to be an assistant, an encouraging presence, a bathroom monitor and a wiper of snotty noses. Attendance was down by half (an ongoing problem), and everyone else who did manage to show up either had a “wet cough” or a persistently runny nose. By the end of the first fifteen minutes of class, I had intervened in three bathroom “false alarms”, four nose wipings, several (lost count) incidents of redirecting students back to their desks, one assurance that no one would go hungry at lunch, one validation of gender, several “shhhh’s” and more than enough firm reprimands for random acts of violence (related to that validation of gender). Poor teacher Rick. I do not remember first grade being this complicated.

In the afternoon, Teacher Rick gathers his students into a “story circle” on the floor, the boundaries of the circle clearly marked off with masking tape. Everyone seems to adjust well to the transition from the desks to the specified space on the floor. He is in close range of a little bookcase, and is asking the children about reading choices. They respond in turn, making their story choices known with the exception of one little renegade who points to a book across the room and begins squirming toward it, when Teacher Rick reminds him that the choices are limited to the book shelf closest to the story circle. The little student then refocuses his desires quite nicely—turns around to face Teacher Rick and is quiet for the rest of “story time.”

What happens next seems to be a little bit impulsive---Teacher Rick decides to review the “ABC’s” with the students before he begins reading the chosen story about the journey of a vegetable truck. He picks up his pointer stick and begins to wave it across the room at the border of ABC’s which are posted near the ceiling on the wall opposite of the story circle. Everyone’s attention is directed out of the circle and across the expanse of the classroom to a place where they have to crane their necks in order to see the posted letters. Some children stand up. Others move out of the circle and follow the pointer to the opposite wall. Some of the children I was previously successful at redirecting, innately sense an opportunity in this chaotic situation. Two bolt for the classroom door. One child slinks toward the back of the room, and nervously begins washing her hands in preparation for lunch (right after story time), and a few others decide to return to the familiarity and comfort of their desks...refuge. Teacher Rick, cognizant at this point that he has lost all control, and desperate to make a connection between what is happening and his assigned authority, then bellows, “Free Time!” The children continue to scatter, but a few stay put in the story circle wanting to hear the story of the vegetable truck. Teacher Rick looks up at me and shrugs his shoulders and begins to read the book, alternately speaking in English and Spanish. I move toward the door leading into the hall, my observation time drawing to an end. I open the door and see the elementary principal walking toward me. She wants “a report.” Poor Teacher Rick.

A large piece of the ethical dilemma associated with research is embedded in the various roles of the researcher. When there is data to be collected, particularly when that

data involves “human subjects”, there are boundaries to be negotiated and reciprocal loyalties to be upheld, both in the sense of the *greater good of mankind* and in the sense of the *dignity and preservation of the human person*. This is essentially an ethical dilemma of representation. Who has the right to interpret and represent someone or something based on an experience steeped in the limitations of time? Even when the research is building upon historical data---for example, the testimonies of colleagues who have seen Teacher Rick interact with children in diverse settings over an extended period of time--- there is still the question of the researcher’s willingness to participate in a static and authoritarian representation. Because information exists and has been circulated does not mean it is trustworthy or valid. If we believe that identity is a dynamic construct, ever-changing, challenging and defying the histories that have shaped and verified it, then we need to continue to guard its moments of transformation.

Additionally, in response to statistical data collection and the reductionist mindset that suggests and in many cases believes without exception that three dimensional beings can be interpreted entirely through two-dimensional data-sets, the attempt to provide “rich, thick description” which enhances the thematic context for the reader becomes particularly problematic. Essentially, even through bringing to life a person, a family, a community, a regional dance, a cultural tradition, a “day in the life of...”, etc., we invite others into a space for which they have little context, except for the rich, thick description that we provide. Where in this invitation lies the “scrutiny of the observer?” Where, when, and in what context does the objective “I” invade the space of the reader and challenge his bias, his history of perception, his context of process?

Journal Excerpt: Classroom Observations, Day Two

Again at the request of the grade school principal, I entered into a specific classroom, one that was reputed to be the most raucous, unmanageable classroom in the entire school. According to everyone I talked to, this was what sixth grade was NOT supposed to be like. Teacher Ellen told me that she always kept the door of her classroom closed at all times to “avoid disturbing other classes where real learning was taking place.” Her assumption was that every other teacher in the school had their students under control. She obviously doesn’t get out much. When her students were getting ready to transition to their music class in another room, after the last group had pushed, shoved and stumbled past us, she faced the wall and mumbled tearfully, in so many words, that she was ashamed of her inadequacy. She said that she had taught in inner city schools for years, and that this was definitely the most difficult group of kids she had ever tried to reach. Our perceptions were on opposite ends of the spectrum. In her classroom, the desks were grouped in “fours”, two desks facing two other desks, and the students in each group, if they cooperated with one another could earn points toward some desirable sixth grade-ish prizes like “Sharpies” and “lip gloss”. Teacher Ellen appeared to be interested in all of her subjects (both academic and human). Also as an added asset to her teaching, she had good lung capacity. She could outshout most disturbances while appearing fairly calm, tirelessly continuing explanations of “mode, mean, and median” and scientific notation, over intermittent screeching choruses of the old pop favorite, “Gimme Back my Pencil!”

This interaction was one of several that I had with Teacher Ellen. Her perception of herself as a teacher and the perception of her colleagues as well as my perception based on my limited observations, but also gleaned from conversations with students, parents and administrators, was polarized. She continually saw herself as a failure, while the rest of us viewed her as a huge success. In her classroom, she was always circulating among the students, listening, and responding to questions and comments. Those of us who typically operated outside of her classroom could maintain a more forgiving and objective view of her gains with students. Although, traditional assessments of her students were not up to standard in many cases, in the context of a very difficult classroom, one that had established a pride in “badness”, she was gaining positive momentum toward behavioral improvement, relative to her situation. Throughout my time with her, she imposed a self-deprecating reflective process on her teaching efforts several times during the day----during breaks and lunch. She continues to ask my advice and I continue to assure her, I have no solutions. We then discuss the chasm that separates what she learned in her teacher education programs regarding behavioral management and *real life*.

