

ILLUMINATING LITERACIES BEYOND THE CLASSROOM:
WOMEN AS BRICOLEURS NEGOTIATING SOCIAL CLASS
AND
MULTIPLE DISCOURSES

by

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(ABSTRACT)

Educators often face a problem of the lack of ongoing contact between the school and students' homes (Delpit, 1995; Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; McCaleb, 1994). Literacy development at school is facilitated by teachers' knowledge of students' home-based discourses (Auerbach, 1989; McCaleb, 1994; Voss, 1996). This dissertation research responded to the question: What do educators need to understand and appreciate about their students' home or living context in order to create partnerships with parents and young students that will nurture literacy growth?

This research is an ethnographic study. I spent one school year as a participant observer in a family literacy program. Young mothers who never finished high school and had children under the age of eight attended this program twice weekly.

I observed during the family literacy sessions, recorded field notes, and conducted formal and informal interviews with nine family literacy program participants. I visited four women in their homes and conducted interviews. All interviews were tape recorded which were then transcribed. I collected copies of women's written pieces produced during the family literacy program.

Data analysis and interpretation (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) revealed themes and issues consistent within each of six women's stories. The deficiency model (Auerbach, 1989; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Sleeter, 1996) was challenged as each woman demonstrated resourcefulness, articulated goals, the use of multiple literacies, commitment to their families' welfare, support and initiative in their children's schooling and a keen awareness of social class barriers.

Repositioning our perspectives (Sleeter, 1996) enables educators to discover the strengths in students' home discourses that include multiple literacies (Voss, 1996) and other funds of knowledge (Moll & Greenberg, 1990). We need to move our lens from that of critique and judgement to that of discovery. Each student comes to school with an abundance of family and home experiences that need opportunities for expressions and learning. The pressures of negotiating home discourses with the dominant discourse (Gee, 1990; Sleeter, 1996) create reservoirs of strength for many families that is often masked by non-middle class appearances.

For

MICHAEL M. PACIFICI

&

KRISHNA J. PACIFICI

MY LEARNING COMMUNITY - PAST & PRESENT

John L. Wann, Sr. Thelma G. Wann John L. Wann, Jr. Miriam L. Wann

Rosary Lalik Jerry Niles Jan Nespor Opal Moore Sue Magliaro

Mary Ann Lewis Doris Martin Pam Simpson Beth Nelson

Colleen Finegan Stoll Murray Ellison Mary Katherine Davis

Jim Garrison Bev Strager Carmel Vaccare Stephanie Kimball

Robin Rogers Lynn Bustle Nyanne Hicks Madhu Sudan Kay Sudan

Anne Phelan Rebecca Scheckler Julia Harbeck Elaine O'Quinn

Ray Van Dyke Belva Collins Jo Ann Warren Susan Duncan

Harvey Brandenburg Bevery Wann JP James Bob Wann Sandy Wann

Women and staff at the family literacy program

John Burton

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CHAPTER ONE

PURPOSE/RESEARCH QUESTIONS/BACKGROUND

We educators set out to teach, but how can we reach the worlds of others when we don't even know they exist (Delpit, 1995, p. xiv)?

PURPOSE

Delpit's (1995) words reflect a problem many educators face regarding the lack of ongoing contact between the school and the home, (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; McCaleb, 1994). Delpit underscores the point that educators are limited in teaching effectiveness when they stay confined within their immediate school worlds. I experienced, as a classroom teacher, a cultural gap between the school and the student's home. This experience motivated this research project.

When an observer walked into my fourth grade classroom eight years ago, he/she noticed a number of activities occurring simultaneously. Desks were arranged in pods of four, although the arrangement appeared awkward because the desks were built to be placed in rows and columns. Students were working in groups of five, sitting on the floor and at desks, writing, drawing, reading, talking, and constructing stage props from boxes, coat hangers and other household materials. As a final project of a myth and fairytale unit, students had rewritten a fairytale into a "modern" adaptation and were writing a sitcom script from the adapted fairytale. The plan was that the students would perform and videotape the sitcom. The class had formed committees and were hard at work completing the various tasks before a final taped sitcom performance. Literacy development was embedded in the reading, writing, strategic planning, critical and creative thinking involved in implementing this project. I expected that the students would be actively engaged due to the multiple learning modalities available within the project. I planned and hoped that every student would become inspired through the participatory, hands-on nature of the project and that the class would develop a sense of community.

I "kidwatched" (Goodman, 1985), observing the students and types of talk, conversation, planning and ways students implemented this project. Talk, and/or conversation was part of the process. I expected students to learn through the process of implementing the project. And most of the students did work well in cooperative groups and enthusiastically followed through with the activities.

But not all were engaged, and I remember one student, Jeff, did not participate in the activities with the level of engagement I had expected. Jeff had a role in his group to record the sitcom script ideas his committee was generating. When Jeff was not able to write down ideas fast enough, or hesitated because of uncertainty with spelling, other students who could work faster began to do his job. Jeff gradually sat back, watching the group work, and then lost interest and found other things to do.

In one of the early activities, prior to the final project of transforming an adapted fairytale into a sitcom, the students read many fairytales and myths of their choice, selected from a table piled with books. The students chose four to eight stories from which to respond in their reading journals. Jeff had no written responses in his journal. He looked at me with a blank and quiet stare.

I was frustrated that I could not reach every student in my classroom. No matter how hard I attempted to plan and teach lessons and activities that would inspire an interest in learning, certain students would not or could not engage as I expected. I had hoped that by offering various types of experiential tasks in which students could become engaged, all in the name of learning and language arts, that some match with students' interests and abilities would become possible. However, often there were students like Jeff who could not make a connection between what I was doing and what their experiences had taught them.

In my relationship with Jeff and several other students, I could not move beyond the role of school work assigner, grade calculator and recorder, and constant classroom behavior controller. I wanted to act as a learning facilitator and guide, enabling student choice and engagement. What was I missing here?

I often wondered what was really going on in their worlds, worlds I could glimpse during informal times in the school day. Jeff talked of his participation on the recreation football team and the All Terrain Vehicle he drove on the weekends. This information signaled to me that he and I lived in very different worlds.

I can now understand that during parent conferences with Jeff's parents, I was assuming I was the only resource available for Jeff. I kept to my own agenda, believing that parents should be carrying out school-like enrichment activities at home in order to support success in schools. We talked about Jeff's study skills, about having a regular time and place for him to complete his homework. It never occurred to me that Jeff's parents were an important resource and that Jeff's home activities were important to recognize. I could have asked about the kinds of activities Jeff liked to do at home, or what his parents believed were Jeff's strengths and skills. I could have involved them in considering what I could have done differently in order to create bridges between Jeff, home and school. I now understand I assumed that because I worked so hard to plan varied activities which involved multiple learning modalities, student engagement would increase.

As Alma Flor Ada writes in the forward to Sudia Paloma McCaleb's (1994) book, *Building Communities of Learners*, "Children live their lives in two worlds: that of the home and community and that of the school. When these two worlds fail to know, respect, and celebrate each other, children are placed in a difficult position" (p. vii). Some teachers believe that it is normal to have a certain percentage of students in their classes who do not succeed. For other teachers the cultural gap is a frustrating situation for which they develop solutions (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; McCaleb, 1994.; Voss, 1996). Voss (1996) recalls:

As a classroom teacher, I've always been dissatisfied. Not with my students or the demands of my work, but with myself - distressed that there are always a few children I can't quite reach. Like a pebble in my shoe, an uneasiness wears on me, so that I find myself asking, 'What else can I try? What can I do better?' One of my frustrations as a teacher has been that I have little information about the children outside of school. What are their homes like? How do they learn there? What background knowledge do they bring from home that I don't reach? (p. 1)

I shared Voss's concerns and questions. I wanted to know, to actually experience, the range of students' lives that appeared different from mine. If I visited Jeff and his parents in their home, what insights might I have gained and applied to the classroom? What would I have learned that would facilitate Jeff's literacy development?

GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research in this dissertation seeks to respond to two questions: 1) What did I need to know about students' worlds occurring outside the school day that would have helped me guide and facilitate learning opportunities for them; and 2) What do educators need to understand and appreciate about their students' home or living context in order to create partnerships with parents and young students that will nurture literacy growth. This research was carried out in order to broaden and deepen my frame of reference about students who may not mirror my preferred set of learner characteristics.

BACKGROUND of STUDY

Literacy Described: A Complex Topic

There are multiple uses and conceptions of the term literacy, a frequently debated and controversial subject (Voss, 1996; Stuckey, 1991; Langer, 1987; Cook-Gumperz, 1989; Morris and Tchudi, 1996; Rose, 1989; Bush, 1995; Taylor, 1996; Delpit, 1995; Hamilton, 1996; McCaleb, 1994). The word "literacy" comes from a Latin root meaning "marked with letters" (Voss, 1996). The term is commonly used to define the skills of reading and writing that a person may possess (Voss, 1996, Morris & Tchudi, 1996, Stuckey, 1991).

Another use of literacy is to "indicate a level of competence and thinking within a particular area" denoting types of literacy (Voss, 1996, p. 3). In this conceptualization, one who is deemed literate has an active knowing and application of this knowing such as in computer literacy, economic literacy, historical literacy, cultural literacy or print literacy. The assumption with this definition of literacy is that as literate, one is able to comprehend, interpret and apply a competency within a domain of knowledge and skill beyond the functional skills of reading and writing (1996, p. 3).

Additionally, one can possess levels of fluency within a particular area or type of literacy such as mechanical or technical literacy (Voss, 1996). These levels of fluency indicate various uses of literacy. A person is fully literate when s(he) uses a literacy (for example, print literacy - reading and writing) in functional, communicative, reflective, flexible and enjoyable ways in his or her everyday life. A functional use of literacy enables one to accomplish things, to get things done (Voss, 1996, p. 14). Communicatively using a literacy enables one to relate with others (1996, p. 14). Literacy used to think critically or to aide in figuring things out is a reflective use of literacy (1996, p. 14). Applying a literacy as needed in different or in new situations is a flexible use of literacy (p. 14). Finally, literacy is used for personal enjoyment and pleasure (p. 14). Voss explains that using one type of literacy, such as print literacy, in all of these described ways, demonstrates that one is fluent in that specific literacy.

Voss (1996) writes that no literacy can be isolated unto itself as only skills of reading and writing, as literacies are multiple, possibly hidden, and are an intricate part of a "complex web of cultural practices that surround and accompany it [them]" (p. 14). In her research with school age children in their homes, Voss identified several areas or types of literacy: print literacy (reading, writing), linguistic literacy (talk, speech), mechanistic literacy (creating with, using tools), consumer literacy (business, marketing, buying and selling) and interactive literacy ("reading" people) (1996, p. 14).

Other literacies are also possible within particular sociocultural contexts. The types and uses of literacy increasingly reflect the rapid changes in information dispersion and communication, specifically with regard to technological innovations, such as, electronic mail and electronic conferencing systems. A redefined notion of literacy includes "modes of representation [that are] much broader than language alone" (New London Group, 1996, p. 64). Different modes of representation add to the increasing diversity of the world's cultures and experiences thus increasing the complexity of types and uses or practices of literacy (1996, p. 61).

The New London Group (1996), identifies the following processes through which literacy is used: linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, spatial and multimodal patterns (1996, p. 65). Linguistic literacy use indicates language in written, spoken and sociocultural uses. Visual processes of literacy include images, page layouts, and screen formats. Audio literacy is music and sound effects. Gestural processes includes body language. Spatial literacy includes processes of environmental spaces and architectural spaces. And multimodal literacy represents the processes of these modes in relation to each other. The New London Group (1996) writes:

Mass media images relate the linguistic to the visual and to the gestural in intricately designed ways. Reading the mass media for its linguistic meanings alone is not enough. A script of a sitcom such as *Roseanne* would have none of the qualities of the program if you didn't have a "feel" for its unique gestural, audio, and visual meanings. (p. 80)

The recognition of multiple and varied types and uses of literacy is important when investigating people who do not appear to conform to dominant ideas of literacy common to mainstream, middle-class lifestyles (e.g., writing a letter to the editor). Research with which individuals work and observe lives of various social groups informs a broader based picture of literacy (Gillespie, 1993). This work of investigating the functions and uses of literacy in the everyday lives of nonmainstream social groups helps to dispell myths and misconceptions commonly attributed to marginalized groups (1993, p. 529). Nevertheless, explaining literacy types and uses does not provide a complete description of this complex topic. Other considerations of literacy are significant. For example, much research assumes that literacy is a socially constructed phenomenon (Wertch, 1991; Lave, 1991).

SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY of LEARNING

According to the sociocultural theory of learning, people are learners participating in literacy practices particular and relevant to their sociocultural contexts (Purcell-Gates, 1995). People construct their perceptions, knowledge, and understandings through interaction with their unique social and cultural environment and histories. An assumption of this theory is that learning occurs across time, through activities within the home and community (Heath, 1983; Heath & McLaughlin, 1994; Taylor, 1993; Labov, 1987). Practices of literacy are embedded in these everyday interactions between and among individuals, groups and settings (Gee, 1990; Voss, 1996). James Gee (1990) writes that:

Literacy practices are almost always fully integrated with, interwoven into, constitute part of, the very texture of wider practices that involve talk, interaction, values and beliefs. You can no more cut the literacy parts of the overall practice, than you can subtract the white squares from a chess board and still have a chess board. (p. 43)

Sociocultural artifacts such as language, values, customs, behaviors, learning strategies, and world views develop through everyday interactions that are unique to groups and individuals. Individuals and groups create meanings and understandings that are negotiated contextually among the members of groups in relation to social, institutional, historical, economic situations (Lave, 1991). The sociocultural theory of learning seeks to understand how people learn and what they learn within the "situatedness" of these sociocultural realities (1991, p. 67).

This theory of learning has developed in order to recognize that people possess and develop skills, knowledges, behaviors, and attitudes in relation to their varied life situations (Moll & Greenberg, 1990; Purcell-Gates, 1995, p. 4). For example, language variation between groups reflects the uses and norms of language use in each community. The dialects and structures of the language within a community are to be understood through the language's development in context (Purcell-Gates, 1995; Heath, 1983; Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Delpit, 1995). Heath (1983) in *Ways With Words* explained the patterns of language use in groups that had meaning for group members but did not correspond to the linguistics forms and structures used in the mainstream "discourse" (Gee, 1990).

Discourse

Discourse is a term used to describe a mosaic of practices composed of language, types of interactions, patterns and modes of behavior, attitudes, and values through which individuals view and understand their worlds (Gee, 1990, p. 142-143). Each individual constructs a primary discourse within his/her family and community environment (1990, p. xvii). Gee (1990) calls this primary discourse one's "home-based discourse" (p. xvii). He explains, "A home-base discourse integrates words, actions, interactions, values, feelings, attitudes and thinking in specific and distinctive ways" (p. xvii). An individual's home-based discourse may or may not have commonalities with a mainstream discourse. A mainstream discourse includes the specific practices attributed to a Eurocentric, dominant, white middle class (Willis, 1995; Walsh, 1991). These practices are reified as a proper, correct standard for society (Walsh, 1991).

