

***Bibliothèque
et Archives
nationales***

Québec



Le présent fichier est une publication en ligne reçue en dépôt légal, convertie en format PDF et archivée par Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec. L'information contenue dans le fichier peut donc être périmée et certains liens externes peuvent être inactifs.

Version visionnée sur le site Internet d'origine le 12 août 2013

Section du dépôt légal

EDITORIAL

NARRATIVE MATTERS 2004

Introduction

More than at perhaps any previous time in history, we are learning about the power, the diversity, and indeed the genetics of the narratives that shape our lives, and about the secret, sacred places in which these narratives are housed. Some dwell deeply in our family history, some in the seat of our souls, others in the communities that encircle us, while many are embedded in the belly of the earth, the colour of a stone, the artifacts of a culture. Almost everything in creation, it can seem, has the potential to tell us a story, and to teach us something of our past, our present, and our future as inhabitants of this planet. First Nations people have long valued oral tradition and have used stories as road maps to hunting and fishing grounds, and as doorways to ancient knowledge. For all of us, stories are the storehouses of knowledge and wisdom, of pain and hope. In a similar way, our *disciplinary* knowledge as well, whatever our discipline might be, has its foundations in stories, and any changes in such knowledge are best told *through* stories.

Because of the ability of narrative to cut across disciplinary lines, not to mention cultures, locations, and times, those whose research draws them to use narrative and to study narrative do not always fit neatly within traditional academic circles. Accordingly, many of them feel the need for a unique kind of community in which they can share – and shape – their respective explorations into the world of narrative ideas. In this editorial, we first give a brief description of two conferences, one in 2002 and the other in 2004, that we took the lead in organizing for the express purpose of addressing this need. These events were called simply “Narrative Matters.” Next, we move to a consideration of why narrative matters, outline what has been referred to as “the narrative turn,” and, for our purposes here, put forward a definition of “story.” Finally, we introduce the papers that are featured in this issue, all but two of which were initially presented as papers at *Narrative Matters 2004*. To begin, let us explain how the concept of such a conference originated.

The story of Narrative Matters

The two of us first met some 15 years ago at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, at the University of Toronto, when we found ourselves in a doctoral level course devoted to the topic of narrative in educational research and practice. Besides learning that we both hailed from the Atlantic Provinces of Canada's eastern coast, and were therefore "Maritimers" (broadly defined), we soon discovered that we felt the same sort of need just mentioned to be part of an ongoing community of narrative-minded thinkers. This need only intensified as, unbeknownst to one another, we gravitated back to the Atlantic region, specifically to Fredericton, New Brunswick, to take up full-time teaching: Dolores at the University of New Brunswick and Bill at St. Thomas University. Yet while we knew that narrative deserved serious attention, we also knew that there were too few of us in our immediate region to provide the diversity of discussion that is required to do justice to the spectrum of areas into which "narrative" leads, even if our own backgrounds were diverse enough as it was: Dolores' in healthcare, education, and leadership, and Bill's in theology, gerontology, and adult learning. Because Maritimers generally have difficulty in getting to discipline-based conferences, which are typically held in much larger urban centres, we thus decided, in 2001, to host a conference in Fredericton itself. If you will, *we dreamed big*, and with the aid of our colleagues on the planning committee, a conference grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), and the background endorsement of such narrative pioneers as Jerome Bruner and Michael Connelly, organized the first-ever international, interdisciplinary conference on narrative. From May 19 to 21, 2002, narrativists from a wide variety of disciplines and practices, and from as many as 15 countries, including Finland, Germany, Australia, Israel, Hong Kong, and Chile, converged on Fredericton with the primary purpose of talking about their work.

The key is that narrative, as we experience it, is about *conversations*, and these conversations needed a home. Although we had two campuses to choose from as venues for the event, we decided on the inviting location of the Sheraton (now the Delta) Hotel overlooking the St. John River, and the Holiday Inn, located on a First Nations site near the mouth of the Mactaquac Stream. Along these waterways were pathways through the woods and through the burial grounds of the early Aboriginal people and the early New Brunswick Loyalists. The locations themselves told stories, old and new. While the conference sessions were scheduled in the various hotel meeting rooms, the tea pot and the coffee pot were always on in the Governor's Ball Room where armchairs and sofas were arranged so that delegates could exchange their ideas and share their stories.

Our keynote speakers at the 2002 conference, both of whom also delivered pre-conference workshops, included renowned educator Mary Catherine

Bateson, author of such best-selling books as *Composing a Life* (Bateson, 1989) and *Peripheral Visions*. Her talk was entitled “Narrative, Adaptation, and Change.” David Kuhl, a palliative care physician from Vancouver whose book, *What Dying People Want* (Kuhl, 2002), had been featured on the Oprah Show a week or so before, spoke on “Exploring Spiritual and Psychological Issues at the End of Life – Using a Narrative Process.” In one of the lunch hour sessions we were also treated to a paper entitled “A Love Story” by Stephen Crites, another narrative pioneer whose writings on aesthetics and experience were known to many of our participants and had informed the foundations of their research and teaching. Our banquet speaker, Shaun Majumder, drew on his background growing up in a Pakistani family in Newfoundland to keep us in stitches with the sorts of humorous stories – many of them about narrativists! – that have earned him top billing as a stand-up comic. And so began the great conversation on narrative that we had long imagined, one that cut across not just disciplines but bigger boundaries too: between the sciences and humanities and between the academy and community.

An important feature of the 2002 conference – as of the 2004 event too – was the bookstore which staff from the Campus Bookstore at UNB had tailor-organized, appealing to delegates themselves beforehand for books that they found valuable in their own work. Thus for the first time in the experience of all of us, an extensive collection on narrative theory, research, and practice in a broad range of disciplines was assembled in one location. Regardless of their field, whether psychology, sociology, history, literature, education, medicine, theology, or ethics, delegates could peruse a delicious variety of titles on narrative themes, rather than being forced to try and find them amid a sea of texts in more discipline-centred collections.

Feedback both after and during the 2002 conference was extremely encouraging. Many participants stayed for an open session on the final afternoon of it, when the focus of conversation was simply “where to from here?” Thanks to Prudence Merton, a delegate from Texas A & M University, one concrete result of this session was the establishment of a Narrative Matters listserv so the conversation could continue on-line. (Visit the *Narrative Matters* website for information on how to subscribe and on the conference program in general: www.stu.ca/conf/narrative). The other result was a vigorous recommendation on the part of everyone in attendance that a second conference be held in the same location as soon as could be arranged. Indeed, some wanted it the very next year!

Thus it was that, from May 20 to 23, 2004, at Fredericton’s Delta Hotel, *Narrative Matters* became a reality once again – this time, even bigger in diversity and scope. In other words, the number of keynotes, the list of participants, the range of disciplines, and the variety of regions that were

represented had all significantly expanded from 2002. Keynote speakers were award-winning Canadian author, Sharon Butala, whose talk, "The Memoirist's Quandary," appears here; Mark Freeman, a psychology professor from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, who spoke on "Life and Literature: Continuities and Discontinuities"; and Tone Kvernbekk, a philosopher of education from the University of Oslo whose doctoral thesis had been awarded the King of Norway Prize. She addressed the question: "What do Narratives Tell us About the World?" The Lt-Governor of New Brunswick, Dr. Hermenegilde Chiasson, an author himself, launched the conference, while our speaker for the closing banquet was Gilbert Sewell, a Mi'kmaq Elder from the Pabineau First Nation in northern New Brunswick. Pre-conference workshops were given on narrative analysis by Michael Bamberg, editor of *Narrative Inquiry* and professor of psychology at Clark University; on narrative therapy by Judith Myers, Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy at the University of Guelph; on the use of stories in healthcare by Linda Clarke, Facilitator of Dalhousie University's Program in Narrative Medicine; on drumming and storytelling in First Nations culture by Carlos Elder-Gomes; and, by Dolores herself, on the role of narrative in teaching, learning, and life.

Among the more than 200 delegates who attended *Narrative Matters 2004* and presented their ideas were members of the editorial boards of a number of academic journals, including *Literature and Medicine* and the *Medical Humanities Review*, and such individuals as: Molly Andrews, Co-Director of the Centre for Narrative Research at the University of East London; Matti Hyvärinen, Research Fellow at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, University of Helsinki, and member of the Finnish Network of Narrative Studies; Stephan Marks, Founder and Director of the History and Memory Project at the University of Education, Freiburg, Germany; and Bernie Lucht, Executive Producer of CBC Radio's award-winning "Ideas" program.

At the 2004 conference, which like the 2002 event was funded in part by a grant from SSHRC, the papers that were presented reflected an even broader array of topics than at the first, from deconstructionist philosophy to autobiographical memory to stories of teachers using mask-making in working with elementary children, and from research on Nazi perpetrators now in their 80's to the voices of the earth as recounted by environmentalists. Presumably, this variety will expand still further at the third *Narrative Matters* conference, being planned for May 2006 by Patrick O'Neill, Janice Best, and colleagues at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

In addition to our colleagues on the Narrative Matters planning committee, we are deeply grateful to Ann Beer, herself a delegate, and Mary Maguire, of the *McGill Journal of Education*, for the invitation to publish this special issue based on the 2004 conference. In response to the Call for Papers, a large

selection of manuscripts were submitted – as we expected, from a variety of perspectives. The ones that were finally selected, whose authors represent backgrounds as diverse as the topics they explore, offer a glimpse into the richness of the presentations that were made at *Narrative Matters* and of the countless conversations that took place throughout it and around it.

Why narrative matters

Why *does* narrative matter? The question is easier asked than answered. For many of us, the term “narrative” can seem so obvious and its meaning so clear that there is no question at all: *Of course, narrative matters because Narrative is Life*. “The thing about stories,” as Native Canadian author, Thomas King (2003, p. 2), puts it, “is that that’s all there is.” In an essay that is frequently cited in narrative circles, Stephen Crites (1971) lays out a compelling case for “the narrative quality of experience” itself. Such lines of thought lend support to what Theodore Sarbin (1986) has called “the narratory principle.” Indeed, in his introduction to a 1986 collection entitled *Narrative Psychology: The storied nature of human conduct*, he proposed that narrative be considered a “root metaphor” for psychology. Buttressing such a claim is one scholar’s observation that “we dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate, and love in narrative” (Hardy, 1968, p. 5).

About the same time that Sarbin’s book appeared, the mid to late 80s, other works were making similar points. In *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*, Jerome Bruner (1986) distinguished between “two modes of thought,” namely “paradigmatic thought,” which science espouses, and “narrative thought,” the primary mode by which we operate each day. In an article called “Life as Narrative” (Bruner, 1987), he went on to explore how “a life as lived is inseparable from a life as told.” His book, *Acts of Meaning* (Bruner, 1990), built on such notions to critique the computational model at the heart of the Cognitive Science movement, which, ironically, he himself had helped to launch. Equally important was Donald Polkinghorne’s (1988) book, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*, an analysis of the role of narrative thinking in a wide range of inter-linked domains, from history to literature to psychology to therapy to everyday life. Soon, other books and articles began cropping up in a number of disciplines beyond psychology per se, including of course education, where the work of such scholars as Michael Connelly, Jean Clandinin, Carol Witherell, and Kieran Egan, drawing on the ideas of John Dewey and Michael Polanyi before them, has done much to deepen awareness of the storied dynamics of teaching, of learning, and of learning to teach (see Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; McEwan & Egan, 1995). Among the many other fields which, to varying degrees, have experienced the impact of narrative ideas are anthropology, sociology, gerontology, psychotherapy, social work, medicine, history, theology, and philosophy.

All of these developments, cross-fertilizing one another with concepts and questions that, hitherto, scholars had perhaps lacked the language to voice and the framework to explore, took on the status of a paradigm shift; a sea-change in our perspective on numerous subjects that are central to human life, from cognition to emotion, memory to politics, culture to ethics. Given the scope of the change entailed, some have dubbed it “the narrative turn” (Hinchman & Hinchman, 1997).

Though impossible to trace all of the intellectual roots to the notion of narrative as *root* metaphor, it is clearly linked to the emergence of post-modernist insights into the languaged, textual, interpretive-hermeneutical, socially constructed dimensions of human life, plus postmodern critiques of inherited notions of power, authority, and truth. For many who have attended *Narrative Matters*, however, it could be said that they identify primarily with “affirmative” – as opposed to “skeptical” – postmodernist thinking (Rosenau, 1992), for there is an often optimistic flavour to their work and a common conviction about “the power of story in a postmodern world,” the official theme of *Narrative Matters 2004*.

It has to be acknowledged, however, that “narrative” – and maybe more so, “story,” the term with which it is commonly (if not always accurately) equated – is not easy to define. Yet a simple formulation can serve as a starting-point for grasping a number of features of each: a story, it can be proposed, is *someone telling somebody about something*. From this, we can extract a few basic points. One would be that stories are modes of communication which bridge the divide between tellers and listeners, bringing them into closer relationship – even when “the teller” and “the listener” are both inside ourselves. Another point would be that stories are “about” something. They are rooted in, or they endeavour to represent, “the real world,” however much that representation is fictionalized or otherwise fraught with interpretation, distortion, and bias. The *story* of the world (see Swimme & Berry, 1992), or the “master narrative” that is central to a given religion or ideology, is, in its fashion, an attempt to tell us what that world is, as well as who we are in the midst of it. As well, what stories are about is usually a number of things at once. A great novel, for instance, might treat the theme of love at the same time as, on another level or in another sub-plot, it deals with faith or philosophy or family relations. For this reason alone, interest in narrative matters attracts people from a spectrum of disciplines, individual circumstances, and professional fields.

To contextualize the articles that follow, we can tease out from these considerations certain over-riding aspects that characterize “narrative.” First, whether we are talking about the stories we encounter in literature, in mythology, in history texts or scientific treatises, or in the corridors of our own memory, stories teach. They not only “delight,” to cite Sir Philip Sidney (1595/1975),

but also “instruct.” They are vehicles for conveying information about values and priorities, about what is important, about what must be remembered. As Carolyn Heilbrun (1988) reminds us, it is not really people who teach us; rather, “only stories do that” (p. 37). Narrative is a way of knowing.

Second, the something that stories are about is usually something – a transition, a tragedy, an unforeseen occurrence – that disrupts our expectations, that parts company with the normal, that disrupts the flow of ordinary life. In other words, stories are about tension or conflict, or “trouble.” In a sense, no trouble, no story. There is nothing to tell, or at least less urgency to tell it.

Third, while science may be seen as a quest for measurable, empirical *truth*, in their own fashion stories are also about “the truth.” Either they represent its intentional evasion or they are an earnest attempt to pin it down and *tell all*, whether head-on, as in the case of biography or history, or more metaphorically perhaps, as with fantasy or fiction – which, in its own way, tells us what is real. The truth that stories convey thus varies from “historical truth” to “narrative truth” (Spence, 1982) – a complex concept which refers to the capacity of narrative structures to confer a kind of *coherence* upon events, factual or not, and to link them (“plot” them) in a meaningful manner. Stories, that is, are structures for meaning.

Fourth, stories transcend. For starters, they transcend history itself, inasmuch as the telling of stories has been at the heart of human existence from the very beginning, even if academics have only recently begun giving it the attention it deserves. Furthermore, the study of story itself transcends traditional discipline boundaries. Narrativists are often notorious boundary-jumpers. As our primary commodities in the economy of daily life (“you tell me your story and I’ll tell you mine”), stories cut through the barriers – of gender and race, culture and class, space and time – that commonly keep us apart. The greater the story, the more it takes us beyond itself and becomes, as Bruner writes in this issue, a “beckoning entryway into possibility: past, present, and future.”

In a sense, then, there is a fifth theme that stories entail: Time. Stories are about time not just in the sense that their plots often turn on rather intricate timing, but more basically in the sense that they trace a movement *through* time, from beginning to middle to end. Furthermore, some stories, whether ancient or modern, seem timeless in essence, in their ability to engage our imagination and to shape our worlds. In short, stories are structures for explaining, perhaps even consecrating, our experience of temporality.

Overview of articles

Canadian writer Sharon Butala, the recipient of numerous prizes and twice nominated for a Governor-General’s Award, is perhaps best known for her

memoir, *The Perfection of the Morning: An apprenticeship in nature* (Butala, 1993). In “The Memoirist’s Quandary,” she considers various epistemological issues involved in writing about one’s life – “problems,” she says, “that all memoirists face.” Aware throughout the paper of what she calls “the excesses of the postmodern movement,” she begins by talking about her mother, who, in Butala’s view, lived her life in terms of the wrong story. This serves as a backdrop to discussing the problems she faced in writing *The Perfection of the Morning*. The first form of the memoirist’s quandary, she explains, is “choosing the story the memoir is going to tell.” As a consequence, “all non fiction is fiction,” inasmuch as “the backward search through happenstance, trivia, the flotsam and jetsam of life to search out a pattern, themes, a meaning is by its nature an imposition of order onto what was chaotic.” A second quandary relates to *voice*: the challenge of choosing not just what to tell but how to tell it; more importantly, who one is to be amid the telling. For women, this can be particularly pressing insofar as (borrowing from Heilbrun) “women come to writing simultaneously with self-creation.” A further dimension of the memoirist’s quandary, then, concerns Truth, a concept that Butala acknowledges is “pretty unstable” yet insists on retaining.

Now well into his ninth decade, Jerome Bruner is Research Professor in the Faculty of Law at New York University. In “The Reality of Fiction,” he analyses the unique brand of reality that is mediated by fictional literature. After outlining what he considers to be the essential “steps” of narrative – from initial canonical state to peripeteia, or “trouble,” to the coda or “moral” – he elaborates his central thesis: Narrative’s principal functions are to provide “a form for recognizing departures from ordinariness” and for “imposing a moral structure on experience.” Narratives offer “templates for possible worlds,” and for knowing such worlds “without having to experience them.” Citing his recent experience of co-teaching a Freshman Honours Seminar in which students read both legal texts and literary texts to explore current political issues, he stresses his core conviction. Stories teach because, by travelling the “two-way street between life and literature” (where “life emulates art and art emulates life”), “we become better able to understand the real world of experience by seeing it in the light of fictional worlds of possibility.” This article is more, though, than a restatement of the familiar argument for literature as a tool for teaching in a variety of disciplines. It is a penetrating plea for the central role of narrative in the realm of human knowledge.

As a faculty member at York University’s Department of Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics, Linda Steinman addresses issues of second language learning in her article, “Writing Life 1 in Language 2.” Based on her examination of 16 autobiographical texts of authors who wrote their first person narratives in their second language, she highlights 1 of the 6 key themes, that of writing. Steinman tell us, “I did not enter their actual environments as

they acquired new languages, but I did enter their narrative world” through conversations with their texts. Works from Arabic, Polish, German, Spanish, and Japanese, by authors such as Edward Said, Eva Hoffman, Ariel Dorfman, Julia Alvarez, Greta Nemiroff, Natasha Lvovich, and Kyoko Mori, to name a few, provided narrative examples of the tensions that second language writing brought. A complexity of experiences was evident, including splits in identity, enhancing creativity, love/hate relationships, public/private debates, accents “veiled” in the texts, as well as competing rhythms and structures emerging between the two languages involved. She realized that SLA references, in general, did not address issues of writing first person narratives in one’s second language. To address this issue and her research insights, Steinman recommended curriculum changes for teacher education programs and teaching practices that would “carve out a space” for second language learners to express their narratives, to help them express their identities as well as abilities, and to facilitate their writing in a language that for them has no experiential memory.

Rosemary Clews is Professor of Social Work and Assistant Vice-President for Research at St. Thomas University, while Kristin Newman is a PhD student in psychology at UNB. Their paper, “Multiple Learnings about Identity from Narrative Research: Canadian war-brides as teachers and catalysts,” explores how the stories of older women who came to a new country over half a century ago can transcend time and stimulate learning on a variety of levels for a variety of people. The authors describe their research into the experiences of “war brides” coming to Canada after World War II and how this research originated, in a real sense, in the story of the relationship between Clews and her mother, herself a war-bride. Then the authors look at the numerous ways in which “stories of yesteryear” can continue to exercise a teaching function, not just for themselves as the researchers but for the war-brides whom they interviewed, and potentially for a host of others, including students, teachers, and researchers in the field of human services, and more recent “newcomers” and the professionals who assist in their resettlement. In one way or other, all of these can benefit from the sort of research that the article considers by gaining a deepened understanding of the “identity restorying” that people experience when resettling in new environments.

From the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning at the University of Toronto, Michelle Boone and Elaine Chan write about “Gaining Interpretive Competence Through Cross-cultural Dialogue among Teachers and Researchers.” They question the intention of equality espoused by Canadian legislation on multicultural school-based curricula. Drawing on Gadamer’s hermeneutic dialogue to gain understanding of multicultural issues, they conduct two stages of inquiry. Preliminary interviews with colleagues from diverse ethnic backgrounds revealed that, as children, these peers felt

singled out in classroom exercises, when what they really wanted was to blend in, be invisible, and be accepted. In the second stage of their inquiry, Boone and Chan conducted a study in a Toronto school with children from a variety of cultures. While the researchers were sensitive to multicultural issues when a video was shown to the children on bringing water to poor villages in Africa and a presentation was given on holocaust stories in Nazi Germany, the reactions of the children themselves were rather different from the discomfort, embarrassment, and isolation that the researchers' colleagues had experienced. To Boone and Chan, this suggested that there were deeper complexities at play in multi-cultural education today, which call for an appreciation for multiple meanings, multiple understandings of self and other, and broader notions of truth and community.

Heather Lotherington is Associate Professor of Multilingual Education at York University. Her article, "Writing Postmodern Fairy Tales at Main Street School: Digital narratives and evolving transliteracies," also sheds light on the challenge facing elementary educators in today's multi-cultural schools. It begins with an account of the author's involvement in inner city Toronto reading stories to kindergarten students, "many of whom come to school without benefit of the middle class Canadian socialization that includes ritual story book reading." This involvement led to a larger project "to rewrite Goldilocks" for readers to whom numerous aspects of the story are simply foreign – e.g., blonde girl, bears in the woods, porridge, etc. – and reflect "the cultural capital" of Anglo-Saxon Canada to which children from diverse backgrounds have little access. After demonstrating how the Goldilocks story itself evolved over nearly two centuries and traveled from Scotland to England to Canada, Lotherington traces the twists and turns of the story of students and teachers updating and indeed digitizing Goldilocks in ways that invite their "growing, complex multicultural identities into the rewriting project." Such "recontextualized stories" can then serve as part of "a new multi-cultural literature: one that provides a sense of multicultural Canada rather than a Canada composed of people from 'other' cultures." In this respect, rewriting Goldilocks not only introduces children to the dynamics of narrative but also "merges modern literacies (i.e. Industrial Revolution inspired paper-based, print centered texts) with postmodern literacies (Information era inspired screen-based, image-centred texts) and looks at how children negotiate these worlds of encoded information." This, Lotherington says, "is how we all have to read in the 21st century."

At Minneapolis' Capella University, Interim Chair of the Family Psychology Department, Malcolm Gray presents "Narrative Couples' Therapy with Feeling-resistant Men." Gray discusses his work as a family therapist counselling couples whose presenting problem, usually identified by the wife, is the husband's inability to "share feelings about common marital issues." In a review of 30 case studies accumulated over 15 years, he notes that in the

majority, husbands have grown up with one or other of their parents, usually the father, having a significant addiction, e.g., to alcohol, and with the dominant family pattern being one of avoiding feelings or even not being allowed to *have* feelings. Gray provides insight into how narrative therapy works and its particular value when working with feeling-resistant men, inasmuch as it highlights the limiting power of the “internalized stories” such men have absorbed from the surrounding culture about *being male*. In this connection, he makes a point that is pivotal to narrative therapy, namely that “our stories may live our lives for us.” Gray outlines how the story-telling and story-listening central to such therapy can assist clients in the externalization and unlearning of relationship behaviour that “doesn’t work for them.” He also discusses his use of bibliotherapy to supplement storying-restorying exchanges with clients, whereby through reflecting on fiction in which the protagonist wrestles with similar issues, the feeling-resistant male “can begin to develop the skills for understanding his own emotional life.”

In “Misreading Charlie: Interpreting a teaching story through metaphor analysis,” Diane Gillespie, Associate Director of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington, Bothell, explores the use of stories for faculty development in higher education. By analysing one story in particular, “Charlie’s Dream,” she illustrates how “stories have a way of teaching us long after their original telling,” haunting us with the sense that there is more to be gleaned from continuing to reflect on them. She focuses on her lingering misgivings around how she handled an interaction with “Charlie,” a student who dropped into class one day to talk with her about a dream he had recently had. Otherwise, he attended sporadically, had missed the mid-term, and was en route to an F. Although his dream intrigued her, when she pressed him on his academic performance, Gillespie felt that she failed to reach him; indeed, not long after, he quit the course completely. Drawing on the work of Lakoff and Johnson on how “conceptual metaphors structure our everyday thinking and behaviour,” and of Tiberius on two main metaphors that instructors employ in their practice, namely *teaching as transmission* and *teaching as dialogue*, she comes to the realization that though she believed she was operating out of a dialogical metaphor in her conversation with Charlie, she responded to him and his dream out of, basically, a transmission model. As she puts it, “Charlie told me why he came to see me, but I could not hear what he said. When he didn’t fit my metaphor and the sequencing didn’t flow, I could not get out of it.” Thus she is reminded of “the need to be fully present so that (our) metaphors take the lead from, instead of overshadowing, the students’ existential situations.”

Leona English is Associate Professor of Adult Education at St. Francis Xavier University. In “Narrative Research and Feminist Knowing: A post-structural reading of women’s learning in community organizations,” she argues that women’s learning and women’s voices have been stereotyped as

caring, connected, and relational in academic literature and in the rhetoric of educational and governmental institutions. Acceptance of this privileged view, she claims, sets false boundaries for women's growth and limits understanding of women's learning by minimizing its complexities. Using a narrative post-structuralist analysis and Foucault's 5-part grid for analyzing power relationships, English examines the learning experiences of 18 women working in a rural maritime social action organization. Traditional sources of power, generally accepted as having the "dominant truths" about women's learning – legal, economic, political, bureaucratic, professional, and so forth – imposed limits on the realities of women's experiences. Even those women with professional backgrounds such as social work resisted this imposition of "regimes of truth" and worked beyond codes of ethics, organizational rules, or educational credentials to deal with problems in innovative and personal ways. Women's life-long learning of such skills as fundraising, budgeting, lobbying, and challenging public policy happens, as one participant said, "all on your feet" in everyday experiences and in resistance to the categorizations of institutional and feminist literature and discourse. English concludes by calling for those in universities to be aware of exclusionary views and practices that restrict women's learning, and to look beyond conventional simplistic social truths to the complex narratives that are embedded in women's lives.

Sally Kimpson is an interdisciplinary PhD candidate at the University of Victoria. In "Stepping Off the Road: A researcher's story of challenging method/changing methodology," she discusses the tensions and disruptions she experienced during the writing of her masters thesis when she shifted her research methodology from a certain kind of ethnographic to variable narrative inquiry. The ethnographical methods she had been taught, she believes, imposed limitations on her ability to draw on the knowledge housed in her disabled body. Authoritative voices (medical practitioners, scientists, academics) recounted an established view that disabilities can be cured and fixed. She felt this had the power to define disabled people's lives by using supposedly rigorous, objective, and neutral research methods. Graduate studies created demands that pushed her body beyond its limits, resulting in life-threatening consequences. Life was not ordered, observable, and congruent, as she had believed, nor could she find ways to bracket her own experiences from those of her research participants. Rather, both life and research can be messy, disordered, and liminal. In search of a new research method, one that valued her voice and her experiences as a disabled learner, Kimpson stepped off the road that was scripted for her by the scientific method, and trusted her own authority and ways of knowing. In shifting to narrative inquiry, the text of her research changed and led her to an awareness of its variabilities. In recognizing the disruptions, disjunctures, and discontinuities in her research experiences as a disabled person, layers

of voice emerged for her and opened possibilities that narrative research methods enabled her to honour.

Carmen Shields, from Nipissing University's Faculty of Education, writes "Using narrative inquiry to inform and guide our (re)interpretations of lived experience." In this article Shields demonstrates how graduate education can "open doors" to the personal and professional wisdom "dwelling" silently within teachers' and students' experiences, and can be more educative by examining how this knowledge informs the academic subject matter under discussion. Using sacred stories from her own childhood dealing with polio, caring for a sibling with autism, and being educated within a faith-based system, she reveals the "special education" and "lasting patterns" these experiences had in shaping her future as a mother, person, and teacher. The "perils of difference in a society of sameness," the "silence around difficult topics," "protecting others who were less able to speak," and developing a "will to fight back" to make things better against forces that "limit possibilities" were some of the significant themes echoing through her life. Shields earned an M.Ed. in special education and taught children with sensory and cognitive handicaps. From the positivistic paradigm of the time, she learned the "cover story" of "how to teach," and how to receive and dispense the knowledge of the experts. Doctoral studies in narrative, with its backward, forward, inward and outward rhythms of inquiry, however, led her to question "who am I?" and "what do I think?". By "(re)interpreting" stories along the way Shields awakened gradually to the unique curriculum of her life and the authority of her own knowledge.

Gail Lindsay is an Assistant Professor of Nursing at York University. Her article "Pioneers Past and Present: Curriculum insights from stories that link through generations," offers readers a unique experience in curriculum inquiry. She weaves together the century-old pioneering stories from the Canadian wilderness that her Afi (grandfather Bjarnason) wrote in his scribbles before he died a few years earlier with her own current day pioneering narratives of developing a new nursing program in an urban university. Lindsay makes sense of the tensions she encountered in her work life through the lens of her Afi's memoirs, which reveal many parallels. Some of the themes emerging as she reflects on the generational links, include how stories teach us, how they cross generational boundaries, how they can bring us comfort in times of trouble, and how the curriculum of life embedded within them can transcend discipline knowledge. Lindsay herself gives us a lens into hidden or silent curricula, ones that span generations, that are "grand narratives" of disciplines, and that are ongoing in the different narratives that each nurse-teacher brings to the team discussion. She identifies that we can learn these hidden curricula that silently shape tensions affecting collegial relations, through dialogue and reflection and through consciously pioneering new links among our stories.

Summary

The articles featured in this issue, written by educators whose contexts range from law to nursing, writing to psychotherapy, kindergarten to community groups, and multiculturalism to resettlement, have brought to life the diversity, complexity, and possibilities of narrative knowledge. Through the specific questions that each paper raises, these writers give us food for thought about some of our national policies in education, or curriculum delivery methods, or relationships as educators to one another and to our students, and the on-going issues of power, voice, and the taken-for-granted aspects of education at all levels of human development. Butala, Lindsay, Clews and Newman examine a mother's or a grandfather's story for its impact on their lives, and on their teaching and research, writing and relating, in today's world. Bruner, Lotherington, Gray and Gillespie, on the other hand, write about reaching students from kindergarten to university, or adult clients using literature and the imagination, and their work with texts from fairytales to philosophy that expand or exclude learners from the story. Women's learning in community groups and student learning in graduate education serve as a focus for English, Kimpson and Shields as they examine how social, academic and institutional stereotyping, power and privilege limits the possibilities for personal knowledge and experience to be valued. Lotherington, Steinman, Boone and Chan, and Clews and Newman address cultural and muticultural tensions that students and newcomers encounter as Canadians from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Thus, we see how narratives provide us with endless possibilities for learning – from life itself, from novels, memoirs, and fairytales, from dreams and disabilities, from family history, from vignettes of pioneering, and even from the landscapes that surround us.

D. F. & W. L. R.

REFERENCES

- Bateson, M. (1989). *Composing a life*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.
- Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (1987). Life as narrative. *Social Research*, 54(1), 11-32.
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Butala, S. (1993). *The perfection of the morning: An apprenticeship in nature*. Toronto: HarperCollins.
- Connelly, M., & Clandinin, J. (1988). *Teachers as curriculum planners: Narratives of experience*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Crites, S. (1971). The narrative quality of experience. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 39(3), 291-311.
- Hardy, B. (1968). Toward a poetics of fiction. *Novel*, 2, 5-14.
- Heilbrun, C. (1988). *Writing a woman's life*. New York: Ballantine.

Editorial

Hinchman, L. & Hinchman, S. (Eds.). (1997). *Memory, identity, community: The idea of narrative in the human sciences*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

King, T. (2003). *The truth about stories: A native narrative*. Toronto: Anansi.

Kuhl, D. (2002). *What dying people want: Practical wisdom for the end of life*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada.

McEwan, H. & Egan, K. (Eds.). (1995). *Narrative in teaching, learning, and research*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Polkinghorne, D. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Rosenau, P. (1992). *Postmodernism and the social sciences: Insights, inroads, and intrusions*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sarbin, T. (1986b). The narrative as a root metaphor for psychology. In T. Sarbin (Ed.), *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct* (pp. 3-21). New York: Praeger.

Sidney, P. (1595/1975). An apology for poetry. In C. Kaplan (Ed.), *Criticism: The major statements*. New York: St. Martin's.

Spence, D. (1982). *Narrative truth and historical truth*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Swimme, B., Berry, T. (1992). *The universe story: From the primordial flaring forth to the ecozoic era – a celebration of the unfolding of the cosmos*. San Francisco: HarperCollins.

DOLORES FURLONG is Professor in the Faculty of Nursing, University of New Brunswick, Canada. She was a founding faculty member and first Assistant Dean of UNB's innovative Renaissance Interdisciplinary Leadership College (2000-2004). With Bill Randall, Dolores co-organized the 2002 and 2004 "Narrative Matters" conferences. In her research, teaching, and publishing she focuses on narrative autobiographical inquiry methods.

WILLIAM L. RANDALL is Associate Professor in the Department of Gerontology at St. Thomas University, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. With Dolores Furlong, he was the Principal Co-organizer of the "Narrative Matters" conferences in 2002 and 2004. Bill is the author of a number of books and articles on the topic of narrative gerontology.

EDITORIAL

HISTOIRES DE RÉCIT 2004

Introduction

Peut être plus qu'à aucun moment auparavant dans l'histoire, nous apprenons à propos du pouvoir, de la diversité ainsi que la génétique des récits qui forment nos vies, leurs secrets et les endroits sacrés qui les abritent. Certains sont ancrés profondément dans l'histoire de nos familles, certains sont assis dans nos esprits, d'autres dans les communautés qui nous entourent, pendant que beaucoup sont incorporés dans le ventre de la terre, la couleur des pierres, les fossiles de la culture. A peu près tout dans la création, semble t-il, a le potentiel de nous raconter une histoire et de nous enseigner quelque chose de notre passé, de notre présent et de notre futur en tant qu'habitant de la planète. Les premières nations de ces territoires ont longtemps valorisé la tradition orale et ont utilisé des histoires comme des cartes de territoire de chasse ou de zones de pêches ou bien encore comme portail vers d'anciennes connaissances. Pour nous tous, les histoires sont les récipiendaires de connaissance et de sagesse, de peine et d'espoir. De la même façon, notre connaissance disciplinaire, quelle que soit notre discipline, à ces fondements dans des histoires, et tous les changements dans de telles connaissances sont mieux racontés au travers des histoires.

Grâce à la faculté du récit de passer au travers des limites entre les disciplines, sans mentionner les cultures, les lieux et le temps, ceux dont les recherches les amènent à utiliser ou à étudier des récits ne correspondent pas toujours au model des cercles universitaires traditionnels. En conséquence, beaucoup d'entre eux ressentent le besoin d'une communauté unique dans laquelle ils peuvent partager, former leurs explorations respectives dans le monde des idées. Dans cet éditorial, nous donnons d'abord une brève description des deux conférences, une en 2002 et l'autre en 2004, que nous avons pris l'initiative d'organiser dans le but spécifique de répondre à un besoin. Ces événements ont été simplement appelés « Histoires de récit ». Par la suite, nous évoluons vers la considération des raisons de ces histoires de récit. Nous soulignons ce que nous considérons comme « le tournant du récit », et, pour nos besoins ici, nous proposerons une définition d'« histoire ». Enfin, nous introduirons les documents qui ont été inclus dans cet numéro, tous ceux

qui ont été présentés pendant *Histoires de Récit 2004* à l'exception de deux. Pour commencer, nous expliquerons l'origine d'une telle conférence.

L'histoire d'Histoires de récit.

Nous nous sommes rencontrés tous les deux il y a 15 ans en Ontario à l'Institut pour les Études en Éducation, à l'Université de Toronto, quand nous nous sommes retrouvés au niveau des cours du doctorat, dévoués au sujet du récit dans les recherches et pratiques en éducation. A part d'apprendre que nous tombions tous deux des provinces Atlantique de la côte Est du Canada, et que nous étions alors des « gens des maritimes », nous découvrîmes que nous sentions le même besoin, mentionné précédemment, d'être partie d'une communauté continue de penseurs préoccupés par le récit. Ce besoin s'intensifie seulement comme, inconnue l'un de l'autre, nous gravitions dans les régions atlantiques, spécialement à Frédéricton, Nouveau-Brunswick, pour prendre des positions à plein temps d'enseignement : Dolorès à l'université du Nouveau-Brunswick et Bill à l'université Saint Thomas. Maintenant nous savions que le récit a besoin d'une attention sérieuse, nous savions aussi qu'il y avait trop peu de gens comme nous dans notre région immédiate pour nous fournir la diversité de discussion qui est requise pour rendre justice à l'éventail des secteurs dans lesquels nous amène le récit, même si notre propre profil était aussi varié: Dolorès en santé, éducation et leadership, et Bill en théologie, gérontologie et enseignement aux adultes. Parce que les gens des maritimes généralement ont de la difficulté à aller à des conférences basées sur la discipline, qui sont typiquement tenues par de plus grand centre urbain, nous avons alors décidé, en 2001, de recevoir une conférence ici à Frédéricton. Si vous voulez, nous avons rêvé en grand, et avec l'aide de nos collègues du comité de planification, une bourse de conférence du Conseil des Sciences Sociales et Humaines du Canada (SSHRC), et l'approbation de fond de pionniers du récit comme Jérôme Bruner et Michael Connelly, nous avons organisé la première conférence internationale et pluridisciplinaire sur le récit. Du 19 au 21 Mai 2002, des narrateurs d'une grande variété de disciplines et de pratiques, et de près de 15 pays, incluant Finlande, Allemagne, Australie, Israël, Hong Kong et le Chili, convergent vers Frédéricton avec comme premier objectif de parler de leur travail.

La clé c'est que le récit, comme nous l'expérimentons, tient place dans les conversations et ces conversations ont besoin de maison. Nous devons aussi choisir entre deux campus comme rendez-vous pour l'événement ; nous nous décidâmes pour le lieu invitant qu'était l'hôtel Sheraton (maintenant Delta) surplombant la rivière Saint Jean et l'Holiday Inn, situé sur le territoire des premières nations proche de la bouche du ruisseau Mactaquac. Le long de ces cours d'eau, il y avait des sentiers menant dans la forêt et au travers des cimetières des peuples indigènes et des premiers loyalistes du Nouveau Brunswick. La localisation elle-même racontait des histoires

récentes ou anciennes. Lorsque les conférences ont été planifiées dans les nombreuses pièces des différents hôtels, les théières et cafetières étaient toujours prêtes dans la salle de bal du gouverneur ou les fauteuils et sofas étaient disposés de façon à ce que les délégués puissent échanger leurs idées et partager leurs histoires.

Nos intervenants clés à la conférence de 2002, délivrant tout les deux des ateliers de pré-conférence, incluent l'éducateur Mary Catherine Bateson, auteur d'un ouvrage qui fait partie des meilleures ventes comme *Composer une vie* (*Composing a Life*) (Bateson, 1989) et *Visions périphériques* (*Peripheral Visions*). Son discours était intitulé « Récit, Adaptation et Changement ». David Kuhl, un physicien de soin palliatif à Vancouver de qui le livre *Ce que les mourrant veulent* (*What Dying People Want*) (Kuhl, 2002), a été présenté pendant l'émission télévisée d'Oprah une semaine avant, a parlé d'« Explorer les issues spirituelles et psychologiques à la fin de la vie en utilisant un processus de récit ». Pendant une des périodes de déjeuner on nous a aussi parler d'« Histoires d'Amour » de Stephen Crites, un autre narrateur pionnier dont les écrits sur l'esthétique et l'expérience sont connus de beaucoup de nos participants et qui ont informé la fondation de beaucoup de leur recherche et enseignement. Notre intervenant pendant le banquet, Shaun Majumder, dessina son passé et sa croissance dans une famille pakistanaise de Terre-Neuve et nous garda intéressés avec ses histoires pleines d'humour, beaucoup d'entre elles à propos de conteurs ce qui lui valut les acclamations dignes d'un grand humoriste. Et alors, commença la grande conversation sur les récits que nous avions tous imaginé depuis longtemps, une conversation qui passe non seulement au dessus des disciplines, mais aussi des frontières : entre les sciences et les humanités et entre l'universitaire et la communauté.

Une chose importante de cette conférence de 2002 – comme pour celle de 2004 – était la librairie que le personnel de la librairie du Campus de l'U. N.B. avait cousue de fils blanc comme de véritables tailleurs, ayant appelé auparavant aux délégués de présenter les livres de valeur. Ainsi pour la première fois et pour nous tous, une collection étendue de récits théoriques, de recherches et de pratiques dans un large champ de discipline a été assemblé dans un même endroit. Sans regard pour le type, que ce soit psychologique, sociologique, historique, de littérature, d'éducation, de médecine, de théologie ou d'éthique, les délégués pouvaient lire attentivement une délicieuse grande variété de titres sur des thèmes narratifs, au lieu d'être forcé à essayer et trouver parmi une mer de textes dans une collection orientée sur une discipline spécifique.

La rétroaction après et pendant la conférence de 2002 a été extrêmement encourageante. Beaucoup de participants sont restés pour une session ouverte le dernier après midi, quand le point de focus de la conversation était simplement « vers où maintenant ? ». Grace à Prudence Merton, un délégué du

Texas de l'Université A et M, un des résultats concrets de cette session a été l'établissement d'une liste de diffusion d'*Histoires de récit* pour que les récits puissent continuer sur internet. (Visiter le site internet Narrative Matters pour vous informer sur la façon de souscrire au programme de la conférence en général : www.stu.ca/conf/narrative). L'autre résultat était une vigoureuse recommandation de la part de tous pour qu'une deuxième conférence ait lieu à la même place dès qu'elle pourra être organisée. En effet, certains le voulaient dans l'année suivante même!!!

Ainsi, ce fut fait, du 20 au 23 Mai 2004, à Frédéricton à l'hôtel Delta, *Histoires de récit* devint, de nouveau, une réalité, cette fois, même plus grande dans sa diversité et sa portée. En d'autres mots, le nombre de notes clés, la liste de participants, la diversité des disciplines, et la variété des régions qui étaient représentées s'étaient toutes significativement développées depuis 2002. Parmi les intervenants, aux documents clés, étaient l'auteurs gagnant de récompenses canadiennes, Sharon Butala, dont la présentation, « Le dilemme des rédacteurs de mémoires », apparaît plus bas; Mark Freeman, un professeur de psychologie du collège Sainte Croix de Worcester, Massachusetts, qui a parlé de « Vie et Littérature : Continuité et Discontinuités »; et Tone Kvernbekk, un philosophe de l'éducation de l'Université d'Oslo dont la thèse de doctorat a été récompensée du prix du Roi de Norvège. Elle soulevait la question : « Qu'est ce que les récits nous disent à propos du monde »? Le lieutenant gouverneur du Nouveau-Brunswick, docteur Hermenegilde Chiasson, auteur lui-même, a débuté la conférence, alors que notre intervenant était Gilbert Sewell, un aîné de la première nation Pabineau du Nord du Nouveau-Brunswick. Les ateliers de pré-conférence étaient sur une analyse de récits par Michael Bamberg, éditeur de *Interrogation de récit* (*Narrative Inquiry*) et professeur de psychologie à l'Université Clark; sur les thérapies par le récit par Judith Myers, professeur de Thérapie de Mariage et famille à l'Université de Guelph; sur l'usage d'histoire en Santé par Linda Clarke, facilitateur du programme de médecine narrative de l'Université de Dalhousie, à propos de jouer du tambour et raconter des histoires dans la culture des Premières Nations par Carlos Elder-Gomes; et, par Dolorès elle-même, sur le rôle de la narration, de l'enseignement et de la vie.

Parmi les 200 délégués qui étaient présents à *Histoires de récit 2004* et présentaient leurs idées, il y avait des tableaux d'éditoriaux d'un grand nombre de journaux universitaires, incluant *Littérature et médecine* (*Literature and Medicine*) et *Revue médicale des sciences humaines* (*Medical Humanities Review*), et des individus comme : Molly Andrews, co-directeur du centre de recherche sur le récit de l'université de l'Est de Londres; Matti Hyvärinen, partenaire de recherche au Collège d'Helsinki pour les recherches avancées, l'Université d'Helsinki, et membre du réseau Finlandais des études sur la narration; Stéphane Marks, fondateur et directeur du projet d'histoire et de

mémoire à l'Université d'Éducation, Freiburg, Allemagne; et Bernie Lucht, producteur exécutif du programme « Idées » de la radio CBC.

La conférence de 2004, qui comme l'événement de 2002 était fondée en partie sur une subvention de la SSHRC, réunissait des documents d'un rayon encore plus large de sujets que la première fois. De la philosophie déconstructive aux souvenirs autobiographiques, aux histoires d'enseignants utilisant la construction de masques pour travailler avec des enfants du niveau primaire, des recherches avec des criminels Nazi, aujourd'hui autour des 80 ans, à la voix de la Terre retransmise par des environnementalistes. Cette variété s'étendra, probablement, encore à la troisième conférence d'*Histoires de Récit*, programmée pour le mois de Mai 2006 par Patrick O'Neill, Janice Best, et ses collègues à l'université Acadia à Wolfville, Nouvelle Écosse.

En addition à nos collègues du comité de planification d'*Histoires de Récit*, nous sommes profondément reconnaissants à Ann Beer, elle-même déléguée, et à Mary Maguire, de la *Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill* de publier cette édition spéciale basée sur la conférence de 2004. En réponse à l'appel aux documents, une large sélection de manuscrits a été soumise, comme attendu, d'une variété de perspectives. Ceux qui furent finalement sélectionnés, dont les auteurs représentent des profils aussi variés que les sujets qu'ils explorent, offrent un aperçu de la richesse des présentations qui eurent lieu à *Histoires de Récit* et des innombrables conversations qui eurent lieu tout autour.

Qu'est ce qu'Histoires de Récit

Pourquoi faire des histoires de récit? La question est plus facile à poser qu'à répondre. Pour beaucoup d'entre nous, le terme « récit » peut sembler si clair et si significatif qu'il n'y a aucune question à se poser: *Bien sur, les récits sont importants parce qu'ils sont la vie.* « La chose à propos des histoires » comme l'auteur autochtone canadien, Thomas King (2003, p. 2), demande : « C'est que c'est tout ce qu'il y a ». Dans un essai fréquemment cité dans les cercles narratifs, Stephen Crites (1971) souligne un cas contraignant pour « la qualité narrative des expériences » elle-même. Une telle ligne de pensée a amené un support pour ce que Théodore Sarbin (1986) a appelé « le principe de narration ». En effet, dans son introduction pour une collection de 1986 intitulée *Psychologie de récit : La nature romancée de la conduite humaine* (*Narrative psychology : The storied nature of human conduct*), il proposa que le récit soit considéré comme une « métaphore de racine » pour la psychologie. Étayer une telle déclaration est une observation d'un autre savant que « nous rêvons en récit, nous avons des rêves éveillés en récit, nous rappelons, anticipons, espérons, désespérons, croyons, doutons, plénifions, rédigeons, critiquons, construisons, causons, apprenons, haïssons et aimons en récit » (Hardy, 1968, p.5).

A peu près en même temps que le livre de Sarbin apparut, du milieu à la fin des années 80, d'autres travaux faisaient des points similaires. Dans *Pensées actuelles, mondes possible* (*Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*), Jérôme Bruner (1986) faisait la différence entre « deux modes de pensées », nommément, les « pensées paradigmatiques », que la science embrasse, et les « pensées narratives », le premier mode avec lequel nous opérons chaque jour. Dans un article appelé, « La vie comme un récit » (Bruner, 1987), il est allé explorer comment « une vie comme elle est vécue, est inséparable de comment elle est racontée ». Son livre *Actes de signification* (*Acts of Meaning*) (Bruner, 1990), construit des notions pour critiquer le model informatique au cœur des mouvements de la science cognitive, qu'il a, ironiquement, aidé à lancer. Tout aussi important, le livre de Donald Polkinghorne's (1988), *Savoir narratif et les sciences humaines* (*Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*), une analyse du rôle de la pensée narrative dans le grand champ des domaines inter reliés, de l'histoire à la littérature, à la psychologie, à la thérapie et à la vie de tous les jours. Bientôt, d'autres livres et articles commenceront à survenir dans un nombre de disciplines au-delà intrinsèquement de la psychologie, incluant bien entendu l'éducation, où le travail de tel disciple de Michael Connelly, Jean Clandinin, Carol Witherell, et Kieran Egan, en batissant sur les idées de John Dewey et Michael Polanyi avant eux, avaient fait beaucoup pour le plus profond éveil de l'histoire de la dynamique de l'enseignement, de l'apprentissage, et de l'apprentissage de l'enseignement (voir Connelly et Clandinin, 1988; McEwan et Egan, 1995). Parmi de nombreux champs qui, à différents degrés, ont expérimenté l'impact des récits d'idées il y a l'anthropologie, la sociologie, la gérontologie, la psychothérapie, le travail social, la médecine, l'histoire, la théologie et la philosophie.

Tous ces développements, se fertilisant réciproquement les uns des autres avec des concepts et des questions que, jusqu'ici, les disciples avaient peut-être manqué de mots pour exprimer et de schéma pour explorer, ont pris le statut d'un changement de paradigme, une mer de changements dans notre perspective sur de nombreux sujets centraux à la vie humaine, de la cognition à l'émotion, de la mémoire à la politique, de la culture à l'éthique. Étant donné la portée du changement nécessité, certains ont surnommé cela le « tournant narratif » (Hinchman et Hinchman, 1997).

Bien qu'impossible de retracer toutes les racines intellectuelles liées à la notion de récit comme métaphore *racine*, c'est clairement lié à l'émergence de la perspicacité du postmodernisme au travers les conversations, les textes, le travail « interpretive-hermeneutical », les dimensions socialement construites de la vie humaine, plus les critiques postmodernes héritées de la notion de pouvoir, d'autorité, et de vérité. Pour beaucoup de personnes qui sont allées à *Histoires de récit*, cependant, il pourrait être dit qu'ils identifient premièrement de façon « affirmative », par opposition à sceptique, la pensée postmoderne (Rosenau, 1992). Il y a plus souvent une saveur optimiste à

leur travail et une conviction commune sur « le pouvoir de l'histoire dans un monde postmoderne », le thème officiel d'*Histoires de récit 2004*.

Il a été reconnu, cependant, que le « récit », et même peut-être plus l'« histoire », le thème avec lequel il est communément (si ce n'est pas, en fait, tout le temps) évoqué, n'est pas facile à définir. Pour le moment, une simple formule peut servir de point de départ pour saisir un certain nombre de caractéristiques de chacun : une histoire, ce qui peut être proposé, c'est *quelqu'un qui raconte quelque chose à quelqu'un d'autre*. De ceci, nous pouvons extraire quelques simples points. Un serait que les histoires sont des modes de communication qui relient les habituellement divisés conteurs et auditeurs, les rapprochant, ainsi, davantage, même dans le cas où le *conteur* et l'*auditeur* sont à l'intérieur de nous-mêmes. Un autre point serait que les histoires sont « à propos » de quelque chose. Elles sont enracinées à l'intérieur, où elles s'efforcent de représenter le « vrai monde », cependant la plus part de cette représentation est rendue fictive ou chargée d'interprétation, de distorsion, et de biais. L'*histoire* du monde (voir Swimme et Berry, 1992), ou le « maître récit » central à une religion ou une idéologie, est, à sa façon, une tentative pour nous raconter ce que le monde est, de même que qui nous sommes au milieu de cela. De la même façon, les histoires parlent de plusieurs choses à la fois. Un bon roman, par exemple, pourrait traiter du thème de l'amour en même temps que, sur un autre niveau ou secondairement, il traiterait de la foi de la philosophie ou des relations familiales. Pour cette raison seulement, l'intérêt dans les histoires de récit attire des gens d'un éventail large de disciplines, de situations individuelles, et de milieux professionnels.