Journal Excerpt: Classroom Observations, Day Three

My third day of “official observation” at Lummi Nation Tribal School is drawing to a close. I have spent two days in the elementary classrooms, watching, trying to withhold judgment (not an easy task), trying to watch and simultaneously confront or eradicate any bias gasping (yes, gasping---bias is a living, breathing entity, and therefore powerful and sometimes dangerous) for recognition (an impossible task). At the same time, I clear my throat, look askance and try to sound convincing as I assure the teachers

squirming under my watchful eye, that I am just an observer, really---- which given the two previously mentioned struggles resonates as a true lie. I have now graduated to high school. In the science classroom upstairs five young men drape themselves languorously across long and sturdy official tables of learning. At the front of the room, the teacher has cautiously positioned a large, heavy piece of granite on the docu-camera. Without looking up, he asks with hopeful restraint, "Can you see the layers?" A grunt emits from one or two of the draped forms, the "table-people". One young man, his bulk of flesh squirming to resist the magnetic attraction to his prone position, slides his legs to the floor. His husky upper body remains supported, his arms outstretched, fingers gripping the opposite end of the table width, chin resting, eyebrows lifted, voice loud. "Hey, Braun! I can't see nothin'!" What the teacher does next both amazes and scares me. He instructs the student to pick up the sledgehammer lying on a shelf at the back of the room. The student is more than happy to comply with this request...and this is what makes me nervous. He smiles and moves toward this potential "weapon of mass destruction". Positioning the sledgehammer at shoulder level, the student, now grinning broadly, swaggers down the aisle, jerks toward one of his classmates playfully, and feigns a strike. "Braun", wisely visualizing an inevitable temptation, casually lowers the granite mass to the floor, away from the expensive piece of equipment that was useless in exposing what are now quite visible strata of rock lying in pieces on the floor. "NOW, I see them layers, Braun."

Note to Self regarding Teacher Braun----Your teaching style is fluid and in your class students never discover a rock solid obstacle that does not offer itself as permeable

upon their approach. You teach the magic and power of transformation.

Relational Scholarship

My desire in the context of scholarship is to value and embrace a polyvocal presence, to recognize that the three distinct periods of our human lifeline: past, present, future----feverishly coalesce and translate into various displays of language, into oral traditions, into storytelling, into complex and contested inter-relationships of community, memory, visions, and dreams. My scholarship will never be solitary, removed, isolated from community. Instead it will be enriched by the primary storytelling of those who have “been there” and maintain a desire to “go there again” through memory, toward the end of discovering a purpose for hope and resolution.

Finally, I believe that the three elements of scholarship, research, and teaching are interrelated and inextricably linked together, like intertwining saplings embracing the trunk of a tree. My scholarship will always inform my teaching and reciprocally, my teaching will always inform my scholarship. My research will weave unsteadily, like drunken knowledge, looking through bleary eyes for possibilities of sensemaking. Scholarship that is relational is difficult and complex; however, it is an insistent calling:

When conceptions of the person, the self, and community are not continually called into practice, reified and reductionist concepts emerge as common practice, creating new forms of “common sense” within a profession.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: Coming Full Circle

“When you write vulnerably, others respond vulnerably”

(Ruth Behar, *The Vulnerable Observer*)

The Ethics of Ethnographic Crossings

Through each exploration of the possible contribution of this work, my goal, in part, is to present what Lorraine Code in her book, *Rhetorical Spaces* terms, an “epistemology of everyday life.” My hope is to enrich the theoretical and practical locations of my research with stories and reflections from my everyday experiences as a writer, a researcher, and a teacher, stories and reflections gleaned from and informed by, dialogical exchanges grounded in diverse learning communities, ongoing and dynamic conversations that inspire my perpetual inquiry into historical structures of privilege, rooted in class, race, gender, and other social divisions, and help me to “ground these perspectives in local, situated practice”(Holland, 2001).

This may be my last chance to impose a “chaos narrative” on you, the reader, a litany of the many incredible circumstances that make up the reality of my life. I will spare you the pain. No chaos narrative at the end. It just would not be fair. Although it *would* explain my passion for this topic and the pressure I feel to somehow get this passion down on paper, however disjointed it may seem. It would also highlight the authority I claim to speak on this topic.

Instead I will bring you into the circle of my title, “Ethnographic Crossings”. By engaging in research in communities that are not our own we are creating pathways of

access, so that we are in a sense setting precedents of expectation for both the community and for those who follow us. So, our ethical or non-ethical behaviors are potentially far-reaching. Essentially, I guess any community, regardless of ethnic, socio-political, or religious status would be considered outside of our familiar and daily scope of practice. And it is important to practice self-reflexivity when entering into *those* communities. However, I am more concerned with communities who have sustained and survived the category of “object(x) of desire”. I will pause here for a moment to provide a note of explanation----I thought it would be interesting to substitute the letter “x” for “s” and see if it made any difference to me when I viewed and considered the word, “objects”, particularly when I paired it with the thought or concept of “erasure”. It did make a difference to me. It seems more ominous and foreboding, like the “x” is not only crossing something out, but that it is also marking a place for digging, like the quest for pirate’s booty.

Anthropologists and other opportunists have been digging on the “X” in Native American Communities for quite some time. Repercussions have varied from distrust and withdrawal (on both sides) to war, imposed pestilence, and incarceration (the reservation system). I think that although it may be painful for all diverse communities to experience an arbitrary and inconsiderate authoritative approach to research, particularly one in which power and privilege are not only present but obnoxious, I think that it is particularly devastating for Native American People to continue to endure such a hardship. I know that everyone does not agree with me. Some scholars, like Philip DeLoria, welcome researchers and their money into their communities without undue protocol or consideration. Just be nice, bring money, and you can come in. That of

course is an interesting point of view. To me such an attitude enables paternalistic practice. I challenged him on this issue when I was at the University of Montana recently, and he politely “shushed” me. The room full of Participatory Researchers I am sure felt the same way. After all, they needed help and wasn’t inclusion enough?

Some Participatory Research Practices are beginning to gain momentum and that is great; however, the issue of self-reflexivity, self-disclosure and the practice of a critical self-subjectivity is lagging far behind. No time for sensitive nonsense I guess. Gotta make the grant deadlines. Hovering over the border is ridiculous, costly, and embarrassing. Just cross and be done with it.

Finally, I would like to say that I did not take a sabbatical from reading both fiction and non-fiction (as well as the necessary research materials). In fact, I think that my concept of “borders, crossings, edges, chasms, zones, etc” was enriched because of my choice to keep reading things that inspired me and moved me intermittently to spaces of joy and devastation. Trespassing upon worlds not their own is a fiction writers “rite of passage.” However, the novels I enjoy the most provide an omniscient narrator--- transparency is powerful.

AFTERWARD

“...[Y]ou journey to a site to see what remains were left behind and...reconstruct the world that these remains imply” (Toni Morrison *The Site of Memory*)

Memory...

In 1961, on the outer boundary of Plymouth, Massachusetts, a black-eyed, brown haired “Indian” girl squats near the breaking surf, gently teasing the white frothy Atlantic Ocean waves as they greedily disrupt the grainy shore, reaching desperately like bony fingers, stretching toward the historic bulk of stone with “1620” inscribed in its dark gray mass. The girl points her Keds-clad toe toward the surf as it approaches, then withdraws her sea-soaked sneaker with a squeal, once the dampness invades the canvas and makes contact with her flesh. (Nietzsche once said, “Man’s tragedy is that he was once a child.”) The father watches from a distance. The mother stands near the massive piece of granite, reading a placard on which is written documented facts about this authentic American landmark...The first time Plymouth Rock is mentioned in the historical record is 1715, when it is described in the town boundary reports as a great rock...There is no mention of the Pilgrims first setting foot on this significant boulder, nor of any memorable event taking place in, on, or around it. It is simply a marker, a visual representation of a boundary. The historical value of the rock and its representation to tourists as the literal touchstone of Pilgrim beginnings in the New World is an American mythological construct.