Cultural standards form cultural models which incorporate a lens or a script through which to see and act (Gee, 1990). A dominant societal standard or cultural model may exist which indicates the "correct" forms of language use and serves cultural purposes for particular contexts (Delpit, 1995; Willis, 1995; Stuckey, 1991). For example, public schools maintain a culture or discourse of school-based literacy (New London Group, 1996). This occurs, as Delgado-Gaitan (1991) writes, through "establishing activities that require specific majority culturally based knowledge and behaviors about the school as an institution. Frequently, these ideas are assumed and are not made explicit" (p. 21). An illustration of implicit school discourse is illustrated during a kindergarten sharing time. Some students tell a story composed of facts, while other students elaborate on an experience, using poetic devices (Gee, 1990). The school-based rule of kindergarten sharing time, never explicitly stated, is that the teacher expects the students to inform their audience of an event as if to construct a spoken text similar to a written essay (1990, p. xvii). The students who share their experiences in alternative forms, hold different understandings of the nature of the school event of sharing time. Typically these differences are construed by teachers as deficits. Students are seen as academically marginal, even though their work and/or responses often reflect many strengths.

Parents and students experience sociocultural isolation when their home and community

environments do not match or reciprocate the language, real life experiences and social assumptions of the teacher and school culture (Cairney, 1995). Delgado-Gaitan (1991) writes, "The absence of appropriate sociocultural knowledge [by nonmiddle-class, nonmainstream families] precludes acceptable participation in formal school activities, resulting in isolation for many parents [and students]" (p. 21).

Deficit Model

The mainstream discourse assumes that individuals in our society should possess certain lifestyle characteristics in order to be healthy, productive societal members (for example, exhibiting specific parenting practices). When individuals or groups cannot or do not accommodate or assimilate these practices, negative conclusions are made regarding people's worth by those in power.

Parents who are not able to participate in schools with and for their children in ways thought to support school success are often depicted as deficit, incompetent, and unable. This deficit model perspective assumes that "some children receive 'good' or 'appropriate' preparation for schooling, while others receive 'poor' or inappropriate preparation" (Cairney, 1995, p. 520). Students' nonmainstream responses are generally taken as indications of laziness or poor motivation, symptoms of learning disabilities or lacking study skills or parental reinforcement at home. This deficit model assumes that parents of such children lack the essential skills to promote school success in their children (Auerbach, 1989, p. 165).

This deficit orientation perpetuates the attitude that families who could not replicate and carry out school-like activities in the home are sites of "illiteracy [which] breeds illiteracy. In an 'intergenerational cycle of illiteracy'; the 'plague' passes from one generation to the next" (Auerbach, 1989, p. 167). Often these parents are seen as undereducated, disadvantaged people who lack skills and confidence. Taylor (1993) describes assumptions in deficit thinking toward families:

Problems promulgated by intergenerational undereducation are far reaching and devastating, leaving families in a constant crisis within the cycle of poverty.

Undereducated parents usually do not pass positive educational values to their children. Neither, in many cases, do they provide an adequate economic, emotional or social environment. (p. 551)

Reflecting this negative attitude toward nonmainstream families, the current president of the National Center for Family Literacy writes:

Parents are the first and most important teachers of their children. Their attitudes convey a critical message about schooling, the work and joy of learning, and the connection between education and quality of life. But the messages communicated in the undereducated families often reflect the parents' own low self-esteem and limited expectations. Undereducated parents, whose own lack of skills and confidence limit their ability to help their children, and who feel intimidated by everything that school represents, are unlikely to become active partners in their children's learning. (Darling, 1992)

Unlike proponents of deficit thinking, those who advance the sociocultural theory of learning view differences as having worth and significance by acknowledging local practices as legitimate within local contexts. Negative judgements about people from sociocultural groups

exhibiting features different from a dominant middle-class standard are believed to be "invalid, unhelpful, and destructive" (Purcell-Gates, 1995, p. 4). These judgements and "truths" ignore the "situatedness" of diverse sociocultural realities (Lave, 1991). Sociocultural literacy researchers seek to uncover the larger systemic conditions that perpetuate lack of access to the dominant mainstream discourse rather than blaming non-mainstream families and portraying them as deficient.

Cultural Lens

A person's identity with a group or groups can create a lens or a cultural overlay that influences what one encodes about the world and how one can process and interpret information (Purcell-Gates, 1995, p. 4). Purcell-Gates (1995) explains that, "The insight that everyone processes information through a cultural lens is crucial to any attempt to explore the processes by which some learners predictably succeed in our schools and others, equally predictably, fail" (p. 5). From the sociocultural perspective Purcell-Gates (1995) writes:

Many cultures are represented in the classrooms of today, including mainstream, majority ones. Members of these varied cultural groups, including the teachers, the curriculum designers, and the children, are not perceiving the schooling experiences in identical ways. They are in many ways living in different worlds, though ostensibly engaging in the same activity -- schooling -- in the same place -- the classroom...Thus when we seek to understand learners, we must seek to understand the cultural contexts within which they have developed, learned to interpret who they are in relation to others, and learned how to process, interpret, or decode their world. (p. 5)

The sociocultural theory of learning when applied to literacy research enables us to understand the literacy processes available and working for all learners regardless of how they appear to many educators or to other representatives of the mainstream discourse (1995).

Funds of Knowledge

Moll and Greenberg's (1990) concept of funds of knowledge is used to understand the everyday resources working within families that may not look or act like mainstream standards. They write (1990):

Without a focus on social relationships and persons-in-activities, it is very easy for outsiders [educators] to underestimate the wealth of funds of knowledge available in working-class households. Funds of knowledge are available regardless of the families' years of formal schooling or prominence assigned to literacy. We build on the ideas that every household is, in a very real sense, an educational setting in which the major function is to transmit knowledge that enhances the survival of its dependents. (pp.320 and 327)

The funds of knowledge concept was created to map out the historic evolvement of economic, labor related activities and language use of Mexican American families by studying how households survive, live through their economic networks and their household social histories (Moll and Greenberg, 1990). Visiting Mexican families and households in a working-class community in the Southwest U.S., Moll and Greenberg, and Gonzalez (and others) have discovered and documented the social sharing of knowledge that is part of each household's

functioning. Moll and Greenberg visited one household and found extensive knowledge of farming, ranching, soil conservation, cultivation of plants, and water management. From another family they learned of animal husbandry, veterinary medicine, ranch economy, mechanics and carpentry.

Clusters of families had developed multiple, complex, and reciprocal social networks when exchanging skills and services. In these networks people exchanged tasks of home and automobile repairs, home remedies, planting and gardening information in addition to funds of knowledge relating to city life (These funds of knowledge included information and connections regarding institutional assistance, school programs, transportation, and job opportunities.) (1990, p.,323). Moll and Greenberg (1990) found that these "densely knit networks" were essential for "conserving and controlling" the existing resources of families (p.,322).