Pour contextualiser l'article qui suit, nous pouvons ironiser de ces considérations certains aspects plus évidents qui caractérisent le « récit ». Tout d'abord, que l'on soit en train de parler des histoires que l'on rencontre en littérature, en mythologie, dans des textes d'histoires, des thèses scientifiques, ou dans le couloir de notre propre mémoire, les histoires enseignent. Elles ne font pas que « ravir » pour citer Sir Philip Sidney (1595/1975), mais aussi « instruisent ». Elles sont les véhicules pour convoyer l'information à propos des valeurs et priorités, à propos de ce qui est important, à propos de ce que l'on doit se souvenir. Comme Carolyn Heilbrun (1988) nous rappelle, ce ne sont pas vraiment les gens qui nous enseignent, bien plus, les histoires font cela (p.37). Le récit est une façon de connaître.

Ensuite, cette chose à laquelle les histoires font référence est souvent quelque chose de particulier – une transition, une tragédie, une occurrence imprévue – qui bouscule nos attentes, qui se sépare du normal, qui dérange le flot ordinaire de la vie. En d'autres mots, des histoires à propos de tension et de conflit ou de « trouble ». D'une certaine façon, pas de trouble, pas d'histoire. Il n'y a rien à dire, ou au moins pas d'urgence à le raconter.

Troisièmement, pendant que la science peut être vue comme une quête du mesurable, *vérité* empirique, de leurs propres façons les histoires sont aussi à propos de « vérité ». Soit elles représentent leurs évasions intentionnelles, soit elles sont des volontés délibérées de montrer du doigt et de *tout dire*, que ce soit tête baissée comme dans le cas de l'histoire ou de la biographie, ou plus métaphoriquement, peut-être, comme avec fantaisie ou fiction – ce qui, d'une certaine manière, nous dit ce qui est vrai. La vérité que les histoires donnent ainsi, change de « vérité historique » en « vérité narrative » (Spence, 1982) – un concept complexe qui se réfère à la capacité des structures narratives de conférer un genre de *cohérence* à des événements, factuels ou non, et de les relier (les délimiter) de façon significative. Les histoires, c'est-à-dire, sont des structures pour la signification.

Quatrièmement, les histoires transcendent. Pour commencer, elles transcendent l'histoire elle-même, attendu que raconter des histoires a été au cœur de l'existence humaine depuis toujours, même si les universitaires n'ont que récemment commencé à leur donner l'attention qu'elles méritent. Plus encore, les études des histoires elles-mêmes transcendent les barrières traditionnelles des disciplines. Les pro-récits sont souvent connus comme des sauteurs de barrières. Comme nos premiers produits en économies de tous les jours (« vous me dites votre histoire et je vous dit la mienne »), les histoires coupent au travers des barrières de genre et de race, de culture et de classe, d'espace et de temps, qui communément nous séparent. Plus l'histoire est bonne, plus elle nous emmène au-delà d'elle-même et devient, comme Bruner écrivait à ce propos, une entrée inévitable au travers de possibilité : passée, présente et future.

Dans un sens, alors, il y a un troisième thème que les histoires nécessitent : le Temps. Les histoires sont à propos de temps pas juste dans le sens de leurs propres délimitations qui évoquent des synchronisations plutôt complexes, mais plus simplement dans le sens qu'elles tracent un mouvement au travers du temps, du début, au milieu, à la fin. Bien plus encore, certaines histoires, qu'elles soient modernes ou anciennes, ont l'air par essence d'être dénuées de temps, dans leur habilité d'engager notre imagination et de donner forme à nos mots. En bref, les histoires sont des structures pour expliquer, peut être même consacrer notre expérience de la temporalité.

Survol des articles

L'écrivain canadien, Sharon Butala, récipiendaire de nombreux prix et deux fois nominée pour la prix du gouverneur général, est peut être mieux connu pour ses mémoires, *La perfection du matin : Apprentissage en nature* (*The Perfection of the morning: An apprenticeship in nature*) (Butala, 1993). Dans « Le dilemme des rédacteurs de mémoires » elle considère des situations épistémologiques variées impliquées dans l'écriture de la vie d'autrui, les problèmes, dit-elle, que tous les historiens affrontent. Au courant tout au

long du document de ce qu'elle appelle l'excès du monde postmoderne, elle commence par parler de sa mère, qui selon la vue de Butala, a vécu sa vie dans les termes d'une histoire fausse. Ceci sert d'arrière plan pour discuter des problèmes auxquels elle a dû faire face en écrivant *La perfection du matin*. Le premier type de problèmes pour un rédacteur de mémoires, elle explique, c'est choisir ce que l'histoire et la mémoire vont dire. Par conséquent, « toutes les non fictions sont des fictions », puisque le fond cherche au travers des hasards, des détails et des débris épars flottant à la surface de la vie, des occurrences et des thèmes, une signification par nature impose un ordre à ce qui était chaotique. Un deuxième problème est lié à la voix : le défi de choisir pas seulement *quoi* dire mais *comment* le dire, de façon plus importante, à *propos de qui* parlera le récit. Pour une femme, ceci peut être particulièrement oppressant (empruntant à Heilbrun) puisque « les femmes viennent à l'écriture simultanément avec l'autocréation ». Une autre dimension des problèmes des conteurs concerne, alors, la Véracité. Un concept que Butala reconnaît être « très instable » insiste maintenant sur la retenue.

Maintenant bien dans sa neuvième décade, Jérôme Bruner est un professeur de recherche à la faculté de droit de l'Université de New York. Dans « La réalité de la fiction », il analyse l'unique morceau de la réalité qui est négociée par la littérature fiction. Après avoir souligné ce qu'il considère être la marche essentielle du récit, de l'état critique de canonisation à PERIPETEIA, ou « trouble », au code ou « la morale », il élabore sa thèse centrale : La fonction principale de l'histoire est de procurer « une forme reconnue de départ de l'ordinaire » et d'« imposer une structure morale à l'expérience ». Les récits offrent des « calibrent pour les mondes possibles », et pour connaître ces mondes « sans les expérimenter ». Citant son expérience de co-enseignement d'un séminaire d'honneur pour premières années dans lequel les étudiants lurent à la fois des textes légaux et des textes littéraires pour explorer des situations politiques courantes, il soumit sa conviction profonde. Les histoires *enseignent* parce que voyager « la rue à double sens entre la vie et la littérature » (où « la vie émule l'art et l'art émule la vie »), « nous devenons mieux capable de comprendre le vrai monde d'expérience le voyant sous la lumière fictive des mondes possibles ». Cet article est plus qu'un ajustement d'arguments familiers pour la littérature comme outil d'enseignement dans une variété de disciplines, c'est la réclamation pénétrante du rôle central du récit dans le royaume humain de la connaissance.

Comme un membre de l'Université de York dans le département de Languages, Littératures, et Linguistiques, Linda Steinman soulève les problèmes de l'apprentissage d'une deuxième langue dans son article, « Écrire la vie 1 dans la langue 2 ». Basé sur l'examen de 16 textes autobiographiques d'auteurs qui ont écrit leur propre histoire pour la première fois dans leur langue seconde, elle souligne un des six thèmes clé, à propos de l'écriture. Stein-

man nous dit, je ne suis pas entré dans leur environnement actuel pendant qu'ils acquièrent de nouveau langages, mais je suis entré dans leur monde narratif, au travers de conversations avec leurs textes. Des travaux à partir de l'arabe, du polonais, de l'espagnol, du japonais par des auteurs comme Edward Said (1999), Eva Hoffman (1989), Ariel Dorfman (1998), Julia Alvarez (1999), Greta Nemiroff (2000), Natasha Lvovich (1997), et Kyoko Mori (1997), pour en nommer quelques-uns, ont fourni des exemples, sous forme d'histoires, des tensions que l'écrit amène. Une complexité d'expériences était évidente, incluant des divisions d'identité, augmentant la créativité, la relation amour et haine, débats publics et privés, accents « voilés » dans les textes comme des rythmes et des structures concurrentes qui émergent de deux langages impliquées. Elle réalise que les références SLA, en général, ne s'occupaient pas des problèmes de l'écriture d'une première biographie dans une langue seconde. Afin d'en tenir compte et pour la pertinence de ses recherches, Steinman recommandait des changements dans les programmes des enseignants en éducation et des pratiques pédagogiques qui sculpteraient un espace pour des apprenants qui leur permettraient d'exprimer leurs propres histoires, pour les aider à exprimer leurs identités comme leurs habilités et qui faciliteraient leur écriture dans une langue qui pour eux n'a pas de mémoire expérimentale.

Rosemary Clews est une professeure au Travail Social et Assistante du Vice-président pour la recherche à l'Université Saint Thomas, pendant que Kristin Newman est une étudiante en doctorat de psychologie à l'Université du Nouveau-Brunswick. Leur document, « Multiples apprentissages à propos de l'identité à partir de la recherche narrative : Les épouses de guerre canadiennes en tant qu'enseignantes et catalyseurs », explore comment les histoires des vieilles femmes qui sont arrivées dans un nouveau pays il y a plus d'un demi-siècle peuvent transcender le temps et stimuler l'apprentissage sur une variété de niveaux pour une variété de personnes. Après avoir décrit leur recherche au sujet des « jeunes mariées de la guerre » arrivant au Canada après la seconde guerre mondiale et comment cela commença, dans un sens, dans l'histoire d'une relation entre Clews et sa mère, elle-même jeune mariée de guerre, l'auteure regarde, de multiples façons, comment les histoires d'hier peuvent continuer à exercer une fonction pédagogique, pas uniquement pour elles-mêmes comme chercheuse, mais pour les jeunes mariées qu'elles ont interrogées, et potentiellement comme un centre serveur pour d'autres, incluant les étudiants, les enseignants et les chercheurs sur le sujet des services humains, et plus récemment des « nouveaux arrivés », et les professionnels qui assistent à leur réinsertion. D'une façon ou d'une autre, tout cela peut bénéficier du genre de recherche que le papier considère en gardant une compréhension approfondie de la « restauration de l'identité » que les gens expérimentent en se réinstallant dans un nouvel environnement.

Michelle Boone et Elaine Chan sont dans le département sur les Programmes, l'Enseignement, et l'Apprentissage à l'université de Toronto. Dans « Acquérir la compétence interprétative grâce au dialogue interculturel entre enseignants et chercheurs », elles s'interrogent sur l'intention d'équité qu'épouse la législation canadienne concernant les programmes scolaires. Calqué sur le discours herméneutique de Gadamer, pour gagner en compréhension des situations multiculturelles, elles conduisent deux niveaux d'interrogations. Des rencontres préliminaires avec des collègues de diverses origines ethniques ont révélé que, comme enfant, ces pairs se sont sentis rejetés des exercices de classe, quand ce qu'ils voulaient vraiment étaient de s'intégrer, d'être invisibles, et d'être bien acceptés. Dans la deuxième phase de leur questionnement, Boone et Chan conduisent une étude dans une école de Toronto avec des enfants d'une variété de cultures. Pendant que les chercheurs étaient sensibles aux questions multiculturelles, quand une vidéo sur le ravitaillement en eau d'un village pauvre d'Afrique était montrée aux enfants et une présentation était donnée à propos des histoires d'holocaustes dans l'Allemagne nazie, les réactions des enfants elles-mêmes étaient différentes du malaise, de l'embarras et de l'isolement que les collègues des chercheurs avaient vécus. Pour Boone et Chan, cela suggéraient qu'il y avait de plus profondes complexités qui jouaient dans l'éducation multiculturelle aujourd'hui, et qui appellent à une appréciation de multiples significations et compréhensions des uns et des autres ainsi que de plus large notion de vérité et de communauté.

Heather Lotherington est une professeur associée à l'Éducation Multilingue à l'Université de York. Son papier, « Rédaction de contes de fée postmodernes à la Main Street School : Histoires numériques et littéraires nouvelles » recueille aussi un éclairage sur le défi auquel font face les enseignants du primaire dans les écoles multiculturelles d'aujourd'hui. Elle commence avec une présentation de la participation de l'auteur dans la lecture d'histoires aux élèves des jardins d'enfants du centre-ville de Toronto, « beaucoup d'entre eux arrivent en classe sans le bénéfice de la socialisation de l'enfant de la classe moyenne canadienne qui inclut le rituel de la lecture de livre de conte ». Cette implication amène à un projet plus large « réécrire Goldilocks » pour des lecteurs à qui de nombreux aspects de l'histoire sont simplement étrangers – par exemple, des filles blondes, des ours dans la forêt, du porridge, etc. – et reflète le capital culturel du Canada Anglo-saxon à qui des enfants de divers horizons ont peu en commun. Après avoir démontré comment l'histoire de Goldilocks lui-même a évolué au-delà de deux siècles et voyagé de l'Écosse à l'Angleterre au Canada, Lotherington trace les enchevêtrements de l'histoire des étudiants et des enseignants mettant à jour et, en effet, numérisant Goldilocks d'une façon qui invite « leur croissance, identité multiculturelle complexe dans le projet de réécriture ». De telles histoires contextualisées à nouveau peuvent alors servir comme partie d'une nouvelle littérature multiculturelle : « une littérature qui procure un sens du Canada

multiculturel à la place d'un Canada composé de gens d'une autre culture ». À cet égard, réécrire *Godlilocks* n'introduit pas seulement les enfants à la dynamique du récit mais aussi « fusionne les instructions modernes, inspirées de la révolution industrielle, et basées sur l'écrit avec ces instructions post-modernes, inspirées par l'ère de l'information, basées sur l'écran, des textes centrés sur des images et qui regardent comment les enfants négocient ce monde encodé d'information ». Ceci, dit Lotherington, est de la façon dont nous tous avons lu pendant le 21^{ème} siècle.

Malcom Gray est responsable d'une chaire de recherche sur la psychologie familiale à l'université Capella de Minneapolis. Dans « Bibliothérapie de couple par le récit avec des hommes inhibés émotionnellement » il parle de son travail comme thérapeute familial conseillant des couples dont le problème, habituellement identifié par la femme, est l'incapacité du mari de partager des sentiments à propos de situations matrimoniales ». Dans une revue des 30 cas d'études accumulés pendant 15 années, il note que la majorité des maris ont grandi avec l'un ou l'autre des parents, souvent le père, ayant une dépendance significative, par exemple, à l'alcool, et avec comme profil familial dominant d'éviter les sentiments ou ne pas être autorisé à en avoir. Gray procure un éclairage dans la façon dont le récit fonctionne et sa valeur particulière quand il travaille avec des hommes sentimentalement résistants autant qu'il souligne le pouvoir limitant des histoires intériorisées que ces hommes ont absorbé de la conception de l'entourage à propos d'être un homme. À partir de là, il émet un point central sur la thérapie narrative, à savoir que « notre histoire peut vivre notre vie pour nous ». Gray souligne comment les récits d'histoires et l'écoute d'histoires, centrale à ce genre de thérapie, peuvent assister les clients dans l'externalisation et le désapprentissage de comportements relationnels qui ne fonctionnent pas pour eux. Il discute aussi de son utilisation de bibliothérapie pour compléter les échanges sur la restitution/création d'histoire avec ses clients. De ce fait, en réfléchissant sur la fiction dans laquelle le protagoniste lutte avec des issues semblables, l'homme sentimentalement résistant « peut commencer à développer des compétences de compréhensions de sa propre vie émotionnelle ».

Dans « Mauvaise lecture de Charlie : Interpréter une histoire d'enseignement à partir d'une analyse de métaphores », Diane Gillespie, directrice associée interdisciplinaire des arts et des sciences à l'université de Washington, explore l'utilisation d'histoires pour le développement des facultés dans les hautes études. En analysant une histoire en particulier, le « rêve de Charlie », elle illustre comment « les histoires ont une façon de nous enseigner longtemps après qu'elles eurent été racontées la première fois ». Nous hantant dans le sens où il y a plus à glaner en continuant à se projeter en elle. Elle se concentre sur son sentiment persistant de difficulté concernant sa façon d'appréhender son interaction avec Charlie, un étudiant qui est arrivé en classe un jour pour parler avec d'un rêve qu'il avait eu récemment. D'autre part, cet élève

suivait ses cours sporadiquement, et il a manqué la moitié d'une session, et était sur le point de recevoir un F. Pourtant son rêve l'intrigua, quand elle le poussa pour les résultats universitaires, Gillespie sentit qu'elle n'arrivait pas à l'atteindre, en effet, peu après, il quitta complètement le cours. Se modelant sur le travail de Lakoff et Johnson au sujet de comment « les métaphores conceptuelles structurent nos pensées et comportements quotidiens » et de Tiberius, sur deux métaphores principales que les instructeurs emploient dans leurs pratiques, qui sont : *enseigner en tant que transmission* et *enseigner en tant que dialogue*, elle en vient à réaliser que, bien qu'elle croyait qu'elle opérait en dehors d'une métaphore dialogique dans sa conversation avec Charlie, elle répondait à lui ainsi qu'à son rêve à propos, simplement, d'un modèle de transmission. Comme elle rapportait cela, « Charlie me dit pourquoi il était venu me voir, mais je ne pouvais pas entendre ce qu'il disait, quand il ne correspondait pas, ma métaphore et mon organisation séquentielle ne fonctionnaient pas, je ne pouvais pas m'en sortir ». Ainsi, elle fut rappelé du « besoin d'être complètement présent afin que (nos) les métaphores prennent le dessus au lieu d'éclipser les situations existantes des étudiants ».

Leona English est une professeure associée au sujet de l'enseignement aux adultes à l'Université Xavier Saint Francis. Dans « La recherche narrative et les acquis féministes : Lecture poststructurelle de l'apprentissage des femmes dans des organismes communautaires » elle soutient que l'apprentissage des femmes et les voix des femmes ont été catalogués comme « bons », connectés et apparentés dans la littérature universitaire et dans la rhétorique des institutions gouvernementale et éducatives. L'acceptation de cette vue privilégiée, elle déclare, dispose de fausses frontières pour le développement des femmes et des limites de la compréhension de l'apprentissage des femmes en minimisant sa complexité. Utilisant une analyse narrative post structur-alistique et la 5ème partie de la grille de Foucault pour analyser le pouvoir des relations, English examine les expériences d'apprentissage de 18 femmes travaillant dans une organisation maritime rurale. Les sources du pouvoir traditionnel, généralement acceptées comme ayant des Vérités dominantes, légales, économiques, politiques, bureaucratiques, professionnelles *et cetera*, ont imposé des limites sur la réalité des expériences des femmes. Même ces femmes avec des passés professionnels comme le travail social ont résisté à la contrainte des « régimes de vérité » et ont travaillé au-delà des codes d'éthiques, des règles organisationnelles ou des qualifications éducationnelles pour composer avec les problèmes de manière innovatrice et personnelle. La longue vie d'apprentissage des femmes de compétences comme la collecte de fonds, le budget, les pressions sociales et la mise à l'épreuve de politiques publiques se produit, comme un participant a dit, « sous ton nez », dans les expériences quotidiennes et en résistance aux catégorisations des institutions du discours et de la littérature féministe. English conclut en appelant les universités à être au courant des vues d'exclusions et des pratiques qui restreignent les apprentissages des femmes, et à regarder au-delà des vérités

sociales simplistes et conventionnelles vers les histoires complexes qui reposent dans la vie des femmes.

Sally Kimpson est une candidate au doctorat pluridisciplinaire à l'Université Victoria. Dans son papier, « Sortir des sentiers battus : L'histoire d'une chercheuse qui conteste les méthodes déficientes et change la méthodologie, » elle discute des tensions et des ruptures qu'elle a expérimentées pendant l'écriture de sa thèse de maîtrise quand elle changea sa méthodologie de recherche d'ethnographique pour des récits interrogatifs variables. Les méthodes ethnographiques, elle croit, imposent des limites dans son habileté à représenter la connaissance contenue dans son corps infirme. Des voix autoritaires (médecins, scientifiques, universitaires) ont présenté leur vision établie que les infirmités peuvent être soignées ou guéries. Elle a senti cela comme le pouvoir de définir la vie des infirmes en utilisant des méthodes de recherche supposées rigoureuses, objectives et neutres. Les études supérieures ont créé des attentes qui ont poussé son corps au-delà des limites, causant des dangers pour la vie. La vie n'était pas ordonnée, observable et congruente, comme elle croyait; elle ne pouvait pas nous trouver des façons pour séparer ses propres expériences de celles de ses participants aux recherches. À la place, les deux, vie et recherches, peuvent être en piteuse état, désordonnées et liminale. À la recherche d'une nouvelle méthode de recherche, une qui valoriserait sa voix et ses expériences en tant qu'apprenante infirme, Kimpson sort de la voie qui était écrite pour ses méthodes scientifiques, et se fie à sa propre expertise et ses propres styles d'apprentissage. En changeant pour l'interrogation narrative, le texte de ces recherches change et l'amène à une conscience de cette variabilité. En reconnaissant les ruptures, décrochages et discontinuités dans ses expériences de recherche comme personne infirme, de multiples voix ont émergé pour elle et ont ouvert des possibilités que les méthodes de recherches narratives lui empêchaient d'honorer.

Carmen Shields de la faculté d'éducation de l'université Nippissing, écrit : « Recherche narrative comme outil de documentation et d'orientation de notre (re)interprétation d'expériences vécues ». Dans ce document, Shields démontre comment les étudiants en études supérieures peuvent « ouvrir des portes à la sagesse personnelle, professionnelle qui repose silencieusement dans les expériences des enseignants et des étudiants, et peuvent leurs enseigner sur les sujets universitaires à l'étude. En utilisant des histoires sacrées de son enfance, lorsqu'elle faisait face à la polio, ou qu'elle devait prendre soin d'un proche souffrant d'autisme ou encore en étant élevée dans un environnement où la foi est la valeur dominante, elle révèle l' « éducation spéciale » et les « attitudes persistantes » que ces expériences ont eues dans le conditionnement de son futur de mère, d'individu, et d'enseignante. « Les périls de la différence dans une société de mimétisme », « le silence autour des sujets difficiles », « protéger les autres qui étaient moins capable de parler », développer « la volonté de rendre les coups » pour mieux faire

les choses contre « les forces qui limitent les possibilités » étaient quelques-uns des thèmes significatifs qui faisaient échos dans sa vie. Shields détient une maîtrise en Éducation spécialisée et a enseigné à des enfants avec des handicaps sensoriels et cognitifs. Partant d'un paradigme positiviste du temps, elle a appris l'histoire générique du « comment » enseigner et comment recevoir et dispenser la connaissance des experts. Des études de doctorats dans le récit avec leurs rythmes d'enquêtes en avancées et en recules, en entrées et en sorties, cependant, l'ont amené à se poser les questions « Qui suis-je? » et « Qu'est-ce que je pense? ». En « (ré) interprétant » des histoires sur le chemin, Shields s'est éveillée à l'unique programme d'étude de sa vie et à sa propre connaissance.

Gail Lindsay est un professeur assistant en Soins Infirmiers à l'Université de York. Son papier, « Les pionniers de passé et du présent : Pertinence pour les programmes d'études des histoires traversant les générations », offre aux lecteurs une unique expérience d'interrogation des programmes. Elle tisse ensemble l'histoire vieille d'un siècle des pionniers des espaces sauvages canadiens que son grand-père écrivit dans son journal avant de mourir quelques années plus tôt, avec son propre récit de pionnier d'aujourd'hui dans le développement de nouveau programme de Soins Infirmiers dans une université en ville. Lindsay rend compréhensible les tensions qu'elle a rencontrées dans son travail, au travers de la vision que donnaient les mémoires de son grand-père et qui met à jour des parallèles. Certains thèmes qui ressortent, comme elle commence à réfléchir sur les liens entre les générations, incluent la façon dont les histoires nous enseignent, comment les frontières traversent les générations, comment elles peuvent amener du confort pendant les périodes de troubles et comment le programme d'étude de la vie à travers eux, peut transcender les connaissances disciplinaires. Lindsay elle-même nous donne des lunettes pour regarder les programmes cachés, silencieux et qui sont continus dans les différents récits que chaque enseignant-infirmier amène aux discussions de l'équipe. Elle montre que nous pouvons apprendre ces agendas cachés qui silencieusement mettent en forme nos tensions, affectent nos relations entre collègues, par le dialogue et les réflexions et en découvrant consciemment de nouveaux liens dans nos histoires.

Sommaire

Les papiers évoqués dans cette édition, écrits par des éducateurs dont les contextes s'étalent de la loi aux soins infirmiers, de la psychothérapie aux jardins d'enfants, et aux groupes communautaires, et du multiculturalisme à la relocalisation, ont amené à la vie une diversité, une complexité et des ouvertures pour la connaissance narrative. Au travers des questions spécifiques que chaque papier soulève, ces écrivains alimentent notre réflexion à propos de nos politiques nationales en éducation, ou dans la transmission du programme d'étude, les relations entre les éducateurs et autrui, avec nos

étudiants, sur les questions de pouvoir émergeants (voix) et la prise pour acquis des aspects de l'éducation à tous les niveaux du développement humain. Butala, Lindsay, Clews et Newman examinent une histoire de mère ou de grand-mère pour son impact sur leurs vies, sur leurs enseignements, leurs recherches, leurs écrits et relations avec le monde de tous les jours. Bruner, Lotherington, Gray et Gillespie, d'un autre côté, écrivent à propos d'atteindre des étudiants du jardin d'enfants à l'université ou des clients adultes en utilisant la littérature et l'imagination, et de leur travail, depuis les textes de contes de fée à la philosophie, qui augmentent ou excluent les apprenants de l'histoire. L'apprentissage des femmes dans les groupes communautaires et dans les hautes études sert de point de mire à English, Kimpson et Shields alors qu'elles examinent comment les catégorisations institutionnelles empêchent les femmes de voir leurs expériences valorisées. Lotherington, Steinman, Boone, Chan, et Clews et Newman, s'interrogent sur les tensions culturelles et multiculturelles que les étudiants et les nouveaux arrivants rencontrent en tant que Canadiens de diverses origines ethniques. Ainsi, nous voyons comment le récit nous procure des possibilités infinies d'apprentissage à partir de la vie elle-même, des romans, des mémoires et des contes de fée, des rêves et des handicaps, des histoires de famille, des images de pionniers et même des paysages qui nous entourent.

D. F. et W. L. R.

RÉFÉRENCES

- Bateson, M. (1989). *Composing a life*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.
- Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (1987). Life as narrative. *Social Research*, 5,4(1), 11-32.
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Butala, S. (1993). *The perfection of the morning: An apprenticeship in nature*. Toronto: HarperCollins.
- Connelly, M., & Clandinin, J. (1988). *Teachers as curriculum planners: Narratives of experience*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Crites, S. (1971). The narrative quality of experience. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 39(3), 291-311.
- Hardy, B. (1968). Toward a poetics of fiction. *Novel*, 2, 5-14.
- Heilbrun, C. (1988). *Writing a woman's life*. New York: Ballantine.
- Hinchman, L. & Hinchman, S. (Eds.). (1997). *Memory, identity, community: The idea of narrative in the human sciences*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- King, T. (2003). *The truth about stories: A native narrative*. Toronto: Anansi.
- Kuhl, D. (2002). *What dying people want: Practical wisdom for the end of life*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada.
- McEwan, H. & Egan, K. (Eds.). (1995). *Narrative in teaching, learning, and research*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Polkinghorne, D. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

- Rosenau, P. (1992). *Postmodernism and the social sciences: Insights, inroads, and intrusions*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Sarbin, T. (1986b). The narrative as a root metaphor for psychology. In T. Sarbin (Ed.), *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct* (pp. 3-21). New York: Praeger.
- Sidney, P. (1595/1975). An apology for poetry. In C. Kaplan (Ed.), *Criticism: The major statements*. New York: St. Martin's.
- Spence, D. (1982). *Narrative truth and historical truth*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Swimme, B., Berry, T. (1992). *The universe story: From the primordial flaring forth to the ecozoic era – a celebration of the unfolding of the cosmos*. San Francisco: HarperCollins.

DOLORES FURLONG est actuellement professeur à la Faculté des sciences infirmières de l'Université du Nouveau-Brunswick (UNB), Canada. Membre fondateur de la faculté, elle est également la première vice-doyenne du Renaissance College, collège en leadership innovateur et interdisciplinaire de l'UNB (2000-2004). En collaboration avec Bill Randall, Mme Furlong a participé, en 2001 et en 2004, à l'organisation des conférences intitulées « Narratives Matters ». Dans le cadre de ses travaux, de son enseignement et de ses publications, elle se concentre sur les méthodes de recherche narrative.

WILLIAM L. RANDALL est professeur agrégé au département de gériologie de l'Université St. Thomas, Frédéricton, Nouveau-Brunswick, Canada. Il a organisé, en collaboration avec Mme Dolores Furlong, les conférences « Narrative Matters » en 2002 et en 2004. M. Randall est l'auteur d'un grand nombre de livres et d'articles portant sur la gériologie narrative.

THE REALITY OF FICTION

JEROME BRUNER *New York University*

This talk was presented at "Le Monde Annual Forum" in Paris on 10 April 2004.

LA RÉALITÉ DE LA FICTION

Cette allocution a eu lieu pendant le "Forum Annuel du journal Le Monde" à Paris le 10 avril, 2004.

Today's Forum on "Literature and Education" provides us with an opportunity to discuss something that has been puzzling the human race for a very long time, provoking wonder, sometimes even fear. How can something known to be make-believe seem real: a tale, a novel, a *piece de theatre*? How can there be truth or reality in the make-believe of fiction? And why, indeed, do we say of great fiction that it is even more real than life itself?

Perhaps we should begin our quest with a quick look at what "Reality" has, over the ages, been taken to mean. We quickly discover, of course, that "Reality" is a notion that has always been in contention, realists and nominalists at war with each other, even at war within their own ranks, about whether Reality is to be found "out there" in some world independent of us, or whether it is made, constructed by us collectively for purposes of utility and to assure like-mindedness in the communities where we live. And of course, there have also been those so-called "idealists" who follow Plato's view that the world is an idealized set of essences to which we have but clouded access through those shadows that the ideal world casts on the cave wall through the cave door.

Today, of course, the "official" or professional philosophical view is that Realism – naive realism – is dead, misleading, childlike. We smile condescendingly at Newton's naive formula that Man sets forth on a sea of ignorance and simply discovers the islands of truth: *Hypothesis non fingo*. We even mock at Aristotle's old formula in the *Poetics* arguing that convincing literature

seems real because it “imitates” reality, mimesis: how do we know the “reality” that something is supposed to be imitating? In one fell swoop, Realism and Idealism have been swept into the trash-bin of historical error.

“Reality,” we now prefer to say, is a product of disciplined imagination, shaped and guided by conventions for selecting, organizing, and testing experience against agreed-upon criteria. As in science, “reality” is now taken to be the child of a provable hypothesis derived from some paradigmatic conception of the “world,” the provable hypothesis lending credence to the paradigm from which it was derived. But then, bang! A new paradigm is invented or imagined, other hypotheses are generated and proved, and a scientific revolution offers us a new reality. Divine intervention gives way to Darwin’s evolution; the humoral theory of disease gives way to the world of germs.

I have started our discussion with scientific “realities” because I want to make plain at the outset that while such realities are obviously different from literary or fictional ones, they bear an important family resemblance to them – both are constructed, a matter that will be clearer presently.



So we come now to literary, fictional “realities,” those grippingly credible episodes – like the restless domesticity at the opening of Albert Camus’ *The Stranger*, or the compelling maritime routines in Joseph Conrad’s *Secret Sharer*. The first and most obvious thing about all such fictional realities is that they are products of language, not just of the artistry of language, but of language itself. For just as language created a visual-audible world for the blind-and-deaf Helen Keller, so language speaking to the imagination, creates a “real” world for us when we read or hear compelling stories. Reality is always in the imagination – imagination’s most compelling product.

But it is not just language per se that is “reality creating,” but rather one particular power that language makes possible – the power of narrative, the power to create and to comprehend stories. Without that gift of narrative, without some virtually innate access to it for shaping the world, there is no reality of fiction. So let’s explore what narrative is, what it takes to create a story. That will start us on our way.

A story requires, first, the presumed existence of some initial canonical state of things in the world, some stable ordinariness to which, as it were, our habits of mind are tuned. Stories begin in ordinariness. Marcel Proust (in *A la recherche du temps perdu*, *Combray*, p. 3) catches our proneness to this initial canonical state with this telling passage:

Perhaps the immobility of the things that surround us is forced upon them by our conviction that they are themselves and not anything else, made so by the immobility of our conception of them.

That is the start.

The very next step in a story is, of course, to bring this taken-for-granted steady state of things into question: to undermine its self-evident ordinari-ness, to put it at risk, even to turn it on its head. Take the young captain in Conrad's *Secret Sharer*, unsure of himself on his initial ship's command. He has decided to weigh anchor early next morning and to give his crew a good night's sleep, he is standing a one-man night watch. All is well, and he routinely does a round of the ship's deck. He notices that a boarding ladder has been carelessly left hanging over the side, and routinely he goes to pull it up. Then, out of the blue, he sees a man in the water hanging on to the end of the ladder. Leggatt, the soon-to-be secret sharer, has shattered the familiar routine of a ship's departure – a disturbing stranger in a strange sea on a strange coast. Ordinari-ness demolished!

Proust, in his unique way, liked to disrupt ordinari-ness in a more philosophical way, as in this passage, again from *Combray*, impeccably designed to smash the taken-for-granted distinction between the real and the imagined.

For a long time, I would go to bed early. Sometimes, the candle barely out, my eyes closed so quickly that I did not have time to tell myself "I'm falling asleep." And half an hour later the thought that it was time to look for sleep would awaken me; I would make as if to put away the book which I imagined was still in my hands, and to blow out the light; I had gone on thinking, while I was still asleep, about what I had just been reading, but these thoughts had taken a rather peculiar turn; it seemed to me that I was the immediate subject of my book. . . This impression would persist for some moments after I awoke; it did not offend my reason, but lay like scales upon my eyes and prevented them from registering the fact that the candle was no longer burning. Then it would begin to seem unintelligible, as the thoughts of a previous existence must be after reincarnation. (p. 8)

Let's use Aristotle's wonderful term, *peripeteia* for these violations of the expected and ordinary, this second step in narrative. The term literally means "adventure" in classic Greek.

Next in narrative, is the *action*: efforts to undo the *peripeteia*, to restore the canonical state of things. Narrative action is constrained, of course, by genre, by tradition, by culture. The adventure tale features outward acts, psychological novels inner ones, all intended to cope with the dislocations created by the *peripeteia*.

If action restores or renews the canonical state of things with which the story began, or replaces it with another, we speak of the story's *resolution* – and again it may take many shapes or, indeed, remain ambiguous. To return to Conrad, the young captain brings Leggatt on board and hides him in his own quarters. The next morning, anchor up and sails set, he brings his ship dangerously close in on shore in treacherously light air, so that Leggatt, the

“secret sharer,” whom he has hidden overnight, can escape secretly over the side, “a proud swimmer,” as the young captain says of him. The ship is saved from going into stays, losing way and drifting ashore, thanks to Leggatt’s floating hat, that had been thrown to him by the young captain in compassion and sympathy. That is the resolution.

A well-formed story, finally, has a *coda*, whether stated or implied: its normative stance, the “moral of the story” as we used to call it. Explicit codas, of course, went out with Aesop, but though we don’t expect “A stitch in time saves nine,” we still search for a story’s normative twist, whether the author intended one or not. Why a “secret sharer” on the young captain’s first and unexpected command, for example? Why the need to hide him? Why the episode of the hat?

Initial canonical state, peripeteia, action, resolution, coda: that is the skeleton of narrative. As I’ve argued elsewhere, a grasp of such narrative structure seems virtually inborn: young children grasp stories structured in this way as soon as they have the language needed to follow it – and even before that in the form of pretend play. You do not have to instruct them in the nature of story! It is our way of organizing even the most minimal extended experience into an orderly form. The narrative form seems to be our uniquely human way of making sense of the world with a minimum of experience, even in the absence of experience. Again to the young Helen Keller. She tells us that, once she had grasped the nature of story – soon after her teacher had given her a first sense of what words were – she was even able to make stories about the visible and audible worlds to which she had no direct access at all.

Note a few gifts that narrative bestows. It provides a form for recognizing departures from ordinariness – a genre for sensing and categorizing possible variations in the world as ordinarily encountered. And it endows one with the means of recognizing sources of disruption and who and what is needed to restore normalcy. In a deep sense, narrative is also our simplest mode of imposing a moral structure on experience. For the peripeteia is a disruption of the valued customary, and a story’s action is a stance with regard to such disruptions. It is no accident that we teach morals through stories.

In the deepest sense, then, a principal function of narrative is to explore alternative versions of the human condition, “possible worlds” as it were. It is the vehicle par excellence for exploring troubles and the possible ways of coping with them. It is no accident that the peripeteia is the “engine” of narrative, as Kenneth Burke once called it. Nor is it an accident that we frame accounts of our own existence in the world as “the story of my life,” troubles included as landmarks.

• • • • •

Let me turn now to a theme I have neglected. It has to do, of course, with the believability of fictional realities, the form of credence we place in them. In what way is our “belief” in fictional reality different from our belief in the “realities” we encounter in our day-to-day encounters with the world? Let me begin with a thoughtful quote from a recent book, Michael Riffaterre’s *Fictional Truth*. He approaches fictional realities from a fresh perspective.

...readers need not be familiar with the reality that the text is about in order to believe it true. The only reality against which they need to test the narrative’s truth is language. (p. 8)

Stories, as he puts it further along, must, in some way, be “axiomatic” beyond testability. To demonstrate he offers this scene from Proust’s *Contre Sainte-Beuve* (p. 120):

No one yet was to be seen in front of the church except for the lady in black one sees leaving hurriedly at any given time in provincial towns.

Il n’y avait encore personne devant l’église, sauf la dame en noir qu’on en voit sortir rapidement à toute heures dans les villes de province.

There is no detail to be verified in Proust’s brief account, indeed there is virtually nothing about her – not the lady’s widow’s weeds (if she is a widow), not her imminent transition from lonely prayer to the bustle of a waiting household, nothing to individualize her. She is a pseudo-person, a type, “an actant rather than an actor,” in Riffaterre’s terms. For him, fictional truth is syntagmatic, inherently undeniable, axiomatic, possible rather than just there.

So what do stories do to us, then? For Riffaterre (p. 10), stories “parallel in language the cognitive processes we use in everyday life.” Commenting on a passage from Henry James,

To recognize the truth [of this particular passage], neither experience nor previous reading are needed, only linguistic competence: truth [in fiction] is nothing but a linguistic perception.

But note that the *soi-disant* “nothing but” of syntax is the cradle of the semantically possible. Stories provide templates for possible worlds, “models” for seeing the quotidian in a new perspective. We do not confuse fiction with life. Yet, we travel back and forth on a two-way street between the two, between life and literature. They, stories, provide us with the means of knowing possible worlds without having to experience them – just as the language-gifted Helen Keller could imagine the visible and the audible without being able to see or to hear.

And, indeed, we become better able to understand the real world of experience by seeing it in the light of fictional worlds of possibility. It is this comparison process that gives fiction its most compelling reality – “There but for the grace of God goes life.” But, by the same token, we are also enabled to say

of life experience as we live it, “Am I getting this right? Is there another, a better way of telling this story?” The well examined life, in a word, is one in which LIFE EMULATES ART AND ART EMULATES LIFE, WHICH IN TURN EMULATES ART WHICH EMULATES LIFE WHICH EMULATES ART, ad infinitum. Small wonder, then, that fiction often has a reality like life itself!

And indeed, we can easily encourage travel on this two-way street between life and literature. Let me sketch out a little experiment that a colleague and I carried out in facilitating such back-and-forth travel.

• • • • •

It took place this last autumn at New York University, a Freshman Honors Seminar that I shared with my colleague, Anthony Amsterdam, a law professor renowned for his civil rights litigation, including his current battles to restrain the Bush administration’s over-zealous reactions to the threat of terrorism. We admitted only fifteen students, and the announced topic was how one balances individual liberty and state security in times of trouble, as in a so-called war on terrorism such as we are living through today – a real enough topic, with our classroom only a kilometer from the demolished World Trade Center.

Our group read both legal and literary texts. The former were briefs submitted to, as well as subsequent decisions reached by, the United States Supreme Court in cases involving liberty-security conflicts, including ones currently pending (and much in the news, like the Guantanamo prisoners and *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*). The literary texts dealt with parallel themes, including two versions of *Antigone* – one by Sophocles, the other by Jean Anouilh, two millennia apart. At the end of term each student wrote two sets of imagined dialogues. One was between a present member of the Supreme Court faced with our current problems, and a justice who had sat on the Court when it upheld the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II, and later apologized for their bad judgment. The other imaginary dialogue was between members of the Chorus of the two *Antigones* reflecting how Creon and his niece Antigone had got into their tragic confrontation: what had gone wrong? I’m going to tell you only about the latter, for the former risks being too technical.

Recall first the deadly struggle between Antigone and Creon, she with her sense of moral duty to bury her slain brother Polynices, and he, Creon, with his sense of kingly duty to maintain order and security in Thebes by denying burial to the slain Polynices, who had been a leader in a revolt against the city. Polynices and his brother Eteocles, recall, had killed each other in mortal combat at the gates of Thebes, battling over how they should take turns on the throne of the city. King Oedipus, their recently dead father, had decreed that the two should share the throne of Thebes. Their uncle, Creon, now King, orders a hero’s funeral for Eteocles but decrees that

Polynices be left to lie unburied, prey to dogs and crows. Antigone, enraged, tries to bury Polynices, and for doing so is condemned to death by Creon, whereupon Creon's son, Haemon, betrothed to Antigone, stabs himself to death in her tomb. Euridice, Creon's wife, then takes her own life in grief. It is a tragic tale.

So what did our students make of it, this tragic tale? Let me tell you first that, not surprisingly, they easily and eagerly travelled between *Antigone* and "real life." They went about it in one of three ways. In the first of them, the whole "mess" was human nature writ large – as familiar in ancient Thebes as among us today. Antigone and Creon needed a good psychoanalyst, one said; another suggested they both needed a friend. "Creon's a real Bush," a third remarked, "preoccupied with his own power." The emphasis was on the personal – both in life and in the drama.

In the second approach, the nature of the state was writ large – any state, whether ancient Thebes or contemporary America. Individual liberty and state security were virtually incompatible in troubled times. "Look at us!" one said. Society creates its own nightmares when liberty and security collide.

In the third approach, the villain was destiny – mythic themes working their way through life, this time with Creon and Antigone their victims. But it was the reverberation of an ancient tragic fate, with origins in the incestuous union of Oedipus and his mother Jocasta, the parents of the ill-fated Antigone and her brothers Polynices and Eteocles. "We've got things like that too: that's life. Look at those power-crazy Bushes! Or look at the ill-fated Kennedys!"

Our freshman were doing what we all do, traveling from literature to life to literature, back and forth. One student even suggested that *Antigone* be made obligatory reading for any judge sitting in a civil liberties case! You might even say our freshmen were reading judicial holdings like novels and novels like judicial holdings. Reading great fiction (and talking about it) encouraged them to look at the real world as a possible one among many that might exist, and to look at fictional worlds as possible models of what the real world might be.

• • • • •

So what does all this have to do with education? God forbid that each time a student reads a novel or a story she should have to dissect it into its initial canonical state, its peripeteia, its action, outcome, and its coda. Yet, unpacking literary fiction is a powerful way of teaching us not only about the subtleties of story but about the possible forms that life takes, particularly about life's dilemmas. Perceptive novelists know this implicitly, and transform their intuitions into fiction.

Take this paragraph from Marcel Proust as a case in point, again *Combray* (p. 15), the same young narrator recounting his mother's "Good night" visits at bedtime:

Sometimes when, after kissing me, she opened the door to go, I longed to call her back, to say to her "Kiss me just once more," but I knew that then she would at once look displeased, for the concession that she made to my wretchedness and agitation in coming up to give me this kiss of peace always annoyed my father, who thought such rituals absurd, and she would have liked to try to induce me to outgrow the need, the habit, of having her there at all, let alone getting into the habit of asking for an additional kiss when she was already crossing the threshold. And to see her look displeased destroyed all the calm and serenity she had brought me a moment before when she had bent her loving face down over my bed and held it out to me . . . like a host for an act of peace-giving communion.

Should our students be more exposed to the fictional truths of literature? Should instruction in literature cultivate the back-and-forth between fiction and life? Think how Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* made newly vivid the deadening effect of commerce on American life? Or how the *Oresteia* has livened the world to the always desperate struggle in life between vengeance and forgiveness. Of literary works of such quality it can indeed be said that they are bigger or realer than life itself – artful models of possible life, particularly of life's inevitable dilemmas.

Literature provides a vehicle for teaching about possible worlds – and not just in literature faculties. My colleague Tony Amsterdam and I, for example, used Herman Melville's *Billy Budd* in a seminar devoted to legal procedure, along with the usual legal stuff, of course. Its effect was electric. It wasn't just the gripping moral anomaly that Melville portrays in that moving drama. Rather, Melville teaches the dilemmas of justice – in possible lives, and yes, as they pose themselves in courts of law in the real world. "I learned to READ in a new way," one student told me several years later. I think he too (like those freshman in our Seminar) – came to read law cases for what they were, but to read them as literature as well. Or perhaps even more important for their careers as lawyers, they also learned to read literature as a source of insights into the law and its arcane ways.

(I should explain, perhaps, that in Anglo-Saxon common law, appellate courts hand down not only their final holding in a case, but also the reasons for having reached their verdict, including *obiter dicta* on their mode of interpreting legal precedents from the past. Anthony Amsterdam and I tried to illustrate in a recent book, *Minding the Law*, for example, how often legal decisions are framed and shaped by narrative conventions. Though Continental courts do not reveal their rationale in so explicit a way, it hardly seems possible that their judges could proceed differently.)

So why not use literary works to help us teach sociology, psychology, pedagogy, even (or especially) history? Why are we so reluctant to widen the two-way street between the possible and the actual? Why do we, indeed, go on thinking that the “reality of fiction” is more suspect and illusionary than the “fiction of reality”?

Indeed, I even think that our law student might have been right about “learning how to read” when he became adept in going back and forth between Melville’s *Billy Budd* and the opinions of the United States Supreme Court. And besides, it also makes them more aware of the medium of story telling, not just its message – the very language of literature. Let me illustrate with an anecdote, again from that Freshman Honors Seminar, a conversation with one of our students. We were walking toward nearby Washington Square after the last seminar meeting in mid-December – the same Washington Square, of course, as in the Henry James novel. I asked him had he noticed how many more subjunctive verb forms there were in Jean Anouilh’s *Antigone* than in Sophocles’. “Subjunctives?” he replied, “Why that?” So I told him that Henry James – his old house now directly across from us – had cultivated the subjunctive as a way of portraying the inner doubts of his *fin de siècle* characters. He paused, and then, “Hey, you think life’s become more subjunctive, more full of “might be’s” for us in our times? That’s interesting.” He paused again, and then, “Hey, why didn’t we talk about that in class? That would have been really interesting.”

A good question – and probably the first time the subjunctive had ever taken on any reality for that young man. In my view, we’re still only beginning to appreciate how teaching literature takes us beyond the literary. For the “reality of fiction” challenges conventional reality itself. It is a beckoning entry-way into possibility: present, past, and future.

REFERENCES

- Anouilh, J. (1951). *Antigone* (L. Galantiere, Trans.). London: Methuen.
- Conrad, J. (1910/1982). *The Secret Sharer*. New York: Bantam.
- Proust, M. (1992). *In search of lost time: Swann’s way* (part I Combray). New York: The Modern Library, Random House.
- Proust, M. (1954). *Contre Sainte-Beuve*. Paris: Gullimard.
- Riffaterre, M. (1990). *Fictional Truth*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins.
- Sophocles. (1999 version). *Antigone*. In D. R. Slavitt & P. Bovie (Eds.), *Sophocles 2*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press

JEROME BRUNER is University Professor at New York University where he teaches principally in the School of Law, having taught previously at Harvard and Oxford. He received his Ph.D. in psychology at Harvard in 1941 and early became involved in educational issues through his 1960 book, *The Process of Education*. He has become increasingly drawn to cultural psychology (see his 1991 *Acts of Meaning*, his 1998 *The Culture of Education*, and his 2002 *Making Stories* – all from Harvard University Press.)

JEROME BRUNER est professeur à la New York University où il enseigne principalement à l'école de droit; il a enseigné auparavant aux universités Harvard et Oxford. Il a obtenu son doctorat en psychologie à Harvard en 1941 et s'est intéressé très tôt aux questions relatives à l'enseignement en publiant un livre intitulé *The Process of Education* en 1960. Il a manifesté un intérêt grandissant pour la psychologie culturelle (consultez ses livres *Acts of Meaning*, 1991, *The Culture of education*, 1998 et *Making Stories*, 1998 – qui ont tous été publiés chez Harvard University Press.).

WRITING POSTMODERN FAIRY TALES AT MAIN STREET SCHOOL: DIGITAL NARRATIVES AND EVOLVING TRANSLITERACIES

HEATHER LOTHERINGTON *York University*

ABSTRACT. At an elementary school in inner city Toronto, I am working with the principal, a kernel group of primary teachers, and the school's technician to develop children's digital literacies. Main Street School is dedicated to the pursuit of social equity for its population of grade K-5 students who are characterized by high multiculturalism and low income. The school achieves this goal through the promotion of digital learning. Our project experimentally writes the children of Main Street School into dynamic postmodern digital versions of traditional European fairy tales, and showcases the evolving transliteracies children are navigating in the pursuit of emergent literacy.

RÉDACTION DE CONTES DE FÉE POSTMODERNES À LA MAIN STREET SCHOOL : HISTOIRES NUMÉRIQUES ET LITTÉRATIES NOUVELLES

RÉSUMÉ. En collaboration avec le directeur, un groupe d'enseignants et les techniciens d'une école primaire de la grande ville de Toronto, je travaille au développement des connaissances numériques des enfants. La Main Street School se consacre à la poursuite de l'équité sociale chez ses élèves de niveau K-5 qui se distinguent par un multiculturalisme marqué et de faibles revenus. L'école réalise cet objectif en encourageant l'apprentissage numérique. À titre expérimental, notre projet campe les enfants de la Main Street School dans des versions numériques postmodernes et dynamiques de contes de fée européens traditionnels, et montre comment les enfants de cultures différentes évoluent vers une culture émergente.

Introduction

During 2003, when I was on sabbatical leave, I observed and participated in classes at an inner city elementary school in Toronto. My agenda was ethnographic research into emergent multiliteracies, tapping how children learn to read and write life in the 21st century that folds multilingualism, multiculturalism and multimodalism into literacy development and practice. During one of my regular chats with the principal on research progress, she mentioned in passing that she would love to have someone just read stories to the kindergarten children, many of whom come to school without benefit

of the middle class Canadian socialization that includes ritual story book reading. Furthermore, many children lack exposure to and competency in English. Story reading would give them an opportunity to catch up on hearing English and learning what a story is in this culture. It was easy to spend a period reading stories to children in a kindergarten class I was observing, so I volunteered.

And so began our project to rewrite Goldilocks. Susan, the junior and senior kindergarten class teacher, was very flexible and suggested that I pull out children for individual story reading during their activity time. She nudged some of her print-recalcitrant learners my way and we started weekly story reading on a one-to-one basis, some children selected by pedagogical recommendation, and some, just curious. It was a period of non-threatening reading in the library corner, where each child selected a story to be read. Squashed into a tiny plastic chair, I sat side by side with each child in the library corner and read stories aloud.

At first, children did not know what to make of this. Freddie, a delayed junior kindergarten boy with a Caribbean background, didn't really know what any of this was about for the first few weeks, and he would drift off while I was reading, looking at the room around him, totally unaware of the story unfolding in the pages in front of him. Three little Cantonese speaking girls, who regularly made plasticine pizzas and cookies at the nearby play dough station, slowly gained enough trust to sit with me individually for story reading. One day, one of the tough big boys in the class tried to bully his way into our library corner to sit and listen, too. Our library corner was becoming popular. Recognized as the "story lady," I was often approached for a story as soon as I walked into the classroom. One day, Freddie took my hand and led me to the library corner for a story that he was starting to understand. It was a breakthrough.