Tired of the sea and the predictable intervals of waves, taunting the shore with their exactness, the girl wanders toward her mother, stumbling unconsciously toward a

contested performative identity struggle. She approaches Plymouth Rock, and hears her mother murmur, "Upon disembarking from the Mayflower, the Pilgrims landed..." The girl approaches the rock, and positions her damp shoe in a small indentation in the lower half of the rock. She bends her knee and leans forward arms outstretched, fingers groping for a hold on the historic mass of stone, "I want to be a Pilgrim!" she proclaims loudly. From a distance, she hears laughter and her father's voice, "You can't be a Pilgrim, you're an Indian!" The intensity of the laughter closes in as her father approaches. She feels the firm grasp of the mother jerking her away from the rock.

"Don't tell her things like that!" the mother whispers hoarsely. "Like what? The truth?" She finds herself wedged between her parents, separating the Native from the American. The space between the two is distant yet so close it almost suffocates her. She wants to disappear. (What if her body were not vertical, but horizontal? What if she wasn't a wedge, but a magician's assistant? She would hover in the air, weightless, a symbolic line between the master and the crowd he intends to impress. Suspended in the liminal spaces. Is she an instrument of trickery or a trickster? Remain still. Close your eyes. Concentrate. They will be dazzled by your spectacle of silence. You can hover above their lives, above their world, become otherworldly. You are as light as a feather floating, surreal, reminding them that the master magician possesses power, or can at least recall power that defies momentarily the scientific laws of gravity. Levity disappearing from his tone, the father sweeps her into his big brown arms. Defeated, he carries her to the car. Crossing oceans of time, many voices echo like the wind in her ear... you're an Indian...an Indian...Indian... The mother smiles awkwardly at gawking

tourists, who seem unaware of the significance of this specific event, that a child unconsciously embodies a moment of historical tension centered around an entity of symbolic importance, a cultural identity at odds with a physical representation of semiotic profundity.

Deconstructing Memory

In her book, *Critical Ethnography*, D. Soyini Madison describes Semiotics as an analytical technique examining how signs perform or evoke meaning and communication within a particular context”(62-63). Every entity then is a potential sign. Therefore, the rock that inspires my declaration in the previous story, “Memory” is a sign. Also, my desire (in the Lacanian sense) to be recognized, to be validated within the confines of what I thought to be a historically valuable identity, is a sign contributing to a newly inspired integrated system: the contested beginnings of my social code. Jay Lemke in his book, *Textual Politics* (1995), describes Semiotics as a discourse about meaning that is useful in considering questions such as “How do meanings depend on contexts? How is one meaning related to another? How do systems of meanings change?” He further asserts that “all meanings are made within communities and that the analysis of meaning should not be separated from the social historical, cultural and political dimensions of these communities” (9).

Beyond the identity of Native-American, I have other Hyphenate-American terms to be concerned about, identities and labels which continue to evolve, labels that still impact my life and inform my interest in the fields of specialization and emphasis I now claim as my own, and wish to explore further in the context of my scholarly work.

I am *interested* in the various constructs of the Hyphenate-Identity, those two rhetorical, semiotic elements, but I am *fascinated* with the symbol that joins them---the linear line that floats in the liminal spaces between these two constructed categories. It is a line that appears to transcend space and time. As illustrated earlier in the “Memory” vignette, the line could be interpreted as a wedge, perpetually separating the two identities, forever forging a relational existence, albeit, one of contested space, and dubious connection. The line could also be interpreted as possessing some degree of magnetic energy, but one that repels instead of attracts, one that recognizes the power of this construct as an integrated unit, and wishes to thwart it, one whose purpose it is to fill the spaces on each side of it with oppositional energies to ensure permanent separation.

Current Projects and Passions

The linear line that floats in the liminal spaces between two constructed categories now inundates me. I live near and work on the Yakama Indian Reservation with both Native-Americans and Mexican-Americans, many of whom struggle with the line that defines their political and social positions. Heritage University is located on the Yakama Indian Reservation in the midst of Hop Fields---ironically. The beer industry is booming on the reservation and during harvest season, one cannot escape the pungent smell permeating the air. Smells like home. Working in the fields are Mexican people, many of whom are illegal. Feels like home. My first week on campus at Heritage, I stopped at a gas station in Wapato on my way to work and was approached by a woman who asked me in Spanish, if I would like to buy a dozen tamales; when I got to campus, The Indian Club was selling Frybread....Sounds and tastes like home.

I am reaching beyond my comfort zone (and limits) as I attempt to Chair the English and Humanities Department, implement two grants I helped write—The Raikes Scholars Grant and our Native American Retention Grant, and coordinate the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship. I return to my comfort zone when I enter my classrooms full of “hyphenated students” hungry for high level, challenging dialogue that evokes visions of our collective histories and dreams.

Recently, in July of 2008, I facilitated a “Teacher/Technology Workshop” on site at the Umatilla Cultural Center in Pendleton, Oregon and was accompanied by a WSU graduate student who worked wonderfully hard right along side me (thank you, M.R.) The three day workshop engaged teachers in dialogues of social constructs of identity and competency (theirs, as well as standards imposed on the students and the community). It also enabled them to build websites (pbwiki.com) of interest to their specific class environments, with a specific emphasis on hyperlinks that would enrich their knowledge of the Umatilla local history---Umatilla and other Plateau Peoples.

This fall, I am teaching all sections (3) of English 101, our Freshman Composition course, for the purpose of assessment. In our department almost half of our students have to repeat the course not once but several times in order to pass. My theory is that there is something wrong in the way the course is being taught. We are not reaching or engaging our specific population of students. I teach with an interdisciplinary subject focus, and I choose broad themes for our papers that I know will engage my unique students and connect to their shared knowledges. Also, this year I am implementing a strategy for teaching basic writing structures that I am calling “Relational Writing”. I present a circular, visual construct that highlights relationships between

various elements of writing and then have my students consistently identify the structure and apply it to their own writing. I am excited so far about the responses.

My work in the community continues as I meet with various groups about the preservation of the Sahaptin Language and issues revolving around “parental involvement”, as well as “community wellness”. I am developing and sustaining important relationships in the community, both with young people and Elders, and am grateful that I have the opportunity to live the philosophy and implement the scholarship put forth in my graduate work.

A significant culminating experience should always end with a note to one’s mother...

Your sense of how the world functions simultaneously as connected and poetically disjointed inspires me and continues to taunt me with dreams of harmony and resolution. My love of all that is beautiful and my acceptance of all that is imperfect is due to your tolerance of my childhood curiosity—my informal study of the natural world: my “leaf, frog and snake collections”, my makeshift hospital for “disabled insects and animals”. You saved shoeboxes and old rags so that my “patients” would have soft beds. My love of reading is directly related to your love of libraries. My love of music is directly related to your tolerance of my misguided hands plunking on the piano you bought for me with money you saved in the “Indian Cookie Jar”. My love of art began when you painted a picture of cherries in a bowl and critiqued (excessively) your perceived lack of not being able to “mix the colors just right”. I thought your work was perfect, and I was sure that other artists could not do any better. I am still looking for one who can.