Children in these networks learned skills and knowledge as they participated in activities with more skilled and knowledgeable family members. When family members were engaged in tasks and activities, children were invited to be involved. When one father carried out car repairs, Moll and Greenberg (1990) report:

He asks Juan to bring him the tools he needs. Even such minimal inclusion in these tasks allows Juan to learn by observing the whole task and by asking questions about what his father is doing. In this way Juan has learned enough to do simple repairs around the house, such as fixing the toilet by himself. (p. 324)

The children in these family networks participated in a community of practice that contrasted with the isolated units in school. Their involvement contrasted with the "singular, narrow, teacher-child relationship common in classrooms" (1990, p. 322). The significance of revealing the funds of knowledge and the ways children developed knowledges outside the public school classroom, counters deficit perceptions and broadens possibilities for school-based instruction.

Funds of knowledge researchers have looked beyond a deficit model lens not to assess what is missing in terms of families in terms of years of formal schooling or a priority for school-based literacy, but to find what is present and operating as part of everyday cultural practices. Researchers worked to understand other types of literacies and knowledge that can be incorporated into classroom activities.

Zone of Proximal Development

The sociocultural theory of learning is drawn from Vygotsky's work on the mind. Vygotsky developed the idea that "in order to understand the individual it is necessary to understand the social relations in which the individual exists" (Wertsch, 1991, p.88). Vygotsky believed that it is through social situations that people learn and grow. Using the concept of zone of proximal development, he explained how significant individuals can act as learning mediators for each other in social settings. The zone of proximal development concept is described as "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Wertsch, 1985, p. 86). In other words, a learner interacts through dialogue, questioning, and conversation with significant others who have a greater fluency with a skill or content knowledge. Learning occurs initially for the learner on a social-group level. The process is seen as "interpsychological" because it occurs among individuals and social artifacts (Wertsch, 1991, p. 87). A cognitive/emotional transformation

occurs as the learning becomes an interior process within an individual (intrapsychological) (1991, p. 87). These two planes of development, social (interpsychological) and psychological (intrapsychological) occur as a transformation that produces enhanced knowledge schemas and further develops mental/cognitive functioning (1991, p. 88). A key feature of Vygotsky's work is the recognition of the social aspects of learning environments.

Lave and Wertsch continue research with Vygotsky's theories. Wertsch (1991) notes that researchers typically examine the social structure while ignoring the social interaction or look at the social interaction while ignoring the social structure. The social structures include the cultural, institutional and historical context as in the social structure of our federal government system or the public school system in the United States (includes people in organizational networks as well as organizations). Wertsch's concept of social interaction is humans relating, creating meaning and functioning within social structures (1991, p. 86). In order to bridge these positions Wertsch has created the concept of a "socially situated" activity and the concept of a "sociocultural approach to the mind" (1991, p. 86). By using this concept, Wertsch connects the cognitive with the social (1991). He writes that "human mental functioning is inherently situated in social interactional, cultural, institutional, and historical context" (Wertsch, 1991, p. 86). The interrelationships between human development and the historical, political, social and cultural environments are significant when understanding how people develop, learn and live.

Lave (1991) believes that group processes feed and shape the individual processes as individuals reciprocally feed and shape the group processes. We are influenced by and learn through our environments just as environments are formed and changed by our participation. Lave calls for a "rethinking of the notion of learning...sees mind, culture, history and the social world as interrelated processes that constitute each other" (1991, p. 63). Lave presents the concept of "situated activity" which is a collaboration of interconnected relationships of "perception, cognition, language, learning, agency, the social world and their interrelations" (1991, p. 67). Lave explains that aspects of situated activity exist in relation to each other and to the meaning making, learning and knowing processes with which each individual is engaged.

Theory of Communities of Practice

Various educational researchers employ the sociocultural theory of learning orientation. Lave seeks to reconceptualize perceptions and notions of learning by using the metaphor of apprenticeship as a learning process occurring within communities of practice (1991). An organization, institution, work situation, therapeutic or school situation or subcultural group carrying out meaningful activities could be a community of practice. Learning occurs as individuals within these communities of practice move from a position as a "legitimate peripheral learner" or apprentice to a position of full participation (Lave, 1991, p. 68). Through the process of becoming a full participant in the group and learning how to do the work of the group, one becomes knowledgeable and/or skillful developing an identity through the recognition of being a contributing community member.

An apprentice or peripheral learner learns and integrates language, behaviors, and thinking processes of the group. The learner is able to do this as he/she increases association and engagement within a community of practice. The needed behaviors and attitudes are embedded in the community of practice's ongoing construction and reconstruction of its work. Lave believes that researchers need to find learning communities, communities of practice, outside the official,

institutionalized public school, "formal, explicit, salient educational sites" (1991, p. 65). In these alternative learning communities, researchers examine the contexts of learning for different groups participating in meaningful or authentic activities (1991).

Research in Communities of Practice

Moll and Gonzalez (1994), in *Lessons From Research With Language Minority Children*, did not use the public school classroom as a unit of study for educational research but went outside the classroom to households (p. 441). Teachers in their study left the classroom and went into families' homes in a working-class Mexican community in Southwest U.S.. These teachers met the parents and family members of their students in order to understand the various cultural resources (language use, economic and social networks, ways of living) developed there. Through the household visits, teachers discovered families who had extensive knowledge of the medicinal value of plants and herbs. Based on awareness of this knowledge as a potential resource for curriculum development, one classroom teacher constructed a thematic unit for her students on the local knowledge of the healing properties of plants. In another household a teacher learned that the family traveled to northern Mexico and brought candy back to the community to sell.

Incorporating the student's "marketing" skills, the teacher began an integrated unit using an inquiry-based approach (Moll and Gonzalez, 1994, p. 445). The students in the class studied the nutritional content of candy, conducted a comparison of U.S. and Mexican candy, researched sugar processing, developed a survey on favorite candies and then graphed the survey results. Some of the individuals the teachers met during the household visits became visiting participants in the classroom. One father, whose regular job was working as a gardener, had musical and theatrical knowledge. With this father's assistance, students produced a school musical. The father wrote lyrics, composed music, and wrote the script for the production (1991, p. 446). These teachers were able to reconceptualize for themselves the households of "minority children" (1994, p. 442). The teachers found that when they entered the households as researcher, rather than "teacher", they experienced a significant reorientation toward the families, developing insider knowledge rather than typical stereotyped images (1994, p. 442). Accumulating insider knowledge can enable teachers to be more informed when making curriculum and instruction decisions. This research practice by teachers can increase the possibility of providing useful matches between classroom and student.

William Labov (1987) conducted research with "inner city youth" (p. 128). He conducted research outside the schools because he believed one way of understanding learning that takes place ["or doesn't take place"] (1987, p. 128), in schools, is to understand the nondirected learning outside the schools where "the community is the educator" (p. 128). Labov (1987) studied the language and linguistic speech forms of groups in the speech community of Philadelphia (p. 128). He compared the language and linguistic speech forms within generations of families to speech forms of peer groups in the community. Through this comparison he discovered how speech forms change and adapt over time through the influence and interaction with significant groups. Labov concluded that there was a direct relation between peer group membership and speech forms that do not model the standard English of school classrooms. He stressed the need for public schools to reduce the sociocultural distance between school literacy

and socially significant associations for students from within the community (p. 139). He (1987) writes:

For many students who are aligned towards street culture and against classroom culture, certain of the sounds and words identified with classroom English are identified with a set of values that have already been rejected. They are associated with a set of polarities: white versus black, middle class versus working class, female versus male. They are associated with high culture versus popular culture in music, poetry, film and drama. They are associated with the school values of patterns of surveillance, submission to authority and informing on fellow students versus the street values of respect for privacy, resistance to oppression and loyalty to friends and equals. The effect of these socially significant symbols is to contaminate the straightforward goals of learning to read and write with an extraneous set of moral alignments that have nothing to do with the main task at hand. (p. 145)

Labov believed that literacy learnings in school should integrate everyday community contexts in order to dissolve the associations he outlined. In this way he believed each student could draw upon their own home discourse to develop literacy learnings and let the school become the community as educator (p. 145). Like Moll, Labov's suggestions broaden school-based literacy to include relevant language forms found in music, dance, and other popular culture valued by students.