But it was one of the little Chinese girls, Victoria, who inadvertently kick-started the Goldilocks project. On this day, part way through the academic year, I asked her which story she would like to have me read to her. In the blink of an eye, she grabbed *Goldilocks and the three bears*, and with an indication of more materials to come, she rooted through a basket for cardboard figures of the three bears. I started to read, and, in the appropriate place, Victoria chimed in using her biggest 5 year old voice: "Who's been eating my porridge?" or a reasonable facsimile, marked more by gusto than actual articulation. Soon we had to fight off a veritable scrum of children waiting to pinch the other little plastic seat in the library corner to hear the story. On one occasion, I had to send Victoria to the bathroom: she was hopping around, clutching herself, obviously needing to go, but for fear of losing her seat in the library to one of the waiting big boys refused to acknowledge her body's pressing message. It was a close call.

Goldilocks quickly emerged as a class favourite. I started to wonder what made Goldilocks so attractive to these children. She was presented in the story as a rather naughty little girl with pretty blonde hair, a colour I noted to be conspicuously absent in the gene pool of the children attending Main Street School. She was walking alone in the woods, an absolute no-no for urban children, who are often locked in their high rise apartments with the television on when parents are not available. What did a lonely cottage in the woods look like to children who lived in high density, publicly subsidized housing? They would not have seen a bear in Toronto, though the city is plagued with urbanized raccoons. And what on earth is porridge?

I asked the teachers what the children might understand of Goldilocks and her life in the woods, and the common link was thought to be the break-and-enter theme of the traditional tale. Rather horrified, but unsure of whether this was ultimately good or bad, I decided that it was time to digitally edit Goldilocks, to bring her into the 21st century of contemporary urban Toronto.

Context: Main Street School

Main Street School, the context of this research, is an ideal laboratory for the study of new literacies and the creation of digital narratives. It is situated in a neighbourhood of mixed housing in north-western Toronto (formerly known as North York), surrounded by discount shopping strips, wholesalers, and light industry. The subsidized, high density, high rise housing development which is home to most Main Street School children attracts a high proportion of recent immigrants to Canada; many live jointly with relatives and their families in small, cramped apartments. At home, the majority of children speak a language or a dialect other than the English used at school. Though the area is economically poor, it is culturally rich: its diverse population provides a tapestry of languages and ways of understanding the world. The highly multicultural community at Main Street School is representative of a large percentage of the school population in the Toronto District School Board which accommodates a significant percentage of newcomers to Canada, and consequently, to Ontario curriculum expectations. For most children, English is a second language.

In effort to boost opportunities for social equity for the children of Main Street School, many of whom enter elementary education in such a different place from the middle class Anglo-Canadian children imagined in provincial curricula, the school has committed to a culture of technologically enhanced learning. Children learn everything from literacy to mathematics to music in a digitally supported learning environment. The school has achieved international recognition for its innovative incorporation of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) (Granger et al., 2002; Lotherington et

al., 2001); and many teachers at the school as well as the principal have won prestigious awards for outstanding achievement in education.

Theoretical orientation: Emergent multiliteracies

The conceptual framework underpinning our project to rewrite Goldilocks is *multiliteracies*: a framework for action collaboratively developed by the New London Group in the mid-nineties (1996):

We decided that the outcomes of our discussions could be encapsulated in one word: 'Multiliteracies' – a word we chose because it describes two important arguments we might have with the emerging cultural, institutional and global order. The first argument engages with the multiplicity of communications channels and media; the second with the increasing salience of cultural and linguistic diversity. (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 5)

The concept of multiliteracies invites a pedagogy that engages multiple worlds communicated in multiple ways, folding into the teaching of emergent literacy the diverse cultural and linguistic worlds of the children attending Main Street School and the school's approach to achieving social equity for its population through technological innovation.

Literacy as conceptualized on provincial EQAO¹ assessments – mandatory high stakes province-wide tests written in grades 3, 6 and 10 – is encapsulated in a Modern era paper world of Anglo-centric Canadiana mediated through written English. Many of the children of Main Street School (as in many other schools in the Toronto District School Board where children from diverse cultural backgrounds enter school without the cultural capital [Bourdieu, 1991] assumed in high stakes provincial tests that will certify them as educated) need exposure to the fairy tales that background the narrative culture of early childhood education.

Fairy tales have been continually rewritten and adapted across their oral and literate lives: European and Asian fairy tales in late twentieth century film have transformed the Little Mermaid perched in the Copenhagen harbour, and the Arabian Genie released from Aladdin's magic lamp, into Disneyland Americana. Given the cultural appropriation of fairy tales in film genres, perhaps, we, too, could retell and redraw traditional folk and fairy tales for the current and future generations of children who are changing the face of Canadian culture.

Who is Goldilocks?

As I looked around at the heads of glossy black hair in Susan's kindergarten class, and back at Goldilocks' pretty blonde curls, I began to wonder who Goldilocks was. Where did she come from? Why do we pretend that this little European girl is somehow Canadian? Who is Canadian? What does that mean?

I went to the Osborne Collection at the Toronto Public Library, where the librarian researched and prepared chronological and critical resources detailing the history of Goldilocks from her unlikely birth as a fox in a cautionary Scottish folk tale to the original 1831 manuscript of *The story of the three bears* (Mure, 1967/1831) to the little girl we recognize as Goldilocks.² I realized with some degree of embarrassment that Goldilocks might well be one of the best children's story pretenders to a Canadian identity. Though the story had been written in England, based on the narrative thread of a Scottish folk tale, the beautiful hand-written and watercolour-illustrated manuscript was permanently housed in Toronto, having migrated in good twentieth century Canadian fashion as part of Edgar Osborne's boxed bequest of heirloom children's books donated to the Toronto Public library.

In the earliest recorded version of the story now known as *Goldilocks and the three bears*, Miss Eleanor Mure (1967/1831) handwrote *The story of the three bears* as a birthday present to her four-year old nephew, Horace Broke, retelling in verse form the ancient cautionary Scottish folk tale of the three bears, who eat a she-fox that has invaded their home (Bettelheim, 1976). The dedication is as follows:

The
celebrated nursery tale
of the
THREE BEARS
put into verse
and embellished with drawings
for a
Birth-day Present
to
HORACE BROKE
Sept: 26: 1831.

In Mure's handwritten version, the vixen is interpreted as an old woman (Bettelheim, 1976) who is rudely turned away when she tries to visit her new neighbours, three bears, tired of pastoral life in the woods, who have made an upwardly mobile move to a manor patterned after Mure's father's home: Cecil Lodge in Hertfordshire. Though there is a "little" bear, the three bears are depicted as being more or less the same size, and there is no indication of gender difference. Nor are they given clothes, despite the urbane anthropomorphism. The old lady, who morphs into Goldilocks in future reincarnations, invades the bears' house, after she sees them go out, in retribution for her rebuffed welcome visit, and vandalizes the house in the scripted manner, finding, and spewing/dumping/drinking three bowls of milk, then breaking three chairs and beds. The beginnings of the bear's comparative chants of discovery that inspired Victoria's spontaneous narrative embellishments are seeded here:

They went to the drawing-room; where the first bear
Roar'd, "Who, without leave, has sat down in my chair"?
The second, astonished, more mildly did say,
"Who's been sitting in my chair, when I was away"?
The little bear madly cried; "What shall I do?
"Who has sat in my chair, and the bottom burst thro?"
(Mure, 1967/1831, stanza 11)

In this version, the bears discover the old lady hiding fearfully in a closet when they return, and go to extreme measures to punish her.

The first commercially printed version of this tale is Robert Southey's *Story of the three bears* published anonymously in 1837 (Southey, n.d./1837) as a story included "for the benefit of the nursery" in the 4th volume of a collection of essays entitled *The Doctor* (Opie & Opie, 1974, p. 199). In this version the three bears, all male and wearing clothes, live together on their own in a house in the wood. They are of different sizes and this is indicated by font colour, capitalization, size and italicization. The protagonist is still a little old lady, though more pathetic and vulgar than vindictive. She does not break into the bear's house as it is not locked, but she enters uninvited:

So the little old Woman opened the door, and went in; and well pleased she was when she saw the porridge on the table. If she had been a good little old Woman, she would have waited till the Bears came home, and then, perhaps, they would have asked her to breakfast; for they were good Bears, – a little rough or so, as the manners of Bears is, but for all that very good-natured and hospitable. But she was an impudent, bad old Woman, and set about helping herself. (Southey, n.d./1837, p. 15-16)

The story proceeds as in the accepted modern version: she encounters the proverbial three bowls of porridge, which may reflect the Scottish roots of the original story, three chairs, and three beds. The bears' responses are surprisingly resonant of modern versions:

"SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY PORRIDGE!" said the GREAT, HUGE BEAR, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

"Somebody has been at my porridge!" said the Middle Bear, in his middle voice.

"Somebody has been at my porridge, and has eaten it all up!" said the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice. (Southey, n.d./1837, p. 21-22; emphases original)

The bad old lady falls asleep in the baby bear's bed. Upon discovery by the three bears, she jumps out the window. The bears rather cavalierly do not seem to care what happens to her after this:

OUT the little old Woman jumped; and whether she broke her neck in the fall; or ran into the wood and was lost there; or found her way out of the wood, and was taken up by the Constable and sent to the House of

Correction for a vagrant as she was, I cannot tell. But the Three Bears never saw anything more of her. (Southey, n.d./1837, p. 32)

Not until the Aunt Mavor's Picture books version, published in 1856, is the main protagonist transformed into a little girl. She is named Silver Locks in the text, which is divided into syllables: "Be-cause her curly hair was Shi-ning" (Anon., 1856, p. 1). The bears are now a family of three: Papa Bear, Mama Bear, and their wee Darling, living in a house in the country. Silver Locks, a country girl, is being mischievous in her break-in, which she thinks the gardener will appreciate. The bears have left rabbit soup. Silver Locks finds one bowl of soup to be hot, the second to be lacking bread, but the third to have the right condiments. The inherently comparative notion of porridge being 'too hot', 'too cold' and 'just right' are yet to insinuate themselves as germane to the story.

Neither does this version of the story showcase the repeated chants of the three bears, which Main Street kindergartners liked to voice:

Then the Big Bear with a voice like thun-der, said, "who has been in my chair and put it out of its place? and the mid-dling siz-ed Bear cried, "Look! who has been sit-ting in my chair and left the cush-ion all a-wry? but the Little Bear was very an-gry in-deed, and he sob-bed and cried, "who has been sit-ting in my lit-tle chair, and bro-ken it down to the ground? (Anon., 1856, p. 7)

The bad little girl is dealt with less harshly than her predecessors, though the original cautionary emphasis on respecting people's property is still clearly in place:

You see this lit-tle Girl was near-ly eaten by Bears be-cause she would touch things which did not be-long to her. (Anon., 1856, p. 8)

The shift to the little girl protagonist sticks after the transformation of the old lady into a child named Silver Locks, and Silver Locks reappears in an early American version of the story (Anon., n.d.). The name Goldilocks does not emerge until 1888 in an American version of *The three bears* published in New York (Anon., 1888) where the character heretofore known as Silver Locks becomes blonde. According to McGrath³ the character Goldilocks changed to match her name, having brightened considerably from the dark Victorian cautionary tale of victimization and crime (as did Little Red Riding Hood, who was originally eaten). As the audience for fairy tales diverged from adults towards children, the stories were softened considerably in tone. Goldilocks as a character is variously named into the 20th century, e.g., Goldenhair (Anon., circa 1901).

Rewriting Goldilocks at Main Street School

The fairy tale has always been a critical site for shifting perceptions. (Wolf, 2004, p. 180)

At Main Street School we have been engaged in rewriting Goldilocks for children living in urban, multicultural Toronto in the 21st century.⁴ Our experimental literacy project aims to introduce children to traditional narratives in English (as a second language) and, by positively engaging their worlds of cultural knowledge and sense of agency, teach an understanding of what a story is in this culture. Our collaborative aims include teaching narratives to children in the primary grades, experimenting with digital texts and literacies, and contributing to a more literary embodiment of multiculturalism. Our project invites children into traditional narratives as listener first, then reader, then writer of a personalized digital version of the story.

Susan is teaching grade two this year. She has been reading different versions of *Goldilocks and the three bears* to her class, and talking about the elements of a narrative. Children are working towards creating a digital revision of character and setting. In this way, they insert their 21st century experiences into the plot of this much loved and much adapted story.

In class, the grade two children are learning about the setting for the story of the three bears. Susan has identified particular rooms in the bears' house, and they have made beautiful posters, drawings and dioramas of the kitchen, living room and bedroom, showing the repeated threes of the story: bowls of food, chairs, beds. Today, the children are collaborating as a whole class to create a collegial version of the kitchen setting in which the bears have left three bowls of vegetable soup cooling. They have selected a new protagonist: a dog rather than a little girl.

Using the Wiggleworks software program for early literacy development by Scholastic, the children then move on to creating their own settings for a personally adapted version of *Goldilocks and the three bears*. The software provides a good elementary platform for the children, who can follow a scripted plot line, and combine drawing and stamps to make their own pictures. However, they are having problems: changing the setting and the characters affects fundamentals of the narrative that are causing them confusion.

One of the overarching intentions of our project is to collaboratively engage a community of educators in the pursuit of multicultural literacy education. The intention is to invite children's growing, complex multicultural identities into the rewriting project, and to offer their recontextualized stories as a new multicultural literature: one that provides a sense of multicultural Canada rather than a Canada composed of people from "other" cultures.

But I have underestimated children's understanding of culture, which in this era of globalization is highly mass media-saturated. With a free reign to insert their chosen settings and primary characters, many have adapted their story contexts to accommodate pop culture icons, rather than the surrounding community I had imagined. The electronic world our research

group is investigating pedagogically in this project is, after all, an important part of 21st century culture, too. One little boy has made his Goldilocks protagonist Teen Titan. He is surprised that I do not recognize Teen Titan and I am promptly informed that he is on YTV after school.

The teachers had warned me of the possibility of the children resorting to other ready tailored narrative contexts and characters, especially those from pop culture media. In bringing in another visual setting with its primary characters, they have inadvertently imported other aspects of the narratives, and this is creating confusion. I notice that many of the girls have chosen to use an undersea setting with a mermaid as the protagonist. This is an interesting twist to be sure, though it brings in obvious confusions in plot lines as the children try to accommodate the characters they have clearly borrowed from the Disney version of *The little mermaid* into the Goldilocks story line. I also observe confusion with the role of 'three' in the story, which, as Bettelheim (1976) notes, is a significant symbol in the Goldilocks story, as in many fairy tales (*The three little pigs*, *The three billy goats gruff*, etc.), relating to aspects of the mind, sexuality, mysticism, and Christian doctrine. What should be in threes in a rewritten Goldilocks? In one case there are triple protagonists rather than triple victims. I begin to see how difficult it is to deconstruct and to reconstruct a narrative. How separate is the setting from the character from the plot? How fused do these become in the mind of the reader, especially the early reader?

Nonetheless, good across-the-curriculum issues come out of the children's rewriting. What would Goldilocks or her new improved version eat? Carrots, beans, vegetable soup are all possibilities in action and I am impressed with how healthy these alternatives are. I encounter a funny problem with one little girl who has revised Goldilocks as a mermaid entering the abode of three goldfish. What would the goldfish be eating that Goldilocks would want to eat? She offers the answer with a giggle: fishfood. I ask her whether Goldilocks would be enticed to eat fishfood? Her answer is brilliant: given that Goldilocks is a mermaid and this is a "Once upon a time" story, it could be that mermaids in fact like fishfood.

Emerging transliteracies in the elementary classroom

Many of our concepts about print, reading, writing, and even instruction have not kept pace with the changing nature of print. (Kamil, Kim & Lane, 2004, p. 157)

The grade two children at Main Street School are showing me with their revised versions in progress of *Goldilocks and the three bears*, how difficult it is to learn what a story is. While we are engaged in updating Goldilocks in keeping with changing national dispositions, complex cultural identities and new media possibilities, we are also trying to honour the basic narrative of the original folk tale in which a property disrespecting protagonist, no matter

how enticing the character wrapping has become over the centuries, tries to rip off innocent beings, and is caught: an enduring moral lesson.

Our explorations into the emerging multiliteracies of the 21st century will help to inform us on how to educate children to function in and to co-create the social worlds they will eventually enter as literate adults. Our project merges modern literacies (i.e. Industrial Revolution inspired paper-based, print centred texts) with postmodern literacies. (Information era inspired screen-based, image-centred texts) and looks at how children negotiate these worlds of encoded information. The multiple literacies children are developing as a matter of 21st century socialization portend much-needed educational reform.

The link between old and new literacies is the story. Our transliteracies project is held together with narrative glue. We are looking to bring into the story line more of the reality of children's lives to create culturally inclusive stories: turning Goldilocks into Dreadlocks.⁵ Eventually these stories will take on digital directions of their own in terms of how they are created and read. So far, children's postmodern narratives seem to be revolving not around themselves but around the pop culture characters, many digitally inspired, that they relate to Goldilocks as a mermaid; perhaps Goldfishylocks. These are brave 7 year old beginnings into multicultural digital narratives (Ryan, 2004).

NOTES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1. Education Quality and Accountability Office, the mandate of which is to "assure greater accountability and contribute to the enhancement of the quality of education in Ontario. (<http://www.eqao.com/>)
2. I am very indebted to Leslie McGrath, Osborne Collection librarian, whose immense scholarly knowledge of children's literature was a tremendous support to my study.
3. Personal communication, Leslie McGrath, librarian, Osborne Collection, January 2004.
4. I acknowledge with gratitude the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for funding the project: Rewriting Goldilocks: Emergent transliteracies.
5. To read a selection of the children's rewritten Goldilocks stories, go to: <http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/joyce/main/goldilocks/index.htm>

REFERENCES

- Anon. (1856). *The three bears*. London: Routledge. Second series of Aunt Mavor's Picture books for little readers.
- Anon. (1888). *The three bears*. New York: McLoughlin. Young Folk series.
- Anon. (circa 1901). *The three bears*. Akron Ohio: The Saalfeld Publishing.
- Anon. (n.d.). *Silverlocks and the three bears*. Boys and girls story series.
- Bettelheim, B. (1976). *The uses of enchantment: The meaning and importance of fairy tales*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. (2000). Introduction. Multiliteracies: The beginnings of an idea. In B. Cope, & M. Kalantzis, (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures*. (pp. 3-8). London: Routledge.
- Granger, C., Morbey, M. L., Lotherington, H., Owston, R. & Wideman, H. (2002). Canada: Factors contributing to teachers' successful implementation of information technology. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 18(4), 480-488.
- Kamil, M. L., Kim, H. S. & Lane, D. (2004). Electronic text in the classroom. In J. V. Hoffman & D. L. Schallert (Eds.) *The texts in elementary classrooms*. Mahwah, N.J: Erlbaum.
- Lotherington, H., Morbey, M. L. Granger, C. & Doan, L. (2001). Tearing down the walls: New literacies and new horizons in the elementary school. In B. Barrell (Ed.), *Technology, teaching and learning: Issues in the integration of technology* (pp. 131-161). Calgary: Detselig.
- Mure, E. (1967/1831). *The story of the three bears*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Opie, I. & Opie, P. (1974). *The classic fairy tales*. London & Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Ryan, M.-L. (2004) Will new media produce new narratives? In M.-L. Ryan (Ed.), *Narrative across media: The languages of storytelling* (pp. 337-359). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Southey, Robert (n.d./ 1837). *The three bears*. Oxford University Press.
- The New London Group (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social factors. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(1), 60-92.
- Wolf, S. A. (2004). *Interpreting literature with children*. Mahwah, N.J: Erlbaum.

HEATHER LOTHERINGTON is Associate Professor of Multilingual Education at York University, and past Co-editor of the Canadian Modern Language Review. Her research focus is multiliteracies. She is currently directing a collaborative study on emergent multiliteracies in the elementary school focusing on the construction of postmodern, digital narratives.

HEATHER LOTHERINGTON est professeure agrégée en enseignement multilingue à l'Université York et a collaboré à la rédaction de la Revue canadienne des langues vivantes. Sa recherche est axée sur l'enseignement multiculturel. Mme Lotherington dirige actuellement une étude conjointe sur l'émergence de l'enseignement multiculturel à l'école primaire en mettant l'accent sur l'élaboration de récits numériques postmodernes.

THE MEMOIRIST'S QUANDARY

SHARON BUTALA

This talk was given as a keynote speech at the Narrative Matters Conference 2004, on May 21st, 2004. A section of the talk was also broadcast on the radio program "Ideas" (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) on Tuesday, January 4, 2005.

LE DILEMME DES RÉDACTEURS DE MÉMOIRES

Cette allocution était le discours-programme prononcé dans le cadre de la conférence « Narrative Matters » donnée le 21 mai 2004. Une partie de cette allocution a également été diffusée à l'émission « Ideas » à la radio (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) du mardi 4 janvier 2005.

"Gonna write a new story," the singer-songwriter says, about his life (Gorka, 2003). Not too many of us "write a new story" of our lives, but some do: an accountant turns bank robber, as happened in Winnipeg last year, or a spouse goes out for a package of cigarettes and never comes back, a politician steals a \$50,000 ring, perhaps subconsciously knowing that he has just found a way out of a too burdensome political career. Not too many of us take such wild leaps from one kind of story into another, but sometimes, some of us do.

"Gonna write a new story," the singer says, and then what? He might have meant that all he was going to do was to change the way he thinks about his life, that he is going to reinterpret it, maybe give it a sunnier slant, stop accepting blame for everything that goes wrong, or stop taking himself so seriously. Or perhaps he is going to forget a lot of his old stories about himself told him by his mom, or his high school principal, that made him feel unchangeable, in order to start seeing the world as a place to have fun, to follow one's bliss, to get less involved, because, what the heck, you're only going to die anyway.

My mother clung to her one story all her life. It was that she was "of good family," by which she meant a family once, long ago, connected to aristocracy,

a family of means, a genteel family, a family of people with decent hearts and minds, for whom pride, dignity and courage were the watchwords, and in whom, therefore, a sense of superiority to the common run of humanity had been bred. She was wedded to that story, saw no possibility of another. She had been taught that no circumstances could diminish her, because being “of good family” held within it the requirement that she always be better than any such circumstances.

In fact, her branch of the family had fallen on hard times just before the Depression, when she was a teenager, from which it never recovered. Before too long she found herself – given her story – in an inappropriate marriage, living in a log house in the northern bush country of Canada, with too many little children, and no money. In this situation, she nevertheless continued to apply the family story and its watchwords. She was, indeed, not personally diminished by her circumstances. But she saw herself, all her life, as living the wrong life, a tragic life, but which, given her family’s ethic, she could not admit to, nor talk about. Was this madness? Or was it noble? For after all, what she had had was a life that we all have, just one damn thing after another, you might say, but nonetheless, one with a lot of satisfaction and rewards.

She could have dropped her family story in favour of another one that was probably truer than the first: that all her family, for a couple of hundred years, had been and were pioneers, moving from one frontier, creating villages and farms out of the wilderness, and then moving on to the next frontier to do it again, and to do it always with great courage and in the face of tremendous hardships. That is, creating a country, as the saying goes, with their own sweat, blood and tears. A life, I choose to believe, far more noble than the first, that of being a misplaced descendant of the aristocracy. If she had recognized her story as this different one, would she have had a more satisfactory, less tinted-with-the-tragic life? Despite every fact being the same, would she yet have been happier?

When Dr. Randall first called me to ask me to speak at a conference on narratology, I said, “On what?” I had never even heard the word. I ended my formal education in literature in 1963, that is, before the term “postmodernism,” with regard to literature, was in wide use, nor had the term “narratology” even been used in any of my classes in English literature. Imagine my chagrin when I discovered both had been used by theorists since nearly the beginning of the twentieth century, and that the groundbreaking papers and books on narratology were being published even as, in 1958, I sat in English 102 with Professor Romalduz reading Chaucer and Shakespeare. And further, the system of thought now permeating many fields and disciplines, the sheer volume of the material, the particularity of the language, meant that I would never be able to master it in the few months I had before this evening, even if, God help me, I’d wanted to.

I had already suffered through something called “the breaking of the canon” – that is, the demotion of the writers we Western hemisphere university students in the fifties all studied (mostly dead White males) and the raising up of those who had never been on that old list: worthy books written by women and others, all who had been marginalized by mainstream literary society, as being incapable of writing as well as those dead White males. I had already had to listen to people more expert than me insisting there is no such thing as a “great” writer – this in the face of Shakespeare, Tony Morrison, V. S. Naipaul and a lot of others. I had even, eventually, come to the place where I could admit there was much to be admired in the post-modernist attitude toward literature. (For example, not the “breaking” of the canon which, I think, sometimes involved throwing out the baby with the bath water, but absolutely, with its widening.)

Postmodernist writing in Canada, mostly deconstruction, included the breaking apart of words and phrases with brackets, slashes and hyphens, and the addition of witty asides that undermined the writer’s own story, and a good deal of essentially annoying self-reference. What was the point, I kept asking myself, of even bothering to tell a story if at every turn you were going to question it, undermine it, and deny it? What was gained by this uncertainty?

The situation in Canada is that a huge number of well known writers survive financially by teaching in universities – we all had to suffer through those few years when the products of those writers became unreadable. The rest of us would have wondered if our writing careers were over, except that the reading public couldn’t figure this work out either, and a little study by the rest of us showed that it was breathtakingly easy to mimic, whether we understood it or not. In literature, at least, many of us fought back at once against the excesses of the postmodernist movement, especially where it spoke so arrogantly of the impossibility of fixing a narrative in a permanent and singular fashion, and even of “the death of the author.”

Those few years of extreme intellectual ferment in university English departments when the postmodernist theoreticians were more or less terrorizing everybody else, showed **not** that they were right, but instead that what the world wants – what people want – is *story*. The 2003 CBC Massey Lectures were delivered by the American First Nations writer, Thomas King. He calls his series *The truth about stories: A native narrative*, First Nations people being way ahead of the rest of us, because “story” is the basis of their cultures, always has been, and is recognized as such. But back in 1999 Robert Fulford gave the same series of lectures and his was called *The triumph of narrative: Storytelling in the age of mass culture*. And triumph it is: we are seeing the rise of a new paradigm, a new model applied in both literature and the social sciences called “narratology.” And what it insists is *story* makes the world go

round. A constant through all cultures and all the ages we know anything about, is the basic human drive to tell stories. It is through the stories we tell about it that we understand the world, in the science-based intellectual world, a belated insight if ever there was one.

At the same time, though, in the turmoil of the late sixties and early seventies, with the rise of feminist literary scholarship, we heard and read feminist scholars, many of them intellectually acute, thrillingly rage-filled, and yet, for many of us, both the extremity of their rage and the declarations they made, way over the top. If that was the authentic voice of womanhood, a lot of us thought, privately, secretly, there was no way we were going to be able to live up to it either.

But those feminist literary scholars did perform that absolutely vital task of showing women that we did not have a history – we did not have a *story* we had written ourselves – and thus, that we did not have authentic female role models. They showed us and the world that for the most part we had been mute about our real lives, and when we did speak, in memoirs and autobiographies, we spoke from within the confines of the patriarchy, and not with our own, authentic voices. They showed us that we had to learn to tell the truth about our lives, each of us to save our own souls, if no one else's.

But what were our own authentic voices? What was our true story? The world-wide and ages-old oppression of women was now out in the open, but in the cacophony of voices, the individual woman and her own voice, her own story, often got lost. To then have literary scholars turn around and tell us that the author was dead, and also that no one could never speak authentically, was to render us mute yet again, and heartbreakingly, just when we were beginning to believe in the possibility of telling our own stories, of saying once and for all, *I exist, I am*. Although I have written now fifteen books, the first published in 1984 when I was forty-four, and the fifteenth to be published in 2005, I am best known for the book I published in 1994, called *The perfection of the morning: An apprenticeship in nature*. Although it was my eighth, most readers, having never heard of the first seven, thought it was my first book. Now, I hung around universities long enough to know that it is there considered bad form to talk about one's own book, but as I am talking about finding and telling one's own true story and as it is the one that taught me most of what I know about memoir-writing, I am going to fly in the face of that tradition. I have called this talk "The Memoirist's Quandary" because written memoirs also belong in a discussion of story-telling, and a discussion about story-telling inevitably encounters the problems all memoirists face.

My original intent in writing that book was to talk about what Nature might be and how one might learn from it. I wanted to do all of this because it seemed to me that bookstores and libraries were full of newly-written books

that were, if not outright lies, certainly misjudgements and misinterpretations, often self-serving, about this subject. I certainly didn't think I was the only one who knew what I knew, but I couldn't find anyone current who was saying it.

Phyllis Bruce at HarperCollins Canada read the manuscript and persuaded me that I needed to drop the lecturing-hectoring tone and to explain to readers how I had arrived at my various "rules," or bits of wisdom, as to how to develop this relationship, and what I believed to be the important things about nature. It was only then that I began to flesh out the framework with stories out of my own life, meant only to explain how I had come to know what I was asserting. I **thought** that I was telling stories of my own life **only** to make clear my points about the amazing power and overwhelming significance of nature. When the book was published, I couldn't classify it, other than to say it was nonfiction, and so I waited for the trade paper *Quill & Quire* to publish its list, according to genre, of all the books published in Canada during the previous six-month period. When it arrived, there was my book, classified under "Memoir."

And that is how, finally, I discovered myself to be a memoirist.

It was not a conventional memoir, with its emphasis on trying to identify and describe the possibilities, the meaning of nature, and its treatment of dreams and visions as factual and significant. Because I was struggling so hard to tell "the truth," (first of all, to find it), and because, I suppose, of the way my mind works when left to its own devices, and not trying rigidly to adhere to some learned-in-school form, readers did not "recognize" what I had written. But all of these demurrers and fears – that I would be seen as a New Age idiot, that I would be seen as a madwoman, I accepted as the price of being able to do the work, which was to me, as often, a great joy. They were not really my own quandary.

The memoirist's quandary begins with choosing the story the memoir is going to tell. Just as no one can take a "slice of life" and make it into a successful stage play – because there is so much "trash" in daily life, 'ums' and 'ahs' and total banality and trivia, red herrings, dead ends and irrelevancies, mixed in with the significant and interesting – one can only take part of one's experience to write about, screening out all of the above, or what the writer considers to be irrelevant.

In order to explain my choice of material included in the memoir, I wrote this in the preface to *The perfection of the morning*:

But nonetheless, there's a way in which all nonfiction is fiction: the backward search through happenstance, trivia, the flotsam and jetsam of life to search out a pattern, themes, a meaning is by its nature an imposition of order onto what was chaotic. It's an attempt to give a linearity to events, many psychic, which had no linearity, which, if anything, were a spiral,

or had more the hectic quality of a dream. What is true are thoughts, dreams, visions. What may or may not be true are the order and timing of events, the perception and linking of them. If it's true on the one hand that everything is what it seems to be, and I constantly remind myself of this, on the other, there is a way in which it's also true that nothing is. I begin to think like the Bushmen as Laurens van der Post reports them as believing, that in the beginning a dream was dreaming us, and like Clifton Fadiman who said that the older he gets the more his life seems to him to have been, rather than a series of actual events, one long, interesting dream. In writing what the world will call autobiography, I am torn between facts and history and the truth of the imagination, and it is to the latter, finally, in terms of my personal history, that I lean.

The experts are right in that there is certainly a way in which you can't tell The Truth; you can only tell the truth you choose. That is what is so interesting about the process of writing a memoir: that as one writes, other possibilities as to what is the truth begin slowly to percolate through the psyche, and many the would-be memoirist, I will bet, has given up that book in the face of such uncertainty, and, in the face of the multiplicities of any human life.

I spent weeks sifting through my twenty years of journals to select the details and the stories and mini-stories that would construct what I wanted to say. As I wrote, I believed, not that I was constructing a fiction that would pass for truth, but that I was finding and slowly demonstrating – crazy at it might be turning out to be – the one true story about myself and my life up to that point. As I wrote I came to understand more about myself and carefully, week by week, I constructed a version that I thought made sense of how I came to know what I knew about nature, and how at the same time and working in both directions, I had come to be the person I now believed myself to be.

But in the last weeks before *The perfection of the morning* was to be released, I grew more and more uneasy. Finally, I phoned my editor and said, "The whole book is a lie; I don't even know what the truth is." If she chose to respond to this, experienced editor that she is, as merely a writer's pre-publication jitters, I knew it to be coming from my nearly overwhelming sense of all the stories I might have told, of everything I'd left out, with my sense of the impossibility of the task I'd set myself, and with my disintegrating control on the story.

In order to protect others, in order not to be sued, or else driven out of the community, I had left out much more than I had put in to create what had become the narrative of my own becoming. Besides that, I had carefully selected from a number of possible stories the story I would tell: not the years I spent on the campus at University of Saskatchewan, nor those very significant first years, until the day of my thirteenth birthday when our

family arrived in Saskatoon, nor the fourteen years of my first marriage. All of these were important parts of my life, and all of them would have been just as true. I had made a careful selection of what I would put in and what I wouldn't. In some ways then, I wasn't telling the truth. My own thinking was that if I put in, for example, all the dreams I had had instead of just a few I judged to be significant, the storyline would be muddled, my points would be lost in all the "noise," and so I told only the parts that would bolster the storyline I'd chosen.

The memoirist's quandary includes the discovery of all the many selves, all the many possibilities of stories, from which one has to choose. Life is just too large, too multifarious, too huge and too intricate to ever put it all in a book, any book, from Proust's *Remembrance of things past*, (although he tried), to Elly Danica's *Don't: A woman's word*. And to the extent and degree one leaves parts out, the writer might be said to be constructing not nonfiction, but fiction.

Second, the choice of "voice" is essential to the success of a memoir. What's this? How odd that one would have to choose, or somehow manufacture a voice, and the "right" voice at that, when one is, after all, simply telling the story of one's own life. And yet, the writer does. The fact is that the literary "voice" and the writer are not one and the same in a memoir; not even the very best, not even the most moving, and not even in the one where the writer is clearly struggling to be as "truthful" as possible. Time and time again, people who know the writer personally say that the author who wrote the successful memoir is "not really like that." (Carolyn Heilbrun talking about the American memoirist May Sarton being a famous case.) The voice the writer chooses will determine what the writer can and can't say.

In my case, I did not have a literary voice when it came to writing about myself and I was stymied for a long time because I couldn't write my book if I couldn't hear in my head how I wanted to sound. Like a soprano about to engage with a new piece of music, I had to try out various ways of sounding until I found one that felt natural to me, and yet wasn't entirely the voice I use in everyday discourse. Then I had to make sure to stick to that voice, because if a writer breaks or changes it, the impression of an unreliable narrator is created. If the memoirist cannot be trusted to tell the truth – if that is the reader's ultimate determination – then the memoir will fail.

I had written myself a new story. In mid-life I moved to a cattle ranch in a very remote area. Because I had come to a huge area with a tiny population, growing tinier by the minute, and a very definite, set-in-concrete, and not terribly charming sub-culture that I had to come to terms with – and was failing and continued to fail – I was forced back on my own resources. Because I was, thus, questioning everything about myself, I had to find my self or die; I had to find a reality or go insane. So I began to walk the prairie

every day and to write in my journal what I saw and what I thought and felt about myself and my life, all the while making the excruciating effort to search out the truth of each moment.

As every narrative theorist knows – as anyone over the age of six or eight knows – ‘truth’ is a pretty unstable concept. I am a reasonably well-educated person, better-educated, I think, than the average person, but there is a great deal about the world that I do not know, and a great many subjects of which I am ignorant, and a great many books I have not read. How was I to tell any kind of truth about anything when I am so thoroughly ignorant about the world?

I had a test, and it had to do, finally, with my stubborn little self and its private history in the world: It was, as I said in the book, that *no one would ever again tell me what I thought, or felt, or knew about my own person, my own psyche, the (of course, ever-changing) meaning of my own existence in the world.* I would do this by rooting out every remembered detail, and all the other versions of the tiny but significant events of my life. I would read whatever I could find about ways of understanding such difficulties, and then I would do my best to stand back as an uninvolved viewer might, and weigh all the different versions, and decide whether I had been right or wrong, or to what degree I had been of each, sparing myself not at all. I would come to a conclusion, and I would then accept that as the “right” one, the version that felt most true to me – “me” as a single consciousness struggling in the world to be a human being.

And that was based on the truth I accepted, that is, that to be human is to be flawed, that often there is no right, and no wrong, that in the end all one can do is be one’s best self. And so I knew, at every juncture, that the reader might pity me for being such a numbskull, or be angry with me for being so relentlessly self-critical – or not enough – or wonder where my rage was, and so on and so on. And I expected to be excoriated for my endless failures as a human being. I didn’t really care, though, at least, not most of the time, because, as Carolyn Heilbrun has so wisely said, women come to writing simultaneously with self-creation. I had written a book I would never have to write again. After twenty years of pacing the prairie, pretty much alone, all day every day, slowly I stripped back the superfluousness and uncovered that thread of continuity that I identify as my self.

With the part of my self that confounds cognitive psychologists and philosophers alike, the quiet one that sometimes speaks, that oversees everything as if not a part of it, I began to see how I had always been *me*, despite such vicissitudes I could not even begin to tell you, but which, I am sure, are just like your own. I came to be this person here before you today, who insists there is a reality, even if it may only be that internal voice that sometimes speaks, through “the clouds of unknowing,” with startling clarity and even

more startling wisdom, and that can alone change a life utterly, in the absence of any other, more conventional catalyst.

In the wake of such power, such groundedness, I think I can see the paradigm of *story*, as not the eternal truth found at last, but instead, as one more useful tool for helping us to understand the human condition. What a long time it took for the academic world to find and articulate what human beings have always known, and always made use of, if not been able to express. *Let me tell you my story*, we say at last, and one of the moments of greatest human intimacy begin.

I might go on to say that that is what memoirs do, and why we read them, because in reading about someone else's struggle to come to terms with one's self in the world, we hope to find echoes of our own struggle; we hope to find in that story of one person's struggle and ideas about it, answers, or at the very least, a scintilla of enlightenment about our own selves and our own struggles in the world. Memoirs, Helen Buss says, (herself a memoirist and literary critic and theorist from the University of Calgary), quoting Georg Misch, appear when many people feel their lives are not congruent with the culture in which they live, or the public culture, that "they seek to regain the harmony and inner tranquillity' of a right relationship with nature and with the spiritual world." So, at last, women are writing memoirs, gay people are writing memoirs, Aboriginal people are writing memoirs, and immigrants, and other people marginalized by the mainstream culture.

My Second World War battles, my life in crime, my lovers, my battle with disease or alcoholism or an eating disorder, or my rise from poverty and obscurity to fame and wealth, are some of the subjects of memoirs. But the best memoirs are always about *becoming*, about "the emergent self," about, as the American writer, teacher and memoirist, Patricia Hampl puts it, how one consciousness has navigated the world. This is both what they are about and wherein their fascination lies, rather than in the narrative of events itself, as interesting as those events might be: Not just the facts, but *what it was like*. Having said that, I have said the most important thing I know about memoirs, and the hardest part about them from the memoirist's point of view: how to find that particular truth, the grappling with it, and the telling of it – the attempt to tell it, sometimes repeated, each version slightly different, each a little more detailed, or adding new detail, each version inching closer to a personal truth. (And, I might add, never, ever quite reaching it.) From Gore Vidal: "In literature. . . the true confessors have been aware that not only is life mostly failure, but that in one's failure or pettiness or wrongness exists the living drama of the self."

Recently, just after I had spoken in a particular community, I received a letter from two women who had been there. I had half-jokingly lamented that I had planned to be Margaret Atwood, but had failed, and as a result

of my twenty-five years of writing, had earned little money and won no truly major prizes. If they had loved the woman of my book, the letter-writers were gravely disappointed in me in person. They scolded me for being ambitious, declared their deep disappointment in me, and went on to recommend some steps I might take to be more the person my memoir had led them to believe I was.

I was stung enough to respond. I said that they had made a mistake in thinking that I was my book, that people move on but books do not, and that their advice might have been very useful to me before I wrote the book, but that the very act of writing it had rendered their advice moot. Further, that it is very annoying to artists to find that the public thinks it is just fine if they live in poverty all their lives, although they do not recommend this for any other class of people in society. I said that they had mistaken the "I" of my memoir for the entire, fixed, "I" of my being. They did not respond to my response.

But, in fact, we writers can't entirely help ourselves. "Notes" enter our voices that we don't even hear, so intent are we on what we want to say. As Mark Twain wrote, "An autobiography is the truest of all books; for though it inevitably consists mainly of extinctions of the truth, shirkings of the truth, partial revealments of the truth, with hardly an instance of plain straight truth, the remorseless truth is there, between the lines, where the author-cat is raking dust upon it, which hides from the disinterested spectator neither it nor its smell . . . the result being that the reader knows the author in spite of his wily diligences."

The author's "wily diligences" of course, include the hardest, most unforgiving fact of all about memoir: that it is betrayal. The family secrets are right there, the writer is panting to write them down, because, of course, all one's failures can be blamed on someone else, and often, justifiably. And all memoirists have to face the potential outcome of publication: Everything from libel suits, to exile from the family, to public censure, or worst of all, the horrifying realization of one's own nakedness in the world. And yet, to blame others is to write a failed memoir. When it comes to blame, I tell my students, it's "just the facts, Ma'am," and let the reader make the judgement.

Last of all, I'd like to address the criticism of the memoirist as self-involved, (aside from the obvious idiocy on the face of it of such a remark). The American memoirist and writing teacher Vivian Gornick says in her book about memoir-writing, *The situation and the story*, that none of us exists in a vacuum, and that the time and the place are essential to a meaningful memoir. Patricia Hampl points out that European memoirists tend to be less "self-involved" than do Americans, in that they retreat from personal revelation in favour of an historical/cultural truth about their time and place.

Europeans, as we all know, are steeped in history in a way that most North Americans haven't so far been.

It is my experience though, that even in writing a new story, the most important part of being human doesn't change, for we are still dragging our real selves along from kitchen to office or to jail. You will have already heard that I believe in a *real self* independent of the stories told about us, to us, and that we tell to ourselves about who we are. Imso Kim Berg, in a paper called *Constructivist Therapies: Solution-focused and narrative*, says, "There is no reality; there are only stories we tell about reality." I have to disagree, although I do not claim to know what *reality* might be either. But I point out that even this scholar will get the flu, and if she says she does not have the flu and is just fine, thank you, she will, nonetheless, still be running a fever, coughing, sniffing and spewing germs around. Some poor prisoner undergoing torture in an Iraqi prison, I am sure would be indignant to be told she is only living in a story, not reality.

So I think there is both a real self that is at once unique and universal, and that there is something behind all the stories that is reality, even if I cannot tell you what it is, and do not expect to be able to in this life. That is why, while celebrating its utility, I am a bit uneasy about accepting wholesale the narratology paradigm. Our bodies and the Earth insist on the existence of some kind of reality, which may simply dissolve on our physical deaths. And our souls insist on the existence of the hard nugget of *self*.

"Gonna write a new story," the singer told us, and that is what more and more of us are trying to do when we write our memoirs. We are going to write a new story about ourselves, only this time we will set the record straight, we will tell the one true story about ourselves. "Gonna write a new story," and then what? In the end, all he offers is that he is "gonna beat back sorrow for a little while."

The interesting, the truly wonderful thing about memoirs is that in writing one's story, the best of memoirs reiterate the oldest one of all, the one that we can all relate to and recognize, about what philosophers have called "the human condition," and the sorrow – and the joy – of finding our own unique ways to come to terms with it. There is no uninteresting life; nor any life unworthy of a memoir. There is only the failure to recognize that the interest lies, not in the events themselves, but in the revealed texture of the individual soul.

REFERENCES

- Berg, I. K. Constructivist therapies: Solution-focused and narrative. (Taken from net – no longer accessible).
- Buss, H. (1995 Autumn). Introduction. *Prairie Fire: Life Writing* 16(3).

- Butala, S. (1994). *The perfection of the morning: An apprenticeship in nature*.
- Fulford, R. (1999). *The triumph of narrative: Storytelling in the age of mass culture*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.
- Gornick, V. (2001). *The situation and the story: The art of the personal narrative*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Gorka, J. (2003). *Outside*. From the CD *Old Futures Gone*. St. Paul MN: Red House Records.
- Haml, P. (1999). *I could tell you stories: Sojourns in the land of memory*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Heilbrun, C. (1998). *Writing a woman's life*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- King, T. (2003). *The truth about stories: A native narrative*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.
- Twain, M. (1904, March 14). Letter to W. D. Howells..
- Vidal, G. (1994) Quoted in P. Lopate (Ed.), *The art of the personal essay*, Introduction. New York: Doubleday.

SHARON BUTALA is the author of fifteen books of fiction and nonfiction. She has spent her life in Saskatchewan, the last thirty years on her husband's family ranch in the southwest of the province, a ranch now owned by the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and called Old Man On His Back Prairie Heritage and Conservation Area. She won the Marian Engel award for her work in 1998, in 2002 she was made an Officer in the Order of Canada, and has received two honorary doctorates. Her latest book is *Lilac Moon: Dreaming of the real West*, in an attempt to answer the question, "What makes a Westerner?"

SHARON BUTALA est l'auteure de quinze ouvrages documentaires et de fiction. Elle a passé sa vie en Saskatchewan, dont les trente dernières années sur le ranch familial de son mari dans le sud-ouest de la province, qui appartient maintenant à La Société canadienne pour la conservation de la nature, et qui a pour nom Old Man On His Back Prairie Heritage and Conservation Area. Elle a remporté le prix Marian Engel en 1998 pour l'ensemble de son œuvre; en 2002, elle a été nommée Officier de l'Ordre du Canada, et elle s'est vu décerner deux doctorats honorifiques. Dans son dernier livre intitulé *Lilac Moon: Dreaming of the real West*, elle tente de répondre à la question, « Qu'est-ce qui fait de quelqu'un un Canadien de l'Ouest? »



FOREWORD

Stories are wondrous things. And they are dangerous.
Thomas King (2003)

This issue of the McGill Journal of Education is full of stories – rich and varied stories, stories of different cultures, contexts and communities, stories that are “dangerous” in a truly positive sense: they challenge us to think in new ways. They aren’t safe because they refuse to allow us complacency and the comfort of living only in received ideas. The issue is published in collaboration with the organizers of the *Narrative Matters Conference 2004* held in Fredericton, New Brunswick: Dolores Furlong and William L. Randall. It is co-edited by me, as Editor-in-Chief, and my colleague Mary Maguire (Book Review Editor). It has been an enriching collaboration that we have all been delighted to see come to completion.

The extraordinary *Narrative Matters* conference confirmed everything I have come to believe about the central place of narrative in our lives, teaching, learning and creation of new knowledge. It was a gathering unlike any other in my experience. The risk-taking and passion of the presenters; the bridge-building between disciplines; the focus on key social issues and the importance of caring about them; the contributions from intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual perspectives, and the constant voicing of experiences that question and enrich conventional thinking all impressed me deeply. This special issue provides, I believe, evidence of some of the excellent presentations made at the conference by people from many academic, social and professional contexts.

I had contacted Dolores Furlong and Bill Randall earlier in 2004, just to explore the idea of such an issue; little did we dream of the scope and significance of what would result from that seed of an idea. Dolores and Bill welcomed the opportunity to collaborate on this, and we were delighted to bring on board my colleague, Mary Maguire, an experienced champion of narrative research. Mary, who could not attend the conference, was able to provide a valuable “outsider’s” eye in the complex team process of reviewing and selecting, editing and preparing the texts for publication.

We are especially pleased to be able to include here, through the generosity of their authors, two very special contributions: Sharon Butala's "The Memoirist's Quandary" and Jerome Bruner's "The Reality of Fiction." We are grateful to all the authors for their enthusiasm and care in working with us, and to all the other authors whose submitted work (though excellent) we were not able to include. Thanks also to Russ and Ann Hunt and Maureen Rappaport for encouraging me to attend the conference.

A final (tiny) story: My own arrival at the conference almost didn't happen; I was bumped from my plane in Montreal (even though I had a boarding pass), had to run as fast as I could from the ticketing desk to the departure gate, and just made the last flight of the evening, having been told that all the flights for the next two days were full. I believe the effort was worth it, and I hope you will agree as you read the pages that follow.

A.B.

REFERENCE

King, T. (2003). *The truth about stories: A native narrative*. Toronto: Anansi.

ANN BEER is Editor of the *McGill Journal of Education* and a professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education.

MARY H. MAGUIRE is a professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education. Her research interests include language and identity issues, writing in multilingual contexts, ethnographic studies, narrative inquiry and ethics in researching with young child participants and in diasporan communities.

AVANT PROPOS

Les histoires sont des choses magnifiques. Et elles sont dangereuses.
Thomas King (2003)

Cette édition de la *Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill* est remplie d'histoires, des histoires riches et variées, des histoires de différentes cultures, contextes et communautés, des histoires qui sont dangereuses dans le sens strictement positif où elles nous mettent au défi de penser d'une nouvelle façon. Elles ne sont pas sans danger parce qu'elles ne nous permettent pas la complaisance et le confort de vivre seulement des idées reçues. Cette édition est publiée en collaboration avec les organisateurs de la conférence *Histoires de récit 2004* qui a eu lieu à Frédéricton, Nouveau-Brunswick : Dolores Furlong et William L. Randall. Elle est co-éditée par deux membres du conseil de l'édition du journal de l'éducation, ma collègue Mary Maguire (rédactrice de la revue de livres), et moi-même, Ann Beer (rédactrice). Ça a été une collaboration enrichissante que nous avons été ravies de voir arriver à son accomplissement.

L'extraordinaire conférence *Histoire de récit*, a confirmé tout ce que je suis arrivée à croire à propos de la place centrale des récits dans nos vies, enseignement, apprentissage et création de nouvelles connaissances. C'était un rassemblement qui ne ressemblait à aucun autre. Le risque pris et la passion des intervenants, la construction de ponts entre les disciplines, l'emphase sur les questions sociales principales et l'importance de prendre soin d'elles, les contributions des perspectives intellectuelles émotives, physiques et spirituelles et l'expression constante d'expériences qui questionnent et enrichissent et la pensée conventionnelle m'ont tous impressionnée profondément. Cette édition spéciale procure, je crois des preuves de certaines des excellentes présentations faites à la conférence par des gens de différents contextes universitaires, sociales et professionnels.

J'ai contacté Dolores Furlong et Bill Randall plus tôt en 2004 pour explorer l'idée d'une telle édition; nous n'avions pas rêvé de la portée et la signification de ce qui pourrait germer de cette graine d'idée. Dolores et Bill ont

accueilli positivement l'opportunité de collaborer dessus et nous avons été ravi d'amener à bord, ma collègue Mary Maguire, une championne expérimentée des recherches sur le récit. Mary, qui n'était pas présente à la conférence, était capable d'offrir un oeil « extérieur » de grande valeur dans le travail d'équipe complexe de revue, sélection, rédaction et préparation des textes pour la publication.

Nous sommes spécialement contents d'être capable d'inclure ici, grâce à la générosité de leurs auteurs, deux contributions très spéciales : celle de Sharon Butala, « Le dilemme des rédacteurs de mémoires », et celle de Jérôme Bruner, « La réalité de la fiction ». Nous remercions tous les auteurs qui ont soumis des travaux et que, bien qu'excellents, nous n'avons pas réussi à inclure. Merci aussi à Russel, Ann Hunt et Maureen Rappaport pour leur aide dans la réalisation de ceci.

Une (petite) histoire de fin : Ma propre arrivée dans la conférence a failli ne pas arriver. J'ai été repoussé de mon avion à Montréal, même si j'avais déjà ma carte d'embarquement; j'ai dû courir comme je pouvais du bureau des billets aux portes d'embarquements. J'ai tout juste réussi à prendre le dernier avion de la soirée après que l'on m'eut dit que tous les vols des deux prochains jours étaient pleins. Je crois que ça en valait la peine, et j'espère que vous en serez d'accord en lisant les pages qui suivent.

A. B.

RÉFÉRENCE

King, T. (2003). *La vérité à propos des histoires : Un récit autochtone*. Toronto. Anansi

ANN BEER est rédactrice-en-chef de la *Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill* et professeur au Département d'études intégrées en éducation.

MARY H. MAGUIRE est professeur au Département d'études intégrées en éducation. Parmi ses intérêts en recherche, on retrouve : les questions liées à la langue et à l'identité; l'écriture dans des contextes multilingues; l'éthique et la recherche narrative chez les jeunes participants et dans les communautés déracinées.