After you left me, I visited your school, formerly called *The Peninsula School of Creative Education*, now simply known as *The Peninsula School*. It is still located in the Coleman Mansion. I came looking for your voice. I came to hear the echo of your footsteps. I wanted to touch the mural that your third grade class painted under the staircase. Instead, I found a gigantic and colorful rendition of Bob Marley. It seems that every year, the children were allowed to paint over the previous murals.

I finally found you on the third floor, in the pottery room, the only room that has remained the same since the inception of the school in 1925. I envisioned you at the potter's wheel, eight year old hands forming and shaping a piece of clay...(the blue pitcher), the oak tree in plain view just outside the large white-framed window. It is old and faded, but still sports a tire swing. I can see your brown legs reaching for the highest branches...it reminds me of the Robert Louis Stephenson poem you would read to me...*How would you like to go up in a swing, up in the air so blue...*

More than for anyone else, this work is for you. It is the "culminating experience" of all that you taught me. So many lessons steeped in critical moments of history. I know you tried to keep me from the "reservation life", and you did, but now I have returned. I have come driven not by sadness, anger, judgment or regret, but by questions. I know you will forgive me. You once told me that questions held a seductive power that was irresistible. "When I die" you said, "I hope it is with a question on my lips".

You whisper to me as I descend the stairs of the mansion. You wave to me from the third story window, face pressed against the glass. I read your lips. You are quoting Josephine Whitney Duvoneck...*"We can be forgiven our orderliness, but never the taming of the free spirit of inquiry..."*

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A. (Dissertation Abstracts International No. 53,3459)

APPENDIX A

Indian Education Outreach Project Site Visit Report

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|------------------|--------------|
| Name: Winona Beck | | Date of visit: Nov. 7, 8, 9, 2005 | | |
| Site: Lummi Nation School | | | | |
| Time spent: On site all three days from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. | | | | |
| Contacts: Cheryl McBride (Elementary Principal), Dave Tomlin (High School Principal and interim Superintendent), Bev Mowerer (21st Century Grant), Helen Feiger (Special Education Director), | | | | |
| <small>Please record the number of each type of peoples you had contact with from the options below.</small> | | | | |
| Administrators | Teachers | Students | Para Pros | Other |
| # 4 | # 15 | # 15 direct conversations with students | # 6 | # 3 |

Purpose (please highlight one):

Initial Visit
 Follow-up
 Training
 Data Collection
 Observation

Primary Objectives of Visit: This visit fulfilled a promise of the previous work-shop to “return collected data to the school and provide relevant, specific strategies for its implementation.” In this context two requested “Three-Point Walk-Thrus” took place in the elementary grades, and one requested “Three-Point Walk-Thru” took place in the High School. In addition, informal classroom observations, both in the elementary and the high school inspired dialogues with teachers and staff about possible content for the “Peer Mentoring” course (2 credits) to be offered through the University of Idaho in the spring of 2006. In the “Accommodation Workshop” in August, administrators, teachers, and staff agreed that the curriculum for the proposed course needed to emerge from the individual and collective needs of the teachers, administrators and staff at Lummi. The final objective then was to study the culture of the school to determine how such a course could support “Best Practice” be imbedded in the school day, not be imposed as an additional demand on time, and most importantly validate and enhance the informal mentoring already in place. Cheryl also mentioned during one of our meetings that the BIA, in the last few days or so, mandated “Peer Mentoring.”

Joanne Harrison put together a packet of quality materials from OSPI, “Mentoring: The Achievement Advantage for All” and in addition there are several key mentoring texts available which could be adapted for the specific needs of the Lummi Nation School. One text is *Mentor* by Laurent A. Daloz which stresses the fluid role of “teaching mentor,” and another text which

may be useful is *The Mentor's Guide* by Lois J. Zachary, which is a more hands-on workbook to explore effective mentoring practice. However, it is critical to remember that the core concepts for a "peer mentoring" course need to evolve from the specific place and experiences of those who are grounded already in some form of mentoring practice at Lummi. Validate "Best Practice" efforts already in place to build trust.

Summary of Visit: Arriving in the early morning afforded me the opportunity to observe both the elementary and high school students have breakfast and to see how the serving schedule functioned for the students, teachers, and kitchen staff. I elected to sit with a different elementary grade each of the three days I was at Lummi. After breakfast on the first day, I observed the first grade classroom of Rick Salinas (one of my "Three Point Walk-Thrus") at the request of Elementary Principal, Cheryl McBride. In this first grade class, thirteen out of twenty children were present. This absence rate proved to be typical in most of the elementary classes I observed. Principal McBride and Rick will both receive my observation report. In addition to Rick's class, I observed the third grade class of Vickie Howell. I also functioned as her substitute teacher when she needed to leave the school for a family emergency. I taught the reading lesson. I returned to Vickie's class on my second day, and was able to debrief my observations with her in an after-school conversation. It was very useful to understand her actions in a context which included behavioral insights from months of daily educational contact. Again, both Vickie and Principal McBride will receive my "Three-Point Walk Thru" (two compliments and a wish) observation report.

Also on the first day I was able to have an extended conversation with Cheryl McBride and learned that the school had just completed a "Bully's Beware" training with Elizabeth Daly as the facilitator. In addition to the education piece for teachers, related to behavioral interventions, the parents in the community were invited to participate in a dialogue. Attendance was good. The goal Cheryl has for the school as a result of this training is to continue to work on a "common language" for all teachers, para pros, and other staff. I attended a meeting at 8:00 a.m. for teachers on my second day in which she addressed this issue and received a positive response from teachers. Ideas for implementing "common rules of conduct" were agreed upon by the teachers, and para pros.

Helen Feiger informed me that she received "almost final approval" to hire a behavioral specialist who would be able to develop an in-school suspension program for the elementary grades (something greatly needed) which would reduce the out-of-school suspensions which many times exacerbate already tense relations between community and school, and which also many times lead to additional referrals outside of the community into the state or legal system. Helen is in the process of writing a job description for the position and they are hoping to have someone in that role by the end of the year.