Heath and McLaughlin (1994) also conducted a study of learning environments of American inner-city youth outside the school. Their research setting was the "everyday conditions" of community youth organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs, Girl Scouts, and "grass-roots athletic organizations" (1994, p. 487). They carried out this research over five years in inner-city neighborhoods of three major U.S. cities. Their research team focused on the daily life of community youth organizations that were recommended by local youth.

By participating with the adult organizers and youth in their projects, and talking and observing the youth in action, Heath and McLaughlin developed understandings of how time, talk and choice played out in the youth organizations. Heath and McLaughlin (1994) described an "egg project" in which girls, ages eleven to sixteen, were asked to take care of an egg as their baby for five weeks (p. 478). At the end of five weeks, the girls were to present their learnings, ideas and thoughts about the egg project in a skit (p. 478).

Heath and McLaughlin compared curricula features of the public school to "contextually authentic curricula seeking to understand where, when and how learning to learn takes place in everyday conditions" (p. 487). They were able to describe organizational structures and curricula features of these youth organizations that could be valuable for public school curriculum change and reform.

Broadening School-Based Literacy

An alternative to the deficit model thinking is to assume an inclusive, differences approach. Auerbach (1989) describes a social-contextual model that seeks to draw on parents' knowledge and experience in order to inform instruction (p. 166). This model increases the social significance of literacy in family life by incorporating community cultural forms and social issues into the content of school literacy activities thus expanding school-based literacy practices. Auerbach's study of family contexts of successful readers "acknowledges the family's social reality

and focuses on the family's strengths" (1989, p. 165). The research found no simple correlation between parents' literacy level, educational background, amount of time spent on literacy work with children, and overall achievement (Chall & Snow, 1987 in Auerbach, 1989). Instead, factors such as frequency of children's outings with adults, number of maternal outings, emotional climate of the home, amount of time interacting with adults, level of financial stress, enrichment activities and parental involvement with the schools are cited as significantly affecting successful reading and writing development. These researchers found a range of literacy practices and materials in the homes of working-class, minority, and ESL students:

Perhaps the most surprising finding was the generally high level of literacy skill and literacy use among the parents of the children. For example, only twenty percent of the parents said they did not like to read and never read books. Thirty percent read factual books...and could name at least one favorite author. Fifty percent read a major newspaper on a regular basis and thirty percent could remember books from their childhoods. These low-income children also demonstrated considerable familiarity with literacy. The vast majority owned some books of their own and half owned more than 20 books. It seems then that explanations implicating the absence of literacy in low-income homes as the source of children's reading failure are simply wrong. (Snow, 1987, p. 127; in Auerbach, 1989, p. 170)

Auerbach views all families as using reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking processes strategically as they live their everyday lives.

In implementing a culturally responsive school-based literacy, one respects and nurtures the language and experiences of each student. Differences in students' language and knowledge are used by educators in schools as resources. Heath and Mangiola (1991) write "let us then not think of students of diverse backgrounds as bringing 'differences' to school, but instead as offering classrooms 'expansions' of background knowledge and ways of using language" (p. 17).

Fine (1996) asserts the need to bridge realities inside and outside the classroom by crossing borders and reinventing the uses of language and writing. High school students in New York City reconstructed the youth culture practice of a "cypher" into a classroom learning form (1996). A cypher is a mixture of a spoken and chanted rap type song performed in a dance-like manner. Solo and chorus voices perform the songs. Other students perform the accompanying movements. Students during an English class worked in one of four groups in order to compose lyrics, write poetry, create art ("grafitti"), and choreograph dance ("posturing") to create a representation of their youth culture. Reading, writing, critical thinking, discussion, critique, cooperative and collaborative learning groups are embedded in this creation process.

McCaleb (1994) broadened school-based literacy when she created a partnership between home and school. In this study parents talked and wrote about their children in school, home and the community and their visions of the ideal school and home partnerships. An El Salvadoran parent described positive memories of school at home in her country. She believed her parents supported school and were committed to working with her school to enable her success. This parent remembered her grandfather's stories that served as a living history. While this parent attended nursing school in El Salvadore, she witnessed the disappearance of several of her classmates during a civil war. She herself had an encounter that left her in physical danger and

then traveled with her son to the U.S. to live. Like other parents in this project, this parent shared stories on various topics related to parenting, to schooling and her struggle to create a life with her son in the U.S.

The parents in this group then co-authored books with their children about themes and ideas springing from the various discussions (McCaleb, 1994, p. 61). The books exhibited the following themes: childhood friendships, families building together, families as problem solvers through struggle and change, families as subjects in their own stories and codification based on community life (1994, p. 94). The parent from El Salvadore co-constructed a book with her son writing about his life using family pictures. McCaleb (1994) wrote:

The power of the dialogue conducted through participatory research allows the participants to hear each other and to come to know and appreciate another's experiential perspective. When a teacher takes this step with the parents of her students, it leads to invaluable knowledge for both parties and to mutual trust. This may become a moment of truth for the teacher as she begins to see the necessity of building a learning community based on the reality of the student and family's life. (p. 97)

Critical literacy researchers are prominent among those writers who understand the necessity of building a learning community with marginalized families. Proponents of critical literacy explain that reading, writing, listening, and speaking are socially constructed phenomena that "are made socially into many and diverse forms" (Lankshear and McLaren, 1993, p. xvii). From a critical literacy perspective, these forms are created within political contexts: "within contexts where access to economic, cultural, political and institutional power is structured unequally" (1993, p. xviii).

CRITICAL LITERACY

Critical literacy researchers work to understand the politics of literacy or the ways that various notions of literacy work to sustain the interests of some and deny or diminish those of others. Of these politics, Carol Edelsky (1994) writes:

Politics is about who gets what, where, and how - who gets money, who gets jobs, who get diplomas, who gets good health care, who gets high-quality literature in classrooms, who gets turns at talk, who gets listened to, who gets valued socially (because resources aren't just material - they're also social; and politics isn't just about what's public - it's also about what's personal). (p. 253)

Additionally, critical literacy researchers seek to reveal sociocultural structures and practices that keep unexamined or hidden literacies invisible and lacking in cultural value, status or cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Consider, for example, if a family member is in jail. Family members may have developed extensive knowledge and strategies regarding the legal and prison systems, including letter writing or advocacy work on behalf of a family member. Such a family has acquired a literacy that is useful in their world. Yet the dominant society typically devalues this knowledge (Taylor, 1996). Denny Taylor (1996) chronicles the paperwork trail and myriad of institutional barriers of people struggling "to get back on their feet" must contend with on a daily basis (p. 13). Despite the development of important literacies, people in such marginalized groups are often treated as quite ignorant.

The theme of developing self-efficacy or life agency is an important aspect of critical literacy. Possessing self-efficacy or life agency means being empowered to act on one's behalf, to

have the internal problem-solving and strategizing resources that enable one to act in ways that are beneficial to meeting goals. Literacy in this context is how one understands and reads the meaning-making symbols and signs in one's life (Voss, 1996). When the two processes of interpretation and practice are combined, a transformative "rewriting" of one's life can occur. The goal of critical literacy is that "people can enter into 'rewriting' their worlds into a formation in which their interests, identities and legitimate aspirations are more fully present and present more equally" (Lankshear and McLaren, 1993).