WRITING LIFE 1 IN LANGUAGE 2

LINDA STEINMAN

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

ABSTRACT. What is second language acquisition like from the learner's perspective? I examined published autobiographies authored by those who have documented their language learning journeys. One theme that recurred across the texts was Writing; a sub-theme was Writing life 1 in language 2. Some narrativists/learners described the dissonance, while others described the relief they felt when writing about events in a language other than the language in which those events occurred. Insights about writing provided by the learners/narrativists could illuminate both second language acquisition (SLA) theory and SLA pedagogy.

ÉCRIRE LA VIE 1 DANS LA LANGUE 2

RÉSUMÉ. Comment l'apprenant considère-t-il l'acquisition d'une langue seconde? J'ai examiné des autobiographies publiées par des personnes qui ont documenté leur parcours d'apprentissage d'une langue. L'un des thèmes récurrents des textes est l'écriture; un sous-thème étant l'écriture d'une vie dans une autre langue que la langue maternelle. Certains narrateurs/apprenants ont fait état d'une discordance, tandis que d'autres ont exprimé leur soulagement d'écrire sur leur vie dans une langue autre que celle dans laquelle cette dernière s'est produite. Les observations que nous ont fournies les narrateurs/apprenants sur l'écriture pourraient contribuer à enrichir la théorie de l'acquisition d'une langue seconde (SLA) et la pédagogie SLA.

It is unusual for narratives in the form of published autobiographies to serve as data in the field of applied linguistics generally, and in second language acquisition (SLA) in particular, so it was with pleasure that I brought my study, which combined applied linguistics and narrative analysis to the Narrative Matters conference in Fredericton in May 2004. I considered what might be of particular interest to those who use narratives in a range of fields (health, social sciences, anthropology, literature, education, gender studies, and religious studies). I chose to focus on one particular theme that emerged from my doctoral study: writing life 1 in language 2 – that is, writing about one's life in a language that is different from the language in which

the events happened. It is possible, even probable, that narratives in all of the fields mentioned above may be authored by individuals who are writing about themselves in a language other than their first, and that what they write, and how they write, will be shaped as a result of translation. This text elaborates this theme. It is drawn from one chapter of my doctoral thesis entitled *Language Learner Narratives: Bridges to Second Language Acquisition Literature and Second Language Acquisition Pedagogy* (Steinman, 2004).

What follows is an explanation of how an applied linguist – myself – came to explore published autobiographies as a database. I then summarize the theoretical frameworks that informed the study, followed by my findings with respect to writing. I conclude with a brief mention of how the findings from the narratives are supported (or not) in SLA theory and SLA pedagogy.

How I came to narratives

During my first month of doctoral studies, I came across Kyoko Mori's autobiography *Polite Lies* (1997) in which the author documented her divorce from her first language (L1) and her embracing of English, her second language (L2). What began as personal reading for me soon morphed into professional reading and professional instruction as I realized that I was learning significant things about language learning from a language learner's perspective. Immersed as I was at the time in the perspectives of SLA researchers and teachers, this third and important voice – that of the language learner – intrigued me. I began a search for other first person accounts authored by those who have crossed languages and crossed cultures. There are, of course, a variety of ways in which the learner perspective may be sought. For example, learners may be asked to write essays on the topic of language and culture crossing, to respond to questionnaires and/or to participate in interviews. While important insights may be gained from such approaches, it is generally the researcher or the teacher who determines the time, the length and the shape of expression. From a critical theory perspective, this top-down direction does not necessarily lead to the most useful data.

This genre I examined has been called language memoirs (Kaplan, 1993); autoethnographies (Belcher & Connor, 2001); testimonios (Beverly, 2000); life histories (Kouritzin, 2000); and, to cite one narrativist in my study, translation therapy (Hoffman, 1989). While these accounts were not limited to language learning events, but were stories of acculturation, numerous references to SLA appeared in the texts that I selected, and it was to these events that I attended in my study.

Crossing disciplines

I was examining one field (applied linguistics) through the lens of another (literary studies) and experienced some dissonance. Interrogating autobiog-

raphy for content rather than form led me to ask myself the question “Who owns autobiography?” Stone offered his insight:

I remain uneasy over the tendency to treat autobiography chiefly as a branch of imaginative literature and thus to stress artistic creation over the equally complex processes of historical recreation, ideological argument, and psychological expression. *Life* is the more inclusive sign – not *Literature* – which deserves to be placed overt the gateway to the house of autobiography. (Stone, 1982, p.19)

The *Canadian Modern Language Review* published a special issue: *Literature and Applied Linguistics: New Perspectives* edited by Hanauer (2003). Some powerful points were made in this journal issue with respect to the unnecessary separation of literature and applied linguistics (AL) caused by differences in research paradigms, and a recommendation was made for literature and poetry to be considered “data” in AL. I was further encouraged by this recommendation.

Is there a collective text for those who cross languages and cultures? Do language and culture crossers represent a cultural group themselves? Wong posed the question “Do immigrants of all ethnic groups and all periods share, in some profound sense, a collective American experience?” (1991, p. 146). While each essay and full-length text I examined for this study described unique life stories, there were common threads running through them. Wertsch (2002) examined collective remembering – I asked myself during this study whether the increasingly large body of immigrant autobiographies expressed or perhaps is creating a collective text.

There is support for using autobiographic accounts as data sources in the field of education. Pavlenko described autobiographic narratives as “an intriguing and often disregarded source of evidence about the language learning process. . .” (1998, p. 3), and cited Steiner’s (1975) call to consider and submit such memoirs to serious analysis in SLA and bilingual research studies. Eisner suggested that effective research in education should “make aspects of the world vivid and generate a sense of empathy. . . [to] help us to know what it feels like” (1995, p. 5). Similarly, “a singular story. . . will in the magic way of some things apply, connect, resonate, touch a major chord” (Pachter, 1981 as cited in Glesne, 1998, p. 155). Mitchell and Myles suggested that “the findings of SLA research are not generally presented in ways accessible and meaningful to teachers” (1998, p. 31). Narratives offer an “emic” (inside) perspective, which Kouritzin described as “countering the potential imperialism of academic theory” (2000, p. 211). “As researchers in education, we need to discover and rediscover new sources for informing our research activities: lived experiences. . .” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 155). This is true, I believe, for teaching, as well as for research, and for any combination of the two.

Database

Some life histories result from personal interviews. The learner accounts that I analyzed did not. They were neither shaped nor limited by my questions nor my presence – not the content, not the form, not the decision to tell the story at all. The accounts were unprompted allowing, the learners to express, as Schumann (1998) suggested, what is important to the learner, rather than to the researcher.

My database included sixteen texts representing thirty individuals. (Please see Appendix A for a list of the texts that I used.) Reading in and across texts, I marked comments and experiences related to language learning, coding by hand rather than using software, and, at the end of many rounds, I identified six major themes that recurred across texts. These themes then became the units of analysis and each formed a chapter of the thesis.

I examined the work of other SLA researchers who have also worked with written narrative accounts. Levels of researcher involvement in the writing varied, as did the specific issues of interest to researchers. Belcher and Connor (2001) selected multicompetent learners and asked them to write specifically about the strategies they used in becoming successful writers in a second language. Pavlenko worked from existing texts to explore language loss and language gain (1998) and again from existing texts and essays to examine the social context and gender issues particular to language learning (2001a, 2001b). Norton (2000) examined language journals to understand issues of power and opportunities to participate in the second language outside the classroom. Schumann (1998) analysed published autobiographies as well as diaries that he asked students to keep of their language acquisition; his focus was motivation and affect. Bailey examined learner accounts for anxiety and competitiveness (1983; see also Bailey, 1991). Kouritzin (2000) interviewed ESL learners to understand adversities they faced. Tse (1999) examined published autobiographical accounts of 29 Asian Americans in order to explore identity issues. Oxford (1996) analysed learner narratives for insights into learners' uses of learning strategies. My work in this study differed from some of these studies in that I did not participate in the writing of any of the accounts; I entered when the accounts were complete. My work differed from some of these studies in that I was looking for themes related to language acquisition rather than for one specific, pre-determined aspect of language acquisition. A distinct feature of my study was that I sought to link the language related themes to theoretical and research literature on SLA and to second language pedagogy. I identified six major themes that recurred across the narratives: one of the six themes was Writing and I will share what the learners/narrativists had to say on this topic. First, I will summarize the theoretical frameworks that informed my study.

Theoretical perspectives informing this study

Four theoretical frameworks informed me and informed this study: phenomenology; critical theory; sociocultural theory; and a theory of ethnolinguistic identity. My portal into the lives of the learners was their published life histories. I did not enter their actual environments as they acquired their new languages, but I did enter their narrative worlds. I posed the silent question “What was the language learning process like for you?” Phenomenology values the perspective that I sought – the emic (insider) perspective, the “vantage point of the self” (Harper, 2000, p. 27) rather than the observer’s perceptions of what was happening.

Critical theory, the consideration and analysis of power or lack thereof, informed this study on two distinct levels. I drew on it to underscore the importance of bringing forward into the SLA dialogue the perspectives of often silent, sometimes marginalized learners. Candlin noted the “consistent anonymising if not the actual eclipsing of the learner... in the relatively short-lived, if intense history of studies in SLA” (2000, p. xiii). A question often asked by those advocating a critical stance is: “Who initiates or drives the discussion?” In this study, the answer was “the learners.” While the study was polyvocal (I did add the voices of researchers and of teachers) the learners’ issues were foregrounded and learners’ issues guided my research and my writing.

Two additional theories emerged as significant as I worked through the database of autobiographies: sociocultural theory (SCT) and Fishman’s (1977) theory of ethnolinguistic identity. The narrativists/learners pointed me toward these theories. As Sandelowski advised: “A theory should earn its way into the data” (1993, p. 217). SCT informed this study on two planes: 1) it is relevant to the intention and act of writing one’s story, and 2) it provided me with a useful way to understand learners’ expressions of co-construction of experience and identity. All events, including language and culture learning are situated – happening to a particular person, at a particular time, in a particular place. The language narratives were rich in providing important information about the contexts and the individual. Agency is a key element in SCT, and agency was an key element in the SLA experiences of the narrativists, both the agency of engagement as well as the agency of resistance (Breen, 2001). What learners brought to the classroom, their histories, very much affected their learning in ways big and small.

With respect to writing in a foreign language, the tension between the agent and the mediating tool (in this study the mediating tool was written language) is considered by Wertsch: “New mediational means transform mediated action” (1998, p. 25). “The introduction of a new mediational means creates a kind of imbalance in the systemic organization of mediated action” (p. 43). Bakhtin (1981) understood language and words in terms of

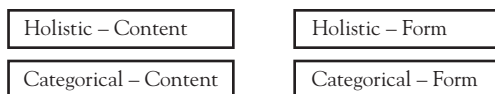
the tension between language of one's own, and language of the other/alien (1981). The learners/narrativists, when describing the writing of life 1 in language 2, lent credence to the theories of Bakhtin and Wertsch.

Fishman's 1977 theory of ethnolinguistic identity offered three dimensions: *paternity*, described as granted, genetic, i.e., one's being; *patrimony*, which refers to one's way of expressing oneself as part of an ethnic group, i.e., one's behaviour; and *phenomenology*, the sense one makes of one's membership in this group, i.e., one's feelings or interpretations. Fishman addressed which levels are more negotiable than others, and the comments written by the narrativists in this study supported his distinctions.

Method

I am aware that it is unusual to analyze narrative texts without attending to form. I drew on Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zilber's (1998) 4-celled model for narrative analysis in order to support my approach to the language learning narratives.

FIGURE 1: *Four-cell framework*



Within this framework, a holistic approach involves interest in all aspects of the life story, whereas a categorical approach seeks to describe a specific subject – language learning, for example. Attending to form involves examining how the story is written, while attending to content focuses on what is happening. Lieblich et al. advised that the cells were guidelines to keep in mind and that strict adherence to one cell may not be desirable. I would classify the analysis of the narratives in my study as categorical-content: categorical (rather than holistic) because it focused on language-related entries specifically and content (rather than form) because what was said to have happened was of greater interest to me than how the language was used.

Riessman recommended making clear the various levels of representation when doing content analysis (1993, p. 10). Riessman's own work involved narratives written up by her as a result of first person interviews with the participants, so the levels of representation she used were somewhat different from those used in my study. I adapted her model to illustrate the levels of representation involved in my study as a whole. This is how the levels of representation looked for my study.

FIGURE 2: *Levels of representation*

Level 1	Learners	Learners write their narratives
Level 2	Learners Researcher	Learner accounts are read and analyzed by researcher
Level 3	Learners Researcher Theorists	Learner themes are connected to SLA literature by researcher
Level 4	Learners Theorists Teachers Researcher	Learner themes are considered by teachers in light of SLA literature; pedagogical implications are sought
Level 5	Learners Theorists Teachers Researcher Others	Others read the study and determine its relevance for themselves and their situations

It is important to keep in mind that because this was a doctoral thesis and I was working in an academic community, at representation stages 2, 3, and 4, my committee members and other colleagues who (p)reviewed this study affected how the material was finally presented.

I reviewed Ellis and Bochner’s levels of “researcher interference” (2000, p. 741), and, in light of their work, I considered the choices made and the research methods used by others who have analysed autobiographical texts (see Chapter 1). At the high end of the scale of interference with (or manipulation of) text are Tse’s (1999) extensive coding to analyse identity issues of Asian-American youth and Bell’s parsing of lines and words in an examination of text for health and gender issues (1988); at the most holistic end (least interference with text) is Pavlenko’s (2001b) approach, which she described as simply noting single sentences or episodes in which gender was mentioned and discussing them in light of theory.

Writing life 1 in language 2

Having made the decision to write their lives, to bring their pasts into their presents in a public way, the narrativists/ learners next faced the decision of which language to use for their life histories. While language narratives may, as Hoffman wrote, serve as “translation therapy” (1989, p. 271), a number of learners noted the tension, complexity, and dissonance of writing in one language about events that had happened in another. Michaels referred

to a language unconnected with the experience as an “alphabet without memory” (1996, p. 101). I will provide direct quotes so that the learners’ words, although separated from their texts, are left intact.

Edward Said expressed his thoughts on this complexity: “Everyone lives life in a given language – the basic split in my life was between Arabic and English – trying to produce a narrative of one in the language of the other has been complicated” (1999, p. xi). Eva Hoffman discussed the advantages expressed by certain authors regarding writing in a new language, referring to Samuel Beckett’s decision to write in French rather than in English precisely for the advantage of “defamiliarization – exile [from one’s language] being, in many cases, an impetus to creativity” (1999, p. 52). Of her own decision to write in English, she reasoned, “Polish is becoming a dead language, the language of the untranslatable past” (1989, p. 120). “I finally choose English. If I’m to write about the present, I have to write in the language of the present, even if it’s not the language of the self” (p. 121).

Ariel Dorfman asked himself: “Could my writing in English make sense of this journey of identity into Latin America that was, of course, being carried out primarily in Spanish?” (1998, p. 95). Dorfman described an early fascination with the question of which language to write in. He was intrigued by a chance meeting, at the age of ten, with the writer Thomas Mann. Dorfman was on board a ship travelling to Chile and evidently (and I found this intriguing, given his young age) contemplating his two languages. Upon hearing Mann’s heavy accent in English, Dorfman asked his father, “In what language does he write?” (p. 86). Dorfman soon made his own decision; he chose English, “the efficient instrument of my inner kingdom” (p. 86), creating a “dialogue with language that would remain regardless of geography” (p. 84). And he did write in English, even during the periods when he had renounced the American part of himself, spoke no English, and was living a totally Chilean life. Dorfman made peace with the notion of “the divorce, the extrication of the English in which I wrote from the nation where I had learned it” (p. 130). “My writing did not need to be based in any community” (p. 132). He tried to make sense of his distaste for America and everything American at the same time as he was working in English, writing in English, and teaching English. He hated English imperialism, yet “used it [English] to keep bread on the table” (p. 190). This love/hate relationship with English was, and is, not unique to Dorfman. There was more to Dorfman’s use of English in his writing: “English was a way of secreting some private part of my past and person away from the overly political world I inhabited. Maybe I needed one unchanging island of identity that, as I transmogrified myself into a Latin American, linked me to the gringo I had once been” (p. 191). Dorfman recognized the contradiction in his writing in English but speaking only in Spanish: “My private English language self and my public gesticulating Spanish persona . . . writing in the language of

Richard Nixon and my revolutionary speechifying in the language of Che Guevara" (p. 191). In 1970, he decided to end the contradiction and never again to write in English. He returned to Chile. "Liberated from the foreign, English-language realm in which I had secluded myself for so long. . . I let Spanish flow out of me like it were a river" (p. 245). This self-exile from written English lasted only a few years, and was the only time he stopped writing in English. After Allende's assassination, English made a comeback in Dorfman's life. But it was not until the age of 50 that Dorfman finally made peace with the two languages, allowing them to coexist in his throat. "My two languages call a truce after 40 years of raging for my throat, the two decide to coexist" (p. 270). He ceased being a reluctant bilingual. He now writes easily in both English and Spanish and appreciates the way in which "English made me one kind of writer, one kind of person, and Spanish somebody else" (p. 221).

Julia Alvarez seemed startled by her accent in writing: "I never wrote in another language. English is, in fact, my 'first language' if we are speaking of the book and writing" (Alvarez, as cited in Novacovitch & Shepard, 2000, p. 218). Yet her writing in English echoed Spanish. Her exposure to Spanish seemed to come through into her writing. "But what surprises me, especially since I am now working in another language, is to discover how much of my verbal rhythm, my word choices, my attention to sound, my prose comes from my native language as spoken by *la familia*" (Alvarez, 1999, p.126). "I don't hear the same rhythms in English as a native speaker does" (p. 173). She heard English in Spanish and Spanish in English (and seemed to write that way as well). Alvarez was also sensitive to the echo of Spanish in the English writing of others. She revealed her "love at first sight" on reading the poetry of William Carlos Williams. Alvarez had not known of the poet's Puerto Rican, Spanish-speaking roots, but intuited them from one line of his poetry. A line in one of his poems, "so much depends," was commented on by Alvarez's (English) poetry teacher as a curious syntactic structure, but Alvarez recognized the structure: "the syntax seemed familiar to me. I had heard a similar expression all my life, *todo depende...* the Spanish form of 'maybe'" (p. 164).

Greta Nemiroff was surprised by the accents of German in her English writing: "The structures of the language are so embedded in my speech that I am often surprised by the appearance of Germanic sentence structure in the first drafts of my written work" (2000, p. 14). Edwidge Danticat, from Haiti, expressed similar thoughts: "The proverbs of our language peek through the veil of our English sentences" (2000, p. 43).

Natasha Lvovich addressed her writing of her life in English: "The language in which I am writing this book is English – the first time in my multilingual and multicultural life that I can find a healthy, real voice in a language that

has gradually become my own" (1997, p. xiv). She acknowledged that it took not only courage but also nerve to write creatively in a foreign language. She, and other foreign writers who write in English, do so "to be heard and to be read, to be free" (p. xv). Lvovich took a critical stance towards her goals in writing.

Kyoko Mori appeared quite happy to write her life 1 (which happened in Japanese) in her language 2 (English). "Language is like a radio. I have to choose a specific station, English or Japanese, and tune in. I can't listen to both at the same time. In between there is nothing but static" (1997, p. 17). Mori felt more herself in English – the self she would like to be – and therefore expressed no quandary or discomfort about writing her Japanese life in English. She refused, as was her mother's wish, to write "polite lies," as she would have had to do in Japanese.

Certain individuals who wrote in their L2 experienced pressure not only from members of the L2 community who seemed to regard them forever as less than competent writers, but also from those in their L1 communities who felt that the writer had "sold out" by writing in English. They were thus disconnected from one or the other, or sometimes, both of their writing communities. For example, Alvarez was told that, "It doesn't seem possible that a Dominican should write in English. Come back to your country – to your language. You are a Dominican" (1999, p. 171). Alvarez expressed her own (non)sense of place as a writer: "I'm not a Dominican writer . . . I'm also not a norteamericano writer . . . I am a Dominican American writer" (p. 173); "I am a Vermont writer from the Dominican" (p. 187). Alvarez chafed at this responsibility, at this expectation from her L1 community and expressed the hope that the duality in her writing would become a "new place on the map . . . a synthesizing way of looking at the world. I'm mapping a country that's not on the map, and that's why I'm trying to put it down on paper" (p. 173). Alvarez hoped to create a new perspective that was not English and not Spanish. Alvarez rejected "simple labels, simplistic choices" (p. 68) that did not reflect the totality of her identity and her experiences. In writing as a Latina and as a woman writing in English, she resolved to "write stories and poems using the metaphors, details, rhythms of that first world I had left behind in Spanish. A multicultural perspective is more and more the way to understand the world" (p. 173).

Connection to SLA theory and pedagogy

My first research question – the one that drove the study and guided my reading and writing was: "How do these learners represent their second language acquisition?" I have focused in this present article on the understandings that emerged from the first question and on one of the themes: Writing life 1 in language 2. Research questions 2 and 3 focused on whether SLA research and SLA pedagogy acknowledged the issues named as significant by the

learners. I will comment briefly on what I found in the research literature and what teachers had to say.

The theoretical literature in SLA that I examined did not address writing life 1 in language 2 in the way that the learners did, although I did find acknowledgement of this tension in some literature on the periphery of SLA for example, Bammer (1994); Coulmas (1997); and Wisse (2000). Much of SLA research and literature seems to attend to the dance rather than to the dancer (to re-word a line from Yeats) – i.e., to the language rather than to the language speaker. Included in the SLA literature that I examined were five texts commonly used as course texts in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) preparation programs. The complexity of writing in a “language without memory” was not addressed in any of these texts.

I invited six experienced English as a second language (ESL) teachers to meet in focus group sessions to determine whether they recognized the issues named as significant by the learners, and if so, whether they saw any pedagogical implications. We considered carefully the notion that writing in a language about events that happened in another language may lead to tension – that identity is at much at play as is ability. We began to wonder whether the common practice of beginning a writing course by having students write about their early lives, which had happened in another language, should be reconsidered. We agreed that excerpts from the texts would serve as useful prompts in the ESL classroom to encourage students to express their own literacy across languages and that excerpts would also be useful in teacher education.

Concluding remarks

Learners, researchers, and teachers each have a different stake in and take on SLA, but have much to offer one another. Those working on theory related to SLA and teachers working with language learners need to carve a space in their studies and in their practice for learner perspectives – including feelings about writing in an alphabet without memory.

There has been a recent surge of energy in cross-cultural writing. Bromley (2000) investigated ‘borderline’ cultural fictions of the diaspora. Bromley used ‘borderline’ to locate the cultural positions of the writer. I also read ‘borderline’ here as modifying the noun ‘fiction’ because many of the contributors use much that is autobiography. Weber, in an issue of *Chronicle of Higher Education* (2004, B8-B10) addressed young, new immigrant writers who are documenting their arrival stories (ex. Shteyngart, 2002; Bezmozgis, 2004; and Vapnyar, 2003). In addition, a just-released anthology, *The Genius of Language: Fifteen Writers Reflect on Their Mother Tongues*, highlighted fifteen writers who described their experiences with tongues not their own (Lesser, 2004). Some of the authors of the narratives in my corpus are represented in

this anthology. Much is expressed about the feelings that lie behind writing in a foreign language.

I conclude this paper with a quote from Aciman, taken from the introduction to his anthology, *Letters of Transit* (1999). It relates to an accent in writing, a phenomenon he noted when reading the works of those included in his anthology:

Some of the writers still make out traces of an accent in their own prose, call it a particular cadence in a language that is never quite just English, but not anything else either. An accent is the tell-tale scar left by the unfinished struggle to acquire a new language. But it is much more. An accent marks the lag between two cultures, two languages, the space where you let go of one identity, invent another, and end up being more than one person but never quite two. (1999, p.11)

In this study, for me, the learners were the teachers; their narratives were the curriculum.

REFERENCES

- Aciman, A. (1999). Permanent transients. In A. Aciman (Ed.), *Letters of transit* (pp. 9–14). New York: New York City Press.
- Alvarez, J. (1999). *Something to declare*. New York: Plume.
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays by M.M. Bakhtin* (M. Holquist, Ed. C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bailey, K.M. (1983). Competitiveness and anxiety in adult second language learning: Looking at and through diary studies. In H.D. Seliger & M.H. Long (Eds.), *Classroom oriented research in second language acquisition* (pp. 67–103). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Bailey, K.M. (1991). Diary studies of classroom language learning: The doubting game and the believing game. In E. Sadtono (Ed.), *Language acquisition and the second/foreign language classroom* (pp. 60–102). Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Center.
- Bammer, A. (Ed.). (1994). *Displacements*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Belcher, D., & Connor, U. (2001). *Reflections on multiliterate lives*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Bell, S.E. (1988). Becoming a political woman: The reconstruction and interpretation of experience through stories. In A.D. Todd & S. Fisher (Eds.), *Gender and discourse: The power of talk* (pp. 97–123). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Beverly, J. (2000). Testimonio, subalternity, and narrative authority. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 555–565). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bezmogis, D. (2004). *Natasha and other stories*. New York: Farar, Straus & Giroux.
- Breen, M. (Ed.) (2001). *Learner contributions to language learning*. London: Longman.
- Bromley, R. (2000). *Narratives for a new belonging: Diasporic cultural fictions*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Candlin, C. (2000). Introduction. In B. Norton, *Identity and language learning*. Harlow, UK: Pearson.
- Coulmas, F. (1997). A matter of choice. In M. Putz (Ed.), *Language choices: Conditions, constraints and consequences* (pp. 31–43). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- Danticat, E. (2000). AHA! In M. Danquah (Ed.), *Becoming American* (pp. 39–45). New York: Hyperion.
- Dorfman, A. (1998). *Heading south, looking north*. New York: Penguin.
- Eisner, E. (1995). What artistically crafted research can help us to understand about schools. *Educational Theory*, 45(1), 1–6.
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 733–768). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fishman, J. (1977). What is ethnicity? In H. Giles (Ed.), *Language, ethnicity and intergroup relations* (pp. 15–52). London: Academic Press.
- Glesne, C. (1998). *Becoming qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.
- Hanauer, D. (2003) (Ed). Literature and applied linguistics: New perspectives. Special issue of *Canadian Modern Language Review* 60(1), 1–6.
- Harper, D. (2000). Reimagining visual methods: Galileo to neuromancer. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 717–733). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hoffman, E. (1989). *Lost in translation*. New York: Penguin.
- Hoffman, E. (1999). The new nomads. In A. Aciman (Ed.), *Letters of transit* (pp. 35–64). New York: New York City Press.
- Kaplan, A. (1993). *French lessons*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kouritzin, S. (2000). Bringing life to research: Life history research and ESL. *TESL Canada Journal*, 17(2), 1–25.
- Lesser, W. (2004). *The genius of language: Fifteen writers reflect on their mother tongues*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., & Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative research: Readings, analysis and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lvovich, N. (1997). *The multilingual self*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Michaels, A. (1996). *Fugitive pieces*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.
- Mitchell, R., & Myles, F. (1998). *Second language learning theories*. London: Arnold.
- Mori, K. (1997). *Polite lies*. New York: Fawcett.
- Nemiroff, G. (2000). No language to die in. In K. Ogulnick (Ed.), *Language crossings* (pp. 13–20). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning*. Harlow, UK: Pearson.
- Novacovich, J., & Shepard, R. (Eds.). (2000). *Stories in the stepmother tongue*. Buffalo, NY: White Pines Press.
- Oxford, R. (1996). (Ed.). *Language learning strategies around the world*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Pavlenko, A. (1998). Second language learning by adults: Testimonies of bilingual writers. *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 9(1), 3–19.
- Pavlenko, A. (2001a). In the world of the tradition I was unimagined: Negotiation of identities in cross-cultural autobiographies. *The International Journal of Bilingualism*, 5, 317–344.
- Pavlenko, A. (2001b). Language learning memoirs as a gendered genre. *Applied Linguistics*, 22, 211–240.
- Riessman, C. (1993). *Qualitative research methods: Vol. 30. Narrative analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Said, E. (1999). *Out of place*. New York: Random House.

- Sandelowski, M. (1993). Theory unmasked: The uses and guises of theory in qualitative research. *Research in Nursing and Health*, 16, 213–218.
- Schumann, J. (1998). The neurobiology of affect in language learning. *Language Learning*, 48 (Supplement 1).
- Shteyngart, G. (2002). *The Russian debutante's handbook*. New York: Riverhead Books.
- Steinman, L. (2004). *Language learner narratives: Bridges to SLA literature and SLA pedagogy*. Unpublished doctoral thesis. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto.
- Stone, A. (1982.) *Autobiographical occasions and individual acts: Versions of American identity from Henry Adams to Nate Shaw*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Tse, L. (1999). Finding a place to be: Ethnic identity exploration of Asian Americans. *Adolescence* 34(133), 121–138.
- Van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience*. New York: SUNY Press.
- Vapnyar, L. (2003). *There are Jews in my house*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Weber, D. (2004, September). Permutations of new-world experiences rejuvenate Jewish-American literature. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, B8-B10.
- Wertsch, J. (1998). *Mind as action*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wertsch, J. (2002). *Voices of collective remembering*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
- Wisse, R. (2000). *The modern Jewish canon: Journey through language and culture*. New York: The Free Press.
- Wong, S. (1991). Immigrant autobiography. In P. Eakin (Ed). *American autobiography: Retrospect and prospect* (pp. 142-161). Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.

APPENDIX A

Principal Narratives

A Border Passage	Ahmed, Leila (1999)
Something to Declare	Alvarez, Julia (1999)
Heading South, Looking North	Dorfman, Ariel (1998)
Lost in Translation	Hoffman, Eva (1989).
Hunger of Memory	Rodriguez, Richard (1982)
Out of Place	Said, Edward (1999)

Support Narratives

Letters of Transit	Aciman, André (1999)
The Promised Land	Antin, Mary (1997, orig. 1912)
Reflections on Multiliterate Lives *	Belcher, Diane and Connor, Ulla (Eds.) (2001)
Becoming American *	Danquah, Meri-Nana-Ama (Ed.) (2000)
French Lessons	Kaplan, Alice (1993)
The Multilingual Self	Lvovich, Natasha (1997)
Polite Lies	Mori, Kyoko (1997)

Onna Rashiku (Like a Woman)	Ogulnik, Karen (1998)
Language Crossings *	Ogulnik, Karen (Ed). (2000)
When I was Puerto Rican	Santiago, Esmeralda (1993)

*anthologies

LINDA STEINMAN has enjoyed the field of ESL for over 25 years. She has recently accepted a faculty position at York University, Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics, where she will teach a graduate course in Second Language Instruction and undergraduate credit ESL. She holds a Ph.D. in Second Language Education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto.

LINDA STEINMAN a beaucoup apprécié de travailler dans le domaine des programmes ALS (anglais, langue seconde) depuis plus de 25 ans. Elle a accepté dernièrement un poste de professeur au département des langues, littérature et linguistique de l'Université York, où elle donnera un cours au cycle supérieur en enseignement des langues secondes et enseignera au premier cycle dans le cadre du programme ALS. Elle détient un doctorat en enseignement des langues secondes de l'Institut d'études pédagogiques de l'Ontario à l'Université de Toronto.

MULTIPLE LEARNINGS ABOUT IDENTITY FROM NARRATIVE RESEARCH: CANADIAN WAR-BRIDES AS TEACHERS AND CATALYSTS

ROSEMARY CLEWS *St. Thomas University*

KRISTIN NEWMAN *University of New Brunswick*

ABSTRACT. This study illustrates how stories about people's experiences half a century ago can still be of educational value today. Using as a case example an interview-based study with war-brides who came to Canada after World War II, the authors show how reflexive narrative research can be a catalyst for learning for several groups of people on at least two main levels, in relation to the concept of identity. This methodology can stimulate learning for the researchers themselves, both personally and professionally, as well as for the research participants. Also, it has the potential to be a catalyst for learning by people interested in the findings of such research, in this instance students and teachers, researchers working on other projects, those who are "newcomers" today, and those responsible for policies and services to assist them with resettlement.

MULTIPLES APPRENTISSAGES À PROPOS DE L'IDENTITÉ À PARTIR DE LA RECHERCHE NARRATIVE : LES ÉPOUSES DE GUERRE CANADIENNES EN TANT QU'ENSEIGNANTES ET CATALYSEURS

RÉSUMÉ. Ce travail illustre comment le récit des expériences vécues il y a un demi-siècle conserve aujourd'hui une valeur éducative. Citant comme un cas type une étude fondée sur une entrevue avec des épouses de guerre arrivées au Canada après la Seconde Guerre mondiale, les auteures démontrent comment la recherche narrative réflexive peut servir de catalyseur de l'apprentissage pour plusieurs groupes, et ce sur au moins deux plans importants liés au concept d'identité. Cette méthodologie peut stimuler l'apprentissage pour les chercheurs eux-mêmes, tant sur le plan personnel que professionnel, de même que pour les participants à la recherche. Elle peut également servir de catalyseur de l'apprentissage pour les personnes intéressées à connaître les résultats de ce type de recherche, en l'occurrence, les étudiants et les enseignants, les chercheurs qui travaillent à d'autres projets, les « nouveaux venus » d'aujourd'hui, ainsi que les responsables des politiques et des services afin de les aider dans le processus de réinstallation.

NARRATIVES ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NARRATIVE STUDY

Multiple learnings can occur by reflecting on stories of yesteryear. Our purpose in this text is to demonstrate how this happens by illustrating the value of acknowledging experiences from the past and of using them to understand the present and to plan for the future. Specifically, we will consider how both the data and the process of a narrative research study can act as catalysts for the learning experienced by the researchers themselves, by the research participants, and by others who, for various reasons, may be interested in the findings that the study reveals. As an example of such a study and how it has the potential to stimulate such a range of learnings, we will describe an interview-based study that we are currently conducting which analyzes the narratives of women who came to Canada from Europe as war-brides during and after World War II. We will be looking with special interest at what they recounted to us concerning one theme in particular, the theme “identity.”

When narrating their experiences of resettlement, and in the course of discussing the themes of “home,” “community,” and “family,” the women in the study made frequent reference to their *identities*, especially their *national* identities. It is our belief that their experiences can enrich our research and practice in the field of human services, by enhancing our understanding of the processes that are involved for newcomers in “re-storying” identity. At the same time, their narratives can assist us personally by facilitating a degree of re-storying about specific aspects of our own identities. Furthermore, besides the learnings derived from the topics these women addressed directly, there were other learnings that we experienced as we reflected on diverse matters that the interviews triggered for us, such as the theme of national identity in general and relationships between women of different generations.

In this paper, we will be departing from a conventional academic approach to organizing a research report (i.e. literature review, theory, methodology, results and analysis). Such a structure, we feel, does not fit well with our narrative thesis and methodology, nor does it illustrate how the study promoted learning during both planning and data collection stages. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 121) point out, “narrative inquiries are always strongly autobiographical.” Indeed, they say, “our research interests come out of our own narratives of experience and shape our narrative inquiry plotlines.” In a similar vein, we have found that a narrative structure that chronicles the process of our work, or tells its story, illustrates most effectively how multiple learnings can emerge.

The study in question is rooted in Rosemary’s narrative of being born in Canada yet raised in England; a narrative that, in turn, begins with the story of Rosemary’s mother, Judith, who is the inspiration for the study. We will begin by narrating Judith’s story (at least as interpreted by Rosemary) and

follow it with vignettes from Rosemary's personal and professional life. We will then describe the theoretical and methodological basis of the study, and say more about the concept of identity. This will be followed by an account of the potential learnings that can be experienced by specific groups of people; in this case, war-brides, current newcomers, resettlement workers, and finally teachers of humanities, social sciences, and human service professions. We will end by outlining the learning that we have experienced ourselves, as researchers, commencing with Rosemary's learning about identity and about her relationship with her mother and then moving to Kristin's learning about relationships between women who have grown up in vastly different times. This latter set of learnings demonstrates, we believe, how the narratives of research participants frequently lead to learnings that are not anticipated at the outset of a project.

Judith was born in England and emigrated to Canada when she was four years old. While growing up in the Saskatchewan prairies, she learned to be proud of her British birth and heritage, which placed her at the summit of the "vertical pyramid" of social status based on country of origin (Porter, 1965). As a young woman, Judith listened to trains passing through her prairie town carrying people, who she thought must have interesting lives, to different, and she imagined exciting, destinations. Judith seized the opportunity to find a "good catch" among the young British men from the *Commonwealth Air Training Scheme* stationed in the air force base outside her town. She believed that marrying a British man would confirm her "Britishness" and would take her away from her "boring rural existence." Upon arrival in England with her infant daughter, Rosemary, Judith became homesick for the prairie. It seems that Judith maintained Canadian as well as British identities by "turning her daughter into a little piece of Canada." She did this by often telling Rosemary that she was Canadian and by referring to her as "my Canadian daughter." Granted, the process was probably not as clear for Judith as Rosemary describes it. However, reaching this conclusion about her mother's national identity enabled Rosemary to gain insight into her mother's experience, thereby reducing the "strangeness" that often exists between mother and daughter (Bateson, 2000).

Rosemary left Canada for England when she was less than two years old. Her mother's frequent references to her Canadian identity encouraged Rosemary to feel different from her British-born family and friends. She was even dressed to look like a post-war prairie child. During the winter months of her first few years in England, she wore a fur coat sent from Canada to post-war Britain where clothes were on strict ration. She recalls feeling miserable and ashamed of the "Canadian-ness" that set her apart from her peers. Then, after almost half a century in Britain, she returned to Canada where she did not feel Canadian at all. She took up an appointment as a university professor, but like an elementary school child, she set about learning basic facts about

the geography and history of the country she had been taught was her native land but that now she only inhabited. In Canada, after hearing Rosemary speak, people often ask her if she is enjoying her (11 year) “holiday” and when she intends to return “home.” If she visits England, she sounds like the people who live there, yet she feels as though she is visiting a country that she once knew but no longer belongs to.

The birth of this study occurred, then, when Rosemary began discussing her experience as the daughter of a war-bride with her colleague, Laura Taylor, also the daughter of a war-bride. Laura, interested in second-language learning among newcomer seniors, reflected on how her own mother’s stories helped her to understand the learning processes of seniors in general. Rosemary, interested in the resettlement processes of newcomers to Canada, reviewed her mother’s stories of transition from prairie-bride to struggling mother in the austere environment of post-war England. Both Rosemary and Laura realized that the resettlement issues experienced by their mothers were similar to those of newcomers in a different place and time, namely Canada in the twenty-first century.

Rosemary and Laura also reflected on the ways in which their identities had been shaped by their mothers’ experiences as war-brides. Eager to learn more about their mothers and themselves, they conducted a narrative study on the published biographical and autobiographical material about Canadian war-brides (e.g. Barrett & Dicks, 1996; Granfield, 2002; Hibbert, 1978; Jarrott, 1995; Rains, 1984; Wicks, 1992). Although they found many stories about the lives of the war-brides in their countries of origin, they found few stories about resettlement as such. In a desire to fill this gap, Rosemary in New Brunswick and Laura in Ontario thus decided to study the resettlement processes of Canadian war-brides.

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

The theories guiding us in our war-bride study are symbolic interactionism, narrative studies, and feminism, and our methodology is qualitative. Symbolic interactionism highlights the importance of meaning in people’s lives (Blumer, 1969). In an effort to understand the meaning that war brides attributed to settling in a new country, we searched for “sensitizing concepts” that represent important aspects of their experience (van den Hoonaard, 1997). Sensitizing concepts are constructs, taken from the vantage point of participants in a research study, which summarize and exemplify pivotal aspects of the phenomenon being studied. As mentioned, the concept of identity is one such concept in the experiences of war brides.

Our approach is, in part, auto-ethnographic. By sharing our own stories and showing how they are enmeshed with the stories of our participants, we are encouraging the reader of this article to engage in the process of

story-creation. As Clandinin and Connelly (1998) put it, our intention is for the reader to cease to be an observer and instead become part of the “intertwined experience of researcher and participant” (p. 151).

For the New Brunswick study, Rosemary, together with Kristin, who is the New Brunswick research assistant, is interviewing a sample of approximately 20 war-brides who came to Canada during and after World War II, and who are now New Brunswick residents. We have aimed for a “maximum variation” sample (Marshall & Rossmann, 1999), following “leads” and seeking participants to represent groups of people we have not heard from in our study. Our sample so far includes women from four countries of origin, several locations in New Brunswick, and a variety of family compositions.

Our interview style is influenced by the work of Rubin and Rubin (1995), Mishler (1986), Clandinin and Connelly (2000), and feminist authors such as Bateson (1989 & 2000) and Mauthner (1998). Rather than enter each interview with a pre-determined schedule, we ask our participants to tell us stories about their experiences since coming to Canada as war-brides. Guiding the interview toward post-arrival stories, we therefore gently discourage stories that stray from the purpose of the study (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). We utilize preliminary statements to structure interviews, and enable both our participants and ourselves as interviewers to jointly construct meaning from the words uttered and the stories narrated (Mishler, 1986). During the interviews, we attend to the dynamics of the war-brides’ narrations and to their “shifts and changes,” as Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 71) express it, which means that “we are constantly negotiating, constantly re-evaluating and maintaining flexibility and openness to an ever-changing landscape.” As feminist researchers, we also listen attentively for silent or silenced stories (Mauthner, 1998) and for “political” angles and power dimensions within stories, and for their poetic and hermeneutic dimensions as well (Randall & Clews, 2001).

Reflexivity is an important component of our methodology in the study. Accordingly, we draw upon the work of several scholars who emphasize the importance of reflexive processes in qualitative feminist research (e.g., Doane, 2003; McKay, Ryan & Sumison, 2003). In contrast to phenomenological researchers, who reflect on their research in order to unpack “conceptual baggage” and then attempt to put it to one side so that it does not interfere with the research process (e.g., Kirby & McKenna, 1989), we reflect on our own experiences and how others might perceive us, and then use these insights in our research. Some of our reflections have been solitary, some have been shared in informal conversations, and some have been discussed on tape and transcribed, thereby forming part of the database for this study. These multiple routes to self-awareness (Finlay, 2003) have assisted our different “journeys” as we explore deeper elements of ourselves, and of our

research partnership (Arvay, 2003). Reflexive processes have also provided greater depth in our understanding of the participants' stories and have enabled us to make multiple interpretations of the interview data (Alveson & Sklodberg, 2000). As a strategy for maximizing learning from both narrative research and feminist research, we therefore strongly emphasize the value of reflexivity.

Another point to stress concerning our war-bride study is that there has been no clear divide for us between data collection and data analysis. Interviews and reflections are both data and guides for work with new participants. We analyze our interview data as it is collected and then allow this analysis to help us decide which data to collect next (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

In order to deepen our understanding about the stories the war-brides have shared with us, we use some of the methods proposed by Riessman (1993) and some proposed by Lieblich, Tuval-Masiach, and Zilber (1998). Like Riessman, we employ methods of textual analysis, data reduction, and the division of stories into segments so that we can analyse them separately. Similarly, we utilize Lieblich, Tuval-Masiach and Zilber's *form* and *content* as well as *holistic* and *categorical* approaches to analysis. That is, we use literary techniques for analysing the *form* of stories, such as the structure of the plot, the sequencing of events, and the emotions that the narratives evoke. We then combine this analysis of *form* with an analysis of *content*, such as is used in the social sciences. In our *content* analysis, we consider both the explicit and implicit meanings that are conveyed by our participants' words. Similarly, our analysis includes both a *holistic* consideration of each story and a *categorical* analysis of the various segments of which it is comprised.

Such analyses of the war-brides' narratives have provided insights into many dimensions of the process of resettlement. In particular, though, they have revealed the importance of the formation and transformation of *identity* that people experience during that process.

Our views about identity have been strongly influenced by narrative researcher Eliot Mishler (1999). Mishler conceives identity as interpersonal rather than intrapersonal, and as an aspect of ourselves that is constantly shifting, is relational, and is developed through dialogical relationships. With Mishler, we believe that we have multiple identities that are reflected in different ways in different contexts, identities that are in constant states of flux and change. "Metaphorically," says Mishler, "we speak or sing ourselves as a chorus of voices, not just as the tenor or soprano soloist" (p. 8). The aptness of Mishler's metaphor of narratives as "identity performances" is impressive, we believe, as is his view that "we express, display, make claims for who we are – and who we would like to be-in the stories we tell and how we tell them" (p. 19).

MULTIPLE LEARNINGS

As indicated at the beginning, our contention in this article is that research processes, as well as the more specific exploration of research data, can promote learning for many groups of people, including research participants, researchers, and others who have an interest in the study. In this case, the interviews with war brides provided an opportunity for them to gain further understanding about their resettlement processes. But data from the study will also be of value to present-day newcomers to Canada, to the people who assist them with their resettlement, and to students, teachers, and researchers in a variety of fields. Finally, the research processes have certainly acted as a catalyst for our own learning as the researchers. We now consider the learnings of each of these groups in turn.

Learning for the war-brides

Participants often raised issues about identity, which suggests to us that these were important for them to explore. For example, the question of national identity was discussed during the first few minutes of an interview conducted by Rosemary. In an attempt to form connections with the participants, Rosemary often began with disclosure about her mother's war-bride status, as she does here with "Anna":

Rosemary: *My mother was one of the war brides who went the other way. She was a Canadian girl that went to England. I was born in Canada.*

Anna: *But you still have an English accent.*

Rosemary: *I remained in Britain until 1993 then I came back and stayed.*

Anna: *So do you like it better in Canada than you do in England?*

Rosemary: *Sometimes, it's different. And there are times when I think [that] I'd like to be with people whose accent sounds like mine. But then I think Canada has so much to offer.*

Roles are reversed as Anna asks Rosemary for her ideas about the countries in which she has lived. Interestingly, Rosemary responds with the same hesitancy and ambivalence that characterizes the responses of the participants in the study.

Another participant, "Olive," describes a joke about her national identity and also shows uncertainty about it. "They say, 'Anyway, where are you from?' And I tease them sometimes. I saw this man one day, and I said, 'I'm from South Africa.' And he was laughing – because they notice, when you talk a little while" [that you sound different]. In response to a question about her national identity, she replied: "I think I would be Canadian. I like Canada, yeah. I think Canada is a wonderful country and I think it's good." After more than half a century, Olive is reminded about her country of origin by chance remarks

from strangers. She makes light of these remarks, but they must contribute to the ambivalence that is suggested by her hesitancy when she is asked about the country with which she identifies. Differences in language, accent, and skin colour are often used to differentiate those who are considered truly Canadian (i.e., English speaking, white) and those who are considered outsiders (Ramos, 2001). This belief about “Canadian-ness” may make it difficult for newcomers to form a Canadian national identity.

“Jane” echoes the struggle with developing a single national identity. *“Sometimes women couldn’t adjust, you know, after living in one place.”* She acknowledges her own struggle saying: *“You’re torn between the two. Half of you still lives in Britain and half of you lives in Canada. I’m half and half. I’m really half and half – No doubt about it.”* Jane indicates that there are difficulties with having with a dual national identity. In a similar way, Ramos (2001) and Khayatt (2001) have documented their personal difficulties forging national identities, simply because they do not fit nicely into the dual categories of Canadian or immigrant/newcomer (Khayatt, 2001; Ramos, 2001). Jane resists being one or the other but contrasts her own ability to adjust with the failure to do so by others. “Wendy” contrasts what is real (her Canadian home) with how she feels (British) when she comments: *“I still feel British, but this is my home now.”*

Despite having spent between 50 and 60 years in this country, none of these women responded with ease to the interviewer’s questions about national identity.

“Martha,” however, seemed to have more certainty:

Martha: *I’m so tired of going to England. If, somebody said to me, “where is the last place on earth you’d want to go?” I think I would say England (laugh).*

Interviewer: *You’re a Canadian in your heart now?*

Martha: *Oh absolutely. But I think there are still a lot of war-brides that say, “Oh I’d love to go and live at home.” Mother used to say to me, “Why don’t you come to live in England?” And I used to say, “Mother, I can’t afford it.” A lot of people do go back and they get such a bad shock that they turn around and come back again. We’ve seen a lot of that, you know, a lot of people come back.*

Although there appears to be little identity confusion in Martha’s response, her rejection of England seems very strong and her response to a question about being “Canadian in her heart” is equally adamant. When attempting to form a coherent national identity, some people may feel that they need to reject a large part of their history (Ramos, 2001). Consequently, it is possible that Martha’s strong rejection of England has assisted in her development of

a single Canadian national identity. Martha indicates that others have not adopted a Canadian identity easily and some still move back to England.

In the case of "Helen," when the conversation turns to issues of identity, she asks the interviewer to turn off the tape. The interviewer reassures her that nobody outside the research team will be given information that could reveal her identity. Helen then agrees that the tape can be turned on and tearfully states: "*I was born a Brit and I'll die a Brit.*" She indicates that she lets her friends believe that she has Canadian citizenship, even though she still has a British passport. Helen's national identity is quite painful for her to discuss and is something that she thinks she must hide.

What learnings might have emerged for the war-brides themselves from these disclosures about identity? By asking women in their late 70s and 80s to share their wisdom, the research process alone might have enhanced their sense of self-worth. This is especially the case since our fast-paced and constantly changing world, the North American "love affair with change" as Bateson (2000) puts it, devalues the wisdom of age. Furthermore, writing and speaking personal stories gives people a voice, and may empower them to make corrections in how they have viewed things thus far (Cooper, 1991). Accordingly, although our study was not intended to provide a therapeutic intervention, the review of life narratives provided an opportunity for these women to do what older people often do quite readily, which is to "dwell in the past" or to "live on their memories" (Seabrook, 2003, p. 104). The narration of one's life-story could act not just as a "clinical intervention" but also as a research tool that provides "a forum for the older person to share personal meanings of life experiences" (Sheridan & Kisor, 2000, p. 120). Helen's tears, for example, suggested that there was unfinished business in regard to her sense of national identity. In general, our participants' hesitancy in answering questions suggests that they valued the opportunity not only to *share* this dimension of their identities but to *explore* it and *learn* about it too.

Learning for newcomers and for those who help them resettle

The process of immigration often brings with it a need to re-story many of the dimensions of identity. A move to another country frequently entails a change in occupation, which results in a change in occupational identity. The lives of all family members will change as well. With this comes a change in relationships within the family, and for women, a change in identity as mother, wife, or daughter. When we move, our social world changes and this is accompanied by a change in social identity. Whether it be occupational, familial, or social, much identity-restorying thus needs to occur.

When people leave their countries of origin they also leave behind much of their support network. There is frequently a reluctance to worry people "back

home” with even the most pressing of problems (Clews, 2000). Furthermore, a telephone conversation or an e-mail message is rarely an appropriate way to share ideas and feelings that will assist with identity changes. People who are employed to assist newcomers to resettle and volunteers who spend time assisting the work in resettlement agencies will often therefore be called upon to be *story-listeners* to help newcomers with the restorying of their identity. Such resettlement workers need to encourage newcomers to have patience while this restorying occurs. Also, they need skills to engage in effective story-listening, plus an awareness that the process of identity-restorying can continue for decades.

As newcomers embark on their own processes of identity-restorying, they will hear stories of other newcomers engaging in this same process. Our interviews with the war-brides have shown us that, even after half a century, people who have been born in another land may still be exploring their national identities. Several women told us, for instance, that they had contemplated a permanent return to their countries of origin, and many visit their first homes frequently. We have concluded that newcomers need to be patient with themselves and to recognize that the re-storying process is lengthy and complex.

The results of this study also have implications for policymakers. At present, funding is available to assist the resettlement of refugees for one year after their arrival in Canada. At the end of this time, they must rely on benefits and services available to all Canadian residents. From the narratives of the women we have interviewed, policy makers could learn about the complexity and duration of identity-restorying processes and thus perhaps extend the funding for resettlement services.

Learning for students, teachers, and researchers

Narratives can be sources for learning at public schools, colleges, and universities (Witherell & Noddings, 1991). Students can learn directly from the narratives of the war brides, and teachers in all levels of formal education can use such narratives to inform curriculum content. Within public schools, for example, these narratives could bring to life classes in social studies and modern history. They could also act as catalysts for students in senior public school and college to explore their own identities and to gain a greater cross-cultural awareness. As well, they might have a place in many humanities, social science, and health or human service courses at the university level, including courses in English, history, sociology, education, gerontology, nursing, and social work. In these and similar courses, methods of learning that encourage reflexivity, such as journaling, role playing, simulations, story writing and letter writing, and exercises that promote cross-cultural understanding could be developed by using narratives or the concepts that lie within them (for example, Clews & Powers, 2004).