Other classroom observations included Mrs. Hottman's fourth grade class in which she read a novel whose context was Coastal Salish Indian Culture, Mrs. Campbells' sixth grade class where her para pro is one of the elders of the Samish Tribe (the self-proclaimed Tribal Chief), Kim Gumley's resource room, which was in its second day of an innovative format implemented by Kim, in which she split a group of sixteen, previously meeting in one room with dividers into four groups of four with para pros overseeing the other three groups. Although the groups were

in different rooms, they were all in close proximity. Kim did an amazing job of engaging with the students in her room and keeping them on task. She was innovative, bright and patient working through difficult student behaviors by offering choices. In the high school, I observed Dave Brahn's science class for three periods. I participated in his in-class Geology lab and helped a few students identify rocks, and then for one of the periods I went outside with the class to participate in the collection of data in the context of "Newtonian Physics." Mr. Brahn's class made their own bows and arrows in a previous class and used them to gather some "distance over time" data. Mr. Brahn set the target at 100 ft. and then the students would shoot their traditional Plateau Indian Bows and measure the time (by stopwatch) it took for their arrows to hit their mark (or not). It was an amazingly "interdisciplinary" science course, as Mr. Brahn casually talked about the hunting techniques of the Plateau Indians while the students took their mark. I was able to shoot a special bow, made by Mr. Brahn, a Plains Indian bow and he explained to me the very different "shooting" technique needed to effectively hunt buffalo on horseback. In summary, my time at Lummi was an insightful feast and a joy. I felt very connected to the community of the school.

Recommended Follow-up: I need to send the two specific "Three Point Walk Thru" observations to the teachers and the principals. A flyer needs to be constructed advertising the opportunity for the "Peer Mentoring" class proposed for spring. If possible, it would be useful to create an e-mail list which would provide direct contact to teachers for the purpose of course updates to build interest and momentum. It would also be good to organize a "Parent Night" and show a film at an informal gathering, just to give parents an opportunity to come to a "no obligation" meeting at the school for the purpose of building community.

Potential Impact on Students: As was mentioned in several meetings, students know when inconsistency is afoot and they take advantage of the distraction to create more inconsistency. A effective peer mentoring program strengthens teacher relationships which in turn creates more positive accountability for students.

Next Visit: My suggestion for a follow-up visit would be imbedded in the Peer Mentoring course. Four contact visits throughout the spring when classes are in session. In addition, please note that the proposal for the Peer Mentoring course will follow. Specific guidelines were suggested and explored through several conversations with the administration, teachers, para pros and staff at Lummi. The proposal will be specific as well.

APPENDIX B

Notes from Lummi Meeting with Cheryl

Day 1:

- I. Cheryl opening intro dialogue connection to other workshops (15-20 min.)
- II. Specifically located peer mentoring professional development. Interactive Cheryl & Winona. 20 min. Hybrid format. Face to face distance processing. PowerPoint slides. Growth and trust collaboration. K-12 collaboration. SIPTAP peer mentoring. Working on building staff attendance.
- III. Cheryl's video. 20 min. roundtable discussion w/ Lummi teachers. Barrier of "you don't know the kids" not always a racial or cultural issue. Fear of discovering inadequacy. → Defense of why they choose to work here.
- IV. Reframing: Learning to question. Teacher process. Engaging in dialogue. Modeling from leadership. Maintain authority. Teachers as experts in their own classes. → No context for learning ← PMDAS. How do you maintain authority by engaging in dialogue? SIPTAP= consensus building. Critical mass= progress. Rationale peer mentoring. Redefine Lauren Dalay. Beginning dialogue → Unique program specific to location. Leadership- nurturing teacher leadership.

Cheryl July 23rd (25th/26th conference call)

Original interest in peer mentoring.

- I. Effort & value. Reduce turnover. "what's going on in there?" Build collaborative team. Part of accreditation. Peer mentoring process SIPTAP → Based on need for authentic evaluations. Leadership conference. School improvement process mandates peer mentoring.
- II. What is best for "kids" regardless of leadership → *Experienced vs. novice
- III. Student achievement and data. How does this inform and how does this enhance peer mentoring. 3X this fear. SIPTAP. Consistency in gathering data. Teacher authority → Change is a positive thing. Work environment vs. learning environment. Focus on student achievement.
- IV. Building on individual strengths by naming a specific teachers process in the → How does this inform peer mentoring. Specificity in naming teacher strength and contribution.

Defense of why work here? Validation of peer mentoring helps answer this question.

Round Table format w/ 3 or 4

SIPTAP & peer mentoring is the time when SPED & mainstream are together

Resource table [Resource books for group discussion]

Film "TSOTSI" DVD available July 18

**Engaging ideas
in a community
context**



A small update....for the course. There is a new announcement posted on the discussion forum. Also, there are two questions posted that relate to the Module 2 readings. Everyone has a choice...to either respond to the questions, or to e-mail me two questions as we discussed the last time we met.

In the module 2 readings....

Which of these stereotypes have been internalized by your students? Which of these stereotypes have you internalized, either consciously or unconsciously?

Which of these stereotypes are reinforced through western civilization historical narratives in textbooks? Through other sources?

Also in the Module 2 readings....

Which of the historical occurrences listed have you heard about? Witnessed? Heard your students talk about?

How does this impact the way you view the Native Community....how your students view their community and themselves?

Modules 3 and 4 have been discontinued due to time constraints and the understandable shift of focus toward the end of our time together.

APPENDIX D

Lummi Professional Development

Peer Mentoring Observation Journals: Total of 12 observations for the course

- **Two classroom observations each week**
- **Several paragraphs (2-3) of “what surprised me, what intrigued me, what do I not understand?”**
- **Include clarification discussions of “I observed this situation, but what does it mean in the context of your classroom space?”**
- **Does your teacher-peer want you to help strategize a solution? Include possibilities in your critical analysis.**

The overall goal of the peer mentoring journal is to help you further discover through careful observation and process writing what is happening in teaching spaces beyond your own. It is intended to develop your own awareness of situations and also to be a second set of eyes for your teacher-peer. We will be sharing some of the highlights of these observations when we meet again on Wednesday, May 31st.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR OPEN AND THOUGHTFUL RESPONSES to our current discussion questions. There are 4 questions in our current module. Please feel free to interact with all of them. It has been very encouraging to note teachers pushing the topic and asking additional critical questions. I have been reading consistently, but have not been responding to every post--two reasons:

1. I do not want to dominate the conversation, but would like it to remain your space of process. Conversations with people who are in the day-to-day practice of teaching at Lummi understand nuances of behaviors and also intimately understand the specific demands on your energy and time, and so therefore empathy has the potential to be exercised as an authentic expression.
2. I am STILL thinking about how to respond to some complex issues you have raised--how do I gently guide the conversation to new depths avoiding the obvious affirmation or denial?

A NOTE ON VISION STATEMENTS: Please continue to shape your “Peer Partner Vision Statements”. There will soon be a link on the “Homepage” of the website where we will post them. Also, we will be sharing them again in our meeting on Wednesday, May 31st.