Critical literacy is involved whether a single individual is struggling to move beyond an oppressive life situation or members of a group are advocating change for a social cause or condition. Critical literacy workers believe that it is possible for an individual or a group to utilize resources toward reclaiming a positive space for change or rewriting the script of one's life. McCaleb (1994) writes: "They [critical literacy educators] all transmit a faith in the human capacity for learning, critical reflection and action to bring about change" (p. 11).

Critical literacy rests on the assumption that democracy and equality are the inherent right of all, regardless of racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic status.

Practitioners attempt to close the gap between the prevailing myth that our society provides equal opportunities and education for all (Stuckey, 1991) and the everyday realities of unequal access to resources (Kozol, 1991). As McCaleb (1994) notes, transformative or liberatory educators strive to reveal ways that differential access to power and to learning affect a social system. Critical literacy researchers also create pedagogy whereby people can "transform their consciousness, their awareness of their world" and slice through oppressive living situations (McCaleb, 1994, p. 14).

SUMMARY

Literacy is a complex topic that can be constructed and understood in multiple ways. My research sought to construct insights regarding the literacy practices of people who live in social contexts different from those with which I am familiar. A federally funded family literacy program provided me access to six women and a window into these women's lives. My research lens is not directed toward the federally funded program, but examines the literacy of the women. I used three questions to organize my study: What is the character of multiple literacies in these women's lives? What themes emerge from the stories and descriptions these women tell of their lives? What will I learn from the stories and from my association with these women?

CHAPTER TWO

METHOD

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I relate how I went about watching, listening, asking, recording and examining aspects of six women's lives (Ely, 1991).

Research methodology is the manner in which researchers approach issues and questions and seek answers (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). The qualitative researcher may use a variety of practices, methods and possibilities of analysis in conducting the research (Ely, 1991). This research was carried out in the ethnographic tradition which assumes that "human actions are based upon or are infused by social meanings; intentions, motives, attitudes and beliefs" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p. 7). Ethnos is a Greek term denoting a people, race or cultural group (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). When ethno is put together with graphic to create ethnographic it is referring to the science of describing "ways of life of humankind" (1994, p.25). Ethnographic researchers observe the activities of individuals under study rather than relying solely on informants' accounts of events and situations or experimental simulations of it (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p. ix).

My research is ethnographic in nature in that I observed and listened to informal conversations and actions during the twice-weekly adult education program sessions in which young adult female participants were engaged. I also observed the women in activities outside of the family literacy program. These activities included field trips to the county courthouse to register to vote; to the fabric store to plan and prepare a sewing project; and to the local hospital to learn about jobs in the health field. I attended one woman's baby shower and later visited with her in the hospital after the baby was born. I went to the hospital with the home visitor teacher from the family literacy program. At the hospital, at the mother's request, we videotaped the mother and her baby as a baby's first day present for the mother and her family. I visited homes of four women and later spent time with one woman at her home number of times, after she left the family literacy program.

The central activity of ethnography is observation through which the researcher immerses herself in the "new culture" (Delamont, 1992, p. 8). The researcher seeks to uncover and describe the complex richness in social situations and the framework by which participants interpret their thoughts, feelings, and actions (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). This social situation includes internalized notions of norms, traditions, roles, and values; contextual variables (1989). In order to understand how individuals take and make meaning in interaction with and within the various components of their lives, and to inform my movement from "external knowledge" to primary insight (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983), I needed to interpret what I saw, heard, and recorded. In the interpretivist tradition, people, as "particular actors, in particular places, at particular times, fashion meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction involving history, language and action" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). To understand, to grasp the "meaning" of social phenomena (1994, p. 120), one constructs a reading of these meanings (p. 120); thus this research includes my sense making, my reading and analysis of the women's worlds. Bernstein quoted in Bartoli (1995), writes: "every translation of these stories is

at the same time an interpretation' (p. 114), reminding us of the multiple and complex understandings that are possible as we try to understand each other's stories" (p. 4).

STARTING

Choosing a Field Study Setting

The setting of a research study acts as the container, however fluid, multilayered and porous its cultural boundaries, from which meanings and interpretations can be constructed. Marshall and Rossman (1989) write:

Human behavior is significantly influenced by the setting in which it occurs; thus one must study that behavior in situations. The physical setting and the internalized notions of norms, traditions, roles, and values are crucial contextual variables. Research must be conducted in the setting where all the contextual variables are operating. (p. 51)

Selecting a site for my study was an extended process. Initially I thought I would organize and lead a community parent-child reading-writing group. I later abandoned this idea when I heard the director of a federally funded family literacy program speak at a local education conference in March, 1995. In this seminar a variety of local educational initiatives were showcased. During his presentation, Drew, the director of a federally funded family literacy program, described how parents, young adults who never finished high school, attended a twice weekly education program with their young children eight years and under. The adults, mostly women, attended classes, while their children participated in a developmental school readiness program. On a weekly basis, parents and children participated together in activities designed to facilitate healthy parenting behaviors. Listening to Drew during his presentation, I immediately developed a mental picture of the participants. I imagined this group of adults to be many of my former students from whom I had felt so removed. This setting appealed to me. Perhaps I would have opportunities to work with the participants in writing and reading activities. With these activities I hoped to gain access to their worlds while contributing to literacy development.

I called Drew at the family literacy program office in April of 1995. During our phone conversation I explained that I was a PhD student in education and that I was setting up a dissertation research project. I said that I was interested in family literacy and in gathering local family histories. Drew was very receptive and in fact had been seeking some venue to increase awareness of the family literacy program. He had some knowledge of the family histories and family/community experiences of the different participants and expressed appreciation for the stories of these families. We made plans to discuss my role and participation during lunch.

Later, during lunch, Drew described the purpose of the program as that of improving education for both the participating adults and their young children. In his view, the program seeks to provide opportunities for parents and children to acquire skills and knowledge useful for pursuing more successful lives. The parents in this program typically worked to pass the GED (General Equivalency Diploma), and their children attended public school readiness programs. Activities that focused on nutrition, child discipline, physical care for parents and children and parent-child interactions that foster reading readiness supplemented the GED preparation curriculum. Family skating parties, family holiday singing, and other family-centered events also supplemented the twice-weekly sessions that participants attended. In addition, the program

offered information and support for those seeking jobs or solving housing problems, dealing with drug and alcohol issues or seeking counseling. (See Appendix A for a detailed discussion and further official description of the family literacy program.)

Appropriateness of Research Site

Marshall and Rossman write (1989):

The ideal site is where (1) entry is possible; (2) there is a high probability that a rich mix of many of the processes, people, programs, interactions, and/or structures that may be part of the research question will be present; (3) the researcher can devise an appropriate role to maintain continuity of presence for as long as necessary; and (4) data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured. (p. 54)

Drew and I discussed how I could be involved with the adult education class. During our conversation Drew and I agreed that if the adult education teacher consented, I would work as a volunteer supporting this teacher with reading and writing activities.

Drew said he would like to see more curriculum planned in reading and writing for the participants. Together we brainstormed different reading and writing ideas. I suggested the women keep journals and write about issues pertinent to their lives, such as the new welfare laws and where to put a new local bridge that went through one rural neighborhood. I guessed that the women might enjoy collecting a family photo album and scrap book and writing a story from it or putting together a collection of items that represent a family history. I had several suggestions for representing family culture through language arts activities. Drew expressed enthusiasm for these ideas, and I felt very encouraged by this conversation. We agreed that the next step would be for me to visit one of the two sites where program participants met. I could meet and talk with the adult education teacher.