Finally, our own narratives as the researchers in this study may assist other researchers who are exploring learning processes that occur during narrative reflexive research. For this reason, we have attempted to describe personal and professional learning that we have gained from our work, in the hope that others will be encouraged to see the value of narrative and reflexive methodologies.

Learning for Rosemary

Rosemary's reflections at various stages of the study assisted in restorying her own *national* identity. Prior to beginning the study, her reflections on her mother's war-bride experiences allowed her to learn more about ways in which her identity-confusion paralleled that of her mother. Re-storying her mother's experience facilitated the re-storying of her own identity. The interviews with the war brides revealed similarities between her experiences of moving to Canada in the 1990s and the relocation experienced by the war-brides half a century earlier, thereby confirming that the stories of yesterday can indeed provide valuable learning for today.

Learning for Kristin

Not all researcher-learnings are about the issues discussed by participants. This is particularly the case for a researcher who is an "outsider" to the research topic. For Kristin, for example, the interviews with the war-brides did not trigger thoughts and feelings about national identity because, having lived in Canada all of her life, her national identity had never been a story that she had needed to narrate. Instead, the interviews triggered thoughts and feelings about her identity as a woman and as a feminist.

While interviewing and transcribing interviews, Kristin noticed a shared narrative among the war-bride participants about what it means to be a "good woman" (e.g., standing by your man, putting others' needs before your own). From a feminist perspective, however, the "good woman" narrative is problematic, because it prescribes particular ways for women to live their lives, ways that typically benefit others (men and children) and not the women themselves (e.g., Rich, 1986). Consequently, the "good woman" narrative hinders possibilities that are important to women's mental health and well-being. As a feminist who struggles both personally and professionally to deconstruct this narrative, Kristin thus felt conflicted while listening to the war brides – who had so much more life experience than herself – support this "good woman" narrative that has been oppressive to many women. This internal conflict provided an opportunity for her to read and reflect on the differences between herself and these women who are 50 years her senior. She noted how the war brides had very different lives from her own. During their teen years, they had faced life and death issues around safety, shelter, and food. In contrast, during Kristin's teen years, she worried

about matters such as school, career, and relationships. Born in 1975, into a growing and vibrant feminist movement, she therefore had the benefit of having access to narratives that promote gender equality. When the war brides were women in their twenties, however, these alternative narratives were not as accessible. The discontinuity that Kristin experienced across generations of women may be a result of the continuously shifting social and political climate regarding women's rights (Bateson, 1989). Due to the oppressed nature of women's status in society, women's lives are much more discontinuous across generations than those of men, and as a result different generations of women may have a different set of narratives available for how to live their lives "as women." Reflections about this difference helped Kristin to be less critical towards the narratives of the war brides.

CONCLUSION: NARRATIVES OF WAR-BRIDES – CATALYSTS FOR LEARNING?

Inspired by North American Aboriginal teachings, one scholar has argued that we should teach from our own stories rather than from the stories of others (Zapf, 1997). An Aboriginal colleague told one of the authors of this article that it is important to tell a story and then allow others to construct their own learning from it (Sacobie, 1999). Here we have shared some of our learnings about our identities as women, as people who work with newcomers, and as researchers. We invite our readers to take from these stories what they will. Rather than ending at this point, however, we will conclude by reiterating some of the most powerful learning for ourselves that has arisen from our research because these insights may also be relevant for others.

First, our hunch that the wisdom of war-brides would facilitate multiple learnings has been confirmed: we have learned about ourselves as women, as professionals, and as researchers. One of us has explored issues about her national identity, and has done some re-storying of her mother's experiences; the other has learned more about relationships between women of different generations. Both of us can identify learning that will assist us in our professional activities as researchers and as human service workers alike. Our anticipation is that the learning we have gained from these narratives about identity could also act as catalysts for the learning of a variety of specified groups.

Second, our awareness of the multi-faceted nature of identity has grown through our work with the narratives of these women. In this paper, we have explored one dimension in particular – national identity. However, our participants also shared (and possibly developed) their occupational identities, their social identities, and their identities as family members.

Third, we have learned once again the vital importance of reflexivity in narrative studies. We will continue to read about reflexivity and to devise new methods of individual and team reflections at all stages of our research

process. Our interviews elicit richer data and our analyses are stronger, we believe, because we have engaged in reflexive processes concerning the interplay between our own stories and those of our participants.

Finally, we are more committed than ever to narrative research. We have enjoyed hearing the narratives of war-brides and learning from their experiences. As each interview has ended we have felt privileged that these women have been willing to share the wisdom they have gained from their life experiences. The stories of the war-brides have acted as catalysts for learning on numerous levels. We thank them.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We acknowledge the financial assistance from the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation and St. Thomas University. We also acknowledge the work of Dr. Laura Taylor, who collaborated with Rosemary in the documentary stage of this study. St. Thomas University Research Office Assistant, Lehanne Knowlton, provides invaluable direct and indirect support. The war-bride participants and our advisory group, particularly Melynda Jarratt, have been generous in sharing their expertise. We thank all these people and organizations. Finally, and most importantly, we acknowledge Rosemary's mother Judith Cox, who died shortly before her 94th birthday while this paper was being revised for publication – without her life and inspiration, this study would never have been undertaken. We dedicate this article to Judith.

REFERENCES

- Alveson, M., & Skoldberg, K. (2000). *Reflexive methodology: New vistas for qualitative research*. Thousand Islands, CA: Sage.
- Arvay, M. L. (2003). Doing reflexivity: A collaborative, narrative approach. In L. Finlay & B. Gough (Eds.), *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social sciences* (pp. 163-175). Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Blackwell.
- Barrett, B. & Dicks, E. (Eds.). (1996). *We came from over the sea: British war brides in Newfoundland*. Portugal Cove, NF: ES Press and British War Brides Association of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Bateson, M. C. (1989). *Composing a life*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Bateson, M. C. (2000). *Full circles: Overlapping lives*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Blumer, H. (1969). *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1998). Personal experience methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (pp. 150-178). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Clews, R. (2000). *Enriching anti-racist social work curriculum: Sensitizing concepts from New Brunswick*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Memorial University of Newfoundland.
- Clews, R., & Powers, A. (2004). Creating learning situations to balance different learning style preferences: Stories from social work and anthropology classrooms. In T. Pettigrew (Ed.), *Atlantic Teaching Showcase 2003: Proceedings* (pp. 41-51). Halifax, Nova Scotia: Association of Atlantic Universities.

Multiple Learnings about Identity from Narrative Research

- Cooper, J. E. (1991). Telling our own stories: The reading and writing of journals or diaries. In C. Witherell & N. Noddings (Eds.), *Stories lives tell: Narrative and dialogue in education* (pp. 96-112). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Doane, G. (2003). Reflexivity as presence: A journey of self-inquiry. In L. Finlay & B. Gough (Eds.), *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social sciences* (pp. 93-102). Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Blackwell.
- Finlay, L. (2003). The reflexive journey: Mapping multiple routes. In L. Finlay & B. Gough (Eds.), *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social sciences* (pp. 3-20). Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Blackwell.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. San Francisco: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Granfield, L. (2002). *Brass buttons and silver horseshoes: Stories from Canadian war brides*. Toronto, Ontario: McClelland & Stewart.
- Hibbert, J. (1978). *The war brides*. Toronto, Ontario: Peter Martin.
- Jarratt, M. (1995). *The war brides of New Brunswick*. Unpublished MA Thesis, University of New Brunswick. (Reproduced in www.canadianwarbrides.com).
- Khayatt, D. (2001). Revealing moments: The voice of one who lives with labels. In C. E. James & A. Shadd (Eds.), *Talking about identity: Encounters in race, ethnicity, and language* (pp. 74-88). Toronto, Ontario: Between the Lines.
- Kirby, K., & McKenna, K. (1989). *Experience, research, social change*. Toronto, ON: Garamond.
- Lieblich, A., Tuval-Masiach, R., & Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative research: Reading, analysis and interpretation*. Thousand Islands, CA: Sage.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1999). *Designing qualitative research*, (3rd ed.). Thousand Islands, CA: Sage.
- McKay, E., Ryan, S., & Sumison, T. (2003). Three journeys towards reflexivity. In L. Finlay & B. Gough (Eds.), *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social sciences* (pp. 52-65). Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Blackwell.
- Mauthner, M. (1998). Bringing silent voices into public discourse: Researching accounts of sister relationships. In J. Ribbins & R. Edwards (Eds.), *Feminist dilemmas in qualitative research: Public knowledge and private lives?* (pp. 39-57). Thousand Islands, CA: Sage.
- Mishler, E. G. (1986). *Research interviewing: Context and narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mishler, E. G. (1999). *Storylines: Craftartists' narratives of identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Porter, J. (1965). *The vertical mosaic*. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press.
- Rains, O. (1984). *We became Canadians*. Hyde Park, Ontario: Overnight Press.
- Ramos, H. (2001). It was always there? Looking for identity in all the (not) so obvious places. In C. E. James & A. Shadd (Eds.), *Talking about identity: Encounters in race, ethnicity, and language* (pp. 104-114). Toronto, Ontario: Between the Lines.
- Randall, W., & Clews, R. (2001). The tales that bind: Toward a narrative model of rural helping. *Rural Social Work* 6(2), 4-18.
- Rich, A. (1986). *Of woman born: Motherhood as institution and experience* (10th anniversary edition). New York: W. W. Norton.
- Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Islands, CA: Sage.

- Sacobie, G. (1999). Personal communication, April.
- Seabrook, J. (2003). *A world growing old*. Toronto, Ontario: Between the Lines.
- Sheridan, M. J., & Kisor, A. J. (2000). The research process and the elderly. In R. L. Schneider, N. P. Kropf & A. J. Kisor (Eds.), *Gerontological social work* (2nd ed.), (pp. 97-136). Stamford, CT: Thompson.
- van den Hoonaard, W. (1997). *Working with sensitizing concepts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Wicks, B. (1992). *Promise you'll take care of my daughter: The remarkable war brides of World War II*. Toronto, Ontario: Stoddart.
- Witherell, C., & Noddings, N. (1991). *Stories lives tell: Narrative and dialogue within education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Zapf, M. K. (1997). Voice and social work education: Learning to teach from my own story. *Canadian Social Work Review*, 14(1), 83-97.

ROSEMARY CLEWS is a Saskatchewan-born woman who moved to England with her war-bride mother when she was two years old. She spent her childhood in England. Rosemary was educated at several British universities where she was employed as a social work researcher, educator and practitioner. She returned to Saskatchewan in her 50th year. At present she is Assistant Vice President (Research) at St. Thomas University, Fredericton, NB.

KRISTIN NEWMAN is a doctoral candidate in psychology at the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton.

Née en Saskatchewan, ROSEMARY CLEWS déménage en Angleterre à l'âge de deux ans avec sa mère, une épouse de guerre. C'est en Angleterre qu'elle passe son enfance. Elle a étudié dans différentes universités britanniques où elle a travaillé en tant que chercheuse en travail social, éducatrice et travailleuse sociale. Elle revient en Saskatchewan dans sa 50e année. Elle est actuellement vice-présidente adjointe (recherche) à l'Université St. Thomas de Frédéricton au Nouveau-Brunswick.

KRISTIN NEWMAN est candidate au doctorat en psychologie à l'Université du Nouveau-Brunswick à Frédéricton.

GAINING INTERPRETIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE AMONG TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS

MICHELLE BOONE & ELAINE CHAN

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

ABSTRACT. We examined the complexities of developing and implementing school curricula that reflect the goals for equality for students outlined in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Stories of teaching and learning experiences were presented to teacher-researchers as a means of generating discussion about differences in perspective pertaining to the curricular needs of an ethnically diverse student population. We articulate this ongoing inquiry about how best to meet the needs of a diverse society in terms of enhancing a sense of 'interpretive competence' (Conle, 1997b, Conle et al., 2000, Conle, 2000).

ACQUÉRIR LA COMPÉTENCE INTERPRÉTATIVE GRÂCE AU DIALOGUE INTERCULTUREL ENTRE ENSEIGNANTS ET CHERCHEURS

RÉSUMÉ. Nous avons étudié les complexités inhérentes à l'élaboration et à l'application d'un programme scolaire qui tient compte des objectifs d'égalité pour les étudiants, tels qu'ils sont définis dans la Loi sur le multiculturalisme canadien. Différentes expériences d'enseignement et d'apprentissage ont été présentées aux enseignants-chercheurs en vue de susciter une discussion sur les différentes perspectives touchant les besoins en matière de programmes d'une population étudiante pluriethnique. Nous articulons cette recherche continue sur la meilleure façon de répondre aux besoins d'une société diversifiée en l'axant sur une forme de « compétence interprétative » (Conle, 1997b, Conle et al., 2000, Conle, 2000).

Trudeau and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act

It is written in the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* that,

The Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada. (*Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, 1988)

As indicated above and reinforced in Moodley's (1995) historical overview of multicultural education in Canada in the 'Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education', "Canada is one of the few democratic societies that has addressed the issue of cultural and linguistic pluralism, incorporated it into its definition of national identity, and formulated it as a formal state policy of multiculturalism" (Moodley, 1995, p. 801). Although Canada differs from the United States in that a multiculturalism policy "designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians" (*Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, 1988) has been formalized, the complexities of how this policy may play out in a school context through the curriculum are not evident. For example, the ways in which this policy is understood differ dramatically, as illustrated by the many different approaches to multicultural education that have resulted from this policy. Moodley (1995) stated that, "the most commonly cited cross-cutting themes are education for cultural pluralism, education about cultural difference, education of the culturally different, education for cultural preservation, and education for multicultural adaptation" (p. 808).

In this article, we explore the use of experiential storytelling as means of engaging educators in cross-cultural dialogue about multiculturalism in schools. This is the central premise of our study. We use a bottom-up approach to multicultural policy implementation wherein the sharing of stories is presented as a means of learning about diversity in schools. We believe stories allow for a natural interaction between theory and practice by acknowledging "the particulars of time, place, person, and circumstance" (Schwab, 1971, p. 322) in a way that generalized curriculum theories cannot. By focusing on experiential stories, dialogue may become less abstract, less generalized and less theoretical because stories may permit an authentic exploration of critical issues that shape the experiences of teachers and students in schools. In this way, the sharing of stories provided a means of addressing multicultural issues in a practical and personally relevant way.

We come to this inquiry as two educators who are now conducting research on diversity issues in school contexts. Michelle is a teacher and researcher of Scottish ancestry, born, raised, and educated in Canada. She is an elementary Montessori teacher who began teaching elementary level French-Canadian students in the French-speaking province of Quebec, Canada. More recently, she taught elementary level students in a more urban context with a highly diverse multi-ethnic population in Toronto, Canada. She has continued to do research in Toronto working with elementary students. Her research documents the curricular interactions of children and teachers in three elementary classrooms sharing stories of experience around such themes as friendship, family history, mentors in our life, successes or failures in a school subject, and how the stories of guest speakers from the community interact with the students' own stories. Michelle and her French-Canadian husband,

as the bilingual parents of 10-year-old and 13-year-old girls, continue their on-going struggle to maintain their daughters' fluency in both English and French because they believe in the value of linguistic diversity in Canada.

Elaine is an elementary level teacher who has taught and conducted research in Japanese schools as well as in Canadian schools. She brings to this inquiry her experience as a first-generation Chinese Canadian who was educated in Canadian schools, and who has worked with students of diverse ethnic backgrounds as a teacher and as a researcher. Her interests in exploring the interaction of culture and curriculum in schools began when she found herself working in Japanese elementary schools surrounded by teachers and students whose school experiences seemed to differ drastically from those she experienced herself as a first-generation Chinese Canadian child in Canadian schools. She is currently researching teacher experiences of culture in the curriculum in an urban, elementary school in Toronto where students come from diverse ethnic, religious, and linguistic backgrounds.

Our lens for examining multicultural education in this paper is focused specifically on the complexities associated with encouraging cross-cultural dialogue pertaining to curriculum issues, thus situating our discussion within the realms of 'education for cultural pluralism' and 'education about cultural difference.' Our emphasis is on cross-cultural dialogue. As Canadian researchers, the idea of the cultural mosaic is an important aspect of our identity (Troper, 1979, see Cummins & Danesi, 1990, p. 12) as we constantly challenge ourselves to develop ways of drawing on the cultural and linguistic resources (Cummins & Danesi, 1990) that students, and teachers, bring to a school context. The metaphor of the cultural mosaic considers cultural diversity within Canada as an "asset" (Conle et al., 2000, p. 384), a viewpoint that has continued to thrive since 1971 when the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* was first established. "This is a liberal pluralist view that sees cultural diversity as intrinsically valuable and beneficial to society" (Moodley, 1995, p. 809). It is a view that translates into curriculum that is concerned both with acknowledging diversity as well as promoting cross-cultural discussion in schools.

COMING TO THE INQUIRY

We examined the complexities of developing and implementing school curricula for students to reflect the goals for equality outlined in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Stories of teaching and learning experiences were presented to teacher-researchers as means of generating discussion about differences in perspective pertaining to the curricular needs of an ethnically diverse student population. We articulate this ongoing inquiry about how best to meet the needs of a diverse society in terms of enhancing a sense of 'interpretive competence' (Conle, 1997b, Conle et al., 2000, Conle, 2000).

We draw on two theoretical frameworks to examine the different perspectives of the teacher-researchers involved in this study. We acknowledged the role of experience (Dewey, 1938) in shaping the personal practical knowledge of teachers (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) through a narrative inquiry approach (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, 2000). We examined “stories of experience” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) to access what the experiences may mean to the teachers participating in the discussions.

We also employed Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutic framework (Gallagher, 1992, Smith 1999a, 1999b) to further examine the stories of experience. Gallagher (1992) stated that “hermeneutics is generally conceived to be seeking meaning, truth, or consensus through interpretation modeled on conversation or dialogue” (p. 22). Understanding for Gadamer is a collaborative endeavor whereby self and other negotiate meaning together through conversation. We contend that mutual dialogue and the opportunity to share and reflect upon our stories may bring about greater awareness and understanding of the perspectives of others to achieve a sense of “interpretive competence” (Conle, 1997b, Conle et al., 2000, Conle, 2000).

Stories of experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, 2000) were shared in the context of a weekly Works-in-Progress group in the Centre for Teacher Development at OISE/UT where graduate students who were also teachers and researchers met to address research issues through the sharing of works in progress during the spring of 2001. We presented stories (Chan & Boone, 2001) about some of our experiences of ways in which cultural diversity may be acknowledged and addressed in the curriculum. These stories highlighted challenges encountered in the process of implementing a culturally-sensitive curriculum, and generated discussion among our teacher-researcher participants about their experiences of attempting to meet the needs of an ethnically diverse student population. We audio-recorded the presentation of our stories and the verbal responses of the teacher-researchers and subsequently analyzed the transcripts. We also received written responses from the 15 teacher-researchers involved in the WIP group.

We examined the stories of experience and identified and interpreted themes using both narrative inquiry and philosophical hermeneutics. Both inquiry approaches used are relational. Connelly and Clandinin (2000) refer to narrative inquiry as “people in relation studying with people in relation” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000 p. 189). Narrative thinking as relational because “interpretations can always be otherwise. There is a sense of tentativeness, usually expressed as a kind of uncertainty, about an event’s meaning” (p. 31). Similarly, Smith (1999a) described one of the most important contributions of hermeneutics as “the way in which the meaning of anything is always arrived at referentially and relationally rather than (for want of a better word)

absolutely” (p. 38). Finally, remaining consistent to both hermeneutics and narrative approaches, we acknowledged the role of the personal and cultural in disclosing and addressing biases in interpretation.

ENGAGING IN A CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE

We received rich and varied feedback from the teacher-researchers who participated in the Works-in-Progress discussion. More specifically, important questions such as the following emerged in the analysis of this data: how do we teach students about cultures when the experiences of individual members of the culture group are so vastly different? How do educators introduce the idea of diversity within a culture while at the same time acknowledging a sense of similarity across cultures as well? What does it mean to celebrate cultural traditions in an ‘authentic’ way? Are some means of celebration considered more ‘authentic’ than others? Should we even refer to members of a culture group as having something in common when there are so many differences within a group? Is addressing the needs of individual students rather than addressing their cultural needs a means of teaching students to respect and appreciate diversity? And how can we, as educators, bridge the gap between home and school for students in ways that acknowledge the cultural influences that shape their sense of identity?

Many important issues were raised in the discussion following the presentation, in response letters written by the teacher-researcher participants, and in our own reflections of experiences. Among these issues was the question of how to include culture in the curriculum in order to accommodate the diverse perspectives of students, teachers, and parents in ethnically diverse student populations. Responses from individuals in the Works-in-Progress group suggested that while some children may appreciate having cultural differences acknowledged in class, others were uncomfortable with the attention and would have preferred to blend in with their peers. The following participant recalled extreme discomfort at having her home culture acknowledged in the school curriculum, the second felt somewhat guilty and unqualified to act as a spokesperson for her culture, while the third participant avoided sharing aspects of her family’s practices with friends of different ethnic backgrounds.

As the only Jewish person in the German program, I did not like it when my teachers singled me out to explain some part of German Jewish history or the details of Jewish holidays and customs. I wanted to blend in, to be invisible. The inclusion of my own culture embarrassed me. (Participant response letter, 2001)

...I always felt this strange discomfort (and perhaps guilt?) when I was asked by colleagues, as soon as they’d hear that I came from Egypt, if I could visit their class to talk about ancient Egypt and perhaps Egypt today. Because I was born in Egypt and moved to Canada when I was a baby, not older than

3 years old, I honestly didn't have many memories of Egypt. Although, I was, no doubt, exposed to Egyptian culture, as a child, it's hard to know if the culture you experience at home is more about your country of origin or about your particular family. I grew up in Canada without one relative so my immediate family was the only Egypt I knew. All this to suggest how unqualified I felt to represent the Egyptian culture or educate others about it. (Participant response letter, 2001)

. . . I thought of my own family rituals that stemmed from growing up in a Catholic Italian household. Going to church on Sunday and not eating meat on Friday and every summer right before school would start my family would can tomatoes. I might share this with friends who were from an Italian background but I would never share this with my Jewish friends in high school. I did not want to appear different in high school; I wanted to fit in with everyone. I did not want to be singled out. Peer influence and acceptance was everything for me. (Participant response letter, 2001).

Our discussion revealed that many participants in the Works-in-Progress group were uncomfortable or embarrassed when they had been asked to share their individual experiences of culture, religion, or ethnicity in a group situation. They emphasized that they did not want to feel different from their peers and recounted how they did what they could to assimilate to the food, clothing, and language norms of the majority culture in order to appear 'normal.'

As teachers and researchers whose interests include exploring different means of expanding knowledge of cultures in the curriculum, we found that this issue became an important puzzle in our work. We realized that we sometimes make the assumption that members of ethnic minority cultures would want their culture to be included in the school context. The stories, however, highlighted the extent to which there exist extreme differences in perspective about how cultural difference may be incorporated into the curriculum. Coming to an understanding about how best to develop a curriculum that balances the need to teach children about cultural diversity as well as providing them with the academic skills needed to become contributing members of society may be a source of tension among students, teachers and parents.

Despite the fact that many interesting perspectives had been offered by the teacher-researchers in our Works-in-Progress group, we were left with many puzzling questions and felt that the issues raised had been left unresolved. Participation in the Works-in-Progress discussion reinforced the extent to which we cannot presume to know what is best for other people's children (Delpit, 1995). We asked ourselves what learning a teacher could bring back to his/her classroom after having participated in this dialogue. What had we actually learned? Could our learning be named? Did we need to name it? We wondered about how we might transform the information shared during the discussion into knowledge about ways in which we could acknowledge

diversity through classroom practices. The remainder of this paper describes how we took a step back from our research practice, and examined, two years later, what learning and understanding came from having participated in the Works-in-Progress dialogue.

PERSPECTIVES GAINED THROUGH CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE

In hermeneutics, dialogue is the primary means through which greater understanding of diversity is possible (Gadamer, 1975). Although there is always the hope that in conversing we may arrive at “some sense of truth” (Gallagher, 1992, p. 22), the principle aim of dialogue is to achieve a sense of understanding rather than to arrive at a universal truth. “The goal of the conversation is to deepen understanding” (Davis, 1994, p. 272). It is “communication oriented toward understanding, in which the speakers’ primary purposes are to express their meanings and intention to one another as clearly as possible” (Burbules citing Habermas, 1993, p.73). Furthermore, it is through this process of dialogical understanding that we come to self-understanding or ‘interpretive competence’ (Conle, 1997b, Conle et al., 2000, Conle, 2000).

Interpretive competence is gained as diverse stories are shared and reflected upon in settings that encourage “open-ended, experiential, and quest-like” (Conle, 2000, p. 50) dialogue. We begin to “see what a particular social and moral issue looks like from more than one perspective because [we] engage [our] imagination by entering multiple stories about it. Each of [us] can then project a variety of reasonable perspectives on a particular situation and try to understand it from multiple points of view” (Conle et al., 2000, p. 386). Conle refers to this ability or competence to take up multiple perspectives as a new kind of objectivity (Johnson, 1993). This new type of hermeneutic objectivity does not involve absolute truths. Rather, it involves adjusting our way of thinking to appreciate that truth is constructed dialogically through conversation, which occurs within a community of people who are attempting to better understand one another.

Reaching for interpretive competence: What did we learn?

The development of interpretive competence involves building up a repertoire of information about a particular issue. The process of ‘attitudinal change’ (Conle et al., 2000) may be different for each individual and is shaped by his or her personal and cultural history. Although new knowledge gained through participating in the Works-in-Progress context was not immediately obvious, we nonetheless felt we had gained a deeper understanding of the issues involved. The dialogue contributed to “a process of learning and knowing” (Macedo, 2002, p. 19) that continues to shape our personal practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) as we negotiate our current research endeavors. In the following segment, we explore ways in

which our understanding of some of the issues raised in the Works-in-Progress discussion may shed light on the process through which teachers and students may better understand their own interpretive competence in diverse multicultural contexts.

MICHELLE'S SENSE OF INTERPRETIVE COMPETENCE. Memories of the participant responses from the Works-in-Progress session resurfaced as I began my doctoral research in three elementary classrooms with six to twelve-year-old children in October of 2002. During my weekly visits, I explored and documented the potential of experiential storytelling activities to naturally connect the curriculum to life experiences and prior knowledge. On two notable occasions, my actions in these classrooms reflected new understanding and attitudinal change, the complexity of which I refer to as interpretive competence.

Part of my research involved introducing students to the personal stories of those who have figured favorably in the community. I showed my research class a documentary film about Ryan Hreljac, a Canadian boy who began raising awareness about the lack of clean water in Africa at the age of six years. The film narrated Ryan's journey to raise money to build a well in Uganda. As I pre-viewed the film before showing it to students, I learned that Uganda is a country of contradictions; although a third of Uganda is covered in water, only three out of ten people have access to clean water in this country (Krishna, 2001). Every day, many women walk more than five kilometres to retrieve swamp water, which they carry back to their dwellings to boil for their families to drink. As I watched the film, I saw crowded conditions at a primary school where there was only one desk and where over a hundred students sat on the floor. I also noted how the Ugandan boys played football (soccer) with their bare feet, and thought about how these boys kicked the ball with such force without seeming to hurt themselves.

Prior to showing the video at my research school, I worried about the effect of the documentary on Zaddie, a seven-year-old from St. Vincent's. Of all the children of visible ethnic minority background in the classroom, Zaddie was the only one who physically resembled the black African children in the film. I wondered if her peers might associate these images of poverty with Zaddie herself. I also wondered how Zaddie might feel seeing faces like hers depicted as poor and without the comforts that many children living in urban areas of Canada take for granted. My memory of the discomfort expressed by some of the Works-in-Progress participants when their culture had been acknowledged in the school curriculum heightened my awareness of the possibility of a similar response in this student. My repertoire of experiences pertaining to 'multicultural encounters' had grown to include the personal narratives of teacher-researchers embarrassed by attention that separated them from their peers in elementary and high school settings. I now appreciated the multiplicity of interpretations that could arise from students when viewing a film such as this one.

On the other hand, some might say that I had become hyper-sensitive to the feelings of Zaddie and her peers. After all, Zaddie lives in an urban area of Canada, has never been to some of the rural areas of Africa that were depicted in the film, and has comforts such as easy access to clean water that many children living in urban areas of Canada likely take for granted. Zaddie, some might say, would not see herself as associated with the poverty depicted in this film because Zaddie may not think about herself only in terms of the color of her skin. My concern for Zaddie's possible discomfort could be construed as 'essentialist' in the way that it reduces Zaddie's identity to the totality of her skin color. Moodley (1995) describes this phenomenon well:

Two notions of culture coexist with one another. On the one hand there is a reified notion of culture with its essentialist elements, which allows it to be fragmented for use, out of the private sphere, into the public sphere of schools. On the other hand there is a dynamic notion of a constantly changing culture, one that describes the ordering and ongoing transformation of all people's lives. (Moodley, 1995, p. 809)

I agree with Moodley that we may cycle back and forth between these two notions of culture in a problematic circle. For example, in refusing to be "colour blind" (Cochran-Smith, 1995, p. 559) I have tried to openly acknowledge cultural diversity in my work, only to recognize that this appreciation of difference may in fact constrain me to an essentialist world.

Nonetheless, what I would like to highlight in this example of Zaddie and her peers is simply my greater awareness that all students would see the contents of the film differently and that variations in students' interpretations may be largely dependent upon their personal and cultural experiential histories. In contemplating these issues I became aware that even the most well intended curriculum activity could fail in the absence of a safe and trusting classroom climate and this fact further reinforced the importance of analyzing and discussing the film thoughtfully with the students.

On another occasion, a Holocaust survivor was invited to speak to these same students as a part of my research. This time, I wondered how the speaker's testimony of events during World War II might weigh on Jason, a six-year old, as the only German Canadian in this community. I put myself in his shoes and considered how I would feel if my cultural lineage was likened although remotely to fascism. It was possible that awkwardness and confusion would be among my emotions if I were a German Canadian listening to our Jewish speaker describe the experience of being hidden from the Nazi Germans in various Christian homes by the Dutch Reform Movement. Again, both their teachers and I recognized the importance of carefully considering the differences in student interpretation that might occur beforehand in order to encourage a more empathetic discussion in class after listening to each speaker's testimony of events.

In showing a documentary film and inviting a Holocaust speaker to class, I encouraged students to relate what they saw in the film and heard from the speaker to their own experiences, and to imagine how the stories might bring to mind events in their own lives. The dialogue was not about finding right or wrong answers; rather, it involved thinking about how the stories related to their own lives in meaningful ways.

ELAINE'S SENSE OF INTERPRETIVE COMPETENCE. I also thought about how participation in the Works-in-Progress discussion might have contributed to my sense of understanding of the complexity of issues pertaining to the inclusion of culture in the curriculum. As I interacted with my student participants in my school context, I realized the extent to which the Works-in-Progress discussion and responses had informed my practice and alerted me of the potential for disagreement about ways in which parents, teachers, and students may respond to curriculum activities addressing cultural issues. I took into consideration that some teachers and parents may not value activities which take time from the instruction of reading, writing, and mathematics. With these factors in mind, I incorporated activities which encouraged students to draw on knowledge gained through interaction in their ethnic communities to develop academic skills. I integrated learning about the students' family history with writing assignments that incorporated interviewing activities, journal writing, and artwork. I kept in mind that students might not be eager to present themselves in ways that would set them apart from their peers, and included activities that drew upon ways in which they were similar to their peers. I also grouped students with classmates that would interact well together, peers I knew through regular interaction with them in their school context to be accepting of one another. Finally, I was reminded recently of the importance of building a relationship with each student based on individual traits and interests, and drawing on these interests as a means of encouraging the students to learn about their family's histories as well as to develop academic skills.

When a student who had initially shown little interest in talking about her family history and immigration experiences approached me to talk about a recent miscommunication between her sister and her mother, I was pleased. She made reference to the ways in which the social context in which she and her sister were living their childhoods differed from that which her mother had experienced as a child growing up in China. As I listened to her, I realized the importance of my role in encouraging her to talk about these issues. While it is possible that she thought about her family's ethnic background and about interactions with other members of her family and ethnic community, previous attempts at encouraging her to talk about aspects of her ethnic identity yielded short, non-committal answers. Since I believe in the value of learning about family history and talking about ethnic identity and the cultures of others, I was pleased at her interest in

talking about her family and friends from her ethnic community. Not only was she demonstrating sensitivity to interactions within her family, but I was delighted that she thought of the incident as something to write about in her journal. An interest in communicating about her experiences in her family had the potential to become a curriculum activity that contributed to the development of written language skills.

As I reflect upon my interactions with the students, I began questioning my role in engaging them in discussion about their family and school experiences. I was reminded of the possibility that students may not be interested in sharing their experiences or the experiences of family members when I began autobiographical writing projects with them. I introduced the idea of writing about their first experiences in their current school by engaging them in group conversations. The students' reluctance to elaborate on stories about their schooling and family experiences that I found fascinating surprised me. Was it that they did not realize the relevance of these stories in shaping their sense of identity as Canadians growing up in immigrant families? Was it that they knew that the stories were important but as teenagers, they were not especially interested in them? How was I interpreting their disinterest? What right did I have to draw them into topics about which they did not show initial interest - whose interests was I serving in this situation? Would their parents support the inclusion of family stories as part of their school curriculum?

Schwab (1969, 1971, 1973, 1983) refers to the development and implementation of curriculum as something practical, reinforcing the pragmatic importance of developing and implementing curriculum that meets the academic, emotional, and social needs of the particular students involved and that is guided by the knowledge and experience of teachers, rather than relying on theory that may not transfer easily into practice. This natural interaction between theory and practice came to mind as I reflected upon an interaction with this student. The incident reinforced to me the importance of acknowledging "the particulars of time, place, person, and circumstance" (Schwab, 1971, p. 322) in implementing curriculum that meets the needs of the students while at the same time drawing on an eclectic range of resources available to the teacher who is implementing the curriculum.

DIALOGICAL UNDERSTANDING

As indicated by the stories presented, perspectives about the inclusion of culture into the curriculum differ widely, and these differences in opinion may touch upon potentially sensitive issues. The value of this study lies in its contribution to our understanding of ways in which teachers, parents, and students may perceive the practices of incorporating aspects pertaining to culture into the curriculum.

Through this context, we also realized the extent to which absolute answers about how best to implement a culturally sensitive curriculum cannot be found. We need to remind ourselves that the goal of these conversations is not to arrive at definitive answers about how learning about different cultures should be included in the curriculum but rather, to achieve a deeper sense of understanding of issues involved in multicultural education. "The truth that is realized in the conversation is never the possession of any one of the speakers or camps, but rather is something that all concerned realize they share in together" (Smith, 1999a, p. 38). Truth is a conversation that is never finished (Smith, 1999a, p. 39). Acknowledging the indeterminate nature of truth contributed to our understanding of the complexity of the issues involved.

Conle (1997a, p. 151) stated "narrative discourse in the sharing of experiences has a bonding quality across differences." Conle (2000, p. 377) further noted that "[w]e reach across cultural barriers into a narrative world to overcome difference and we use our understanding of those differences as well as of the commonalities to find out more about ourselves." Our study substantiated this claim and identified the value of narrative discourse as a means of creating connections with others to move the inquiry forward. By using our teacher stories as a starting point for discussion, we provide a vehicle for diverse interpretations to be shared and new meanings to be exemplified in the process of professional development and learning.

The present study confirmed the importance of providing a public space where multiple viewpoints about ways in which diversity may be acknowledged in classroom settings may be expressed and explored in an atmosphere of trust. Greene (1988) also highlighted the need for a 'public space', a community where individuals feel safe to speak openly about their views. The Works-in-Progress environment represented a venue through which fruitful discussion and diverse interpretations concerning multicultural issues could be shared and reflected upon. Learning environments such as these provide opportunities to critically reflect upon alternate points of view. The availability of this space for discussion facilitated the sharing of the intuitive knowledge teachers had gained through their experience of working with students and colleagues.

The emphasis on stories of experience using a narrative approach provided a means of establishing such a community space within the context of the Works-in-Progress group. Narrative discourse became a means of taking the issues out of the classroom and "allowing the accounts to move beyond the anecdotal stories told in staff rooms" (Black & Halliwell, 2000, p. 105).

Through sharing "experiential stories . . . [we] bring into view possible futures" (Conle, 2000, p. 56). "We teach our partners, they teach us, and we each teach ourselves in the context of sustaining and developing the

dialogical relations we actually have. We improve by imitating, practicing, and experimenting in the midst of real time activities" (Burbules, 1993, p. 49). By entering into a collaborative conversation where diverse narratives of experience are shared, we move toward acknowledging the perspectives of more stakeholders in the process of curriculum development.

REFERENCES

- Black, A. & Halliwell, G. (2000). Accessing practical knowledge: how? why? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16, 103-115.
- Burbules, N. (1993). *Dialogue in teaching: Theory and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Chan, E. & Boone, M. (2001). Addressing multicultural issues through teacher stories. *Journal of Critical Inquiry into Curriculum and Instruction*, 3(2), 36-41.
- Clandinin, D. J. & Connelly, F. M. (1994). Personal experience methods. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research in the social sciences* (pp. 413-427). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Clandinin, D. J. & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (1995). *Uncertain allies: Understanding the boundaries of race and teaching*. Harvard Educational Review, 65, 541-570.
- Conle, C. (1997a). Community, reflection and the shared governance of schools. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 13, 137-152.
- Conle, C. (1997b). Between fact and fiction: Dialogue within encounters of difference. *Educational Theory*, 47, 181-201.
- Conle, C. (2000). Narrative inquiry: research tool and medium for professional development. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 23, 49-63.
- Conle, C., with Blanchard, D., Burton, K., Higgins, A., Kelly, M., Sullivan, L. & Tan, J. (2000). The asset of cultural pluralism: an account of cross-cultural learning in pre-service teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16, 365-387.
- Connelly, F. M. & Clandinin, D. J. (1988). *Teachers as curriculum planners: Narratives of experience*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia.
- Cummins, J. & Danesi, M. (1990). *Heritage Languages: The development and denial of Canada's linguistic resources*. Toronto: Our Schools / Our Selves Education Foundation.
- Davis, A. B. (1994). Mathematics teaching: Moving from telling to listening. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 9, 267-283.
- Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: The New Press.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Gadamer, H. G. (2002/1975). *Truth and method*. New York: Continuum Publishing Company.
- Gallagher, S. (1992). *Hermeneutics and education*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Greene, M. (1988). *The dialectic of freedom*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Johnson, M. (1993). *Moral imagination*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Krishna, L. (Writer) (2001). Ryan's well [Television series episode]. In A. Pick & L. Krishna (Producer), *Inspired Lives*. Canada: Real to Real Productions in association with In Sync Video.

- Macedo, D. (2002). Introduction. In P. Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Minister of State (Multiculturalism) (1988). *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*. http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/policy/act_e.cfm (visited 4 November 2004)
- Moodley, K. (1995). Multicultural education in Canada: Historical development and current status. In J. Banks & C. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (pp. 801-817). New York: Macmillan Publishing.
- Schwab, J. J. (1969). The practical: A language for curriculum. *School Review*, 78, 1-23.
- Schwab, J. J. (1971). The practical: Arts of the eclectic. *School Review*, 79, 493-542.
- Schwab, J. J. (1973). The Practical 3: Translation into curriculum. *School Review*, 81, 501-522.
- Schwab, J. J. (1983). The practical 4: Something for curriculum professors to do. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 13, 239-265.

MICHELLE BOONE has just completed a Ph.D. in the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Department at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto with a doctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. She trained as an AMI (Association Montessori International) Elementary Montessori teacher. Her research explores experiential storytelling as curriculum at the Elementary school level. Other research interests include narrative inquiry, arts-based inquiry, narrative curricula in elementary education, Montessori education and multicultural education.

ELAINE CHAN is a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. Her research interests are in the areas of: narrative inquiry, ethnic identities of first and second-generation Canadians, interaction of culture and curriculum in school contexts, and student and teacher experiences of educational equity policies on multicultural school landscapes. Her doctoral studies were supported with a doctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

MICHELLE BOONE vient de compléter un doctorat au département des programmes, de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage de l'Ontario Institute for Studies in Education de l'Université de Toronto avec une bourse de Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada. Elle a reçu une formation en enseignement primaire de l'AMI (Association Montessori Internationale). Dans sa recherche, elle explore le récit des expériences personnelles comme programme au niveau primaire. Parmi ses autres sujets d'intérêt, notons la recherche narrative, la recherche fondée sur les arts, les programmes axés sur les récits en enseignement primaire, la méthode d'enseignement Montessori et l'enseignement multiculturel.

ELAINE CHAN est détentrice d'une bourse de perfectionnement postdoctoral au département des programmes, de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage de l'Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Université de Toronto. Ses intérêts en recherche portent sur la recherche narrative, l'identité ethnique des Canadiens de première et de deuxième générations, l'interaction de la culture et des programmes dans le milieu scolaire, ainsi que les expériences des étudiants et des enseignants en ce qui concerne les politiques en matière d'équité en enseignement dans le paysage scolaire multiculturel. Une bourse de doctorat octroyée par le Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada lui a permis de poursuivre ses études doctorales.

NARRATIVE COUPLE'S THERAPY WITH FEELING RESISTANT MEN

MALCOLM C. GRAY *Capella University*

ABSTRACT. The problem of dealing with men who have difficulty knowing or stating what they feel continues as a problem in many forms of traditional psychotherapy but is especially problematic in the context of relationship therapy. A therapeutic model for dealing with "feeling resistant men" is introduced and discussed in the context of information drawn from 30 case studies of conjoint couple's therapy over a period of 15 years. The approach is based on encouraging men to recognize and better connect with feelings through the introduction and discussion of selected literary materials in conjunction with their unique experience and personal stories.

BIBLIOTHÉRAPIE DE COUPLE PAR LE RÉCIT AVEC DES HOMMES INHIBÉS ÉMOTIVEMENT

RÉSUMÉ. Le problème que pose le traitement des hommes qui ont de la difficulté à prendre conscience de leurs sentiments ou à les exprimer est toujours présent sous différentes formes dans la psychothérapie traditionnelle, mais il l'est tout particulièrement dans le contexte de la thérapie relationnelle. Un modèle thérapeutique de traitement des « hommes inhibés émotionnellement » est présenté et examiné dans le contexte des données tirées de 30 études de cas de thérapie de couple réalisées sur une période de 15 ans. L'approche préconisée consiste à encourager les hommes à reconnaître leurs sentiments et à mieux les apprivoiser en leur proposant certaines œuvres littéraires et en en discutant avec eux conjointement avec leur propre expérience et leurs récits personnels.

The therapeutic model introduced here is based on concepts drawn from the literary tradition and explores ways of understanding how narratives as in stories can provide meaning to clients in the therapeutic context. The poet T. S. Eliot (1919) introduced the literary concept of the objective correlative to explain how in writing, objects and things serve as vessels for difficult-to-articulate emotions and feelings. Eliot reasoned that the object represents an external reality and thus resides outside of the inner self. In the case of literature, when invoked these objects may release information about the internal conditions of the self both for the reader and the writer. The objective correlative anticipates post-modernism and in a way narra-

tive (story-telling) therapy where stories and images invoked may take the clients(s) to deeper understandings of themselves or their situation.

In the model of narrative therapy introduced here, rather than restricting the focus to the client's own stories, objects, ideas and experiences found in literary works are introduced into the therapeutic context. Conditions of common experience in a written work may also invoke understanding, insight, memories that can be processed by the client, especially when the written work parallels or has congruence with the client's experience. This view strongly parallels the work of Michael White and David Epston (1990) on externalization and reauthoring of lives and relationships where the client's stories and images once introduced, explored, and retold in therapy provide the raw material for emotional change in the client.

One of the most frequent complaints I have heard as a family therapist in private practice over the past twenty five years is that wives cannot get their husbands to share feelings about common marital issues. This complaint carries with it a large folk history referencing as a major issue gender differences between men and women. There is increasing evidence at least in some emotional arenas that men (while not necessarily being the "strong, silent type") are likely to manage issues in areas such as loss and grief differently, more instrumentally perhaps while women more frequently address issues at the more visceral, emotional level, (McGreal, Evans, Burrows, & Ao, 1997; Puddifoot & Johnson, 1999; Stroebe, M., Stroebe W. & Schute, 2001). While this view has spurred continued debate, the concern for couple's therapy is how to manage a conjoint situation with a male client who is not easy with the language of feelings/emotions and a partner who clearly wants more feeling as part of couple's communication.

This paper is drawn from a review of 30 case studies accumulated over a fifteen year period in which the male member of a couple presenting for therapy struggles with the expression of feelings and self-expression. In the majority of cases reviewed the male subject has grown up with an alcoholic or other parent from an addictive pattern family. Here, an addictive pattern family is one in which some degree of addiction either at the parental or multi-generational level exists. In most reviewed cases, more often the fathers of the male subjects were involved in an addictive pattern.

In describing common characteristics reported by the men in this study, the central issue in the life of the parent addict and often for the men themselves is the inability to effectively address self as an existential reality and the lack of or avoidance of feelings especially with regard to self-perception. In support of the view that the inability to face how one feels about oneself (a recurrent theme in the case of the men in this study) is largely a familial learned pattern, one client, in reflecting on his father's behavior, commented that, "It was as if any feelings that came up in the family were quickly

squashed even if they weren't about him. They (expressions of feelings) seemed to make my father angry." In these families, the sense is that no one is allowed to have feelings as though they would cause "feelings" to occur in the addictive parent. As another male subject noted, "Even in returning home as an adult better able to talk and with some increased awareness of self, when the family would sit down at the kitchen table to talk together and catch up, Dad would roll the TV (his constant companion) in from the other room, place it centrally in front of the gathered group and turn it on loudly." In the presence of the parent, the rule becomes don't feel, don't think, don't talk, it isn't safe or acceptable. It is generally argued that this introduces distortion in a child exposed to this pattern where the sense of self is diminished and a learned avoidance of the recognition and expression of feelings develops. Without access to feelings in the family training center, individuals develop uniquely incommunicable and predictable behaviors around self awareness and self-expression. Woititz's (1983, 1990) seminal article both introduced and described this particular family pattern as it applies to alcoholism.

However, in the United States, a highly consumer-focused, service-based socio-economic system, there are multiple cultural addictions available to individuals who have difficulty in addressing self and attendant feelings about self. Food, work, sex, focus on others, spending, gambling, television, the internet are all recognized non-chemical addictive behaviors in the society. These distractions offer many people delivery from conscious emotional commerce with self. The extent of the problem is easily illustrated. For the sake of simplicity, if we use alcoholism as one form of addictive family pattern behavior, it is easy to recognize the pervasiveness of the problem. In 1992, it was estimated that 7.4% of American adults, 14 million people were found to have alcohol use disorder, dependence or abuse (Grant et al., 1992). More pessimistic estimates range as high as 30 million Americans having alcohol related issues. The extent of this pattern is further illustrated by recent national data on children and alcohol abuse suggesting that one out of every four children in the U.S., approximately 25 % are growing up in an alcoholic abusive or dependent family (Grant, 2000). In 85% of the 30 cases reviewed here, male partners were able to identify one or both parents as having an addictive pattern of one sort or another – many alcohol related. Other data suggests a 50% probability of developing an addiction if having grown up in an addictive pattern family (alcoholic), Woititz, 1990. Coming from one of these families also substantially increases one's chances of marrying someone with or who develops an addiction.

The narrative perspective as originally envisioned in the Epston and White model (1990) raises as its central issue the question of the limiting perspective of culturally internalized, subjective insight. They argue that most culturally normed and thus internalized stories in post-enlightenment western culture,

and I would say especially for men, fall into the logical and linear positivism characteristic of traditional western society. The tradition emphasizes classification, characterization, and assessment of socio-cultural and natural phenomena as if they represent measurable linear constructs.

This provides for a perspective on self and others described by assessment, judgment and hierarchialization of life situations. What is lost is the experiencing of the quality of a phenomenon, a person, or their uniqueness. In western culture, White and Epston (1990) call these ways of viewing oneself dominant-problem saturated stories, i.e. understanding based on the premise of what is wrong. The problem focus becomes a story pattern of people's lives that become fixed and are lived out according to these more normative linear storylines.

As a counter to this position, post-modern theorists like White and Epston (1990), Anderson and Goolishian, (1988) and Beckvar and Beckvar (1998) hold that a story as a narrative, creative process has a much greater generativity and problem solving capacity than normative cultural models can offer. Beckvar and Beckvar (1998, p. 44) suggest that,

Our theories or stories are understood as the stuff of human experience, encompassing our sciences, histories, politics, economics, and religions-our personal as well as our professional lives. Thus, every conversation, every theory may be seen as an exercise in story telling. And we may become aware that the stories we tell ourselves guide our lives and our work and ultimately create our reality. Indeed our stories may live our lives for us. To speak of stories rather than "reality" means that "truth" in the tradition of logical positivism is not available to us. According to the notion of storied reality, the form of relationships with self, others, creatures, and things necessarily takes the form of the way we story ourselves and others.

Using story as the central theme in countering this process, then, White and Epston (1990) conclude that, "The identification of unique outcomes can be facilitated by the externalization of the dominant problem-saturated description or story of a person's life and relationships", p. 16. Narrative therapy in this application then suggests a method of re-authoring or creating alternative stories by a method whereby the individual is encouraged to examine their personal "... stories, taking them over, and making them their own" (1990, p. 13).

Because of the struggle to reach a common ground for "emotionally" polarized couples containing feeling resistant men, a therapy of alternating conjoint couple's sessions with husband and wife both being present with the option of having the husband and wife come for individual session emerged over the past fifteen years. In these cases it is essential to invite both participants to engage in individual sessions as needed but also to make the therapy specifically contingent on the man (who is feeling resistant) coming to both

individual and conjoint sessions as needed. This process, pattern and treatment approach is explained early in the couple's conjoint work.

The presenting problem most frequently put forward by both members of the coupleship is *communication problems* or *the inability to talk to one another*. In a surprising number of cases, the males often agree with this observation though the women described by these cases more frequently call for the appointment. The exception is when the male calls for help because his wife insists or will leave him, when she has left him and often when she is having an affair which is often tantamount to leaving him or at least getting his attention. These couples readily identify an apparent gender imbalance in the ability to address feelings on the part of the male (other than anger). Couples whose primary presenting problem is current substance abuse are referred to substance abuse treatment as a first step.

In the case of this particular population of males, in addition to the Foucaultian argument [as cited in White and Epston (1990)] of the internal tyranny of the normative cultural story as told by external "so-called" experts, there is often a specific lack of awareness of the existence of the emotional as opposed to the logical. Based on my small sample, men who have already been strongly socialized to avoid feelings and emotions as part of the male cultural "normative" model present a world and self-view that is also strongly aligned to Descartes "linear" view of the world, *cogito ergo sum* that proposes thought and rationality over emotion. With the men drawn from these case studies, the reference to feelings often becomes something more akin to an active disdain or a blank stare. It is not uncommon to hear, "What does she mean by I don't have any feelings" or "I don't know what she wants." In conjoint session many of these men present as defensive, distrustful and anxious. Commonly presented "male" responses to conjoint discussions in session emerge as stone-walling, anger, withdrawal, shutting down and threats to leave. Threatened or real violence is not uncommon in these polarized relationships. Women frequently describe their feelings in these relationships as empty, confused, and themselves as angry, lonely and abandoned. This makes the doing of relationship very difficult. However when faced with the imminent collapse of their relationship world, it is often this potential loss that opens the door for the men to search for some of the answers.

The argument about therapy within therapy for feeling resistant men is not meant to imply that the women involved in these coupleships do not also have limitations in how they address feelings and communications. Many of the women also come from addictive and addictive-like family patterns. Individual sessions for the female partner are often also provided as needed to keep the therapy moving. Treating men in the context of the couple's therapy is akin to creating a story within a story. The plot can be very complicated. As the therapy progresses, men may become better able to share feelings

conjointly and this is often taken as a sign of progress in the couple's work. It is not infrequent for a feeling of support and encouragement to emerge as though the female partners "are pulling" for their mates to succeed at the task. This is often expressed as a value for the good of the individual as well as the coupleship and is reinforced with the stated objective that being better able to discuss feelings between both partners will provide the raw material to assist couples in resolving their differences.