A Semi-Final Word:

Please e-mail or phone me with any concerns or suggestions. Also, any topics (articles, sites) you would like to see posted or linked, let us know.

winona@wsu.edu (509) 335-2609, winonab@uidaho.edu (208) 885-3007

APPENDIX E

It is important to bring up that while every vanguard theorist, practitioner, activist mother and child in existence recognize the limitations, offenses and the tragic reduction of humanity that the “Positivist Paradigm” propagates, we must know *and* remind ourselves that research institutions, corporate and private grant foundations, both domestic and international non-profits, National Centers for education, economics, ecology----what and whomever, still define and control “us” *and* “them” through statistical representation, through the embedded tenets of the Positivist Paradigm and that they signify the finality of “truth” by stating emphatically, “Numbers don’t lie”. To the contrary, throughout the two years of my community research, I have learned that not only is the “truth” not final, but that numbers do indeed lie, they lie dormant.

| Axioms About | Positivist Paradigm | Naturalist Paradigm |
|---|--|---|
| The nature of reality | Reality is single, tangible, and fragmentable. | Realities are multiple, constructed, and holistic |
| The relationship of knower to the known | Knower and known are independent, a dualism | Knower and known are interactive, inseparable |
| The possibility of generalization | Time-and context-free generalizations (nomothetic statements) are possible—generalizations, truth-statements free from both time and context | Only time-and-context-bound working hypotheses (idiographic statements) are possible. Describes the individual case. |
| The possibility of causal linkages | There are real causes, temporally precedent with or simultaneous with their effects. | All entities are in a state of mutual, simultaneous shaping, so that it is impossible to distinguish causes from effects. |
| The role of values | Inquiry is value-free | Inquiry is value-bound |

(Lincoln & Guba, 1993)

FIVE Assumptions of Positivism: (table as list)

- An ontological assumption of a single, tangible reality “out there” that can be broken apart into pieces capable of being studied independently; the whole is simply a sum of the parts.
- An epistemological assumption about the possibility of separation of the observer from the observed—the knower from the known.
- An assumption of the temporal and contextual independence of observations, so that what is true at one time and place may, under appropriate circumstances (such as sampling) also be true at another time and place.
- An assumption of linear causality; there are no effects without causes and no causes without effects.
- An axiological assumption of value freedom, that is, that the methodology guarantees that the results of an inquiry are essentially free from the influence of any value system (bias)” (Lincoln & Guba, 1993).

APPENDIX F

Wynn Spring 2006

University of Idaho Spring 2006 Indian Education Outreach Project Peer Mentoring Syllabus- Winona Wynn

Rationale for Course: The need for teacher support at the level of practice is critical, particularly for tribal schools where student and teacher relationships are strained due to community and family stressors which often times remain unarticulated or specifically defined in the context of the classroom accommodation strategies and “Best Practice.”

Course Objectives:

- To recognize and validate informal mentoring already in progress
- To define non-hierarchical “collaborative mentoring”
- To create and sustain creative, innovative mentoring relationships
- To support the day-to-day efforts of teachers in the context of classroom practice and data collection
- To articulate elements necessary to support a school-wide mentoring culture
- To collaboratively develop a strategic plan to support an embedded “Learner-centered Mentoring Paradigm” in the classroom and the school

Course Description: This eight week, two-credit, peer mentoring “course” delivered through a distance learning format, will include four face-to-face meetings designed to collaboratively articulate a vision for peer mentoring in a specific school context, enhance ongoing discussions, share progress on data collection, and finally to provide a forum for a collaborative dialogue related to ethnographic and case study research in the context of the peer mentoring experience---critical reflections exploring our growth as mentors and research collaborators. The course content, specifically group discussion prompts will reflect an interdisciplinary research focus of teacher support in a practical context. Teachers may receive 2 academic credits through the University of Idaho. The course will be divided into four emphasis modules:

Classroom Management Building Successful Educational Spaces- April 5th

This first professional development module will set the tone and define the structure for the remainder of our time together. We will discuss highlights of several recent research articles, key portions of which will be posted on our interactive class website which will be ready for us toward the end of March. We will also explore ideas gleaned from the work of Robert J. Marzano, *Classroom Management that works: Research-based Strategies for Every Teacher*. Most importantly, however, the “what works or what doesn’t work and why not” dialogue will emerge from your day-to-day experiences and will provide the foundation for building successful educational spaces. The interactive piece to this module will include role-playing of specific classroom management scenarios (no chair throwing or spit-wads allowed). This module is intended to be a partial fulfillment of the objective to “support the day-to-day efforts of teachers in the context of classroom practice.” This exploration is also designed to enhance the ongoing Reflective Observation Journals emerging from the peer mentoring interactions (see “course synopsis and class projects”).

Ethnography as Pedagogy: Exploring Your Classroom Dynamic- May 3rd

This second professional development module will also support the goal of the fourth course objective, “to support teachers in their efforts to maintain and be informed by relevant, current, and specific data collection.” The research dialogue for this module will derive from the work of June Gordon, *Beyond the Classroom Walls: Ethnographic Inquiry as Pedagogy*. The bulk of her work materialized from interactions with teachers, students and education administrators in Washington State who worked and lived in the Seattle, Bellingham, Oak Harbor, and Tacoma areas. The project for this module will be a “classroom ethnography” which essentially translates into a “case study” which for elementary teachers will involve a simple five question form modeled after the University of Minnesota’s “Expanding the Circle” curriculum. The idea is to articulate through a simple student-centered interview, one dimension of learning successes and challenges present in your classroom space. In addition to the interview, you will provide a more holistic narrative which provides a context for this “case study.” This will be the “ethnographic” portion of your classroom dynamic. For upper level grade teachers, the “Expanding the Circle” curriculum may be a little basic, and so you will can either build on the questions, or redesign the questions to fit your specific needs. You will also provide a holistic narrative to provide a context for your specific classroom dynamic. These projects will be shared with peer mentors, and an agreed upon (between you and your mentor) portion of the projects will be shared with the group as a whole via our class webspace (discussion board). Hopefully, as a collective voice, we can provide further insights into your experiences.

Peer Mentoring Support: Sharing and Reflecting on Observations May 31st

This third professional development module will support the objectives of “creating innovative peer mentoring relationships, articulating elements of a school-wide peer mentoring culture, to participate in non-hierarchical collaborative mentoring, etc.” The primary “task” of this module is to maintain a “Peer Mentoring Reflective Journal.” To build your cross-curricular mentoring partnership(s), you will share insights with your peer mentor and to a more selective degree with the larger group. The material for the journal will come from two classroom observations which you will arrange with your mentor. The reflective journal can be as brief or as extensive as you need it to be in order thoroughly assess what kinds of learning are taking place, to note positive strategies used by your mentor-partner which contribute to a creative and effective learning space, and also to note areas which may need improvement. Your role is not to threaten, cajole or ridicule (not that you ever would). Instead, your role is to provide a new set of collaborative and supportive “eyes and ears.” I realize that we are “protective” of our classroom spaces, to varying degrees, and that another presence evaluating our methods and/or practices can be a bit uncomfortable or can be perceived as threatening (hence our interpretations of comments as critical and negative). Please keep in mind, the goal of this module and of this training is to support teachers at all levels and to build trust in the area of professional development.