I concluded from our lunch discussion that entry would be possible due to Drew's willingness to have my participation in the program. I also concluded that I could meet Marshall and Rossman's (1989) third criterion of devising an appropriate participant observer role through participating as a volunteer. However, the other two criteria were less clear. Gauging the richness of "contextual variables" (Marshall and Rossman, 1989, p. 51) was still an unknown for me. Assuring data quality and credibility were two aspects I wasn't sure I could control or plan for. I wanted to learn things that weren't readily available and involved some risk as I would be dependent on the willingness of the women to reveal their histories with me. I wanted to use my familiar presence in the family literacy program in order to gain access into the everyday worlds of the young adults' lives outside the setting.

Visiting the Research Site

Four weeks later I found myself driving to a large blue, metal prefab church located in the middle of a gravel parking lot. This church shared the parking lot with a used car/garage/scrap metal business. There are green rolling fields on two sides of the church and a fenced-in area that contained playground equipment and a trailer court on the far side of the church. This industrial-agricultural residential assortment lies at the end of a county road. The county road intersects the major highway linking a state university town of 40,000 to the county seat town in this rural/semirural county. This region has historically supported farming, coal mining, an army

ammunitions plant, and other light manufacturing and industry. The major employers are two state universities.

I did not know what to expect when I walked into the church and continued down the hall into a large room. In this room, several people served breakfast from behind tables of food. Others sat at tables eating and talking. Drew, the director, introduced me to each staff member and program participant. This particular morning the adult education teacher, Ellie, was setting up tables and chairs in the classroom across the hall. Ellie assured me that the adult education group of women was very accustomed to having visitors present during their adult education sessions. This was the end of the year and the group was spending time completing program assessments and evaluations. On that day I stayed until lunch and then returned two more times before the scheduled end-of-the-year picnic. Drew invited me to attend the picnic and be the official "videotaper" for the occasion. I agreed to do this.

Program Schedule

During the morning of that first visit I observed a schedule for the morning sessions that included an opening by the teacher, Ellie. She shared inspirational information on setting personal goals and dispursed local information on activities relating to family health, education and entertainment. The group then split up and individuals went about doing their own work. Each woman was doing a different activity. Some people were taking practice GED tests while others were working in math or reading workbooks. Drew, the director, was tutoring a woman (Tina) in math in preparation for the June GED test. There were weekly goal and feedback sheets that everyone was required to complete. One day a week the participants joined their children for a joint activity facilitated by the infant and preschool teachers.

At 10:30 there was a break and then the women were expected to return to whatever each was previously working on. I noticed that several of the women listened to conversations going on around them and read the newspaper the entire morning. Figure 1 presents the daily schedule.

<u>Family Literacy Daily Schedule</u>	
9:00-9:10	Bus arrives
9:10-9:30	Breakfast
9:30-10:00	PACT and Adult Resource Time
10:00-11:40	Adult and Preschool Education
<u>Preschool</u>	<u>Adult Education</u>
9:30-9:45	Circle Time
9:45-10:45	Centers
10:45-11:00	Cleanup/Singing
11:00-11:15	Group
11:15-11:35	Outdoor Play
11:35-11:40	Ready for lunch
11:40-12:05	Lunch
12:05-12:15	Teeth-brushing, Toileting, Preparation for nap, Story time with Parents
12:15 - 1:40	Adult Education; Nap
1:40 - 1:50	Parents get children up, put away cots, prepare for home
1:50	Bus leaves

Figure 1. Family literacy program participant schedule.

Initial Impressions

My impression of those late spring sessions was that there was a community of caring women here. The situation appeared to be very informal within a structured schedule. The environment did not resemble a public school classroom with quiet school talk or a strict adherence to a structure. The academic conversations were interwoven with personal conversations, and there was an ongoing playful, joking, kidding dialogue constructed by women. It was never quiet as participants and staff bantered, shared, and talked about personal and academic matters.

One woman shared a story about her cousin who delivered her baby with her help in the bathroom the night before. Other women then shared other birthing stories. Then the group returned their attention to the workbooks, practice essays, and program scrapbooks that were part of their official program. The boundary between the academic aspect of the program and the personal was porous.

In June, 1995, I attended the year-end picnic. It was held at the other family literacy program site, in an old church in a small village down the mountain not so many miles from the town where I live. The year-end picnic felt to me like a church social. Various family and extended family groups sat at a long line of tables inside the church hall or stood mingling outside. Outside the church in the yard several activities were underway. These activities included a clown troop playing in the crowd; high school students painting designs on kids' faces; kids playing on

outdoor play equipment; a fireman climbing up a fully extended fire engine ladder and the local sheriff visiting in his patrol car. Later, after dinner, the staff performed a skit for the picnic participants and several women played music. The program staff provided pizza and fried chicken, while attendees brought salads, vegetables, fruits or dessert.

Though this event occurred in my county, relatively close to my home, I felt somewhat ill at ease among the family literacy women and their families. Even as I considered how long I have lived in this area, participating in this picnic highlighted my unfamiliarity with the group. I could relate to Ely's thoughts that "Modern ethnographic work has taught us that human beings know little about cultures right around them, and that at least in substantive cultural knowledge ... great discrepancies may exist between next-door neighbors" (1991, p.68).

Additionally, I was very sensitive to the problem facing participant observers, such as developing friendships with people in which they would ultimately interpret, evaluate, analyze and draw conclusions. I related to Judith Stacey's thoughts when she writes (1991):

Ethnographic research depends upon human relationship, engagement and attachment, it places research subjects at grave risk of manipulation and betrayal by the researcher. For no matter how welcome, even enjoyable, the fieldworker's presence may appear to "natives", fieldwork represents an intrusion and intervention into a system of relationships, a system of relationships that the researcher is far freer than the researched to leave. The inequality and potential treacherousness of this relationship is inescapable. (p. 113)

I felt skeptical about the role I would have during data collection.

As a graduate student, I was seeking to do research in a manner which incorporated elements of Lincoln's interpretive research criteria (1996). Lincoln argues that elements of positionality, community, voice, reciprocity, sacredness, caring, and yearning should be included as criteria for qualitative research efforts. While I considered how these elements were present in this research, I was especially intent on creating reciprocity with the women in order to establish integrity in my data collection. How could I develop this "deep sense of trust, caring, heightened awareness and mutuality" (Lincoln, 1996, p. 17) when I may be in a situation where I could be exploitive? How could I be fair to the participants in my researcher role? Would my role have legitimacy in which mutually helpful relationships could be created? What would the women expect of me in return for my use of them in my research? What could I offer them? These concerns and questions remain with me.

In spite of my misgivings and fears about my role as a researcher, I left the picnic that night glad I had immediately helped by videotaping the celebration. I concluded that this was a research site where entry was possible largely due to the openness and flexibility of the staff. I anticipated that there would be a "rich mix of many of the processes, people, and interactions" (Marshall and Rossman, 1989, p. 54). Participating as a participant observer as both a volunteer and a researcher would legitimate my role for the program staff and participants (Marshall and Rossman, 1989).

Changes Over the Summer

At the end of the spring semester, the director mentioned to me that Ellie, the adult education teacher, might not return in the fall. He invited me to apply for her position. In August I received a phone call from Kathy, the adult education aide. She asked me to apply and accept

the adult education teacher position. Ellie had indeed decided not to return for the next year. According to the program aide, Ellie and Drew held differing opinions about how the adult education class should be conducted. I was surprised that Ellie was not going to return to the program, and I knew that I could not carry out research as well as teach. I declined the offer. Yet

now I felt my research role was in jeopardy. Would the new teacher be welcoming and agreeable to having me and my research project in her class?