The primary outcome of the majority of therapy based outcome research has been to indicate that what works effectively in therapy is the relationship between therapist and client. Consequently, that therapy should take on a conversational tone that is most importantly personal and respectful is not much of a surprise. Here, the collaborative, language system approach especially as contained in the work of Goolishian and Anderson (1987) is useful because the focus turns toward the narrative and the therapeutic intent is seen as a collaborative conversation. This allows for an approach that is non-threatening, and is delivered by a male therapist, within the cultural-gender framework of "male" conversation. The collaborative language systems approach is often described as less hierarchical in nature, and mutually respectful. Using the framework of "male" conversation raises its own ethical and political issues, but in these 30 cases, the majority of female partners seemed to feel that if it helped the male and therefore supported the relationship it was a successful strategy. As one woman reported, "It makes sense, I can't talk to him, and maybe you can?" Defining this approach in the context of couple's therapy seems to help both partners accept that one or the other may require some individual help and coaching. Maintaining therapeutic neutrality in this context becomes a challenge. However presenting this in terms of a coaching perspective rather than exclusively as therapy seems to help maintain balance. That this approach may represent a problem for many women therapists is not only acknowledged but seems a trend in private practice in my experience. Thus in Tucson where I practice, for example, I see an increasingly frequent situation of having men in relationship therapy "out-sourced" to male therapists who can work in parallel with the relationship therapist. Many of these cases are drawn from that category.

In addition to the languaging systems approach, thinking in terms of a constructivist, postmodern, systemic perspective is helpful here. The therapeutic relationship is defined in terms of the participant observer rather than residing in the exclusive domain of the healer as one who knows what is best. Rather the therapist becomes the co-facilitator in this case. Here the therapist actively works toward restorying as a way of countering the normative, "You are the expert." As Beckvar and Beckvar (1999) suggest, "...in the process of perceiving and describing an experience, whether to ourselves or others, we construct our reality as well as our personal knowledge base

about reality.” Accordingly, we can only know constructions of the world that belong to us. Constructions of perceived reality are expressed through a system of language or in Maturana and Verela’s (1980) original use of the term “*languageing*.” Here the telling of stories, *storying* and *restorying* becomes a co-creative activity. In the therapeutic environment, understanding the context of language, its creation and consequences then becomes grist for the therapeutic milieu. Part of that *restorying* is to challenge the dominant normative problem-saturated narrative established in the first family environment or genre. I often tell the client that their relationship behavior that doesn’t work for them (in their case referring to behaviors characteristic of them) has been learned, thus it can be unlearned and relearned. This deconstructionist intervention often sets the stage for stepping outside one’s self and obtaining at least a glimpse of White and Epston’s (1990) externalization. For it implies that there is nothing wrong with the person and implies that if one wishes to change, a person can learn to be different or in narrative terms retell the “*story*.”

Ideally having gone through the process of *restorying* the male client experience around self and self expression both individually and conjointly, the next step is the shift to both partners sharing and retelling the relationship story. Here couples are often supportive in helping one another, and consequently the couples *restory* and understand the individual and joint experience. Once the polarization has decreased the emotional distance between the couple, some modicum of support and trust can be re-established or created. However, I have often got this far and asked the husband, “*how do you feel*” only to receive a blank stare, as though the question was not heard. It is apparent that while individual, couple and family *restorying* can improve the marital harmony to some extent, often the men have only a few additional feeling skills to move forward. When such men struggle and are at a loss for words, much less their feelings, the therapist is faced with a number of options, e.g. giving up on the therapy or referring the client to some other treatment modality with the hope of their being able to develop an expression of their feelings. While the first option ends the therapy, the second has the drawback of putting the couple’s therapy on hold. I have come to this place with many men in couple’s and individual therapy. Among ideas to alleviate this bottleneck of expression is for the therapists to attempt to train, re-train the client to recognize and express feelings. However, here the problem is the lack of context to learn or experience the process. We have already seen that developing feelings exclusively in the context of the couple’s work runs the risk of compromising the male, and may add to the belief that the male client is incapable of feelings. The risk is unwittingly encouraging the female client to “*give-up*” or having the couple accept things as they are.

It is here that the therapy then requires an additional element to create a medium to retell the story “with feeling.” Faced with this still “not yet awake” dilemma on the part of the male partner, it appears that the milieu of their own personal and couple experience may not offer enough of a source for connecting with feeling, and while progress in sharing some feeling in the relationship has been made, it is far from a habitual pattern and a bit shaky as an acquired skill. Strategically, it also seems highly risky to rely on the relationship communication to continue reinforcing the opened door to feeling. So, it is to other story – re-storying sources, such as the derived biblio-approach where therapist and client co-create an emotional framework of story through conversations around introduced literary works, that the therapy moves. This approach of reading stories of others’ experience, dilemmas, and feelings introduces the client reader to an objective—subjective dialogue with the therapist about the nature and essence of emotion and feeling without consciously pressuring the client to “have his feelings.”

Story telling, myth, poetry, and literature reside in a domain that corresponds more to the creative and unique self. Sometimes these literary works offer situations and examples of feelings and emotions that have a more universal sense about them. Self help books and materials are discouraged because of their propensity to offer insider “expert” explanations that carry right or right sounding answers. These often appeal to the logical positivist trap of knowing. In using story telling, myth, poetry, and literature, rather than as one male client put it “psycho-babble,” the conversation can involve discussions and assignments to respond to situations that carry potential emotional meaning in relationship to the characters, to the client and or to the client in relationship to the characters. The client is supplied with a list of books and materials that I rely on most heavily in the process. I refer to them as “Books of Spirit” because they have become meaningful books for me in their own right and offer personal reference to the co-conversations with clients who also may read the books or segments of them as part of our co-creative discussions. I tend to pick materials for reading and discussion based on an educated guess and some insight (having worked with both the men and couples for some time) as to what may invoke images that provide the fuel for experiential connectivity and identifying and talking about feelings. As an example, Rodolfo Anaya’s *Bless me Ultima* (1994) is a novel and story used with an Hispanic male client who is caught with a confusing identity between being a particularly sensitive male in a close extended family where the members both male and female have adopted a very linear non-feeling manner of dealing with life, e.g., being focused on getting ahead and in this particular case away from their border beginnings. The client wants to be part of the family, strong like them, but when he tries to be like them feels he falls short, becomes depressed, can’t face his feelings and binges on drugs and alcohol. In *Bless me Ultima*, the hero, Antonio is caught as a small boy

between his strong male Father's family of the Llano and his Mother's more settled farming community life along the river. This struggle of identity is embedded in Antonio's emergent coming of age story and has become a modern classic. Here the similarities, disparities and subtleties of the story and the hero's life serve as potential for the emergence of the client's feelings. Antonio's experience in the story provides a framework for the client's articulating his own emotional experience. If he can learn to construct an emotional reality through Antonio's story, he can begin to develop the skills for understanding his own emotional life. The rest turns into a therapy of feelings and expressions either directly or indirectly related to Antonio's character in *Bless Me Ultima*.

Shared story telling as a form of therapy introduces the client to a context for the client to learn what feelings are and how they function by example. It also offers the vicarious experience of emotion through narrative literature, and in the narrative therapy tradition, invites the client to tell and retell their own story "with feeling." Other contemporary examples I have used from literature include, Peter Matthiesen's (1978) *Snow Leopard*, Leslie Marmon Silko's (1977) *Ceremony*, and N. Scott Momaday's (1977) *House Made of Dawn*. All have powerful stories about men in various contexts. Clients are often able to empathize and identify with the book's characters. This provides the raw material for discussion, identification and processing of both the character's feelings and (with coaching from the therapist) the client's feelings about the character's story, all fodder for feelings based treatment. These discussions often lead back to situations and circumstances identified in the couple's therapy or the client's life thereby providing reinforcement and a direct link to understanding feelings in the larger social context.

This approach is not a quick or easy therapy. Creating an alternating conjoint therapy with separate individual sessions over specific issues is complicated, requiring considerable balance and rebalancing from the therapist. Work with men in couple's therapy with the admitted purpose of assisting men to better express their feelings as an ongoing process of the therapy has numerous pitfalls and inherent difficulties. It is a strength that such changes are attempted in the context of the relationship, even if that relationship is difficult. The context provides both the impetus and the support for men to change. What is unique is using literary sources in the manner of Eliot's (1919) idea of the objective correlative to assist men in connecting with feelings. It is in effect a bibliographic therapy within the context of marital therapy and can be successfully undertaken with therapists who have adequate experience with couples and "feeling resistant men."

APPENDIX

BOOKS OF SPIRIT

- Anaya, R. (1994). *Bless me ultima*. New York: Warner Books.
- Chodron, P. (2001). *The wisdom of no escape*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.
- Griffin, J.H. (1993). *Follow the ecstasy: The hermitage years of Thomas Merton*. New York: Orbis Books.
- Hesse, H. (1951). *Siddhartha*. New York: New Directions.
- Matthiessen, P. (1987). *The snow leopard*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Maugham, W. S. (1992). *The razor's edge*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Momaday, N. S. (1968/1977). *House of dawn*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Nichols, J. (1987). *The last beautiful days of autumn*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Schneebaum, T. (1988). *Keep the river on your right*. New York: Grove Press.
- Silko, L. M. (1977). *Ceremony*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Wetring, J. Van D. (1987). *The empty mirror: Experiences in a Japanese zen monastery*. New York: Ballantine Books.

REFERENCES

- Anaya, R. (1994). *Bless me ultima*. New York: Warner Books.
- Anderson, H. & Goolishian, H. A., (1988). Problem-determined systems: Towards transformation in family therapy. *Journal of Strategic and Systematic Therapies*, 5, 1-13.
- Becvar, D., & Becvar, R., (1998). *Systems theory and family therapy: A primer*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Becvar, D., & Becvar, R., (2003). *Family therapy: A systemic integration*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Eliot, T. S., (1919). Hamlet and his problems. In A. Preminger & T. V. F. Brogan (Eds.), *The new Princeton encyclopedia of poetry and poetics* (1993, pp. 844-851). Princeton, NJ.
- Grant, B. F., Hartford, T.C., Dawson, D.A., Chou, P. Dufour, M., & Pickering R. (1994). Prevalence of DSM-IV alcohol abuse and dependence: United States, 1992. *Alcohol Health and Research World*, 18, 243-248.
- Grant, B. F. (2000). Estimates of U.S. children exposed to alcohol abuse and dependence in the family in the family. *American Journal of Public Health*, 90(1), 112-116.
- McGreal, D., Evans, B. J., Burrows, G. P., & Ao, K. S. (1997). Gender differences in coping following loss of a child through miscarriage or stillbirth: A pilot study. *Stress Medicine*, 13, 159-165.
- Matthiessen, P. (1978). *The snow leopard*. New York: Viking Penguin.
- Maturana, H. & Varela, F. (1980). *Autopoiesis and cognition: The Realization of Living*. Boston: D. Reidel.
- Momaday, N. S. (1968/1977). *House made of Dawn*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Puddifoot, J. E. & Johnson, M. P. (1999). Active grief, despair, and difficulty coping: Some measured characteristics of male response following their partner's miscarriage. *Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology*, 17, 89-94.
- Silko, L. M. (1977). *Ceremony*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Stroebe, M., Stroebe, W., & Schute, (2001). Gender differences in adjustment to bereavement: an empirical and theoretical review. *Review of General Psychology*, 1(1), 62-83.

- White, M. & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative means to therapeutic ends*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Woititz, J. (1983, 1990). *Adult children of alcoholics*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications.

MALCOLM GRAY is a college and university professor, family therapist, program evaluator, educational and organizational trainer. He has worked extensively in professional degree programs through Union Graduate Institute, the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education, the Minnesota Center for Social Research, and other institutions. His primary credential is the experience accumulated over 25 years working in the field of family psychology and psychotherapy. Dr. Gray is an American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) Approved Supervisor. His interests include cross-cultural research, archetypal psychology, the ethnography of the family and qualitative evaluation research.

MALCOLM GRAY est professeur d'université, thérapeute familial, évaluateur de programmes et formateur pédagogique et organisationnel. Il a beaucoup travaillé dans le cadre de programmes de formation professionnelle à Union Graduate Institute, au Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education, au Minnesota Center for Social Research ainsi que dans d'autres établissements. Il a acquis ses principaux titres de compétences à travailler pendant plus de 25 ans dans le domaine de la psychologie et de la psychothérapie familiales. M. Gray a effectué des travaux postdoctoraux en thérapie familiale clinique; il est superviseur agréé de l'American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). Ses intérêts portent sur la recherche interculturelle, la psychologie archétypale, l'ethnographie de la famille et l'étude d'évaluation qualitative.

MISREADING CHARLIE: INTERPRETING A TEACHING STORY THROUGH METAPHOR ANALYSIS

DIANE GILLESPIE *University of Washington, Bothell*

ABSTRACT. In this article the author interprets a teaching story, written over a decade ago, about a troubling student who failed her course. Using George Lakoff's and Mark Johnson's cognitive linguistic theory, she shows how the conceptual metaphors implicit in her interactions with the student prevented her from responding helpfully to the student's situation. Through her re-examination of "Charlie's Story," the author demonstrates how conceptual metaphors, as interpretive tools for narrative analysis and reflection, can reveal the philosophical and social commitments that shape teachers' pedagogical practices.

MAUVAISE LECTURE DE CHARLIE : INTERPRÉTER UNE HISTOIRE D'ENSEIGNEMENT À PARTIR D'UNE ANALYSE DE MÉTAPHORES

RÉSUMÉ. Dans cet article, l'auteure interprète un récit d'enseignement, rédigé il y a plus de dix ans, relatant le cas d'une étudiante qui éprouve des problèmes et qui échoué à ses examens. Faisant appel à la théorie linguistique cognitive de George Lakoff et de Mark Johnson, elle démontre comment les métaphores conceptuelles que comprenaient implicitement ses interactions avec l'étudiante l'ont empêchée de bien gérer cette situation et d'aider l'étudiante. L'auteure démontre dans ce nouvel examen de « l'histoire de Charlie » comment les métaphores conceptuelles en tant qu'outils interprétatifs de l'analyse narrative et de réflexion, peuvent mettre au jour les engagements philosophiques et sociaux qui façonnent les pratiques pédagogiques des enseignants.

In this article I interpret a teaching story, written a decade ago. During the early 1990s, I wrote and interpreted several stories to explore the potential of using narrative for faculty development in institutions of higher education in the United States (Gillespie, 1991; 1996; 1999a; 1999b; 2000). Encouraged by the works of cultural and narrative psychologists Jerome Bruner (1986; 1990) and Donald Polkinghorne (1988), I explored how teacher narratives were not just expressions of the teaching self but actually constitutive of it. As Polkinghorne put it: "On the basis of [linguistically] constructed experience, we understand ourselves and the world, and we make decisions

and plans regarding how we will act" (p. 158). In this new turn toward narrative in faculty development, researchers wrestled with issues such as socially sanctioned images of teachers and the gap between instructional values and practices.

One story I wrote – "Charlie's Dream" – bewildered me. I tried to interpret it several times but finally gave up and tucked it away in a drawer. Finding and analyzing the story ten years later, I discovered new meanings through re-examining the conflicts in the story. As I re-framed the conflicts, the teaching metaphors informing my practices became apparent. Re-interpreting this story has given me new insights into myself as teacher and a deeper appreciation of the interactions between narrative and metaphor in reflective teaching practice. Here is the story.

Charlie's Dream

Walking into the library classroom, I found the students in my undergraduate psychology class talking quietly together in small groups. As I walked over to one of the groups, I saw Charlie enter the room. "Ah, good," I thought to myself, "there's Charlie." He walked by me and sat in the back row, alone. His tousled blonde hair was pulled back in a red kerchief, and he was wearing jeans ragged from the knees on down. Earlier in the semester, when we were studying Carl Rogers, he had brought up his earmarked copy of Hesse's *Siddhartha* because, Charlie said, "Rogers' ideas remind me of Hesse." Today I knew I had to talk with him because he had not been in class for about a week and had missed the midterm examination. I felt a brief rush of irritation with myself for not having tried to reach him sooner and then a brief rush of irritation at him, at his elusiveness. Another student called to me because she couldn't find relevant articles on weight management for her project. Seeing the librarian enter the room for his presentation, I responded to her, "Ask the librarian during his lecture."

Relieved from the duties of direct instruction, I concentrated in a different way on my class. The chair next to Charlie was empty, so I settled in next to him and immediately noticed the darkened circles under his eyes. "My god," I thought, "He looks like an old man. What does this mean?" "Can you stay after class?" I quickly whispered. "Yeah, sure," he replied. My attention turned to the librarian who was showing students how to do a computer search for their literature review. As he finished his presentation, students asked questions of him and me until the end of the hour. After the last student left, Charlie and I sat down across from each other, alone in the room.

"You are really behind, Charlie," I stated as neutrally as I could. "What's going on? I'm worried about you." "Nothing," he replied. I waited. He looked off into space as he said, "You know I read all the time, but I can't read what

people tell me to read. I only like to read what I want to." I inquired, "What have you been reading lately?" "Nietzsche," he answered without emotion. "I really like reading guys like Nietzsche." "Philosophers?" I asked. "Yeah," he chuckled and looked me in the eye for the first time. I responded, "You know I'm married to a philosopher? He teaches Nietzsche. I kid him about studying all those dead, depressed white men. But he tells me it's better than reading the white men who weren't depressed." Nodding that he understood the humor in this exchange, Charlie smiled, and his eyes lit up. Tentatively, I asked, "Do you think you could read for someone in a philosophy class?" After several minutes, he replied, "Probably not." As I heard his response, I noted the flatness in his voice again and his lack of emotional expression.

After a long silence he said, "I had a dream." "Oh?" I asked. "It must be important." "I don't know," he answered. "But I came to tell you." There was more silence. And then in a soft voice, he started telling me about it: "I walked down to a graveyard, like the one down by the end of my street, but it wasn't really my street; you know how dreams are. And there in the middle of the graves was a beautiful, strong moose. As I walked up close, I saw that he was eating a deer. The deer was still alive and struggling. The moose kept tearing into the flesh. I couldn't take my eyes off the scene; it was real gory. I was horrified but I couldn't take my eyes off. I was paralyzed."

I didn't say anything because Charlie was looking far away, as if he were still looking at the scene. After a time, I asked, "How is the dream related to what we were talking about before . . . I mean your feelings about being told what to read . . . about assignments given to you." Looking at me, he chuckled and said, "I would have never thought about that." His body moved as if coming to life as he smiled at the puzzle. "Well, what do you think?" I asked. "How would you interpret the dream in terms of your life as a student right now?" "Oh, you mean that I'm either the moose or the deer?" he asked. "Maybe," I answered him, "but actually, Charlie, I thought that the moose and deer might represent different parts of you – different ways of being, you know, ways that feel at odds with each other." "God," he replied, "I never would have thought of that." His body was still again.

Sensing that the next moments might be critical in this exchange with him, I asked tentatively, "How might you feel like the deer and how might you feel like the moose?" He replied, "Well, I want that strong self to emerge, you know, the dignity in the moose's head as it lifts up from the prey; but I feel a tenderness in me like the deer." I waited and then said, "That seems important . . . to feel those feelings and how they pull against each other." "Yeah, but I'm so trapped," he replied. We were both silent. "There's a way of out of this dream, you know, Charlie," I said moving closer to him. "Oh yeah, what?" he asked. Holding my breath, I stated, "Moose aren't carnivorous; the moose doesn't have to eat the deer." "I already thought of that," he blurted

without hesitating. “I forgot to tell you one real important thing – about the moonlight. The moonlight was shining down on this scene, on the moose, and so I know that the moose is supernatural, not a real moose.”

It was then – in the moonlight of his dream – that I knew that I could not reach him. As his hollow eyes gazed into mine, he connected with me as someone who cared about him as a human being, but his slight smile told me that I could not reach him as a student. I am, finally, someone who assigns him readings and gives him tests. My heart sank. I began to redirect our conversation away from the dream and back to his situation as a student. I gave him concrete options about counseling and counselors, about ways of trying to stay in school. I tried to be hopeful. But we both knew subconsciously that the deer was dying and that he was paralyzed and that he would paralyze me, connected, as I was, with the reality of school.



Charlie came back to class two more times without his assignments and without making efforts to get caught up with his work. Each time he came in late, sat quietly in class, and left before I could talk to him. Perhaps he could see me under the pressure of the work that comes with the end of the semester, or perhaps he could see that the students whose dreams were not so troubled commanded my energies and attention. He drifted out of my net of awareness until, on a cold, gray day, I sat alone late in my office tallying grades. There was his name in my book followed by a row of blanks, a column where numbers should have been – as evident as a too shallow grave. Having tallied all the other grades and looking back at his record, I was suddenly flooded with the realization that I had stayed with him in the graveyard and thus had accepted the terms of the struggle. What would have happened if he had told me about the moonlight earlier? Would I have walked him out of the graveyard first, to stand on safer ground? Face flushed, I wrote the registrar to withdraw him administratively from my class – as if there were still a way out of his dream, as if the deer’s life might still be spared.

Identifying the conflict

When I wrote this story, I thought that I had done what a good teacher would do, even though my efforts did not result in Charlie passing my class. I had engaged with him, staying present with him as he described his dream and encouraging him to stay in school. Yet when I reflected on the story after writing it, something bothered me, as if I were still standing in the graveyard with him. Interpreting the story a decade later, I discovered what I had not seen when I originally worked with the story; namely that I was not really listening to him. This article takes up the question of how I came to interact with Charlie in the way I did through examining the

central metaphors that structured my interactions with him. I discovered these metaphors through an examination of the conflict in the story.

Originally, I thought the conflict in the story involved whether or not to administratively withdraw him from the class, which, at the time, opened a philosophical can of worms for me: what concrete evidence did I have that Charlie deserved another chance? He never asked me to withdraw him. I had flunked students before for just this record. If I withdrew Charlie, would I not have to withdraw other students who had attended sporadically and not turned in their work? Yet, by not withdrawing him, by putting the "F" in the mostly empty column, I thought that I would be sealing his fate: failure. He would be someone who would, at the least, be on academic probation and, at most, never be able to recover from an "F" grade on his record. The haste with which I made this decision indicated that, at the time, I did not want to think these issues through. I used my intuition about Charlie's potential in light of his independent reading (Hesse, Nietzsche) and his fragility (deer): he might get stronger.

Re-analyzing the story ten years later, I found a conflict much earlier in the story, in the following lines:

"You are really behind, Charlie," I stated as neutrally as I could. "What's going on? I'm worried about you." "Nothing," he replied.

Originally, I thought that the conflict was Charlie's, as well as mine. But these lines illustrate that it was I who was worried, not Charlie. Charlie told me, a second time, that his performance in school was not a conflict for him when he replied that he could probably not read for someone else. I experienced his unwillingness to read assignments as a conflict for him. He did not even present his dream as a conflict; he simply asserted, "I came to tell you." I am the one who framed the dream as a conflict about school:

"How is the dream related to what we were talking about before . . . I mean your feelings about being told what to read . . . about assignments given to you." Looking at me, he chuckled and said, "I would have never thought about that."

When he did answer my question about how the dream might be related, he came the closest to stating that he felt conflicted: "Yeah, but I'm so trapped." I responded immediately, pushing to get him out of the trap: "There's a way out of this dream, you know, Charlie." Not surprisingly, he once again removed the conflict by telling me. "The moose is supernatural, not a real moose."

My new insight into the tension shifted my thinking about this story and moved me into an arena where I felt not so much conflicted as vulnerable. Why had I been so dogged with him about school, even in the face of his direct statements that he was not in conflict about it? I take up this ques-

tion now, arguing that I unwittingly employed a teaching metaphor that I superimposed onto my interaction with him. I further suggest that I avoided deeper analysis of the story at the time I wrote it because the metaphor that I employed was not widely affirmed in higher education. These complexities made it easy to tuck the story in a drawer.

In re-examining the story, I used Lakoff's and Johnson's (1980; 1999) cognitive linguistic theory of metaphor, a theory increasingly employed as an analytic tool in qualitative research (e.g., Aubusson, 2002; Dexter & LaMagdeleine, 2002) and for promoting reflective teacher practice (e.g., Martinez, Sauleda, & Huber, 2001).

Conceptual metaphors and teaching

During the late 1980s and 1990s, educators at both the K-12 levels (e.g., Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Dooley, 1997; Knowles, 1994; Richards, & Gipe, 1994) and the college and university level (e.g., Hoffman, 1994; Parks, 1996; Palmer, 1993; Tiberius, 1986) explored how metaphors can help teachers reflect meaningfully about their teaching. I use the word *metaphor*, not in its historically narrower sense, as restricted to figurative language, but in its broader, more contemporary sense, as critical in cognition, as central to how we understand the world. Although metaphors can operate explicitly on surface levels of description in speech or writing, they often carry implicit inferences with them. As I will illustrate, these implicit inferences structure our interpretations and evaluations of our classroom experiences.

According to contemporary cognitive linguists, such as Lakoff and Johnson, conceptual metaphors organize cognitive processes, including perception, memory, concept formation, and behavior. In *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) stated, "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (p. 5). Rather than a comparison of certain features to others (e.g., *my love is a red rose*), they argued that conceptual metaphors carry over experiential gestalts. They use the term *gestalt* to emphasize the way in which experience gains coherence and meaning given the experience's larger background and context. Take their famous example LIFE IS A JOURNEY: the experiences associated with journeys, such as *traveling along a path toward a destination*, are transposed onto the abstract concept of life, as in *I'm on the path to success*. Originating in bodily experiences, these metaphors are common and much of the metaphor operates inferentially. That is, in life (an abstraction), we infer – from our physical experiences of traveling – that our goal is to get to a destination, in this case what we define as success (another abstraction). That one's life can *move along a path*, *get sidetracked*, or *stuck in rut* are inferences that are implicitly carried over in the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor.

For Lakoff and Johnson, our ordinary experiences in the world are a rich source for reasoning metaphorically. Educational activities are no different. As Tiberius suggested, “Most of us . . . have well formed metaphors for teaching and learning which organize our understanding of these concepts” (p. 146). Concepts such as *life*, *teaching* and *learning* are abstractions, so we appeal to our ordinary experiences in the world to explain and make sense of them.

The literature is full of different metaphors for teaching and learning. In this article, I draw on Tiberius, who described two conceptual metaphors for teaching and learning that are common in US American education. Tiberius called the first conceptual metaphor *transmission*, “the transference of information from teacher to students” (p. 146). Using this metaphor, teachers assume that teaching is a matter of getting information to flow, usually from instructor to students. Learning is a matter of receiving the information that has been transmitted. We take our experiences with sending and receiving information (usually mechanically) and project them onto teaching and learning (e.g., Did he *get* what you taught him? I tried to *convey* the main points to my students.) If one uses this metaphor, then the instructor’s focus is on the information in the course: managing it, usually by breaking it down into units or bits that can be sent to and received by the student whose job is to process and store it for later recall. In focusing on the information and its *flow*, this metaphor highlights subject matter and the mechanics of *getting it across*. Tiberius noted that Paulo Freire’s (2002) metaphor of banking education is a “dramatic” example of the transmission metaphor, in that the student becomes a “receptacle” to be filled by “deposits” from the teacher (p. 147).

Tiberius described another metaphor, one that competes with the *transmission* metaphor, as *dialogue*. Using this conceptual metaphor to describe teaching and learning, teachers draw on their experiences of being in conversations with others, especially during times when they join together to solve real life problems. As Tiberius stated, in the dialogue metaphor, “the emphasis is on the interactive, cooperative, and relational aspects of . . . teaching and learning” (p. 148). Through interacting with the student, the instructor is able to *draw out* students’ prior knowledge so that students can contribute meaningfully to the dialogue and in the process develop and enrich what they already know. In this way, the teacher is *interrogative*, a partner who engages in inquiry with students. Tiberius argued that Freire’s a dialogic approach (“problem posing education”) to teaching literacy exemplifies this conceptual metaphor.

According to researchers such as Tiberius, the metaphors instructors employ matter for their thinking and practice. For example, if a teacher employs the *transmission* metaphor, she might identify the source of a learning problem as in her *delivery* or the student’s inability to *receive it*. Or if a teacher employs

the *dialogue* metaphor, he might improve his teaching by studying how to *ask questions* that reveal students' thinking. Writing in 1986, Tiberius argued that the transmission metaphor was dominant in higher education. More recent applications of conceptual metaphor theory (Deignan, 1997, 1999; Eubanks, 1999a; 1999b; Lakoff, 1996; Santa Ana, 1999) have similarly demonstrated that certain conceptual metaphors gain normative power in discursive contexts, especially when they cluster together to present a coherent explanation for the way the world is. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) hinted at this when they stated, "People in power get to impose their metaphors" (p.157). Such power can also render other metaphors questionable, even illegitimate. Teachers who structure their teaching using the *dialogue* metaphor, for example, might be tempted to keep their classroom experiences private if they teach in an institution where the *transmission* metaphor predominates.

Conceptual metaphors in "Charlie's dream"

In "Charlie's Dream," the conceptual metaphor of *dialogue* that I employed broke down – for him and for me. I attempted seven different times to engage Charlie in a conversation about how he could do better at school, a topic to which he never really responded. I attended to him, trying to draw him out by listening intently, responding to what he said, engaging with him about the dream that he came to tell me. When a teacher thinks that learning occurs in *dialogue*, she must discover what students know so that they can begin to participate meaningfully. An implicit assumption of this metaphor is that knowledge resides and grows inside students as they participate actively. Ideally, every student can come to understand any subject matter if they get engaged and participate.

One variation of the *dialogue* metaphor is the teacher as *midwife*. In this variation, the teacher assumes that learning is a natural process; students have good ideas that are waiting to be born. The *midwife* teacher wants to get students into an optimal setting for the birthing of their ideas. For labor to start, students must believe that they have worthy ideas to give birth to. Once students believe in their potential, the teacher serves as a coach while their students examine their prior knowledge in light of the new subject matter. In their now famous study of women's intellectual development in the college years, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) defined *midwife* teachers as those who believe "that [their students] possess[es] latent knowledge" and "draw it out. [Midwife teachers] assist the students in giving birth to their own ideas, in making their own tacit knowledge explicit and elaborating it" (p. 217). Once the students' ideas are born and can survive on their own, the teacher steps back, as the fully developed ideas are now the student's.

Although the use of the *midwife* metaphor goes back to the ancient Greeks, feminist educators such as Belenky and her co-authors have used it as a

particularly apt metaphor for teaching women and other groups who have been economically and socially oppressed, as their capacity as knowers is often called into question by the dominant group. Freire argued, for example, that the dominant group justifies its power ideologically, by claiming its own intelligence as superior, especially in contrast to the oppressed, whose intellectual capacities are deemed inferior. Part of the work of liberatory educators, Freire noted, is to bring out the knowledge and intellectual capacities of the oppressed through dialogue.

As a feminist teacher in the early 1990s who worked with students who demonstrated significant financial need, I had consciously embraced the *dialogue* metaphor. I had not, however, considered how I might distort it. I think now that my inability to examine its potential for misuse resulted from the radical nature of the metaphor in an educational environment which privileged the *transmission* metaphor. I felt uncertain about the interaction and how much Charlie self-disclosed in telling me his dream. Perhaps I even wanted to prove the metaphor worked in just such situations, with a seemingly lost student such as Charlie.

I know that I believed that Charlie had ideas that could be brought to life within the university. If only he could find the right place, he would be able to give birth to his ideas. After his first admission that “nothing” was the matter, I responded as if he “could be” in labor, if only we could find the right delivery room. For example, the following responses were directive:

“Do you think you could read for someone in a philosophy class?”
“[Your dream] is related to what we were talking about before.” How?
“You feel like the deer . . . the moose?” How?”
There’s a way out of this dream, you know, Charlie.”

When he told me that the moose was supernatural, unreal, I backed down from trying to coach him as a student by becoming more prescriptive. Yet, even as I graded the class at the end of the semester, I wanted to save a place for him to come back. Looking at my grade book, I thought, “[He stayed] in the graveyard.” I tried to imagine, even at the end of the quarter, that I could do something that would take him out of the graveyard so that he could find a place where he could fit in school, where he could bring his ideas to life.

Lakoff and Johnson argue that conceptual metaphors structure our everyday thinking and behavior, including how we tell our stories and maybe what stories we tell. But metaphors are always partial renderings of reality; they shed light on different dimensions of experience. During my interchange with Charlie, I never considered that he might, for example, have been strung out after spending the night with a demanding but perverse aunt or in the first stages of diabetic reactions. When metaphors become routinely applied, like any habit, they operate mechanistically. As Green (1971) put it,

A dead metaphor is one which we use in thought as though it were literal. It no longer impresses us as metaphorical. Its inference is so shrouded in custom and habit, its comparison so covered over by the blind convention of everyday thinking that the metaphor controls what we think. These are the dangerous metaphors. They frequently obscure useful philosophical questions that we want to raise and force us to frame our investigations within unnecessary limits. (p. 62)

Perhaps the same thing happens when we idealize our metaphors or use them only in private. We then hold on to them so tightly that we do not think to explore what they hide. The dialogue metaphor has worked for me in most teaching and learning situations. In the early nineties, it was a metaphor I held more privately, in part because the transmission metaphor remained privileged in US American higher education. Not only did many of my colleagues view students as recipients, but my students also had been institutionally conditioned to be recipients and so were less likely to perceive dialogue as a form of teaching. Given the emphasis on collaboration and student empowerment over the last decade, the dialogue metaphor has gained much more legitimacy and respect.

In mindlessly employing metaphors, we paint over or distort the empirical evidence in front of us. Charlie told me why he came to see me, but I could not hear what he said. When he did not fit my metaphor and the sequencing did not flow, I could not get out of it. I kept trying to get him into a dialogue that would keep him in school because, I believed, he had ideas that mattered. Even after I had written it up as a story, the interaction haunted me. I see, now, that the story raised troubling questions for me, albeit unconscious ones: was I losing my effectiveness as a dialogic teacher? In a public telling, could the dialogue metaphor stand up to the transmission metaphor? Why did I bother at all, for example, with a student who was unwilling to read assignments? It was easy to put the story in a drawer.

Stories have a way of teaching us long after their original telling. As reflective practitioners, we can look back and see what shaped our thinking and actions – then. Much in our thinking and acting is shaped by our conceptual metaphors for teaching and learning, and if they are alive and generative and loosely held, we can ask ourselves the “useful philosophical questions” that a mechanical application of a dead or idealized metaphor might cut off. Even if we continue to deploy the same metaphor, we can be mindful, ever alert to the exceptions, to the metaphor’s edges. I am not suggesting that I needed to deploy another metaphor. To the contrary, had I used the transmission metaphor at the onset of my interaction with Charlie, when the first conflict arose, when he first told me nothing was wrong, I would never have engaged him at all, would never have been particularly troubled by his absence, and would have never stood with him in the moonlight of his dreams. My interpretative work with narrative and conceptual metaphor

continues to remind me that I need to be fully present so that my metaphors take the lead from, instead of overshadowing, what my students bring me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank Katherine Brown, Bruce Kochis, Mike Gillespie, and Bill Seaburg for helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

REFERENCES

- Aubusson, P. (2002). Using metaphor to make sense and build theory in qualitative analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 7(4). Retrieved January 13, 2005, from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR7-4/aubusson.html>
- Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bullough, R. V., Jr., & Stokes, D. K. (1994). Analyzing personal teaching metaphors in preservice teacher education as a means for encouraging professional development. *American Educational Research Journal*, 31, 197-224.
- Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Dooley, C. (1997). Teaching as a two-way street: Discontinuities among metaphors, images and classroom realities. *Journal of Teaching Education*, 49, 97-107.
- Deignan, A. (1997). Metaphors of desire. In K. Harvey & C. Shalom (Eds.), *Language and desire: Encoding sex, romance and intimacy*. (pp. 21-42). London: Routledge.
- Dexter, S., & LaMagdeleine, D. R. (2002). Dominance theater, slam-a-thon, and cargo cults: Three illustrations using conceptual metaphors in qualitative research works. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8, 362-380.
- Eubanks, P. (1999a). Conceptual metaphor as rhetorical response: A reconsideration of metaphor. *Written Communication*, 16, 171-199.
- Eubanks, P. (1999b) The story of conceptual metaphor: What motivates conceptual mappings? *Poetics Today*, 20, 419-442.
- Freire, P. (2002). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (30th Anniversary Ed.). (Trans. M. B. Ramos). New York: Continuum.
- Gillespie, D. (1991). The case of Carl and the concept of socialization: Sample entry. In R. Edgerton, P. Hutchings, & K. Quinlan. *The teaching portfolio: Capturing the scholarship in teaching*. Washington: The American Association of Higher Education.
- Gillespie, D. (1996). Narrative and reflective teaching practice. *Innovative Higher Education*, 21(1) .
- Gillespie, D. (1999a, October 8). From Senegal, powerful blessings for American students. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. B7.
- Gillespie, D. (1999b). When students are no longer "us": The case of Carl and the concept of socialization. In B. A. Pescosolido & R. Aminzade (Eds). *Teaching for the 21st Century: Understanding and rebuilding the social worlds of higher education*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Gillespie, D. (2000). Teacher narratives. In D. DeZure (Ed.), *Learning from change: Landmarks on teaching and learning in higher education from Change Magazine (1969-1999)*, Sterling, VA: Stylus Publications.
- Green, T. F. (1971). *The activities of teaching*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Hoffman, D. (1994). Metaphors of teaching: Uncovering hidden instructional values. In E. C.

- Wadsworth (Ed.), *To improve the academy: Resources for faculty instructional and organizational development*: Vol. 13. (pp. 109-120). Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press.
- Knowles, J. G. (1994). Metaphors as windows on a personal history: A beginning teacher's experience. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 21(4), 37-66.
- Lakoff, G. (1996). *Moral politics: What conservatives know that liberals don't*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the flesh: The embodied mind and its challenge to Western thought*. New York: Basic Books.
- Martinez, M. A., Sauleda, N., & Huber, G. L. (2001). Metaphors as blueprints of thinking about teaching and learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17, 965-977.
- Palmer, P. J. (1993, Nov/Dec). Good talk about good teaching: Improving teaching through conversation and community. *Change Magazine*, 25(6), 8-13.
- Parks, J. G. (1996). Teacher as bag lady. *College Teaching*, 44, 132-6.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Gipe, J. P. (1994). Metaphor analysis: An alternative approach for identifying preservice teachers' orientations. *Research in the Schools*, 1(2), 53-60.
- Santa Ana, O. (1999). "Like an animal I was treated": Anti-immigrant metaphors in US public discourse. *Discourse & Society*, 10, 191-224.
- Tiberius, R. G. (1986). Metaphors underlying the improvement of teaching and learning. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 17, 144-156.

DIANE GILLESPIE is Professor and Associate Director of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington, Bothell, USA, where she teaches multicultural social science courses and qualitative research. Her research interests include diversity, conceptual metaphor, narrative, and case study as reflective teaching/learning practices.

DIANE GILLESPIE est professeure et directrice adjointe du département Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences de la University of Washington, à Bothell, aux États-Unis, où elle donne des cours multiculturels en sciences sociales et enseigne la recherche qualitative. Parmi ses intérêts de recherche notons la diversité, la métaphore conceptuelle, la narration et l'étude de cas en tant que pratiques réflexives d'enseignement et d'apprentissage.

STEPPING OFF THE ROAD: A RESEARCHER'S STORY OF CHALLENGING METHOD/CHANGING METHODOLOGY

SALLY A. KIMPSON *University of Victoria*

ABSTRACT. This narrative recounts the disruption of my graduate research project by persistent, self-reflexive questioning of the process of doing independent research for the first time, and draws its texts from the resulting master's thesis. In this story, the ethnographic method I chose initially to study the experience of women returning to school to earn degrees became less methodologically convincing as critical questions about the method emerged through self-reflexive writing in my research journal. As I followed the disruptions generated through writing, and attended to the equally compelling disruptions due to disabling chronic illness, these experiences prompted a methodological shift in the research, with unforeseen textual consequences. Slowly, it became apparent to me that research journal writings that reflected my observations and concerns about power, representation and authority in the research I was conducting, and within the academy itself, constituted the ground of a viable narrative inquiry into what I had been experiencing as a beginning researcher. The thesis I had set out to create was definitely not the one I wrote.

SORTIR DES SENTIERS BATTUS : L'HISTOIRE D'UNE CHERCHEUSE QUI CONTESTE LES MÉTHODES DÉFICIENTES ET CHANGE LA MÉTHODOLOGIE

RÉSUMÉ. Ce récit relate l'interruption de mon projet de recherche d'études supérieures en raison de la remise en question constante et autoréflexive du processus de recherche indépendante entreprise pour la première fois, et tire ses textes de la thèse de maîtrise qui en a résulté. Dans ce récit, la méthode ethnographique choisie au départ pour analyser l'expérience des femmes qui retournent aux études afin de décrocher un diplôme est devenue moins convaincante sur le plan méthodologique à mesure que je me posais des questions très importantes sur la méthodologie dans la rédaction autoréflexive de mon journal de recherche. Tout en suivant les interruptions générées par la rédaction, et en prêtant attention aux interruptions tout aussi contraignantes en raison de la maladie chronique invalidante, ces expériences ont mené à un changement de la méthodologie de recherche ainsi qu'à des conséquences imprévues sur la rédaction. Il m'est ainsi lentement apparu que la rédaction du journal de recherche qui exprimait mes observations et mes préoccupations concernant le pouvoir, la représentation et l'autorité dans le cadre de la recherche que je menais, et au sein de l'académie elle-même, constituait la

matière pour une recherche narrative viable sur mon expérience en tant que chercheur débutant. La thèse que j'ai écrite n'a assurément rien à voir avec mon projet de thèse initial.

Allow me to present a snapshot of my world, the world of the story I am about to relate, an "ingot of time and place" that Connelly and Clandinin (1990, p. 11) suggest as a way of providing a brief narrative sketch to orient you to the autobiographical story I relate in this text.

A number of years ago, at the time this story began its life, I was a graduate student in counselling psychology, a woman on the threshold of mid-life, having lived for two decades with a disabling, degenerative chronic illness. I had entered graduate school directly from a nursing degree (BSN) program. My experience of being disempowered as a BSN student provided the impetus for my master's research, in particular my sense as an undergraduate in nursing that my own life experience with chronic illness was not an appropriate site for study. At that time I believed that "playing the game" and "jumping through the hoops" were the only ways to survive in this highly competitive discipline. Any creativity I brought to my studies withered in a parched climate of learning objectives and outcomes and competition for top marks. What was I learning in this environment? Was there something about nursing and nursing education that pushed students to the limit? Was there something about nurses as women that lay at the heart of this experience?

With newly-crafted questions about how gender informed the education of women, as a graduate student I sought to better understand the experience of women returning to school, in particular, nurses undertaking BSN degrees. Like most graduate students doing research for the first time, I chose what I thought was a suitable "method" to pursue my questions, and set about doing "the research." But things did not go as neatly as I had envisioned. Through ongoing critically self-reflexive writing practices in a research journal, begun intuitively at the beginning of my degree program, and ongoing disruptions in my studies due to disability, reflected upon in that journal, the study I had undertaken using an ethnographic interview method (Spradley, 1979) was disrupted. This disruption sent me off in an entirely different methodological direction. Slowly, it became apparent to me that research journal writings reflecting (on) my observations and concerns about power, representation and authority in the research I was conducting, and within the academy itself, constituted the ground of a viable narrative inquiry into what I had been experiencing as a beginning researcher. The thesis I had set out to create was definitely not the one I wrote.

It was my intention to include a page from the thesis so that reader's could see for themselves how unconventional a text it is. Unfortunately, reproducing a page from what was a very unusually-formatted text for this journal article was an unsurmountable editorial challenge, but the following excerpts from the thesis provide readers with the material to visually imagine the original formatting. All the excerpts that follow immediately below fit onto *one page* in the original document, juxtaposed in relation to each other. The first three paragraphs are part of the (central) research story being told in the thesis, around which other writings were positioned. The italicized text, drawn directly from my research journal, appeared off to the right of the page encased in a box. The quote from van Manen stood alone in bold type in the upper left corner of the page, and the excerpt beginning with the question ("Why is letting go of the ethnography a turning point for me?") was drawn from the personal narrative I wrote as a lengthy reflexive text, which appeared throughout the thesis as a footnote.

Excerpts from thesis (Kimpson, 1995)

As the questions slowly mounted, like clouds building before a storm, I continued along the path I had chosen, despite the fact that the ground was becoming considerably less firm. By this time I had dropped my first informant, Camilla, from the study in an effort to reduce the amount of work, and was continuing with Rachel, Shirley, and Faye.

I had already written a summary of the cultural scene, and a descriptive summary of Rachel's experience as told to me. I was consciously experimenting with "writing styles," and began to create a third document in which I wrote about Faye's experience, bringing in aspects of feminist theory and other literature to explain or theorize (about) her experience, and what she had in common with the others. I hadn't really conceptualized the text of the final document (the "ethnographic text"), and my experimentation with writing was, in part, a way of helping me decide how it would be written. Unwittingly, it was also helping me develop themes, which I had tentatively named (power, powerlessness, empowerment or personal authority), but remained unsure of. I still wasn't really sure I was doing it right, coming to the themes in the systematic way outlined by Spradley.

At that point, not yet really ready to make any changes, I began in earnest to explore my difficulty with finding themes, penetrating more deeply and self-reflexively the concern that "when writing is thought of as a reporting process there is no place for thinking of research itself as a poetic textual (writing) practice" (van Manen, 1990, p. 125).

June 13, 1994: I've been writing a summary of Rachel's experience. In our first interview, she talks about professors telling students that they are "on track" with respect to an assignment, which is a qualitative answer, and the student interprets it quantitatively – in terms of marks. This brings up the question of differences in

communication – are these communication differences between someone who has power and someone who doesn't? Or communication differences across cultures – are professors yet another subculture? They are clearly part of the university culture, and the culture of nursing, the culture of the school of nursing within the university. Do students and professors communicate differently based on their relative positions in the hierarchy? Professors share with their students their membership in the same culture of women in the larger societal culture. Professors, like students are in two worlds, they have to “translate” the university's requirements to the students, just as the students have to translate what the professors require into a concrete product. The professor has to give marks not just to the student, but also has to give students' marks to the university. Both are dancing, in different ways, to someone else's drum. Both, to some degree, have to play the game. (Excerpt from research journal)

Why is letting go of the ethnography a turning point for me?

This shift represents a new respect and honouring of not just what I knew, but the myriad ways of knowing lying close to the heart of my personal authority. It was a difficult decision, one that played on my insecurities, but that ultimately felt right. I was finally listening and attending to my own intuition and voice, after deferring for so long to the ‘experts.’ While learning to value my own knowing, I was unlearning values I had learned about the knowledge of these experts, and the methods they espoused. With respect to the research I had undertaken I was moving myself from the margin to the centre, while paradoxically moving from the centre of the dominant discourse (ethnography) to the relative margins (interpretive/autobiographical inquiry). Yet as a woman I was always removed from the centre of power in the culture I live in.

• • • • •

How did this different thesis, structured so unusually, come to be? Or, as Rushdie (1997) asks, “How does newness come into the world? How is it born? Of what fusions, translations, conjoinings is it made? How does it survive, extreme and dangerous as it is?” (p. 8).

Narrated here is a story characterized by multiplicity, containing both a personal narrative about my experiences of being a graduate student and a disabled woman, and a narrative about (doing) research. Inextricably intertwined, at times these narratives are indistinguishable from each other. Focused primarily on my thesis research process, the story being told here draws its language/text directly from the multiple narratives (and reflections) that constituted the original thesis. Thus it is a retelling that mirrors the original.

I am writing this paper having re-entered graduate school to pursue doctoral studies. Keeping a research journal is again central to my work, but now more consciously so. As during the master's degree it is a place to track my

thinking and research activities, to struggle with and reflect critically on ideas (my own and others'), and to describe the daily experience of living in a chronically ill body. In the thesis from which this article draws its texts, and in the article itself, research journal writings serve several functions. They illustrate points I want to make. They serve as counterpoints to other texts, and some provide readers with a sense of how living with disability might intersect with and influence being a graduate student.

In the excerpts from the thesis (above), the italicized text is drawn directly from my research journal and illustrates my reflections and deliberations as I wrote the descriptive summary of this participant's (Rachel) experience. The van Manen quote serves as a counterpoint to the other texts. It is an example of "intertextuality," a discursive practice that Lather (1991) suggests decentres the author and demonstrates how authors are "inevitably inscribed in discourses created by others, preceded and surrounded by other texts, some of which are evoked, some not" (p. 9). Although I will not reproduce these textual practices in the same form here, I used them liberally in the thesis as a way of creating a text that was multivocal, weaving together the voices of various authors, rather than creating a text with a "singular 'authoritative' voice" (p. 9).

As a caution, there are some things you might like to consider while reading this story. It is not a story about journal writing as a methodological tool, although certainly this story has potential to contribute to that methodological discourse. It is also not a story about how the ethnographic method I had chosen fit(s) into the field of ethnography (or not), or even the broader field of interpretive inquiry. Rather, it was a method that I struggled with partly because, over time, it failed to accommodate my changing understanding of, and political commitment to, reciprocity. I had originally understood reciprocity to be the mutual effect of researcher and researched on each other, not the involvement of research participants in the construction and validation of knowledge as Lather (1991) suggests.

Shall we begin (again) then?

Telling stories

I had entered graduate school directly from a nursing degree program, in which I had learned well what "legitimate" research methodologies were. In part, these were believable to me because I was a nurse, steeped in medical terminology and practices. And even though I had lived for several years with a disabling chronic illness, I had – not surprisingly – adopted the dominant societal attitude toward disability as a "personal tragedy," entirely connected to my physical impairment, something to be treated, fixed or cured, not a set of socially constructed experiences I live with on a daily basis.

What might have prompted me to think differently about research and its effects? There was little in my life or the social context of the academy that effectively countered what I knew at the time; authoritative voices dominated, especially those of the medical community. Treatments and curative practices were developed by scientists and researchers who had the authority to define disabled people's lives – my life – using “rigorous” – objective, neutral, valid – research methods. As a BSN student, I was not exempt from learning these methods, and spent considerable time and energy learning how to calculate standard deviations and statistical significance. But when I learned about the importance of a holistic approach in community nursing practice, I could envision a crack in this intellectual armour. This kind of holistic practice seemed to recognize and attend to the daily challenges I faced living with disability, like taking stock of energy and pain levels and deciding which activities to engage in and which to defer. These were deeply subjective experiences unaccounted for in descriptive statistics.

At the beginning of graduate school, a colleague suggested I read Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule's (1986), *Women's Ways of Knowing*. A research journal entry reveals my responses to their theorizing:

I'm not sure I recognize myself in the category of “constructed knowing,” or “the impetus to allow the self back into the process of knowing, to confront the pieces of the self that may be experienced as fragmented and contradictory” (Belenky et al, 1986, p. 136). I haven't really articulated a way of thinking about truth or knowledge that could guide my intellectual life. In fact, if asked, I would probably say that my intellectual life has been focused on getting assignments done, including reading and quoting other's work. I wonder if some of the frustration I felt being a BSN student has to do with the lack of fit between how I learn and experience the world as a woman – the way Belenky et al describe it – and the way I was expected to learn. I felt so disconnected from myself and others in that competitive atmosphere, which went contrary to my need to connect with others, an essential component of my learning.

Clearly, graduate school provided me with the opportunity to begin to reflect on and question what I came to understand as an adherence in nursing at the time to masculinist intellectual and scientific practices. But along with the intellectual awakening, graduate school created new physical challenges for me, prompting a reconsideration of how I was proceeding with my studies and how I was living my life.

• • • • •

It is difficult for me to remember when I decided to approach doing research and being in academia differently. Having to bow to the limitations on my energy as a result of living with chronic illness seems central to this decision. But there was more. Initially, like my peers, I had also chosen not to “have a life,” to pursue my academic work relentlessly, using up most of my energy on my studies. Institutional imperatives bore down on me, a transport

truck of rules, regulations and codes of conduct leaving me on the shoulder whirling, like so many fallen leaves, in deadlines, meetings, assignments, and presentations. Also, a sexual harassment case erupted in our small department in my first term, leaving me confused and angry. I added political action to my heavy academic load, co-founding a small group of supportive women students who met regularly to respond to ongoing issues of concern.

Displacing the challenges and messiness of living with disability in order to meet the demands of academic life, I chose to push myself physically beyond my own limits. Ultimately disabling, the imperatives that demanded a whirlwind pace from me left me no choice. Near the end of my first year, I underwent emergency abdominal surgery because my life was threatened. Yet this frightening event represents a divergence, forcing me to reflect on my life in altogether different ways, to formulate not just new meanings, but a new self. I could no longer allow myself the questionable luxury of putting most of my life on hold in order to complete my degree. Surgery and recuperation forced me to slow down enough that I could carefully consider my previous experiences as a BSN student.