Resource Tools: Creating an Individualized Teacher Survivor Kit June 7th

This final module will provide a useful context for the culmination of all of our process and hard work. The “survivor kit” will be a collection of key elements of this training course that you found useful. We will discuss various ways these pieces of information can manifest themselves---reminders tattooed on your forearms or forehead, large and colorful paper necklaces with “classroom management” strategies printed on them, knitted socks with special pockets in which you can hide small pieces of paper which say things like, “note to self: **Do not** grimace when I walk into the classroom.” Just kidding. Okay, the idea is that you can be as creative or as uncreative as you like. The goal for this final module is that you finish this professional development training with useful resources and insights relevant to your specific teaching spaces, and a new peer mentoring relationship which will continue to offer you support in your day-to-day teaching challenges. Part of this survivor kit will be a reference list with either the articles themselves or links to articles posted on our class webpage.

Synopsis of Course and Class Projects

Online Discussions, reflections, individual descriptions of learning goals and anticipated outcomes, classroom data gathering project (ethnography of classroom culture and case study of an individual student. Across school boundaries “Teaching Observations” (2 per week per teacher) Interactive class webpage up by the end of March. Four face-to-face meetings to clarify, troubleshoot, dialogue about progress, address concerns, celebrate successes, etc. Dates of on-site visits: April 5, May 3, May 31, June 7, 2006.

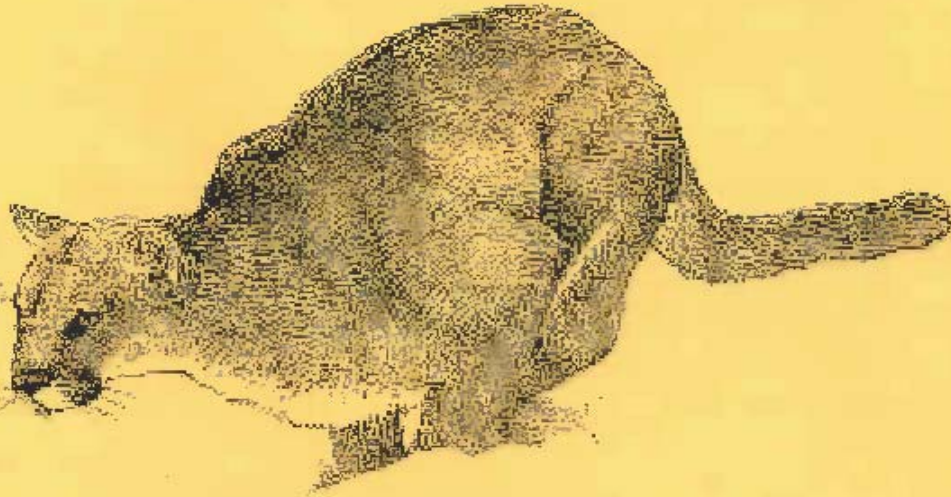
Class Projects are as follows: The Peer Mentoring Reflective Journal is intended to be a record of your teaching process (number of pages to be determined the first face-to-face meeting). The Ethnography/Case Study will be a more formal presentation of your research-based teaching, intended to be a model for gathering data on a consistent basis, the elements, structure and design of this project will be discussed in our first fact-to-face meeting as well. A handout will be provided at that time. The final project of a “survivor kit” will be the most connected project to come out of our time together. It can take any form you find most useful—the most formal version of which could be a collaborative teaching article for publication? We will discuss the possibilities at our first face-to-face meeting as well—Lots to talk about!

The ending words I would like to share with you (until we establish a beginning conversation next month) are in the context of your development as professionals in the field of education: Thank you for your interest in your personal growth as it applies to and informs your vision of Indian Education (if you don’t have a vision for Indian Education yet, then work on one). I have to believe that as educators we are all interested in a transformative pedagogy, one that changes, “them” and “us,” and moves somehow beyond the binary of “them” and “us.” In Indian Country we believe in the power of circles, not simply going in them as we sometimes do, but in the way they connect histories (both good and bad), and the sustained visions of those histories—the nurturing of our children and the preservation of our cultures. I really look forward to seeing all of you soon!

APPENDIX G

MOVING ON? WHERE ARE YOU GOING NEXT?
WHERE ARE YOU HEADED?

WE SUGGEST WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY!



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY IS A FANTASTIC PLACE TO LEARN AND GROW. THIS CAMPUS OFFERS EXCITING THINGS TO DO LIKE INTRAMURAL SPORTS, CLUBS, AND A FABULOUS GYM WITH EVERYTHING YOU WILL EVER NEED.... THE TEACHERS HERE ARE GREAT, AND LOVE TO HELP YOU SUCCEED. THE FOOD ISN'T HALF BAD. IT'S REALLY QUITE ENJOYABLE.
I LOVE BEING A COUGAR!

WINONA WYNN
ANY QUESTIONS? WINONA@WSU.EDU

Washington State University was a wonderful choice to attend school for me. This university offers many different majors and can fulfill any area you are interested in with your career. Although I have only so far attended this school for one semester, I have learned many things that have helped me become a more independent and mature of a person. I would highly recommend this university to all of you who are interested in gaining a full knowledge and having a fun time! The people, professors and staff are extremely friendly and more than welcoming which is one of the main reasons why I love going here. If you want to attend a school that fulfills your every need, then attend Washington State University!

~Kristina Patterson~

Washington State University is a wonderful place to go to school. There are many clubs, organizations and cultural events to attend. WSU is also a very culturally diverse place, where it is easy to feel comfortable and welcomed. Along with that, WSU's teachers are very professional and helpful, for the most part you can get a hold of your professor at about anytime and he/she is willing to help to guide you into attaining a better understanding. As a freshman, I feel at home and welcome at WSU, plus it is only 2 1/2 hours from home giving me the independence to make my own, while being close enough to go home.

Kayla Metlow

As Dave Chappelle would say "Sir, my message is simple..." WSU is phenomenal. The biggest thing I've noticed right off the bat is a strong sense of community. Coming to a huge college made me somewhat nervous. I had a lot of worries about how I would handle attending classes with massive hoards of students and disappearing into the crowd. However, this has not been the case so far. All but one of my professors are amazing. They're extremely helpful and are willing to go above and beyond their call of duty to help me succeed. So if you haven't made a decision on school, consider being part of the cougar family and knowing that you have a place on campus, in the dorms, and in the classroom. GO COUGS!

-Kendall Brenneise-

Why WSU is the BOMB!!

When I first started applying to colleges, I applied to WSU because it was close to home. That was pretty much the only reason, but as I looked at the other schools that I was applying to, I slowly began to realize how different WSU was from the rest. I ended up deciding on WSU because of the community. We are a school in a tiny town whose population is 80% college students. Because of this, there is never a lack of opportunities for the college students to get involved. There are things that you can do for fun (granted, not a lot because Pullman is so small) and there are also things that you can do to help you with school, adjustment, and almost anything you need help with. There is no big city to distract you when you really need to do work, but there can be some big city events. Everyone at WSU is in the same place. It sounds kind of stupid, but we're all here in a tiny little town, finding ways to entertain ourselves. Because Pullman is so small, we all understand where each other is coming from, even though we all come from very different backgrounds. I love the unity in diversity that is found in Pullman. Good luck applying to college, and GO COUGS!