Slowing down allowed me the time to be more reflective, indeed more self-reflexive and I began to carefully consider my former experiences as a BSN student, and those as a graduate student. Writing was central to all my activities, especially in the research journal I had begun during my first term. It provided a place to chronicle my experience, to store information and insights, to work through questions and concerns, thoughts and feelings, and to struggle. Recursively engaging in the ongoing research process and writing about it revealed to me important insights about learning to do research, as this journal entry shows:

How is choosing to study the BSN experience a turning point for me? It marks the application of my budding feminist sensibilities to scholarship. Although reading feminist literature has generated in me a multitude of questions about my life and the experiences of other women, in addition to being at once validating and somewhat disturbing, I really hadn't thought these could become guiding questions for the research I am expected to do. I actually hadn't even seen that the questions have been leading me towards this end.

Deeply generative, out of this kind of reflexivity emerged my proposed thesis research. The journal became fertile ground from which pieces of my thesis began to grow. In time, something new and tenuous – a different way of doing research – the narrative inquiry I undertook into my own research practice as I learned to become a researcher, was born. As that new process unfolded I reflected on it in my research journal:

December 5, 1994: So now I'm back to "What am I doing?" knowing that what I have just done is part of what I am doing; reflecting on and beginning with my own present experience and questions, writing the process as it unfolds, using the literature when it feels right, and paying close attention to what I am

doing. I am also interpreting my experience in a critical way through the lens of feminist thought, deconstructing realities of my own, and those shared with other women, which are harmful and disempowering. I also tell a story with my experience, understandings and insight as I go, a story of what it is like to be a woman doing research for the first time. This is my method.

Although my original intention beginning the research journal was to provide a place to chronicle my research activities, during my convalescence I allowed myself to bring thoughts and feelings arising from living with disability to the writing, to bear witness to my daily struggles, my fleshly life. Thus, my lived body was slowly transposed into a vehicle for understanding, something I sought to respect and understand, not defer, as the research unfolded. By including the body – “that sad grey dishrag philosophers hang inside the door beneath the sink” (Zwicky, 1992, p. 142) – and especially my disabled body as a source of knowledge, I “. . .intervene in the production of knowledge. . . in ways that work out of the blood and spirit of [my life], rather than out of the consumerism that can pass for a life of the mind in academic theory” (Lather, 1991, p. 20).

October 12, 1994: I really don't feel like a writer today. I'm really in a lot of physical pain, and need to take just little steps. I can only do so much, especially when it's difficult to concentrate on writing. So I follow closely what's happening in my body right now – the burning in my wrists, the achy, weak feeling pulling my body down, pulling energy into the pain, using it up like coal in a fire. It hurts so much, I begin to cry. . .

*Journeys bring power and love
back into you. If you can't go somewhere,
move in the passageways of the self.
They are like shafts of light,
always changing, and you change
when you explore them.*

Rumi

These Branching Moments

The tension of bearing the pain subsides. I experience relief, and clarity. Being enervated passes. Which passageway should I enter now? There are so many calling to me, and I stand before them, unmoving, waiting for a sign, a voice gently echoing, leading me forward.

I am wrestling with whether or not to write in response to my reading of Bateson's (1994) “Peripheral Visions,” but as I think of doing that it feels like I should be writing in response to my own research journal, and what I have recorded since I began. I think I am stuck because of a judgment I have of myself that I don't know enough to respond to either of these texts in a way that creates an intelligent critique. It feels like I'm having a ‘crisis of the literature.’ I've read a bit, enough to pique my imagination and stimulate my thinking, but not enough to really understand how it can guide me right now. So I am torn between reading others' works, and beginning to write an account of how I came to be where I am now.

As I slowly articulate this conflict, again paying attention to my body, I become aware of a slight pull towards, actually a relaxing into, writing rather than reading, and then I notice a supportive thought – that I don't have to critique while I write, I can just write. Maybe I can critique later, when I have a deeper understanding of how to do it. Why do I need a deeper understanding now? Won't that come as I use my existing understandings in a reflective way?

Am I not then working out of the blood and spirit of my life? Will this be enough? Is self-reflexivity a sufficient antidote for the bitter pill I accept as a participant in the production of knowledge?

Ethnographic intentions: Choosing a topic and method for study

My original intention to use phenomenology to study registered nurses returning to school to obtain Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees emerged from an initial desire to know the meaning of this experience for these women. I wondered if the stress these students experienced might be linked in some way to the fact that they were predominantly women studying in a male-dominated institution. But my life had slowed down considerably following the surgery, and this interlude created space for questioning. In particular, I queried whether phenomenology would uncover BSN students' implicit understandings about power, which I believed were linked to what I assumed was their lack of awareness of the influence of gender on their experience. I began to doubt whether phenomenology was up to this task.

Realizing that I needed a method that revealed these tacit understandings and how they informed the BSN students' experience, I began to look elsewhere. When a colleague had used Spradley's (1979) ethnographic interview method to study women's lives, revealing important issues of gender and power submerged in their consciousness, it seemed attractive to me. With its detailed, step-by-step design, I was actually seduced by the "simplicity" of Spradley's method.

This excerpt from my research journal (also appearing in the thesis) reveals my understandings of how to proceed using Spradley's method:

The ethnographic interview method is structured in two phases: an initial interview and a second of follow-up interview. The initial interview provides an opportunity for myself and the informant to develop rapport through the process of eliciting information (Spradley, 1979), and for the informant to begin discussing her experience of returning to school. This descriptive data is then subjected to a focused analysis from which emerge the fundamental units of knowledge (or domains). The follow-up interview will use more specialized questioning (structural and contrast questions), to confirm my analysis and to distinguish the meanings embedded in the informant's language. Again, analysis (taxonomic and componential) follows the second interview to discover cultural meanings and themes. The final event in the sequence is writing the ethnographic text, the cultural description.

Naïvely, I hoped that following Spradley's clearly-outlined steps would reduce some of the complexity inherent in qualitative methods and simplify the research process for me, especially in light of the institutional pressure I felt to finish within allotted time frames, in the face of a variety of ongoing disability-related interruptions. Pressures to finish bubbled up everywhere.

We are sitting, all of us, graduate students in counselling and a couple of faculty members, in a large circle in a high-ceilinged, carpeted meeting room in the graduate students' building. Over the past year, we have been meeting together to discuss issues of common concern to our department. I am nervous, and feel the comforting presence of the other members of our small women's group around me. A couple of us have volunteered to bring what we believe to be serious concerns to our 'community' meeting, and strongly suspect that these may not be well-received. During some cross-talk following our usual "go 'round" of names and years in the program (in which I reveal I have been a graduate student for over two years), one of the faculty members calls me an "experienced student" in an overtly ridiculing tone. I feel a wave of shame, followed by the searing heat of anger, but realize it would not be safe for me to reveal my true feelings.

Like other graduate students I was always aware of the ongoing pressure to finish within the expected rather than allotted time limits, a clear expectation that students undertaking Master of Arts degrees in Counselling, requiring a thesis, would finish their degrees in 2 years, rather than the 5 years allotted by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. This was not the first time this particular professor had voiced his displeasure of me in an indirect, oblique way. Never did I sense from him any awareness, empathy or compassion for my particular circumstances. Unfortunately, when these incidents happened I spent considerable time feeling inadequate, or berating myself for not being able to finish on time. In vulnerable moments, the weight of my socialization, a well-used bowling ball, neatly toppled any silly notions I had about honouring my own voice, or my rights as a woman with a disability. My ingrained belief that people in authority know better, and that there is something wrong with me if I cannot finish on time, seemed to be blemishes on my skin, masking any clear, strong, authoritative self that may lie below the surface.

Making the choice of ethnography gave me some confidence though, and I thought that doing this research (in a timely fashion) was possible; it was not just something I read or dreamed about, or struggled with. This method seemed to provide me with the means to take my informants beyond their surface understandings as to the influence of gender in their lives, which I assumed would be either non-existent or buried. I also thought that I wouldn't have to worry so much about any biases I might have if I was studying how the women used language as a tool for constructing their realities.

I was excited and energized by this new direction. Yet my first reading of Spradley's book found me confused by the strange terminology. I reassured

myself that this confusion was because I was unfamiliar with this particular ethnographic method and the language Spradley used, and clarity would emerge as I immersed myself in the research process. In my journal, reflective writings mapped out the concrete beginnings of my struggle with bias, framed as questions about imposing my feminist understandings on the participants.

What about the 'position' I occupy as a researcher based on my experience as a woman and a nurse who has returned to school? How will it influence what is to be found? What about the fact that I share the same gender socialization and membership in the same minority group as my informants? Anne Oakley (1981) tells me that, "A feminist interviewing women is by definition both 'inside' the culture and participating in that which she is observing" (p. 53), but does this make me better equipped to study the culture of women as Mies (1983) suggests? Perhaps being inside the culture I am studying might have some limitations. I might overlook language differences because they may not be blatantly different to me. Or I might take too much about the culture for granted because it is part of my cultural knowledge. Or worse, I might impose my feminist understandings on the data. Perhaps doing Spradley's method will help to suspend some of that, mostly because of how it breaks their language down into pieces, rather than looking for meaning. There is something 'objective' about this methodology that makes me feel good in the sense that I may be less likely to impose my views on what the informants tell me.

Naïvely, I thought Spradley's method would "control" for bias. Also, I adhered to my belief in the power of his method to provide validity, revealing that I was still willing to trust an "authority" (male) when uncertain. Even though I had begun to struggle with the tension I felt between my own insights into the experience, and the potential these might have for obscuring the informants' experience, I forged on with the interviews with the four women who volunteered to participate in my study.

Power, representation, and research

The research interviews revealed much about these women's experiences, and unexpectedly, about my experience as a researcher and graduate student. I wondered how they lived with the cultural contradictions being revealed, many mirrored in my own experience as a disabled woman doing a graduate degree. These parallel worlds intrigued me. As women returning to school, our lives revealed the kinds of cultural contradictions that arise from the disjuncture between two competing ideologies, those that prescribe certain types of behaviours for women (nurturant, submissive, non-competitive) and those valued by Western society such as individual, competitive activity in the public sphere as the means for achieving self-hood (Anyon, 1983).

Cultural contradictions are often revealed in everyday pedagogical practices. The previous community meeting episode reveals my response to a professor's efforts to silence me. I said nothing. Beyond my shame and unexpressed

anger, I was thinking that the faculty member had no right to say what he did and that he knew nothing of me or my reality. I silently questioned his authority to make disparaging comments based on his own privilege and power. But I also understood my place, and the power of the professor to influence my life and accommodated to this, while resisting internally. I also knew that the community meeting had become a regular feature of our academic unit primarily because of the lobbying efforts of our women's group to bring women's issues forward, a direct act of resistance against the male-dominated faculty and discourse in our department.

The BSN students I interviewed also demonstrated similar kinds of resistance through their engagement in "bitch and moan" sessions with their peers. And, as I did, they accommodated to the demands of professors on a daily basis, in the classroom, by "jumping through hoops," and "finding out the hidden agenda." But they also resisted overtly in their own ways: (informant pseudonyms used here) Faye told me she had spoken out in class about women and poverty from her own experience; Rachel had challenged the idealism of one professor; Shirley had constantly asked questions to gain clarity, rather than blindly accept what she was told. Yet she left every time in confusion that was frequently relieved in dialogue with peers. But, like myself, all-out resistance was out of the question. Instead a kind of resistance-in-accommodation, a passive resistance, happened largely in private thoughts or beliefs, which were held from those in authority. This is an example of "accommodation with a critical edge [containing] an internal resistance" (Anyon, 1983, p. 24). I witnessed discrepancies between the informants' public behaviour and their private thoughts (as revealed to me), just as I witnessed my own. I saw these discrepancies as necessary contradictions, given our common experience of powerlessness as students.

I also discovered a central contradiction in these women's lives. Contrary to my initial assumptions about having a lack of awareness of how gender impacted their experience as nurses and nursing students, they had been learning about the historical oppression of nurses as women in the health care hierarchy, and society in general. While they were well able to apply this new awareness of 'oppression theory' to their work settings, they rarely applied it to the ongoing oppression each was feeling as BSN students. When they did put these two together, it seemed to be with a certain degree of resignation, coming from a place of relative powerlessness; I never heard about it being used toward collective action to change their circumstances. Yet they also spoke strongly and enthusiastically of how they had grown in so many different ways as a result of returning to school. Asking questions about how they lived with the cultural contradiction of growing and becoming more enlightened in a largely oppressive academic environment unexpectedly pointed to problematic elements in my own life as a researcher.

Indeed, I was not prepared for the questions our dialogues raised for me in terms of power in the research process. I was not prepared for the difficulty and perhaps lack of fit I was having with Spradley's ethnographic interview method past the initial interviews. I was not prepared for the immense struggle trying to discover "cultural themes" – themes I knew implicitly, buried just beyond my awareness, borne of my own experience of being situated in the same culture of women returning to school. And I was not prepared to deal with my personal battle with bias, trying to bracket my own assumptions, all the while questioning whether or not bracketing was possible, and to what ends.

Of course I had biases – knowledge about being a woman, about pursuing a university degree, about living with disability – but was unaware of valid ways to incorporate them into the research. And because I was not prepared for any of these difficulties, I did not initially recognize their importance as they arose. Instead I viewed them as "researcher errors," or things I should have been able to see and understand in ways predetermined and authorized by the method I had chosen.

A series of research journal writings starkly reveal my struggles at the time:

I feel stuck and doubtful again about how I've been doing the interviews, mostly the kinds of questions I asked. It feels really scary right now and I was having thoughts of calling Vance and going to see him to consider the possibility of modifying this method somehow. I feel blocked and really discouraged. It feels to me like I'm on several edges, or perhaps they make up one big one. I've got so many loose ends in my work – finishing my transcription of Fran's interview, writing a summary of Shirley and Fran's experiences and sending them off for feedback (verification). These seem fairly simple. The hard one is coming up with cultural themes, then the question of how to write the whole thing up. Right now I'm having trouble figuring out 'dimensions of contrast,' in part, but also what elements go into a paradigm worksheet. It's so hard to tell from what Spradley does because he uses 'kinds of things,' but I'm talking about 'ways to do something.' For instance, what's different about each of the ways to 'play the game' and reasons to do so? Do I know yet? It feels like the differences are embedded in the text somehow, and I'm having trouble seeing it. A way to find out differences in reasons for playing the game might be to ask, what would happen if you didn't play the game or didn't have the reason to play the game? But if I asked the informants this question I would likely get something like "you might not please them" or "you might get kicked out" etc., which are just reasons which I already know.

I am also aware that I have so much reading to do – or perhaps I have set aside all of those articles to read because of my own doubting of my authority and knowing with respect to this thesis. I feel like I'm caught and there are so many different levels to sort out: my informants' experiences, my own, my reflections on this institution and what it requires me to do to get through my degree – all the hoop jumping – passing courses, getting marks, meeting deadlines and objectives. Yet

I know that somehow engaging with all this in a reflective way is producing for me or developing within me a critical consciousness of university education. And then not really knowing how to approach it in terms of the cultural themes that are emerging – ah the themes and my frustrations with them. No real sub-themes come to mind but when I talk about it with friends and colleagues, it seems I know what they are. How do I language them – my words or their words? And what about power issues in the research – where really all this started?

And one of my other problems is that each informant has her own experience, and way of seeing this experience, which by necessity are different, and I haven't really asked a lot of questions like, would you say most or all BSN students would say/think/do/feel that? – to get at what's common for all. I know that I can to some degree answer that question from my own experience, and may yet have to – and where do I put that element into the research? I sense the paradigm worksheet is going to reveal some things – but what? Will it be something I already know – likely? And what do I do with the gaps? And will it be just a matter of counting up the number of times someone had the same reasons or similar reason? How does that point to themes, if it does at all? Part of my problem I think is how close I am to this topic and how difficult it is for me to see things because it's part of my tacit, cultural knowledge. That's why I think it's necessary to get Vance help me with this – just to bounce information off and have him ask good questions, the kinds of questions I don't seem to ask because I already know what the answers are, and what the informants know, for that matter.

• • • • •

I think the literature I have been reading about being in and experiencing the world as a woman will likely reveal some important things. I'm sure that what I am reading now about silencing the self is incredibly important and I'm just having trouble seeing just how important that is. I tend to minimize it or get caught in my judgment and blame about myself as being incredibly biased. I think this judgment has prevented me from doing the interpretive part of the study. It's interesting how I also silence myself by judging myself as biased. What effect does this have on my ability to play with and interpret the data? My main focus has been on being as true to the data and trying to leave myself out of it because of my inner feeling of being incredible biased toward/against nursing and nursing education, and how nurses treat their ranks.

• • • • •

Renate Tesch (1987) says that themes can emerge and be valid before they are actually confirmed by the process, in part because as a researcher I have a deep involvement in my topic, and have deep personal knowledge about it. This supports my sensing of the themes fairly early in the data analysis, but, not knowing this or not being aware of this fact, I have tended to deny my own reality, instead attributing my awareness of themes wholly to my own experience, which I had been told to make explicit but to "bracket" when I was doing the analysis. But perhaps bracketing alone is not enough. Maybe as Bernstein (1983) tells me it "is an illusion to think we can assume the position of disinterested observers by bracketing all our preunderstandings...we can only (understand others) by adopting the performative attitude of one who...enters a dialogue with the subject aimed at mutual understanding" (p. 182).

I forged on with the interviews, the transcriptions and each of the levels of analysis. But, near the end, while drafting the ethnographic text, “the cultural description,” I began to consider more deeply the questions emerging from being situated (more or less) in the same culture of the women I was studying, the culture of the academy. What emerged was the authorship of the ethnography and how to represent the BSN students’ experiences textually. I had become aware that I was the one who was creating the end product of our labours.

I asked myself, “In what ways might I be unconsciously exercising my power as a researcher?” a question that frames this excerpt from my research journal:

Something that occurs to me about the ethnographic research process is that I am in control – I know what kind of questions I am supposed to ask to get more detailed and meaningful information from my participants. Not only am I in control – I designed this research – and even though the informants self-selected based on their desire to share in my process of bringing the experience to light – I ‘own’ this research. Now that I am getting closer to writing the text, I’m realizing that I can’t ignore or minimize those doubts I first vocalized about this methodology, and its lack of fit with who I understand myself to be and my feminist values and beliefs about patriarchal power in women’s lives. I am required by the method to make interpretations, judgments, and evaluations, and even if I negotiated my final presentation with my informants it wouldn’t eliminate the problem of unequal power and authority, nor, I suspect, will “member checks”. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985)

These concerns were not just mine. Judith Stacey (1988) tells of a history in ethnography of grappling with these same issues. Truly I had discovered in this journey that I was drawn to more participatory/action-based research when focusing on women’s lives or other topics that are directly concerned with power. Stacey tells of postmodern ethnographers who engage in a “critical and self-reflexive ethnography,” who have been “excruciatingly self-conscious about the distortions and limitations of the textual products of their studies” (p. 25). But are criticality and self-reflexivity enough in this power-laden process? Clifford (1986) says that ethnographic truths are “inherently partial” (p. 7), and even considers them to be “true fictions” (p. 6) – “powerful ‘lies’ of exclusion [in which] power and history work through them, in ways their authors cannot fully control” (p. 7). Wolf (1992) calls the creation of a text an “exercise of power” (p. 11), but she also speaks to me of the dilemma I was having with the different experiences and interpretations expressed to me by each of the informants, and how I managed these competing interpretations depended on how well I “comprehend[ed] and process[ed] the data” (p. 10). This is something with which I was clearly having difficulty.

Burdened by my ‘ethnographic responsibility,’ I explored the possibility of finding ways to share voice/authority/authorship with the informants. But I was not really willing to consider it seriously because, as a disabled woman,

I feared the extra work entailed in altering the method. I imagined a huge drain on my limited energy having to renegotiate relationships with all four informants. I had learned my lesson from the surgery, and was not willing to compromise my health by increasing my workload.

Questions about whether, or even how the method I was using might not be liberating for the informants had also been subsumed by my firm conviction that it would reveal aspects of their experience that were oppressive, thus opening the possibility of freeing them from submerged consciousness. On the surface, Spradley's method implied that life is ordered, observable and congruent, but living every day with disability had taught me that it is messy, disordered and liminal, and my experience as a researcher was no different. I had been asking the informants to talk about their lives using a method that, increasingly, I was having difficulty with. Simply put, by inadvertently imposing order on their experiences I was in control.

Stepping off the road

I looked up the road I was going and back the way I come, and since I wasn't satisfied, I decided to step off the road and cut me a new path. (Maya Angelou, 1993, p. 22)

When I think of the actual moment I "stepped off the road," it was the culmination of questioning about the research I was doing and my role in it, to the point where the questions themselves began to turn the research around, to guide it. As I asked and attempted to answer these questions, deepening understandings pointed me in a direction I hadn't intended to follow at the outset. Or one I hadn't even conceived of as possible.

Cultural themes about playing the game, surviving, and becoming more enlightened were constantly being repeated in my everyday life as a disabled woman returning to school. My own experience of these themes confounded my understandings of the informants' experience. But really our lives were like mirrors for each other. Just as all of the BSN students had talked to me about the different ways they had to jump through hoops – completing the academic requirements of each course and all the administrative requirements of the degree by rote – and play the game – not challenging professors' ideas or idealism – I knew that I had been doing some of the same things as part of my graduate education. Perhaps I was having trouble seeing the emerging cultural themes because they were so familiar to me. Every time I would try and articulate them, I judged myself to be imposing my own biased understandings on the data.

But when I asked myself, "How does doing this research mirror what the BSN students are telling me about their experience?" I began to see how I had jumped through the hoops set out by Spradley's method, in part because I was a neophyte researcher and also because I had not yet learned to trust

my own authority and ways of knowing. So assiduously had I been following the rules, trying to bracket my assumptions and biases, doggedly trying to fit myself into the method, that I had negated my own knowing, obscuring the cultural themes emerging in the data. Appropriating power and authority (Spradley's method) that was external to me and that also held power in my life left me caught in the unavoidable ambivalence germane to the relationship between feminism and ethnography.

At the outset, I did not have the research experience or skills to critically understand or analyze the method I had chosen or to change it. Indeed, the marginalization I had experienced as a disabled woman – and the method itself – constrained me from asking such critical questions as, “Where is Spradley's method situated?” “Who does this method serve?” and perhaps most importantly, “How does it construct both me as a researcher and my informants?”

Like the women's preoccupation with survival as BSN students, I had been caught in my own survival as a disabled woman and a graduate student, which interfered with my ability to see how power enacted through the method was affecting my life as a researcher. When I was unable to see what the method promised it would reveal to me, I mostly blamed myself. I had focused instead on being as true to the data as I could, while trying to leave myself – and my own data – out of it. By silencing myself in this way, my creative, knowing self was constrained and encumbered, just as the creativity of the BSN students had been restricted by having to jump through the hoops.

Yet, the critical self-reflexivity I was practicing in my journal writings, and the sense that my situation as a student (inside the academy) might allow me to cross over into my own research, prompted me to think that these might be possible ways of reducing some of the power-based limitations of creating the ethnographic text. Returning to my research journal, I began to write in response to previous journal writings, from which was borne the narrative of my own struggles with doing research for the first time, freeing my creative self to emerge and play with the data in ways that made sense to me.

What surfaced in this process was my relationship with my self as a writer, and my writerly authority, and the tensions generated between equally compelling prescriptions to be creative and scholarly, and how these resided in my life as a disabled woman completing a graduate degree. Journal entries appearing in my thesis (Kimpson, 1995) reveal these tensions:

How do I reconcile the conflicting demands of this thesis, to be scholarly and creative? Forming this text in the context of an academy that values writing and

research that is objective and disembodied creates a profound tension in me, which challenges my ability to remain attentive, that fertile ground for writing. Yet, I persist because part of my project is to remain true to what I value and believe about knowing, and the ways I know.



How does a person whose creative life is just blossoming come to know or understand that a work like this one might not be a life's work, but just a piece of it? It seems to me that that knowing must be something which happens in retrospect, something you realize after you have completed it, after you have made the decisions you need to make to contain it, to end it. So many have kindly and gently reminded me of this, but it seems a difficult task, especially when you are someone like me, a person who never expected to even be attending university, or never even thought she'd be writing or thinking in this way. And for someone with a fluctuating and debilitating illness, which may narrow the future for me, how do I know this isn't the culmination of my life's work? Can you promise me that it won't end here? That this is in fact a doorway to infinite future possibilities?

I began to wonder how I might create a text that not just recounted my efforts over time, but aesthetically captured some of the disruptions along the way. And even though my experience became the focus, I was uncomfortable with this kind of textual authority and sought ways to de-centre myself through intertextuality (Lather, 1991). I began to experiment with a disruptive aesthetic form and different ways to represent multivocality. The form began to emerge as I realized I could organize the text as a series of disjunctures and interludes. I played with beginnings, and included these in a series of preludes inspired by David Jardine's (1992) words:

The urge to introduce and re-introduce is a form of cowardice. Always timid, moving back, repairing wounds that might inflict, hedging bets and covering hunches that might just not work out, wanting to have the first word before which other words need to be said... (p. xxxv).

Several threads ran through, none happening in a linear fashion, but were buried in the fabric of the text; sometimes the interruptions or disjunctures changed the text(ure) as a new connection, another thread woven through. Occasionally, a thought interrupted/intruded and appeared as an aside.

[like this one which is pushed over to the right side of the page]

creating gaps in the text (Jardine, 1992). I wanted the reader's experience of reading to resemble mine in the writing, "losing the thread" and "finding it again" (Jardine, 1992, p. vi), and when the thread was found, it would be in a place slightly different from where it left off. It was not easy to remain present, to hold on to all the threads this writing re-presented, especially

the struggle for/with complexity, ambiguity, irreducibility, and the multivocal and multilayered nature of discourse (Daly, 1990).

So I juxtaposed journal entries with asides, short entries from the interview transcripts, short cultural descriptions, citations from relevant literature, and in several chapters, a running footnote that reflected more deeply on the story being told and how it was being written (as described on p. 158). Again, writings from my research journal appeared in the thesis (Kimpson, 1995) describing the contours of this process:

It's clear that over time there have been a number of interruptions/disjunctures in this process. Not all have been because of institutional constraints, or because of illness. Many have come because of my persistent questioning of the process while engaged in it. Time is an important context for this research, in part because it marks out the way the work has proceeded/moved. A pattern has been established in which I write about my experience, or others', and the writing is interrupted. Sometimes a bodily or felt sense of energy being blocked will reveal (upon reflection) that I don't know how to proceed. Other times questions will intrude, and the writing stops. My next move is often to reflect, asking the question, "What have I been doing here?"

As I write about what I have been doing to shed some light on how I might proceed, insight is often generated, and I will resume writing, often in a slightly different direction, or at least changed in some way. Often in these forays into the past (most often the recent past), I will bring forward much more than what interrupted the writing. The questions move me further back into the past and I bring more of that experience into the present. Through this process of retrieval, I am developing an increasingly complex and insightful knowledge about this particular experience. Complexity and the interrelationship between present and past deepen through the process of repetition.

Writing became not just a way of doing research but a means of creative self-expression. With this inquiry into my own research practices, I wrote primarily to illuminate my own understandings and how they were transformed through writing. By exploring and dislodging my own assumptions and beliefs, and the contradictions inherent in the experience, I theorized my own practice of doing research. I had looked up the road to where I was going and, especially, back over where I had traveled, and in doing so, the decision to step off the road emerged.

Arriving/departing

As I write and read my own writing, I am changed. On the path of knowledge, we can never arrive (Newman, 1991). Knowing this, I cannot make claims about how others should do research. It is easy to be seduced into thinking that there is some end-point at which all student researchers must arrive to make the leap to "experienced researcher" or creator of knowledge. Our understandings of what knowledge is, who creates it, from what, how

it is constructed and for whom are all in question now, leaving us without answers, end-points.

As I crafted the narrative, I began to see how often I had felt like I was groping in the dark, looking for light somewhere between the lines on Spradley's page when in fact there was light within me. In some ways, I merely had to turn inward. This was a move that was ever more difficult because of being a woman living with disability, for whom so many aspects of life are authorized by those who construct me as devalued and worthless. Giving myself the authority to value my own insights and to focus on my knowing undeterred was transgressive, a stepping off the road.

In creating the thesis in the way I did, the move to foreground in writing the ethical, personal and political problems that confronted me reveals an explicit consciousness about how we shape our texts. In particular, it illuminates how doing so is "a political issue. . . not just the way the world is written" (Jones, 1992, p. 25), thus rendering problematic our assumptions about the social, while acting in (and upon) it, and taking a stand (Lather, 1991). It also reveals how, as Maxine Greene (1994) suggests, in a time "of decentering, of eroding authorities, of disappearing absolutes, we have to discover new ways of going on, as members of communities, as persons in process, always on the way" (p. 217).

To a degree, I was on the elusive quest to get it right, even while learning from Margery Wolf's (1992) experience in *A Thrice Told Tale* that there is no right way. In fact the right way for me was, ultimately, to realize the importance of the questions I was posing, and to pursue them wholeheartedly. Creating an inquiry of the research experience as it continued to unfold seemed like a direct move towards the kind of authenticity I had been seeking. Ostensibly, I was unlearning some of what I had learned over my life in formal educational settings (Le Guin, 1989). How was I doing this? By beginning with myself. As a feminist, using my own experience as the ground for my research practice is a deeply subversive and political move that is enacted by naming "that location from which I come to voice – that [embodied] space of my own theorizing" (hooks, 1990, p. 146) – autobiographical writing.

As my story illustrates, there are different realities and other paths to follow as we learn to conduct research as part of our graduate education. This narrative then "takes place," marking the territory that is the ground for meaningful action (Grumet, 1987). Reflecting on the tensions and contradictions experienced while doing qualitative research with other women, leaving the ethnography behind, and subsequently writing an autobiographical narrative about these transgressive moves are meaningful actions. In doing so, I reconstruct myself in ways that call into question dominant understandings of what constitutes research, who the subjects of research might be, who does research (and for whom) and how it gets done.

REFERENCES

- Angelou, M. (1993). *Wouldn't take nothing for my journey now*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Anyon, J. (1983). Intersections of gender and class: Accommodation and resistance by working-class and affluent females to contradictory sex-role ideologies. In S. Walker & L. Barton (Eds.), *Gender, class and education* (pp. 19-37). Sussex, England: The Falmer Press.
- Bateson, M. C. (1994). *Peripheral visions: Learning along the way*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Belenky, M. J., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice and mind*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bernstein, R. (1983). *Beyond objectivism and relativism: Science, hermeneutics and praxis*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania.
- Daly, M. (1990). *Gyn/Ecology: The metatethics of radical feminism*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Clifford, J. (1986). Introduction: Partial truths. In J. Clifford & G. Marcus (Eds.), *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography* (pp. 1-26). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2-14.
- Greene, M. (1987). Sense-making through story: An autobiographical inquiry. *Teaching Education*, 1(2), 9-14.
- Greene, M. (1994). Postmodernism and the crisis of representation. *English Education*, 26, 4, 206-219.
- Grosz, E. (1993). Bodies and knowledges: Feminism and the crisis of reason. In L. Alcoff & E. Potter (Eds.), *Feminist epistemologies* (pp. 187-215). NY: Routledge.
- Grumet, M. (1987). The politics of personal knowledge. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 17(3), 319-329.
- hooks, b. (1990). Choosing the margin as a space of radical openness. In b. hooks, *Yearning: race, gender, and cultural politics* (pp. 145-153). Toronto: Between the Lines Press.
- Jardine, D. (1992). *Speaking with a boneless tongue*. Bragg Creek, AB: Makyo Press.
- Jones, A. (1992). Writing feminist educational research: Am I in the text? In S. Middleton & A. Jones (Eds.), *Women and education in Aotearoa*, 2. (pp. 18-32). Wellington, NZ: Bridget Williams Books.
- Kimpson, S. A. (1995). *Stepping off the road: A narrative (of) inquiry*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC.
- Lather, P. (1991). *Getting smart: Feminist research and pedagogy with/in the postmodern*. New York: Routledge.
- Le Guin, U. K. (1989). Bryn Mawr commencement address (1986). In U. K. Le Guin, *Dancing at the edge of the world: Thoughts on words, women, places* (pp. 147-160). New York: Harper & Row.
- Lenzo, K. (1995). Validity and self-reflexivity meet poststructuralism: Scientific ethos and the transgressive self. *Educational Researcher*, 24(40), 17-23.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Mies, M. (1983). Towards a methodology for feminist research. In G. Bowles & R. D. Klein (Eds.), *Theories of women's studies* (pp. 117-139). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Newman, J. M. (1991). *Interwoven conversations: Learning and teaching through critical reflection*. Toronto, ON: OISE Press.
- Oakley, A. (1981). Interviewing women: A contradiction in terms. In H. Roberts (Ed.), *Doing feminist research*. (pp. 30-61) London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

- Richardson, L. (1992). The consequences of poetic representation: Writing the other, rewriting the self. In C. Ellis & M. G. Flaherty (Eds.), *Investigating subjectivity: Research on lived experience* (pp. 125-137). Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.
- Rushdie, S. (1997/1988). *The satanic verses: A novel*. Toronto: Vintage.
- Spradley, J. P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Stacey, J. (1988). Can there be a feminist ethnography? *Women's Studies International Forum*, 11(1), 21-27.
- Tesch, R. (1987). Emerging themes: The researcher's experience. *Phenomenology & Pedagogy*, 5(3), 230-241.
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. London, ON: The Athlone Press.
- Wolf, M. (1992). *A thrice-told tale: Feminism, postmodernism and ethnographic responsibility*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Zwicky, J. (1992). *Lyric philosophy*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

SALLY KIMPSON is an Interdisciplinary Doctoral Candidate in Nursing and Education at the University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, studying health and the socio-economic well-being of disabled women. She has a longstanding and deep interest in the philosophical and theoretical foundations of contemporary approaches to research and practice in the human service disciplines. Her current research draws from poststructuralist thought in its focus on the effects of discourses in disabled women's lives.

SALLY KIMPSON est candidate au doctorat interdisciplinaire en nursing et en enseignement à l'Université de Victoria en Colombie-Britannique, où elle étudie la santé et le bien-être socio-économique chez les femmes handicapées. Elle porte depuis longtemps un vif intérêt aux fondements philosophiques et théoriques des méthodes de recherche contemporaines et à la pratique dans les disciplines des services sociaux. Sa recherche actuelle s'inspire de la pensée poststructuraliste qui se concentre sur les effets des discours sur la vie des femmes handicapées.

USING NARRATIVE INQUIRY TO INFORM AND GUIDE OUR (RE) INTERPRETATIONS OF LIVED EXPERIENCE

CARMEN SHIELDS *Nipissing University*

ABSTRACT. In this paper, I share stories that provide sites of inquiry for the (re)interpretation of my own educative experience. Crossing time, I (re)visit and (re)construct seminal events in my life using knowledge gleaned in the intervening years to come to see how these life stories inform and guide me in the present. I use my own stories to enhance my understanding of the direction I am taking in my life since they are what I know, and I offer them here as an example of how narrative inquiry can provide a theoretical and practical framework for (re)interpreting our lived experience.

**RECHERCHE NARRATIVE COMME OUTIL DE DOCUMENTATION ET D'ORIENTATION
DE NOTRE (RÉ)INTERPRÉTATION D'EXPÉRIENCES VÉCUES**

RÉSUMÉ. Dans ce document, je raconte des récits qui sont sources d'interrogation pour l'(la ré)interprétation de ma propre expérience de l'enseignement. Je (re)visite et (re)construit les événements fondamentaux de ma vie en faisant appel aux connaissances glanées au fil des ans pour en arriver à voir comment ces récits me renseignent et m'orientent aujourd'hui. Je relate ma propre expérience pour mieux comprendre la direction que je donne à ma vie puisque c'est ce que je connais, et je la cite ici pour montrer comment une recherche narrative peut constituer une structure théorique et pratique pour interpréter ou réinterpréter notre vécu.

INTRODUCTION

It is only recently, in the past decade and in middle age, that I have understood the profound significance attached to considering all of life's experiences as grounds for building a personal framework that is whole and sustaining. These years have afforded me the wisdom and time to reconsider the nature of lived experience as a grounding force in my life choices and directions. I have also begun the process of basing my own inquiring into my beliefs about learning and living using a narrative structure, employing the age old art of telling stories as a means of sharing perspectives and formulating arguments to explain my own position and viewpoints.

Storying is, in the words of Clandinin and Connelly (1994), a process of moving simultaneously in four directions: inward (inside self), outward (toward community), backward (in time), and forward (also in time). What one does in telling something to another is to engage in sharing a story, an event or situation that moves in each of these directions. There is also another important aspect of sharing stories that inform and connect us across time and place, and that involves reconstructing stories from the past in the light of present knowledge. It is not enough to retell the same story in the same way across time if that story is to be used to connect with new meaning and inform us in the present. Rather, a story remembered must be revisited and reconstructed using our own life experience across the intervening years. It is then that we can make use of specific stories to inform and guide us, to connect us to the core of ourselves which we may have sensed tacitly from the very beginning, but left behind as we went out into the world where knowledge often seems to be connected more to 'expert texts' than to our own human experience.

In this article, I share some of my own stories of using narrative inquiry as a means of (re)interpreting and (re)connecting my understanding of my own shifts in consciousness as I have (re)considered my life experience across time and place. I do this storying purposefully, because I believe that we each must find the seeds of, and establish the grounds for, our actions and beliefs in something solid that we can share with others and live by ourselves in a principled and accountable way, in the 'practice' of our lives. In considering why we know what we know, I do not believe we can leave our pasts behind us. I would even say that in thinking we do, we move toward negating the essence of ourselves or rendering ourselves disembodied in the roles we choose to enact. To me, we are then left living the metaphor of 'life as performance,' with only a received script to live by.

ACQUIRED THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Perhaps it goes without saying that we are born into a story already in progress, but the implications for each of us is profound in terms of examining the roots of our beliefs about the world, and the way our thinking and actions are enacted in our lives. Setting out to develop our own vision for living, I think we have behind us the social construction attached to the place and language of our origins. We therefore see through a lens established before we know we are looking, and we carry the epistemological stance of our families and the culture we know into our lives as a basis for living. Essentially, we begin life with an acquired theory or perspective, one we only come to consider critically as we reach a stage in life where we begin to emerge as the selves we are, separate yet connected to others in the world. Annie Dillard (1987), writing about her childhood says,

"I woke in bits, like all children, piecemeal over the years. I discovered myself and the world, and forgot them, and discovered them again. I woke at intervals until... I was more often awake [to myself] than not" (p. 282). This awakening to self as independent being takes us back and forth, outside ourselves to the stories we were born into, and inside ourselves to that person we are becoming. This pattern of awakening replicates the storytelling process itself, as it provides us with the template for coming to know across time as we continue to (re)awaken to ourselves, no matter what our age. All too often though, in our rush from one stage to another, it seems that we forget the gift that this inward, outward, backward, forward emerging pattern can provide if we pay attention to it. Without that movement, reflexively taken, I believe we are unable to really use our own experience as a means of (re)interpreting present circumstance in our lives.

PERSONALIZING THIS VIEW

My own story began as a person immersed in what I think of now as the best and the worst of the 1950's. My early experience was rooted in a solid and unchanging white, middle-class neighbourhood, a two-parent family, four living grandparents, a given way to relate and behave in every situation. I also attended a well-established school for girls where I remained for fourteen years. All the lessons I absorbed and lived that were part and parcel of this lifestyle were tempered by other, more difficult lessons though. For example, I learned about long-term illness and the determination of recovery from contracting polio as a six year old. I learned about the perils of difference in a society of sameness because when I was ten, my sister was born severely autistic. She did not look or behave as everyone else did which set our family apart in our neighborhood. Fearing negative comments about her that might hurt my mother or me, I seldom brought anyone home after school. I learned from the adults who surrounded me that public denial of emotions and feelings, and silence around difficult topics, was expected and polite. I learned to place myself last and others first. I learned the art of protecting others who were less able to speak than I. And I learned about non-relating relationships. From here, in the present, as I look back across the years, this is what I see.

STORIES FROM THOSE LIFE EXPERIENCES

In previous writing, I have detailed excerpts of some of the experiences noted above. I include two of these stories here as a means of providing examples of the power of coming to know in new ways from stories lived in the past. Both of these stories were written in 1996: the first focuses on my experience with polio and inquires into how I might have used tacit knowledge gained in that illness and recovery in later years. In the second

story, I explore connections between my determination to see possibilities for my sister and my work over the years in special education.

Storying myself

As in any life, some incidents or specific times stand out as momentous. For me, one of those was in the late winter of 1954, when, as a six year old, I contracted the polio virus. My memory holds bits and pieces of the initial stages of that experience: feverish and ill at school, pins and needles on the left side of my body, our housekeeper telling me I would have to go to the hospital. Once in hospital, I was quarantined with three playmates – we had shared gum from each others' mouths and ingested a virus with life-long effects. My left side was paralyzed. My left arm was placed in a sling and pinned back to the sheet; my feet were pressed firmly at ninety degrees against a board at the bottom of the bed. There I spent many weeks watching the other children who were all more mobile than I was myself. Later came months of physical therapy and rest at home. As I look back, my memory fixes on the convalescing child I was, struggling to walk, to move limbs in the therapy pool, to get out of the arm brace that kept me captive for many months. During that time, I believe now that I developed the will to fight back, to push boundaries for myself to whatever degree was possible. Perhaps, as Castaneda (1987) describes, this is the place in time where I began to 'ground my internal dialogue' in the perception of myself as persistent, stubborn, and, above all, able. My flight from remaining a polio 'victim' seems to me to have resulted in the wish to work against any force that entraps or ensnares. Indeed, my life's work appears to be enmeshed in a desire to liberate myself and others from situations that limit possibilities. Has all this been a move to replicate my own sense of power over my physiological destiny? (Shields, 1996)

Storying my sister

In 1960, I learned that some situations seem to be orchestrated by a power so strong that even the best efforts at fighting back are not enough. At two, my sister, who had been slow to sit up, and did not yet walk or talk, was pronounced mentally handicapped by our family physician. I remember stubbornly trying to show our parents that possibilities still existed, telling them falsely that my sister had sat up in her bed, and later, helping her learn to stand and walk. When I tried to press her to try by herself, her tactic was to withdraw to her bed and rock by the hour. She seldom spoke the few words she knew, and she never cried. It is only recently that I have come to see that threads of my sister's childhood have woven a strong and lasting pattern across the years of my life. There I have found the seeds of my work in special education, which I now know has been ongoing in one capacity or another since I was twelve years old. I see that my sister is far from the only one I have tried, often by acts of sheer will, to make 'better.' In this stance and language, I see multiple lessons from my upbringing with its many interpretations of love both spoken and unspoken. (Shields, 1996)

I know that my epistemological foundations are comprised of all the secret and sacred stories (Crites, 1971) of those early years with all the emotions and feelings of turmoil that I still feel when I revisit stories and events from my own long ago. It is from there that I began the twists and turns of my

own educative journey, working to determine on what grounds I should rest my actions and make my choices.

Looking back on these reconstructed stories now, seven years after I wrote them, I find an even more profound sense of continuity from those early experiences because I see the powerful, and perhaps even unavoidable, thread of being the provider of support for others continuing on in my work with my graduate students as I teach and supervise their work. For me, the stories I wrote then have become, in the words of Crites (1971), sacred stories, because “men’s [sic] sense of self and world is created through them. [They] form men’s living image of themselves and their world...and celebrate the powers on which their existence depends” (p. 295). He claims further that “these stories are like dwelling places. People live in them” (p. 295). I believe that is what I do. Clandinin and Connelly (1995), name our stories “secret, sacred and cover stories,” which I believe extends the notion of stories as dwelling places. I think of many of my formative stories like the two above, in this way. My sister, for example, was a secret story until my doctoral studies, my inside self a sacred story of thoughts and ideas unspoken. In contrast, my outside story was often lived as a cover story as I disguised painful aspects of life at home from others.

EXTENDING AN ACQUIRED VIEW

Stories of schooling

Spending all of my growing up years in a school for girls with religious overtones and a Christian ethic presented a very powerful vision that enhanced the grounding I received at home and extended it outward toward the world. The rules were clear and discipline was expected. Teachers had the opportunity to know students well, and for me, security and personal interest in me meant a very great deal. I was a good student in the courses that interested me, and a poor one in those that did not. Over the years, I have come to see that I was a person then who hid the upset of home behind a disguise of behaviours that pushed the limits personally and scholastically. I think that under a cover of strength, I was a person in need of much support. During my middle school years, I found one teacher who I felt I could approach with my inside questions, questions that I know now were of an epistemological nature. She took me seriously; she shared and discussed and gave her time for an adolescent engaged in a first awakening to her self. One specific story that I clearly remember provides a link between the girl at home and the girl at school who was becoming.

Speaking and not speaking

At my school, we began each day with prayers, and we had formal scripture classes as part of our studies until high school. These classes were focused on

acquainting us with the formative stories of the Christian view. I never spoke about my sister to anyone; I followed my parent's example in this stance, assuming that was what was expected. Meanwhile, I had many questions about my place in the universe: why did I recover from polio when others I knew did not? Why was my sister handicapped and I was not? Did a purpose exist for me that I would come to know? My scripture teacher became the one I could voice these questions to. She formed a small group of three of us and met with us for two years, listening and sharing with us, and easing the burdens I carried. She became my safe place and also a place of challenge to find my own particular path using the strength that she said God had given me.

Years later, at the age of twenty-seven, as I completed a degree in Religious Studies, I realized that I was also completing the cycle of searching for answers to the same questions within the same acquired framework that I had explored with my teacher all those years ago. I found that although I had shifted from silence to becoming a procedural knower (Belenky et al., 1997) in my years at the university, my educative journey was still tied to my past; I had grown older and had moved far from home to build my life in a new place, but I had brought my old story with me. It took me many years following this realization however, to understand that my search for answers had remained an outward one alone. The feeling of complete emptiness that I experienced following those three years of academic study of Christian philosophy and hermeneutic exploration was largely based in that disembodied sense of knowing that comes from studying the perspectives of others without making the meta-cognitive leap inward as part of the inquiry process. I remember as I stepped away from the comfort and safety of those years, asking myself what I had lost and naming it, faith. I saw that I had absorbed the lesson too often still perpetuated by us in the modern university: that knowledge is an accumulation of arguments and perspectives of others, and that the job of the student is to acquire as many of these as possible in order to place herself within the position of important others. The forgotten step is the connection to why we might think as we do based on our own tacit knowledge, which we seem to learn to discount in our race to present arguments that appeal to us but that are owned by others.

GATHERING LIFE EXPERIENCE TO BECOME MYSELF: SLOW BEGINNINGS

I took my emptiness and my new found ability to formulate and defend specific positions taken by experts (that I thought of as knowledge) to studies in education, where, over the five following years I completed a B. Ed and an M. Ed in special education. Along the way, I taught children who were deaf, blind and cognitively handicapped. Engaging in my studies, I learned the 'how to' of teaching; I took steps toward amassing that expert knowledge and I embraced a mechanistic worldview that I absorbed as part of becoming the efficient professional that I wanted to be. Essentially, I gave up my old questions of 'why me?' 'what is my calling?' for 'how do I

go about that?" In re-focusing my questions, I extended my pattern of seeking the "how" from knowledge experts learned in my first degree, and I left myself behind. I learned to operate like a well-oiled machine, the ultimate positivist metaphor. I lived this metaphor as I engaged in my profession of special education, and raised my children. I felt I had found answers to the questions about my place in the world through the structure of a positivist epistemology, and a way to contribute to the world through my professional life. My faith had found a home.

During those years, as a resource teacher and consultant, I employed standardized tests of ability and achievement to assess and place children who did not fit the norm of regular classroom life. Over a period of ten years and under the guise of progress, I worked to bring change as I saw it to teachers and supervisors for the betterment of students. It took me that long to begin to see that in dispensing my certain knowledge, I was losing the original purpose of my work – I was getting lost behind my own unquestioned, positivist cover story. One experience from that time speaks to my vision of myself then with clarity.

Organizer and chairperson

As chairperson of an annual provincial reading conference, I was able to invite a speaker I admired to give the keynote address. He agreed to come on the condition that he try inviting the audience to step personally into his talk rather than address them lecture-style. There were four hundred teachers in the audience when he set the stage with questions designed to initiate us into viewing our own practice as teachers, and to begin to tell ourselves our own stories of teaching and learning. The reaction was mixed: as he spoke, and in the silence of our own reflections, one third of the teachers took his invitation to leave the room if they were uncomfortable. Another third wrote on their evaluations that they were intrigued and excited by the message delivered that day. The other third, myself included, sat in some bewilderment, unsure of the task and the message that accompanied it.

It was not until I moved my family across the country for my doctoral work a number of years later, that I began to be able to name the discomfort and disconnection that I felt that day. I had my roles and structures to live by; I was mother and daughter, teacher and wife, but who was I, just me myself? I remember my thesis advisor telling me that becoming educated meant stepping out of my established roles and reacquainting myself with myself – what did I think? I found I did not know.

TAKING CHARGE OF MY OWN EDUCATIVE EXPERIENCE: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Writing about a dramatic shift in his own worldview, Egon Guba (1991) likened himself to Paul on the road to Damascus, experiencing a profound

change in the understanding of his life direction. My own metamorphosis was not sudden, but was rather a much more gradual emergence from one self to another, separate yet of the same origins. I find for me that change is most often comprised of small ah-ha! moments that culminate in a new way of seeing. Slowly, new vision percolates that lights my path and offers new direction. When I embarked on doctoral study, I engaged in a journey of (re)connection with myself through (re)visiting and (re)constructing stories from my past that cross time and situation and speak to who I am becoming in the present. I found that so many stories comprise that journey. For example, it was then that I connected the girl I was living with my sister to the teacher of special education that I was for so many years, for the first time, and I spoke the story aloud to student colleagues, which was a profound sharing from within for me. I wrote how it felt to be paralyzed on one side as a child with polio for the first time, and connected my experience to the children I had taught who could not keep up for their own reasons. My heart and soul joined my head gradually, as such (re)connections through story emerged and I came to see in a more complete way.

Paulo Friere (1973) makes a distinction that has been seminal in my changing understanding that adopting a role or many roles is not a substitute for living life connected to myself. He distinguishes between dialogue and anti-dialogue, and defines them in the following way:

Dialogue is a relation of empathy between [those] engaged in a joint search. [It is] loving, humble, hopeful, trusting, critical... it is nourished by love, humility, hope, faith, and trust... Only dialogue truly communicates... Anti-dialogue is loveless, arrogant, hopeless, mistrustful, acritical... lacking love, it ... cannot create a critical attitude. Anti-dialogue does not communicate but rather issues communiqués. (p.46)

I opened my eyes to a different way of being with my self and others as I read this passage in years past. I could see my disconnection from my own life stories. I had never viewed my own stories critically, and so had missed the meaning they held for me in the present. I found myself in the midst of a life of 'issuing communiqués,' and realized that I could not change the way I related to others without first relating to myself. I saw the separation and distance I had created from my past, and how that separation had limited my understanding of the world.

When I chose to write my doctoral dissertation using narrative, I believe I opened the door to intertwining my 'why, what and how' life questions through an exploration of my own lived experience, both personal and professional. The process was revealed as the educative journey that it has always been. I gave up my machine metaphor as I (re)connected with myself across time and situation, and I gave up my search for that expert knowledge outside myself that engaged me for so many years. Instead, I have taken a path that leads toward supporting myself in a journey to become my own authority,

using as curriculum all of my life's experiences to provide the very fertile ground for me to come to know in my own unique way.

Today I bring my evolving narrative understanding to all the relationships in my life. I am a more personal mother and companion, willing to share my formerly secret and sacred stories (Crites, 1971) with those I love. I also am able to bring my own stories to graduate students as part of our class sharing as I attempt to open doors for them to bring their life experience to bear on the subject matter we are focusing on. In a piece that Bill Pinar wrote entitled "Working From Within" (1991), he says of his own teaching,

I have knowledge of my discipline, some knowledge of my students, and self-knowledge that I am willing to share... I come ready to respond, not only as a student and teacher of my discipline, but as a person... I must be willing to disclose my thoughts and feelings... if I am to hope that the discipline that is significant for me will also be significant for [them]. (p. 9)

This quotation describes the way I have worked with graduate students over the past number of years, and also the way I choose to live in the relationships in my life. In Parker Palmer's (2000) words, I "let my life speak" where in years gone by I let expert knowledge I had amassed but had not made my own, speak. I continue to journey on, relating what I learn to my own experience from the past, (re)interpreting as I go. Sometimes I fall off the path I have come to know so well. I still forget. But I know to use that backward, forward, inward and outward pattern of story and its subsequent awakening to regain my footing as I strive to inform my own future direction guided by my own educative experience.

REFERENCES

- Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1997). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice and mind*. New York: BasicBooks.
- Castaneda, C. (1987). *The power of silence*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Clandinin, D. J. & Connelly, F. M. (1994). Personal experience methods. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research in the social sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Clandinin, D. J. & Connelly, F. M. (1995). *Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Crites, S. (1971). The narrative quality of experience. *American Academy of Religion Journal*, 39, 3, 291-311.
- Dillard, A. (1987). *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Friere, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York: Continuum.
- Guba, E. (1991). What happened to me on the road to Damascus. In L. Heshusius & K. Ballard (Eds.), *From positivism to interpretivism and beyond*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Palmer, P. (2000). *Let your life speak*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Pinar, W.F. (1991). *Autobiography, politics and sexuality: Essays in curriculum theory 1972-1992*. New York: Peter Lang.

CARMEN SHIELDS is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Nipissing University, teaching in the area of curriculum studies in graduate education. Her research work is in the area of narrative inquiry and phenomenology. Research interests include topics in gender and feminist studies, personal story and links to curriculum development. She is currently in the third year of a SSHRC program of research studying aspects of faculty belonging in faculties of education across the country.

CARMEN SHIELDS est professeure agrégée à la faculté d'éducation de l'Université Nipissing où elle enseigne dans le secteur des études de programmes en enseignement du deuxième cycle universitaire. Son travail de recherche est axé sur la recherche narrative et la phénoménologie. Ses intérêts portent sur les études féministes et de genre, les récits personnels et les liens avec l'élaboration de programmes. Elle en est maintenant à sa troisième année d'un programme de recherche du CRSH portant sur les aspects de l'appartenance à une faculté dans les facultés d'enseignement d'un bout à l'autre du Canada.

PIONEERS PAST AND PRESENT: CURRICULUM INSIGHTS FROM STORIES THAT LINK THROUGH GENERATIONS

GAIL M. LINDSAY *York University*
IN COLLABORATION WITH J. W. D. BJARNASON

ABSTRACT. Stories that were written by my grandfather at the turn of the 20th century spiraled into my daily life as a nurse-teacher at the turn of the 21st century. In this paper, I explore a common plotline of my Afi (Icelandic for grandfather) and me as pioneers by linking his life stories to the tensions I experience in my contemporary professional worklife. Our narratives intersect, crossing generations with stories that illuminate for me ways to understand these tensions as a faculty member and curriculum-maker.

**LES PIONNIERS DE PASSÉ ET DU PRÉSENT : PERTINENCE POUR LES PROGRAMMES
D'ÉTUDES DES HISTOIRES TRAVERSANT LES GÉNÉRATIONS**

RÉSUMÉ. Des récits rédigés par mon grand-père au tournant du XXe siècle refont surface dans mon quotidien d'infirmière-enseignante au tournant du XXIe siècle. Dans ce document, j'explore une intrigue commune mettant en scène mon Afi (grand-père en islandais) et moi-même comme pionniers en établissant un lien entre les récits de la vie de mon grand-père et les tensions que je ressens dans ma vie professionnelle contemporaine. Nos récits s'entrecroisent et franchissent les générations en me révélant des moyens de comprendre ces tensions à titre de professeure et de conceptrice de programmes.

In this article, I explore my work at an urban Ontario university as a nurse-teacher in the twenty-first century, through connections to my Afi's (grandfather's) stories of being an early 20th century pioneer in rural Manitoba. My grandfather wrote his autobiography in 1997-1998 in his 89th and 90th years at the same time that I was writing my doctoral thesis. He mailed eight school scribbles to me, noting in the flyleaf of one that he often wrote his stories when Amma (my grandmother) was away with friends playing cards. In the midst of planning a fall visit to my grandparents, after my own writing on healthcare reform for registered nurses (Lindsay, 2001) was completed, I turned my attention to transcribing Afi's scribbles into a book-form. Yet, as I wrote, an unanticipated response arose within me; I knew that Afi's stories and my relationship to them were not finished.

In September 2002, my father, my siblings, and I visited Afi in Arborg, the farming town of his birth, where he had moved when Amma was admitted to hospital in the city. At my first glance of him, I was surprised. His body was much smaller than I remembered, his skin paper-thin, and his face encircled with a bandage from ear surgery. He looked like an Icelandic elf, a *huldafolk*. I gave him his book while reminding him of stories he had written. In one story about his childhood when skiing on a barrel stave, he landed face first in a snow bank. In a later story involving his friend John, he stood at the end of a sidewalk plank and stepped off when John stepped on the other end. Afi laughed out loud with delight, and leafed through the pages of his book.

One evening in January of 2003, after spending a day with my cousin Brant and his wife Cathy, Afi peacefully slept into death. Once more, my thoughts turned toward his scribbles and stories. The deep resonance I had felt when I first typed Afi's stories returned anew. As I combed through his stories, retold in different places with new details added each time, Afi's memoirs came together. Working with his words and my memories intact, I shaped his stories into narratives with beginnings, middles and ends, thereby extending our connection and bringing his life forward into mine.

I paid attention to the parallels between Afi's experiences and my own. Though generations apart and from very different lives, one of everyday survival in a rural setting and the other of academic survival in an urban university, I found Afi's stories instructive in dealing with and talking about the tensions occurring in my professional life now. As a nurse-teacher, I approached my work narratively (Lindsay & Smith, 2003). I wrote about my experiences to make sense of them, to see ways to live through these increasingly painful events. In this paper, I examine exemplars from these work tensions, the faculty relationships and the program curriculum that gave rise to them. I show how these exemplars and my Afi's stories are interwoven. Exploring experience in this way reveals for me the layers of curriculum at work in nursing education.

I approach this inquiry with awareness of "relational responsibility" (Clanlin & Connelly, 2000, p. 177). While reconstructing what happened in my faculty peer group and what my part in it was, I recognize that this inquiry represents my interpretation of these events and, therefore, is a partial understanding of the situation. Other organizational layers underpin these events, but will not be told in this paper. My focus is primarily on the relevant nurse-teacher relationships, and our curriculum building process.

As I reread Afi's stories after he died, my grief for what was happening in my workplace and for my grandfather intersected. Afi loved that I was a teacher. He called me "professor" and encouraged my continuing educa-

tion. His own story of schooling partially illustrates where his values and attitudes originated.

When I started school, it was a one room schoolhouse that later became a four room schoolhouse, which I worked on when I was 14. We mixed the mortar for Brinki Bjornson, the plasterer, and I finished my grade X with honours that season. Then the following year the school board dropped grade XI so there was no more education. My parents were too poor to send me to Teulon each day for my grade eleven as the fare for both ways was 35 cents per day. Since I would have to leave at 7 in the a.m. and be home at 7 p.m. in the evening, maybe it was too much time away from home. That was the end of my education.

Oh, how I wished I could have had an education. When talking to the people we associate with, it's somehow hard to understand at times as they are so educated and can converse about so many things. It makes one feel as if you do not belong, so we just keep our place and be polite to one and all. We are not as well educated as the others, schoolteachers, nurses and retired government workers. I feel a little out of their class, so we just keep silent most of the time, and feel proud to be able to say, "I did it my way". Now it's time to close the chapter on the past, and live with the future, which is ahead, how long is not for me to say.

In July 1999, I joined a newly developed Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) program. Moving beyond part-time management and part-time teaching positions, I felt that I was entering the most satisfying time in my nursing career. Yet, as is expected with new programs, the change brought an endless learning curve and increasing demands for creativity in developing new courses, immediately beginning them with students, and concurrently developing other courses for the next semesters. It was also a busy time for me in other ways. A small group of us on faculty designed and led an international conference, *Creating Healing Spaces* (2000). We believed in this concept and felt it was congruent with our philosophy as nurse educators of valuing "lived experience." Also, by the time I completed my second year in this collaborative undergraduate nursing program, I had successfully defended my doctoral dissertation on nurses' experience in healthcare reform. As a member of our Collaborative BScN faculty, I felt like a pioneer. I had helped shape the new nursing curriculum and had participated in policy development for this program delivered at our university and college partner sites. While some of these activities came to a close along the way, the work of designing my own approaches to teaching-learning and research, ones that complimented our phenomenological philosophy had been ongoing.

Each year since 1999 we increased our faculty complement and student numbers. Each year I felt the shift from being involved in everything with a few other colleagues, to sharing the load with many. By the summer of my 3rd year, I was digging deeper and deeper into my "root cellar" in search of nourishment that would allow me to continue. I moved from imagining

that when we had achieved a steady compliment of student and faculty numbers things would be different, to cautiously wondering if I could live through each new day with whatever it brought. I shifted from short-term crisis mode to thinking about my stamina and about maintaining my energy for the long haul.

A small group of colleagues and I worked long hours every day, and despite some conflicts, I felt closest to heaven on earth during this time in my professional life. In reflecting on Afi's memoirs, I recalled that my grandfather had written a similar story.

After managing the Leland Hotel, I was Office Manager for the Associated Anaesthetists of Winnipeg and I just could not believe how nice it is to work from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. I was so fortunate to have the farm near Riverton where I visited when I was a boy. I could not get home soon enough to spend the weekend in the country, to repair, fix up the sheds and clean up the grounds of limbs and branches. I was in my glory doing that, and after dark I would light the pile of shrubs and watch them till the embers were turning to ashes, the full moon shining above and everything was so still and quiet. It was heaven on earth.

A few years ago, one spring morning, the sun was on the horizon and I decided to drive to the sandy shore. The weather was mild and the snow and ice had melted for about twenty feet out to where ice met the water, and while standing there, I heard this sound like chimes in the distance. I thought I had left my radio on in the car so I investigated and the radio was not on. So back I went and I could still hear the sound of chimes. Wondering what's making that sound and looking to where it's coming from, I saw that the water was only three or four inches deep at the shore. The ice had shifted towards land and the porous ice had formed icicles and they were crystal clear, close to the ice where it had stranded. There was a slight breeze and the ripple on the water made the icicles bump against one another and this was where the chimes were coming from. Nature was playing them for me to hear and this was the only time I ever heard them.

In the fall of my third year in the new collaborative BScN program, and while pondering how to construct my life as a nursing scholar in the face of relentless daily demands, two major projects that faculty had undertaken were brought to school meetings. The first embodied our dreams of developing a masters program and the second focused on obtaining funding for a research center. At this meeting a maelstrom of issues, emotions, and conflicts arose as these two issues magnetized, collected, and exposed intense feelings, perceptions, and events that had obviously been silently unfolding. These heightened reactions continued, and threatened to explode all over us. They called into question the core of all that we had worked for: our philosophy of valuing lived experience and multiple perspectives, our belief in creating healing spaces, and the development of our practical foundations. Sub-groups polarized around projects, and debates surfaced about faculty membership

and their modes of inquiry. While I felt my own sorrow and anger rise in response to this situation, suffering seemed evident on all sides. Though my fuse was short, when one of my peers gave advice on how to structure my winter course, I did not express the resentment I felt, nor did I ask questions that would clarify comments offered. Rather, I went silent, similar to my Afi's earlier story of education.

In addition to these many painful events, a number of other stressful activities loomed on an already bleak horizon: the annual arrival of fall semester students in large numbers, the moving ahead of our masters program proposal, the detailed preparation for a national and professional program accreditation process, and the integration of yet another new group of full-time faculty. While each responsibility affected me personally, each also led me to wonder about us as a faculty, and as a collective. What impact would all these tensions would have on our working relationships, I asked myself. Mirrored in Afi's experiences were lessons that offered new ways for me to understand my feelings.

There was that day in the duck marsh near the farmhouse – it was a perfect fall day, calm and bright, when I sat in my duck boat, a Newfoundland canvas covered dingy, with reeds all around me. I noticed this Green-winged Teal come flying by, and suddenly a streak of blue-black seemed to come from above, and I heard the thud when the Peregrine Falcon hit it in the air and flew away with it in its claws. It was an amazing sight as a few feathers drifted in the air.

From Afi's story, I realized that we are all inter-related, and I understood that what happens to one has consequences for all. In these accounts, Afi taught me that there were no good guys and no right positions. In an attempt to protect myself in my situation, however, I wanted to identify with the Teal, but in doing so I was ignoring my own defensiveness in the face of change and my history of smoothing over tensions and of withdrawing in the face of conflict, a topic I had written about elsewhere (Lindsay, in press). My "good person" story of myself led me to assure myself that I would not act like the aggressor. Yet, I had to admit that when threatened, I could readily be the falcon on the hunt. In his time, Afi was likely out in his boat to shoot ducks, an action that implicates him with the Falcon just as I am implicated in faculty dynamics that I do not like. Afi's actions in shooting ducks for food arose from family history of hunting in the early 1900s. Hunting birds and animals in that time might be considered akin to grocery shopping today. Indeed, seeing my grandfather's stories as meaningful in his time and context lead me to wonder if my colleagues' words and actions, along with my own, arose from our individual narrative histories in our time and context.

Now, in late winter of 2004, I find that in my work as a nurse-teacher, I am living in-between. As a newly tenured faculty member, I am on the cusp of

my first sabbatical and an open future. Reflections on the past five years lead me to understand that being part of a new university program, developing courses, policies and practices in a small group of peers, sharing the terror and the accomplishments, is coming to completion as our program has recently (June 2003) been granted a 7-year accreditation by a national nursing education professional association. For those of us who felt instrumental in designing this baccalaureate program, this award pleased us immensely; our efforts were validated. Yet, as we celebrated, it seemed, from my perspective, to outrage those who felt things needed to be done differently and who perhaps had hoped that this external review would name or expose shortcomings. The continued jostling at meetings and over e-mail essentially deconstructs what has been achieved and established. Each of us brings our own unique narratives of experience to bear on what matters and on what should be done. We are apart still; a new story has not yet been shaped.

Language becomes a code for polarized positions, alignments and judgments on our history. Terms, such as “human science” that once held a neutral philosophical nursing history, have become loaded with personal meanings that raise comments about a specific nursing theory, a theorist, and those who espouse this particular worldview. Our conflicting assumptions about what the term includes or excludes only serve to build walls further between us. As such loaded terms emerge in faculty discussions, I see that words have lost their meanings and now fail to foster understanding. My feelings of anger, belatedly named, rise in my body, as my neck and shoulders ache and lock in tension. Words of criticism surge inside, and I wish to isolate myself from the whole situation to figure out what is going on and how I can be a person in this painful environment. A labour of love is being undone, and my grief takes me back to Afi’s words when he faced an irreversible personal loss.

I think I never mentioned what I am about to write, and that is when I was twelve years old and stood beside the bed and watched my eight-year old brother Marno die. We did things together, like get a partridge with a slingshot for dinner because we were poor, and very often we had a bird or even a rabbit for supper. Mother knew how to cook them so that they were very tasty. It was April and the weather was changeable. My brother got pneumonia and after two weeks the doctor could do no more. I remember having a dream of a big pure white horse coming down from the sky and he stopped in front of my brother and me, and he took Marno on his back and off into the sky. It looked and felt so real and a day or two later, the white horse arrived. I stood beside his bed as he passed away. And then I pulled the sheet over him.

I wonder what to do, now that this story I helped to create is ending? How do I conduct myself when “the sheet is being pulled over” important events and relationships? I worry about the impact on our curriculum by these faculty goings-on. Then, it comes to mind that these different worldviews are not new. All along, our narratives have been an invisible curriculum.

I wonder if bringing these differing perspectives more clearly into view would open conversations on how to work together. Like my Afi's dream of the white horse taking his brother away, my dream of creating healing spaces through a curriculum that values lived experience was also taken away. My sabbatical time awaits, promising me respite and peace from the sense of loss in relationships. As I hope for a more restorative time, I turn my energies to writing this paper as a way of navigating the shoals and the darkness of the grief I feel so deeply. And yet, I wonder, is the hope I feel toward my sabbatical an assumption, a way of "pulling a sheet" over my head too? While Afi's story lingers in my reflections, Annie Dillard's words also come to mind,

When you write, you lay out a line of words. The line of words is a miner's pick, a wood-carver's gouge, a surgeon's probe. You wield it, and it digs a path you follow. Soon you find yourself deep in new territory. Is it a dead end, or have you located the real subject? You will know tomorrow, or this time next year. . . . The writing has changed, in your hands, and in a twinkling, from an expression of your notions to an epistemological tool. The new place interests you because it is not clear. (1989, p. 3)

The plotline for me amidst all of these tensions is embedded in questions: how am I in relationship with my colleagues and with my work life; how are we, as colleagues and educators, in relationship with each other and with our social milieu (Lindsay, 2004)? Based on my insights from reflections on Afi's stories and my own, I imagine each of us in this work situation participating according to our own narratives and narrative histories. I expect that our autobiographies will come into play along with personal meanings from our individual past experiences. I envision that we have a choice, either to replicate and reify our protective interpretations and perpetuate the separations already in place, or we can reframe the situation so that new endings may be possible.

The value to thinking narratively reveals to me the knowledge that I can claim about the situation and my personal assumptions. However, this distinction about knowledge brings me up short – how much of what I "know" is simply a mirror of what I already believe to be true? If a story can be told from each person's perspective, what new information can be revealed? Can alternate plotlines be constructed, depending on how the "facts" are interpreted? In my colleagues' viewpoints, I detect a wish for the inclusion of what matters to them – clinical practice, a particular theory to guide the curriculum, accepting faculty with non-nursing degrees, and different research models. Experientially-based lenses can frame and colour interpretations of a situation and render a person credible, whether they are accepted or not. Personal and social narratives intersect in situations, giving the situation a complexity filled with multiple possibilities that can influence the ongoing community or grand narrative we faculty were subject to. If I believe that

my story offers the only lens to this situation, then much detail leading to understanding could be missed. My Afi's stories brought me the much needed wisdom to enlarge my perspective beyond my own interpretation of the events.

Canadian novelist Sharon Butala wrote in *Perfection of the morning* (1994) about a time when she lay on the Saskatchewan grassland, shutting off her internal chatter, and mingling her awareness with the prairie life,

You have to be still and quiet for these things to happen; you have to release your expectations; you have to stop thinking you already know things, or know how to categorize them, or that the world has already been explained and you know those explanations. You know nothing. You understand nothing. You have only what your own body tells you and only your own experience from which to make judgments. You may have misunderstood; you may be wrong. Teach me, is what you should say, and, I am listening. Approach the world as a child seeing it for the first time. Remember wonder. In a word: humility. Then things come to you as they did not when you thought you knew. (1994, p. 129)

A hope rises within me; I want to share these words with colleagues at work, let them know there is a message in here for them. Then, I pause, and wonder how this is a lesson for me. How would I be different in my situation if I approached relationships saying, 'Teach me; I am listening.' Each of us brings our autobiographies to every situation. Each autobiography brings plotlines that intersect. Suddenly, I realize that reflecting on the autobiographical context of this situation creates space, a new curriculum space perhaps, for me to understand how my narrative intersects with others'. The two curriculums—the formal and the invisible – finally meet as one. An email I sent to my practicum co-lead teachers in the spring of 2004 captures my awareness:

I just wanted to share a few morning thoughts... yesterday when you talked about the workload for next fall (three courses to teach, preparation for winter practicum, chairing Council) I was struck by how much work that is and how it sounds like too much!!! And then later, I realized that last fall I taught three courses, prepared for practicum and chaired Council. What hits me is how taken-for-granted this workload is. I am not valorizing myself – I am thinking about what is routinely expected and accomplished and largely invisible. It goes a long way to suggesting why getting to our research might be a tad difficult. Sigh! (E-mail, April 1, 2004)

Previously unseen connections between my experience and my colleague's concern for the future open me to the possibility of relationship. In this vein, I think back to Afi's story of the falcon as the hunter and it leads me to reflect on an email I sent to Jenny (pseudonym), a colleague. Jenny admitted being in information overload and not having responded to a curriculum planning document approved in January that she now sees as causing problems. Emily (pseudonym), another colleague, and I prepared

this document, so I respond by resending the materials emailed in December that invited faculty input and participation. Thus, my response to Jenny is defensive, with the intention of showing how Emily and I am not at fault, and I reject seeing the merits to Jenny's point about overload (see e-mail above!). In this example, I notice my embodied responses to people, places and events of daily life, and I conceptualize our narratives as touching and clashing. So, what do I make of all this reporting about e-mails? It shows a level of expectation of my colleagues and myself that we, as faculty, then transfer onto students, who also repeatedly tell us that they too are overloaded, and that too many assignments reduce their learning. Our teacher workload stories play out between us and are transferred to students. Do we then feel inadequate because we cannot keep up? Does a fear of being found lacking translate into defensive anger and withdrawal?

My body responds to these demands by expanding, tensing, sighing. How does this impact on my students? I return to Dewey's (1929) argument that the split between theory and practice, means and ends, is damaging to human life as it impedes social reconstruction. Dewey reminds us that

Full education comes only when there is a responsible share on the part of each person, in proportion to capacity, in shaping the aims and policies of the social groups to which he belongs (p. 209)...When the liberation of capacity no longer seems a menace to organization and established institutions...making a living economically speaking, will be at one with making a life that is worth living. (p. 211)

As I work to make a life worth living, I see that our stories of being nurse-teachers intersect with each other and with students' ongoing stories of becoming nurses. And, our stories play out in clinical situations with colleagues (Schwind, 2003) and also with those in our care. How can we then "liberate" ourselves from these narrative tensions to shape our situation as a healing space? Students in clinical practice settings often bring to their nursing narrative notes and conversations stories of their conflicts with staff nurses, healthcare team members, and with patients. Their experiences resonate with my stories of faculty life. Whether we realize it or not as educators, these encounters and our ways of working through them, are also a part of the living nursing curriculum. Indeed, as Connelly and Clandinin (1988) wrote, our relationships and life experience are the process and content of our curriculum, and for me, are the basis of our social significance.

Thus, what matters to curriculum discussions is more than the discipline content. The fullest development of the nurse-teacher "as a person who is aware of how she functions in a situation" directly informs, as Peplau (1952, p. xii) said, "the kind of person each nurse-teacher becomes, and in turn, makes a substantial difference to the curriculum that each student nurse will learn" as s/he is taught throughout her/his experience. Reflection on and reconstruction of my personal and social experience in connection

to my grandfather's stories underpins my curriculum. Afi's narratives help me over time to understand my work experiences, and suggest to me that disagreement and connection are both possible in problematic situations. Annie Dillard's observations also come to mind once more, "the world is as glorious as ever, and exalting, but for credibility's sake let's start with the bad news" (1999, p. 8). It is tempting to put a Hollywood ending on my story, to make it tidy or happy; or, to stay with the certain, expert, cover story (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995), but that would not reflect my learning about the dialectical power of narrative and autobiography. Afi's stories included the falcon, death, loss and grief as well as splendour and solace in nature. Yet, after more than 9 decades of life's bittersweet experiences, he still had hope for relationships:

When I leave I want to hear the breeze and the rustle of the leaves as I walk through them and commune with nature, geese ducks, crows, gulls and birds of various kinds. So if you come looking, that's where you'll find me – with a straw between my teeth. I'll be waiting for everyone. Who knows maybe the good Lord will let me put the kettle on and we'll have tea. God bless everyone. (Bjarnason, 1997-8)

I come to the end of my text knowing that how I interact with faculty colleagues underpins my daily life and impacts on our curriculum. Yet, what haunts my thinking is the possibility that we will, rather than become a faculty community through dialogue about each other's narratives, stay within our autobiographically plotlines, leaving no openings for learning and change. My commitment to thinking narratively, which is made transparent in my writing, is a practice as well as a theory. I fall back daily into the narrative-in-progress that is my life and remember this is also true for my colleagues and students.

My grandfather's stories live on and weave through my life and my work every day, guiding me through the many challenges I face as an educator and as a human being. There are many more of his stories to learn from as I move on.

(John Wallace Duncan Bjarnason, June 3, 1909 – January 18, 2003).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

An earlier version of this paper was presented to faculty colleagues at Scholarly Conversations in the School of Nursing, York University, in June 2004.

REFERENCES

- Bjarnason, J. W. D. (1997-1998). *Memories*. Winnipeg: Author. (unpublished manuscript)
- Butala, S. (1994). *The perfection of the morning: An apprenticeship in nature*. Toronto: HarperCollins.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (Eds.). (1995). *Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1988). *Teachers as curriculum planners: Narratives of experience*. Toronto: OISE Press.
- Dewey, J. (1929). *The quest for certainty*. New York: Minton Balch.
- Dillard, A. (1989). *The writing life*. New York: HarperPerennial.
- Dillard, A. (1999). *For the time being*. Toronto: Penguin Books.
- Lindsay, G. (2001). *Nothing personal? Narrative reconstruction of registered nurses' experience in healthcare reform*. Unpublished thesis, OISE/University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- Lindsay, G., & Smith, F. (2003). Narrative inquiry in a nursing practicum. *Nursing Inquiry*, 10(2), 121-129.
- Lindsay, G. (2004). As others see us: How nurses are conceptualized in healthcare reform literature. *Canadian Nurse*, 100(7), 16-20.
- Lindsay, G. (2006). Constructing a nursing identity: Reflecting on and reconstructing experience. *Reflective Practice*, 7(1).
- Peplau, H. (1952). *Interpersonal relations in nursing*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- Schwind, J. K. (2003). Reflective process in the study of illness stories as experienced by three nurse teachers. *Reflective Practice*, 4(1), 19-32.

GAIL LINDSAY is a nurse-teacher who is interested in how students, teachers, and their autobiographies are in relationship with other practitioners and those receiving care in healthcare situations. She contributes to a science of nursing education by thinking narratively about people and events, over time, in diverse settings.

J.W.D. BJARNASON was an artist, an observer of nature and Gail's grandfather. His stories of being a pioneer illuminate Gail's experience in a new collaborative nursing program.

GAIL LINDSAY est une infirmière-enseignante qui s'intéresse à la façon dont les étudiants, les enseignants et leurs récits de vie sont liés aux autres intervenants et à ceux qui reçoivent des soins de santé. Elle contribue à une science de l'enseignement infirmier en envisageant de raconter les gens et les événements sur une certaine période et dans différents contextes.

J.W.D. BJARNASON était un artiste, observateur de la nature et grand-père de Gail. Ses récits de pionnier enrichissent l'expérience de Gail dans un nouveau programme de sciences infirmières coopératif.

NARRATIVE RESEARCH AND FEMINIST KNOWING: A POSTSTRUCTURAL READING OF WOMEN'S LEARNING IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

LEONA M. ENGLISH *St. Francis Xavier University*

ABSTRACT. This paper reports on qualitative research with 8 board members and 8 directors of women's social action organizations. A poststructural reading of the narrative data gives voice to an undertheorized aspect of humanist relational learning in women's organizations and makes visible the power-relations. The power relationships are explored and shown to be an integral part of how women learn and lead, challenging the usual reading of women as kind, caring and uncomplicated. Through the medium of narrative, this research explores women's learned practices of resistance, and offers a paradoxical view of relational learning that attends to the ethic of care as well as to power relations. Implications for the education of women are drawn

LA RECHERCHE NARRATIVE ET LES ACQUIS FÉMINISTES :
LECTURE POSTSTRUCTURELLE DE L'APPRENTISSAGE DES FEMMES DANS DES
ORGANISMES COMMUNAUTAIRES

RÉSUMÉ. Ce document fait état de la recherche qualitative réalisée auprès de huit membres de conseils d'administration et de huit directeurs d'organismes d'action sociale voués aux femmes. Une lecture poststructurelle des données narratives dévoile un aspect de l'apprentissage relationnel humaniste dans les organisations de femmes, sur lequel très peu de théories ont été élaborées, et souligne les rapports de force. Les rapports de force sont explorés et apparaissent comme partie intégrante de la manière d'apprendre et de diriger des femmes, ce qui vient remettre en question la perception habituelle de bonté, de bienveillance et de simplicité des femmes. Au moyen de la narration, cette recherche examine les pratiques de résistance apprises par les femmes et propose une vision paradoxale de l'apprentissage relationnel qui participe tant à l'éthique de la bienveillance qu'aux rapports de force. Nous pouvons y constater les répercussions sur la formation des femmes.

“Don't say in the years to come that you would have lived your life differently if only you had heard this story. You've heard it now” (p. 60), says Thomas King (2003), in the Massey Lectures, aired on Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) radio. And indeed, you will hear women tell how they

lead and learn in social action organizations. This article is an attempt to relate their experiences of being part of community based organizations that strive for justice, security, and learning opportunities for women. Whereas the contemporary adult learning and education literature stereotypes women's learning as relational (Fletcher, 1998), caring and connected (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986), and inclusive (MacKeracher, 2004), there is insufficient attention to the complex ways in which women learn to be community developers, teachers, and community activists. The common perception of women as caring and connected leads to an almost simplified portrayal of their learning as homogenous, uncomplicated, and harmonious (Hayes & Flannery, 2000). This study looks at what the women say about their learning experiences in the nonformal learning arena, and then analyses this learning in terms of its importance for educational practice.

I came to this research as a feminist and as a member, both past and present, of feminist organizations such as those represented in the research. I am deeply committed to women's learning and leading in the community. I am simultaneously drawn to feminist research, to telling stories and analyzing them, and deepening our collective understanding of how women learn. To paraphrase Thomas King (2003), I am committed to living my life differently because I have heard women's stories of learning. Here are some of the stories.

METHOD/METHODOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS

This study focused on women's social action organizations in eastern Canada, and included interviews with 8 directors and assistant directors (minimally paid) and 8 board members (volunteers) to explore how they negotiate the structure and culture of their own organizations, which include members and funding bodies, as well as how they learn to be "good" board members and feminists. The organizations are feminist in orientation and range from women's centers, anti-violence agencies, transition houses for victims of violence, to women's counseling services. The organizations offer support, education and protection for women, as well as a safe space for them to gather, dialogue and provide mutual support to each other. Some of the organizations provide a drop-in center, others have libraries, and others provide emergency housing. The general structure consists of a paid director, one or two paid staff members, a volunteer board of about 10 members, and in the case of the women's resource centers, members outside this structure who pay fees to support the activities of the organization. The women interviewed range in age from 25-60 and have been involved from a minimum of 1 year to a maximum of 25 years (the median length of involvement was 5 years). Four of the board members are no longer serving on the board but are still attached to the organization. Of the 16 interviews, 4 were done by

email, 4 in person, and 8 by telephone. The research asks about whether relational, caring and feminine are adequate descriptors of these women's interrelationships.

THEORETICAL FRAMING

The theoretical framing of this inquiry occurs at the intersection of several frames of thought, the first of which is a feminist reading of the literature on women's learning. The feminist reading suggests that learning by males and females differs and yet, gender stereotypes do not apply (see Alcott & Potter, 1993). This feminist reading can, without intending to, perpetuate the notion that women are kind and caring and men are logical and unemotional in their relationships. The second theoretical underpinning is poststructuralism, which positions the study as a challenge to everyday readings of women's learning as united in voice and cause, and uncritically caring. Rather than focus on a list of gender differences, poststructuralism "informs an analysis of how women experience and express shifting identities that reflect multiple social influences" (Hayes & Flannery, 2000; Ryan, 2001). Poststructuralism is concerned with the nexus of discourse, power and knowledge and how these intersect (Hughes, 2000). It draws on the work of Foucault (1977, 1978) and his emphasis on the ubiquity of power and resistance. In the case of this research, poststructuralism allows the researcher to look at the dynamics of power in women's relationships.

The third theoretical underpinning is narrative as a way of uncovering the stories of the women who are involved. In many ways this research develops and supports the use of narrative and poststructuralism, which have been applied together in few instances in education (e.g., Blumenreich, 2004; Johnson, 2001), and even fewer instances with feminist theory (the work of Chapman, 2003, and Tisdell, 1998, are somewhat of an exception). In this article the narratives are interpreted and analysed, treated as data that can be coded to highlight women's lives and learning.

Although it is not intended to speak for all women, the dominant humanistic relational learning theory in education (Belenky et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982; MacKeracher, 2004) stands as an alternative to the masculine bias in many theories of growth and intellect. Yet, much of this relational theory is premised on the notion that women grow and develop best in connection and that this will foster empathy, vulnerability, and participation. Guided by these frameworks, the researcher attempts to complicate the learning relationships of women in nonprofit social action situations by focusing on the factors that affect their learning to be members and factors that affect their functioning.

NARRATING THE FEMININE

The geographic setting

One of the conceptual tools that Foucault provides is a 5-part grid to use in the analysis of power. The first aspect of the grid is a recognition of the differentiation of the legal, traditional, and economic conditions which enable or bring power relations into play (Foucault, 1982; Marshall, 1990). Of these three conditions, the economic seems to be the most significant in this study. The poor to working class economic status of the region enabled the exercise of power in the women's narratives. The women, directors and board members, were living in the Atlantic region of Canada, in an area that is primarily rural and which has fiscal and social challenges such as illiteracy, lack of jobs, and inadequate housing. Consequently, the women who were interviewed for the study invariably reported that they were concerned with looking for government funding to support their centers, create employment, provide pre-employment counseling and education, initiate literacy programs, and help women in their struggles with government bureaucracy. The greatest learnings for many of them were the degree of reliance on government, the social and economic effects of the local environment, and the amount of good will and collaboration involved in being active. Yet, the reality of the situation produced effects. So, it is not surprising that one of the board members, a woman in her 40s who has been a board member for 10 years, identifies her specific geographic locatedness as contributing to conflict in the organization. In describing her women's center, she tells of how there is

not a lot of room for overtime pay, a lot of restrictions because women put in too much and sometimes don't get paid money. This causes some friction in that they expect others to do the same thing. Then you're accused of being less. There is an underlying belief among male-dominated government funders that women's organizations need less money because women will pick up the slack. This overwork and underpay can cause jealousy, feeling unequal, and that you are being treated differently. Our experience at the [women's organization] was that we left exhausted. Even the staff were jaded, beaten down by the system.

She is pointing out here how government power in the form of underfunding, creeps into the organization, causing women to overwork and then be difficult in relating to each other. The omnipresent power that is part of their relationships causes some of the women to be jealous and to resent some of the other women. In a similar vein, a board member of another organization reports a similar phenomenon: "Some women guilt others into taking on things that they cannot handle nor do they want to handle. They can 'guilt' women into volunteering, even to self-detriment-financial and stress-wise." So involvement in a center that supports women's learning to be board members, good citizens and volunteers becomes complex and leaves some members disenfranchised and resentful of others. This process serves

in many ways as a “dividing practice” that sorts or classifies the good from the bad members (see Ball, 1990).

Yet, there is a consistent note of optimism in the participants’ voices, affected to a strong degree by their commitment to the organization, which in some cases has been for more than 25 years. Power, exercised here in the form of guilt, produced a desire in this board member to directly acknowledge the guilt trips and to actively resist them by saying no. The resistance in this female board member was formed precisely at the point where power was exercised by another (Brookfield, 2001). This power and its resistances are a form of agency and produce positive effects in the women who resist it. In this sense, the dynamics of the organization are complicated and not defeatist. The learning is about how to cope, resist power with power, and to work for opportunities for other women. Instead of being docile bodies, in a Foucauldian sense (1978) women embody resistance and produce a discourse of dissent.

Discussion and “talking things through”

The second dimension of Foucault’s (1982) 5-part power analysis grid is an awareness of the “types of objectives pursued intentionally by those who act upon the actions of others” (Marshall, 1990, p. 24). In this study, it became clear that the main objective of the directors and the board members was to be feminist and participatory in decision making and leadership practices. In practice, this took the form of informal invitations to join the board, shared leadership of the chairing of meetings, and the use of the circle as a seating arrangement. The board typically meets once a month, during which the members are involved in a variety of informal learning activities: how to chair a meeting, how to apply for funding, how to organize a women’s event (e.g., Take Back the Night March). Given this particular structure of informal learning and inclusion, talking about issues of power and conflict was difficult for both board members and directors/ leaders.

The directors, by and large, saw themselves as problem solvers who describe the resolution of conflict in a relational way. One director in her 50s who talked about her many years with the organization and her own leadership style, described how she encouraged members and staff to deal with conflict:

We talk it out and we discuss issues when they come up. Personally, I feel that healthy organizations do have conflict. I feel that conflict occurs when there is a difference of opinion or when others feel that they do not have a voice. When I experience conflict, I like to address it in a respectful way. If it is a conflict between a colleague and myself I will sit down and talk to them about how I am feeling. I feel that conflict must be addressed in order for someone to feel respected and safe in an organization. I don’t know how conflict is dealt with in other organizations in the community.

That sometimes makes women's organizations challenging places because there is an upfrontness about problems and a seemingly endless willingness to talk things through. The production of this regime of truth about women as relational learners is producing two connected yet contradictory effects: on the one hand, it reinforces the power of feminism and of women having voice, yet on the other hand it produces a truth effect that women are essentially relational. The latter universalizes the experience of women and learning, and further contributes to women's isolation and separateness. It also produces a form of self-surveillance in that women are "encouraged" to voice concerns but in ways that are conducive to conflict resolution. There is an established discourse around who voices what discord, and which voices are listened to. Women who know they will be heard exercise more voice, others exercise the self-discipline of restraint.

Yet, not all board members share the view that conflict is negotiated and decisions are consensual. Most would say there is consensus or as one woman put it, we "agree to disagree sometimes." On occasion women's organizations choose not to make a policy since it will be too divisive, "such as whether men can participate or not." One board member, who resigned after 5 years on the board, talked about how she experienced the negotiation of conflict:

I gave up because as far as I was concerned, it was top down. We had become like a men's organization, very patriarchal. The director used to say to us at board meetings – "You the board are my boss," which was really disingenuous since we all knew she made all the decisions. And, then again I don't blame her in many ways – she was right there on site all day and she had a lot of day-to-day decisions to make – it made more sense but it really made me resentful at meetings. We, as a board, support, not direct, staff. So rather than fight it, I just left when my term was up.

With the use of the dominant discourse of consensus, sharing, and collegiality, a regime of truth was produced that served to further structures of power, albeit in this case a power that produced services (potentially not the most effective services) for community women. There is a contradiction built into feminist organizations. Whereas relational learning and feminism are about supporting voice, as one board member notes, "If you allow people to have their say, it can't be warm and fuzzy." And, as she points out, "At my age, I don't want warm and fuzzy; I want honesty." This statement resists the dominant discourse in feminist organizations ("can't we all get along?") and "the judges of normality" (Foucault, 1977, p. 304) who want things to be connected in women's organizations. This participant resists by saying that warm and fuzzy is neither desirable nor a goal for her.

Yet, it must be said that although the discourses of the bureaucratic organization ("you the board are my boss") and feminism ("we support staff") are contradictory, women's strength in organizations is their ability to negotiate

this binary. Even within a disciplinary institution, women can find ways to resist. As Foucault (1980) notes, "Each society has its regime of truth. . . that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true" (p. 133). This research shows that two discourses-bureaucratic and feminist – can in fact operate as parallel regimes of truth.

Learning in the organization

The third aspect of Foucault's (1982) power analysis grid is to recognize the technologies that are used to bring power relations into play (Marshall, 1990). In the women's narratives there is evidence of many technologies of power being used, especially in relation to the effort by most of the organizations to foster the lifelong learning and development of women, especially in the area of feminism(s). One of these technologies is the use of the discourse of learning, which produced a desire in many of the women to learn more about feminism, and for some to offer quiet resistance by sitting silently and disregarding the new learning.

Significantly, more than half of the 16 participants indicated that their learning about feminist organizations occurred informally and incidentally. Very few of the women reported having any formal study in feminism. They learned by watching the leaders, participating in meetings, organizing events for women and working with other members.

One board member who has been an active leader and participant in the local women's organization for 10 years, talked about the incidental learning that occurred. Though she had studied feminism and been active in women's organizations for many years in large centers, being a board member in a rural area was a somewhat disorienting experience for her and caused a transformation in her own thinking:

I have learned that you need to choose your battles and to find compromises. . . [I have had] personal growth regarding facilitation skills, learning to politically disagree yet work together. I stand my ground and know I need to give a bit. . . In terms of practical skills I have had both formal and informal learning. I have learned to lobby government, to be diplomatic, as well as to find strategies to try to work with government. It is no easier these days than yesteryear to do that and to secure funding. Sometimes it is frustrating in the organization because there are so many different levels of education, knowledge, experience, and this translates into different understandings in the organization. When I lived in [large city], the women's center was homogeneous and we could be gung ho on many issues including abortion. Here it is harder in some ways – there is more diversity on the board and sometimes we just have to let go of some of our ideals.

Board members report a considerable amount of learning in "relation to personnel issues; budgeting. . . negotiation skills, finances, and fundraising." One board member noted that her learning came through dealing with staffing issues, from finding out that sometimes there is conflict and not everyone

wants to negotiate difference. Yet, she pointed out that they were able to work through the issues because "it was all women on the board; women are less inclined to grandstand or to engage in impression management." Relational learning in feminist organizations has been subjected to truth rules, in a Foucauldian sense, about how feminist organizations ought to be, rules that have arisen in women's efforts to define and support themselves, and also in their effort to effect social change. Yet, in practice, relational learning for women was influenced by two seemingly contradictory regimes of truth – relational and bureaucratic. The women in this study negotiated both regimes at once. In some cases they resisted the technologies of power in the form of the learning discourse and in others they welcomed it. In some cases, the effects of the power were both compliance and consent.

Learning with clients

A fourth aspect of Foucault's (1982) 5-part power analysis grid is understanding forms of institutionalization. Although the women in these narratives were not in traditional institutions such as school or hospitals, there is no doubt the women's organization was an institution that effected disciplinary power (Marshall, 1990). Because they were partly funded by government and filled many social service functions, these community based organizations were viewed by local women as quasi-governmental, which influenced which women came to them and which women avoided them. In part because of dealing with women in crisis, to some degree, one of the sites of considerable learning for participants was with clients. This is especially true for the executive directors who had day-to-day responsibilities in their organizations for dealing with victims of violence and with the legal system. Or in some cases, with low-income women who needed support to deal with government workers or housing authorities. Here is how the director of a women's shelter talked about her work with a client who had been beaten and sexually assaulted and who formally charged the abuser in court:

It is just an incredibly gruesome trial, gruesome experience. . . . Technically I have overstepped the boundaries with her. . . . because I had her and her children in our home many, many times. According to the social worker code of ethics, that is overstepping the boundaries, professional boundaries. I had gotten too close to this young woman and I was too involved in helping her and that wasn't healthy. Now I understand a whole lot more about boundaries and that kind of stuff than I did then. Yeah, technically speaking I probably did overstep some of the boundaries by having this young woman as a guest in our home and by taking a very personal interest in helping her. . . . You know what, I'd do it again. There are times when you have to heed this stuff and times when you have to deliberately decide that the circumstances warrant you taking a different approach.

Though her own professional code of ethics insisted that this social worker-director keep a professional distance from the client, she was unable and

unwilling because a relationship had built up between them and the victim was in serious need of help. In her view, the “right” thing to do was to resist the code and to act according to her conscience. This is a case of using the ethic of care to resist the technologies of power in the code of ethics which attempts to regulate her behavior. As a woman and director she acts against the power that seeps into her daily activity and attempts to control her. Her resistance is care, concern and relationship which stands in opposition to a regime of truth that all transition house directors maintain boundaries in all situations. As well, she resists a managerial discourse of impartial leadership and distance from clients. Hers is an active resistance that produces a subject who is knowledgeable and feminist, as opposed to one who is pliable, docile, and subordinate to the state or its disciplinary institutions.

Informal and incidental learning

A fifth aspect of Foucault’s (1982) 5-part power analysis grid is understanding the degree to which the exercise of power is rationalized by the situation (Marshall, 1990). The situation that these women found themselves in is key to understanding how they relate. Because the women’s organizations see themselves as resisting many of the patriarchal and hierarchical dimensions of traditional schools, government bureaucracies, right-wing churches, and such, they have been readily able to resist the credentialing and traditional educational criteria espoused by government. They recognize that the discourse of learning is mostly caught in that of education and institutions such as schooling, higher education and vocational instruction. This discourse, readily apparent in the discussions of credentialing, most educational literature and in everyday conversation produces a truth that worthwhile learning ought to be sanctioned and initiated by approved institutions. Whereas lifelong learning has become a catchphrase for government bureaucrats and policy makers (see Boshier, 1998), funding priorities suggest that only “education” is bona fide. For women and women’s learning this is especially problematic since much valuable and really useful knowledge is gained through experience (see MacKeracher, 2004). Although government has sanctioned official educational systems and perpetuated them, creating an educational fortress in society, these women’s organizations often resist by offering their own nonformal education, celebrating informal learning, and commending the women who come for services for their “life experiences.”

One of the directors, a 15 year veteran of a women’s center, talked about how she learned about feminism:

I have been involved since '84, kind of working on projects. . . the learning experience is everything from learning how to engage with government to understanding women's oppression. And looking at solutions to breaking up some of those barriers so that the learning here has been tremendous. Absolutely, I mean I could never, I can't imagine learning what I learned someplace else. The

learnings have been, you learn how to do public speaking. You learn how to put together project proposals. You learn financial planning. You learn how to budget, you learn interpersonal skills. You learn conflict resolution. You learn how public policy is developed and you learn how to challenge public policy. You learn how to engage with the political process and the bureaucratic process. . . . And all on your feet. There was no manual to pick up. I mean even with our re-entry program here, which we started about two and a half years ago, maybe three years ago. When we started we had bits and pieces of information and like we developed a five hundred page re-entry program. . . . So even as far as something basic like a re-entry program that was kind of moderate and up to date and relevant for today. . . . We had to invent that ourselves. We learned together.

The valuable learning here is wrapped in the discourse of learning (not education). Although this woman and most of the directors and board members has a post-secondary education she is pointing to the fact that her most valuable learning has occurred experientially and informally. This discourse resists the power of the institution and the rhetoric of government which sanctions only formal learning. The regime of truth produced by government and perpetuated by higher education officials and faculty has been resisted by these women. They produce the truth effect that learning can indeed occur in the community and that it can be valuable. This is a way of drawing attention to the many women in the community who do not have access to credentials and yet who have experienced lifelong learning, not as rhetoric but as the embodiment of growth and change. The power exercised by the institution has the effect of creating female subjects who are learners inside and outside disciplinary systems.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

Education has long been attentive to the dynamics of complex power relationships (Apple, 1990; Brookfield, 2001; Cervero & Wilson, 1994), and to the gendered nature of teaching and learning relationships (Hayes & Flannery, 2000). Yet, some essentialist, universalizing, and stereotypical readings of women's learning and relating remain. This study attempted to resist these readings by explicating the intersection of power, gender, and relational learning in women's organizations, from a feminist, narrative, and poststructural perspective. By probing these intersections, the research contributes to our field's research on women, learning, and social activism.

The narratives show that women are not one-dimensional, docile bodies, and that stereotypic readings of how women learn are just that: stereotypes. The relational learning-in-practice in these local women's organizations serves as a critique to relational learning-in-theory, which ignores power relations. Intricacies of power, authority, and discord factor into the everyday learning and discourse of the organizations, regardless of gender of participants or leaders. Yet, in these women's organizations there is an articulated attempt

to surface tensions and to work through conflict, though not always successfully. Harmony and caring, however, are not the only attributes of women's learning. Many of these women learned through experience and through conflict (Boud & Miller, 1996). Women are indeed affected and influenced by a caring dimension but that does not always translate, nor would they want it to, to homogeneity and niceness. The truth effects arising from their narratives are two-fold: Women are indeed caring in how they learn and women are indeed able to negotiate the power, knowledge, and conflict that are an integral part of their learning.

Educators, whether community based or institutionally situated, can benefit from looking closely at the integration of poststructuralism and narrative as a way to understand further how females learn. In reading the data with an eye to knowledge, discourse and power, the emphases afforded by a post-structuralist perspective, the educator gets a more complicated and helpful view of how females learn. They begin to attend to societal and cultural factors influencing learning, as well as to the actual learning, which is often non-formal and not infrequently spurred on by a disorienting dilemma or difficult situation.

Significant in this reading is how the effects of a disciplinary institution (a board) can cause dividing practices. Like the other disciplinary institutions that Foucault names such as hospitals and prisons, the board technologies of power effect a categorization of good and bad board members, causing resistances of various sorts. This is especially notable since the boards use the discourses of inclusion. Likewise, in educational centers we need to be aware of the effects of this discourse and how it creates categories of included and excluded women, often because of self-discipline or self-regulation.

As well, this research shows that narratives can be used to do a poststructural reading of learning at the community level. There can be a useful interplay of these methodologies provided that the researcher understands that all narratives are partial truth and that it is in the reading that meaning is created for the reader. Poststructuralism offers proponents of narrative an opportunity to view learning through a complex lens and to analyze the story in terms of the categories of knowledge, discourse and power. This augments the narrative reading and necessarily complicates the data in ways that are illuminating for scholars, practitioners and others with an interest in learning.

Now you have heard some of their stories. "Don't say in the years to come that you would have lived your life differently if only you had heard this story. You've heard it now" (King, 2003, p. 60).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to acknowledge the research assistance of Nicole Woodman Harvey (Ph.D. candidate, OISE/ University of Toronto) in carrying out this study.

REFERENCES

- Alcoff, L., & Potter, E. (Eds.). (1993). *Feminist epistemologies*. New York: Routledge.
- Apple, M. W. (1990). *Ideology and curriculum* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Ball, S. J. (Ed.). (1990). *Foucault and education: Disciplines and knowledge*. New York: Routledge.
- Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B., Goldberger, N., & Tarule, J. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing*. New York: Basic Books.
- Blumenreich, M. (2004). Avoiding the pitfalls of conventional narrative research: Using post-structural theory to guide the creation of narratives of children with HIV. *Qualitative Research*, 4(1), 77-
- Boshier, R.W. (1998). The Faure report: Down but not out. In P. S. Jarvis, J. Holford, & C. Griffin (Eds.), *Lifelong learning in the learning society* (pp. 3-20). London: Kogan Page.
- Boud, D., & Miller, N. (Eds.). (1996). *Working with experience: Animating learning*. New York: Routledge.
- Brookfield, S. D. (2001). Unmasking power: Foucault and adult learning. *The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education*, 15(1), 1-23.
- Cervero, R., & Wilson, A. (1994). *Planning responsibly for adult education: A guide to negotiating power and interests*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Chapman V-L (2003). On 'knowing one's self' selfwriting, power, and ethical practice: reflections from an adult educator. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 35(1), 35-53.
- Fletcher, J. K. (1998). Relational practice: A feminist reconstruction of work. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 7(2), 163-186.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (Trans A. Sheridan). New York: Vintage.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality: An introduction. Volume 1*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin. (Trans. R. Hurley).
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1982). Afterword. In H. Dreyfus & P. Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*, with an afterword by Michel Foucault (pp. 208-228). Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hayes, E., & Flannery, D. (2000). *Women as learners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hughes, C. (2000). Resistant adult learners: A contradiction in feminist terms? *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 32(1), 51-62.
- Johnson, G. (2001). Teacher reflection narratives: A poststructuralist approach. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 27(2), 199-200.
- King, T. (2003). *The truth about stories: A native narrative* (Canadian Broadcasting Company Massey Lectures Series). Toronto: Anansi.
- MacKeracher, D. (2004). *Making sense of adult learning* (2nd ed.). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Marshall, J. D. (1990). Foucault and educational research. In S. J. Ball, (Ed.), *Foucault and education: Disciplines and knowledge* (pp. 11-28). New York: Routledge.

Ryan, A. B. (2001). *Feminist ways of knowing: Towards theorising the person for radical adult education*. Leicester, UK: National Institute for Adult Continuing Education.

Tisdell, E. (1998). Poststructural feminist pedagogies: The possibilities and limitations of feminist emancipatory adult learning, theory and practice. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 48(3), 139-156.

LEONA M. ENGLISH is Associate Professor of Adult Education, St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia. Her recent publications include *International encyclopedia of adult education* (Palgrave, 2005) and *Spirituality of adult education and training* (Krieger, 2003).

LEONA M. ENGLISH est professeure agrégée en éducation des adultes à la St. Francis Xavier University en Nouvelle-Écosse. Notons parmi ses publications récentes, *International encyclopedia of adult education* (Palgrave, 2005) et *Spirituality of adult education and training* (Krieger, 2003).