Washington State University is a fantastic place to learn and grow. This campus offers exciting things to do like intramural sports, club and a fabulous gym with everything you will ever need. They also have a place where you can rent any type of outdoor equipment you imagination can think of. For instance I rented two snowboarding packages that included a new board, new binding, new boots for a mere 50 dollars for all of winter break. The teachers here are great, and love to help you succeed. The food isn't half bad. It is really quit enjoyable. I love being a Cougar.

Shaun Huntington

Why WSU?

If you did not know already, WSU rocks. From the moment I set foot onto this campus I fell in love with it. This University is a huge community of college students. You are not thrown into a huge city full of millions of strangers, or stuck in a small community college. Pullman is a small town, not much more than a speed bump on the road to Spokane, yet it is full of nothing but college students. Everyone in town is in the same boat, going to school, people understand and because of a mutual understanding of college life it is very easy to make friends. Pullman is a college kids Disney land. That's all I'm going to say. Make the best discussion of your life and apply.

Jaron Lindbom

I am from California and I chose to attend WSU because I was eager to leave California. WSU offered great classes with excellent professors who enjoy helping their students receive the most from their education. They spend time outside of class to prepare students for exams or to help edit their papers. It offered an excellent program for my major. Everyone is very connected and the atmosphere is extremely friendly. Even though the football team is not the best, everyone rallies together to give their full support at the games.

Chris

Mark

I chose Washington State University for a couple of reasons. One reason why I chose WSU is because when I came and visited the campus it just felt like the place for me. I had visited other colleges and none felt the way the WSU felt. Another reason why I choose WSU is because it had a Sports Management program, which is a major that I am strongly considering. I also knew a lot of people who were coming here which I knew would make it easier when I first came to campus.

Jaimee Jewell

WSU: Party School or No?

Coming from Boulder, CO, home of the University of Colorado (Number one party school in the U.S.) the rumors of WSU being a party school did not concern me. When my sister graduated from high school, I was seven years old, and she had made the mistake of choosing CU. So, from a young age I made it my goal to get out of Boulder. I dreamed of going to college in California, but with tuition promising me a future of debt, I turned my attention to Washington. I visited about nine schools across the state, because I had visited Washington every year to see family in Spokane and felt like this state was a second home for me. I finally toured the WSU campus and fell in love with the welcoming atmosphere here. I was once interested in a degree in Communications, so this school seemed like the perfect choice for me. I have come to love the party atmosphere, although it can get kind of distracting. Being at this school has been a great experience for me so far, meeting many people I plan on staying friends with for the rest of my life. I would recommend applying here with the expectation that managing your time is a key component to surviving in this environment. I love it here, except for my gened class.

Jonathan Lee
November 16, 2006

Washington State University is the perfect university for me. It is the only institution for higher education for me in fact. During the fall of 2005, I applied to several colleges and was rejected from all of them except WSU, there was of course the letter from University of Washington Bothell. The pretenses I applied to UW and Western Washington were that they sponsored the Formula Society of Automotive Engineers who build a Formula style club, the school was far away from home and that it was not a community college. I wanted the real college experience. To be far away from home where I could improve on the skills needed later in life. So far, it has proved to be a successful experiment. I have met many people from different walks of life broadening my perspective on life and giving me a chance to be successful in the academic world while enjoying the experience of college life.

The reason why I chose to come to WSU is because of the communications program. I want to major in broadcast news and I was informed that the communications program was among the top ten in the country. I also like Pullman because its only an hour and a half away from home and I like to visit on the weekends. WSU, Eastern and the University of Montana are the only schools I applied to, and although I got accepted to all three, WSU was my first choice. I recommend WSU because it is culturally diverse and has something for everyone. The only downside is the hills, but you get used to those!

Washington State University is a great school to attend. It has 250 majors to pick from, and outstanding professors who teach different courses. It's not hard to meet new people here too; when I came to WSU I was coming alone. I had no friends or family coming with me. I was scared and terrified because I expected college to be way different than high school. Little did I know that I was wrong. I became best friends with my roommate and made many more friends while doing other activities. Like intramural soccer and diversity club. I highly suggest anyone to go to Washington State University it's a great college.

John Schram

When I was thinking about which college I would like to attend, I thought WSU would be right for me. I was right. I hail from Puyallup, Washington and WSU is all the way on the other side of the state. This means that it's far away enough from home for me to not feel controlled by my parents too much, but still in the state. The fact that Pullman gets all kinds of different weather drew me to WSU as well. Back home, it seems like it is either wet or hot all year around, and I love the diverse weather over here. Consider carefully what's important to you when considering what you want to pursue for a higher education.

Alex

Washington State University is a great college. Coming here there were a lot of new things that I experienced; I had to live on my own, live a couple hours away from home, and make new friends. Also you have to acclimate yourself to the new academic structure. But because everyone is in the same situation that you are, it makes it easier to find friends. The first week of school you meet a lot of people. I am only in my first semester of college and it is already so exciting. I feel I am part of a community at WSU.

WSU?

World class face to face. To decide to go to college is a monumental decision, the decision of which one to attend even more so. I will not say WSU, is the school for you, that life will be the best there, but I can say that WSU has great communications, writing, and veterinary programs. While there are great teachers and programs at WSU, there are also horrible teachers.

Lummi Nation Professional Development

Wednesday, May 31, 2006

1:00- 4:30

Peer Mentoring Objectives and Goals

- To “open the classroom doors” and provide opportunities to share your teaching knowledge and experience with others (Group Activities in **bold**)

Interactive small group session: “Teacher/Student Identities”

Identity is the social, the cultural, the historical with a human face (Wenger, 2004)

What are some of the everyday roles/identities you bring to the classroom?

I am a father, a mother, a sister, an uncle, an auntie, a great dancer, a cook...

I am kind, artistic, an enthusiastic weight lifter, a child advocate, an empathetic listener...

Which of these roles/identities do you share with your students? Does this impact your understanding of their experiences? If no, why not? If yes, in what ways?

Consult with your group and agree upon one illustrative story, either an individual story or a composite story of “your” classroom experience that shows how sharing a common path might impact the student/teacher relationship.

- To see classroom observations as a supportive, not necessarily as a corrective tool (two compliments and a wish)

Interactive Peer Mentor Sharing: “The Fly on the Wall: Classroom Observations”

What was one area of focus for your classroom observation? What kind of context did you create in order to share your observations with your peer mentor? Did you use the classroom assessment form available on our website or did you create your own criteria based on conversations with your mentor?

- To provide a guide for “open interviewing” of students for the purpose of local, specific, relevant data collection directly related to and informed by your classroom spaces and experiences.

Practice open-ended interviewing with your peer mentor: “Tell me about your fourth grade teacher...”

Examples of “open-ended” questions:

Tell me more about the time when....

Describe the process of....

Tell me more about the person who taught you about....

What stands out for you when you remember....