Nan, the New Adult Education Teacher

The woman who had been the computer/technology support person was hired as the new adult education teacher. I met with Nan in August, 1995. Nan and I shared stories about our personal histories and our teaching experiences. We discovered a number of similarities. Nan, though now married, had been divorced with a small child when she completed her masters degree

in adult education. Like me, Nan, as a single mother, completed school and then worked full-time. Nan had worked in business and industry as an adult trainer and tutor. She also had worked in more traditional school settings, teaching traditional GED preparation courses.

Nan shared her adult education goals with me. She hoped to facilitate a sense of ownership among the program participants. She planned to accomplish this by forming participant teams who each complete a schedule of chores such as setting up and cleaning up during breakfast and lunch; setting up the computers; and planning and presenting team presentations on topics she created.

Nan shared her writing project ideas. These ideas included each participant writing a family essay; selecting a newspaper article and writing a summary of the article and then writing an essay about a topic from the newspaper article. She explained that this process would help participants to learn the difference between an essay and a summary.

During our August meeting, I explained to Nan that my research was qualitative in design and that I would collect data through observation and informal and formal interviews in order to understand the everyday worlds of the participants. Nan was receptive to my research interest. She had some empathy for me as a student collecting data because she herself had been a student and her husband was a PhD student writing his dissertation at that time. I realized that I had no clear understanding of how the dynamics in the sessions between Nan and the participants could impact ways I could collect data and work as a volunteer. Balancing the roles of assisting Nan as a volunteer classroom aide and collecting data for a research project was going to be interesting. At this point in the research I could relate to Hammersley and Atkinson's (1983) reflections:

Even the most friendly and co-operative of gatekeepers or sponsors will shape the conduct and development of the research. To one degree or another, the ethnographer will be channelled in line with existing networks of friendship and enmity, territory and equivalent 'boundaries'. Having been 'taken up' by a sponsor, the ethnographer may find it difficult to achieve independence from such a person, finding the limits of his or her research bounded by the social horizon of a sponsoring group or individual.

(p. 73)

While I enjoyed a professional resonance with Nan, Anne and Drew, I knew that that alone could not ensure success in establishing relationships with the participants. The staff had

shared many insights, information and encouragement with me and for this support I felt grateful. Yet, my true interest was the women's lives. I knew I couldn't rely on my rapport with the staff to facilitate relationships with the women participants.

New Location for the Family Literacy Program

During the summer the family literacy program moved from the blue metal church to a smaller brick church situated on a main road on the other side of town, further into a rural area. There is a residential area on the hill behind the church. There, daily walks were planned as part of the morning schedule. Across the road from the church cows grazed on pasture land next to brick ranch style homes. A Moose Lodge sat in a building right next to the church where the county bookmobile was parked.

COLLECTING DATA

Observing

My observations were made public during my first official visit in the fall of 1995. Nan introduced me to the group as a graduate student and as a former elementary school teacher who would be assisting with the program and who was going to do research. One participant responded immediately by saying to me, "You don't need no GED, do you?" This was the type of response I dreaded. This woman honed in on the primary issue and fear for me. Who was I to come into this group and ask others to self-disclose intimate aspects of their personal lives? These women could very easily be labeled, categorized and judged by me. This woman voiced what the others may have been thinking. Would I analyze, judge and evaluate them against my middle-class standards? I later wrote in my expanded field notes:

I realized I was scared of her street wise ability to read me as a phony, as an insecure white female who perhaps has had an easier or more privileged life than she. I have now come to appreciate J's quick, perceptive wit and teasing comments that accentuate and reveal tensions existing underneath all the talk. Her sense of humor and stream of consciousness dialogue with any conversation is touching, admirable and oh so funny.

So, having no apparent choice but to keep going, I responded by saying, "We all need a GED." I then presented a brief history of myself as a person and as a teacher. I told the group of ten women that I was a single mother of two boys and had been for twelve years. I told them that I had been a preschool and an elementary teacher, teaching second and fourth grades in the local county. I explained that I was doing a research project on family literacy. I wanted to find out how families live their lives through talking, writing, listening, and reading. I explained that by understanding better how literacy is a part of families' lives, teachers can plan more effective learning activities in schools.

After my explanation, a woman participant asked pointly, "What do you want?" Again, trying to ignore indications of hostility towards me, I said I wanted to observe, take notes on what I observed, and interview people. I didn't mention at this time that I wanted to tape record the interviews. I said that they could teach me, and I would write about what they taught me. One woman participant asked if this was going to become a book, a published book that others would

read. I said "I hope so". I briefly explained that I would have consent forms for people to sign and that I would like to do interviews during the program sessions. After my explanation, Nan directed the women's attention to other concerns and activities.

Choosing Where to Observe

Delamont (1992) writes that "choosing where to look and when to look is also a matter of systematic, principled, reflexive decision-making." The family literacy sessions were full of activities by numerous people. Numerous visitors came and went, as the teaching staff and program participants followed the schedule. Visitors from the outside came into the classroom to carry out activities that included various health screenings for the children; to make short presentations about community services available for the families; and to conduct the Literacy Volunteers of America parent-child reading program for six weeks during the fall.

Interactions and conversations were diverse and complicated, as people talked about various learning activities and personal life events. Women called their social workers, made medical appointments, ordered birthday cakes from bakeries, and talked about personal problems. New babies, new marriages, and new boyfriends were celebrated. Personal plights and immediate crises were discussed and addressed. Yet, the atmosphere was more tense than it had been in the spring as the program staff encouraged formality and developed school-like tasks.

My observations involved three contexts: the official program interactions; the informal interactions of the participants during the sessions and during home visits; and the off-site program activities planned for the participants and their families (for example, roller skating party, Christmas caroling).

Within these contexts I observed and took fieldnotes following Wilson's five relevant types of data needed to understand "meaning structures" (In Marshall and Rossman, 1989, p. 107). The types of data include: 1) form and content of verbal interaction between participants; 2) form and content of verbal interaction with researcher; 3) nonverbal behavior; 4) patterns of actions and nonaction; and 5) traces, archival records, artifacts and documents.

Deciding What to Observe

The challenge for me was to know when data were relevant for insights related to my research interests. I found three of Wolcott's four strategies for deciding what to look at and how to look (in Delamont, 1992 to be helpful. These include: observation by broad sweep; observation of nothing in particular; and searching for paradoxes. On different days I observed and looked for different things. When observing by broad sweep I looked at the women's dress, mannerisms and language. Additionally I took in the big picture of program staff and participants as they went about the day.

During observation of nothing in particular, I was in Nodding's receptive mode (Lincoln, 1996), waiting. Lincoln describes this receptive mode as: qualitatively different from the analytic-objective mode in which we impose structure on the world. It is a precreative mode characterized by outer quietude and inner voices and images, by absorption and sensory concentration. The one so engrossed is listening, looking, feeling. This mode allows us to receive the object, to put ourselves quietly in its present. (1996, p. 20)

In addition, as a compulsive note recorder, I recorded who was there, who was absent and why.

One can't really plan to observe paradoxes; things happen and I had to be ready to recognize when insightful cracks opened up. One morning several women were discussing Agatha Christie novels. Julie shared how she reads Agatha Christie novels from the local library. She and Ann, another participant, discussed their favorite titles and what they liked about the mysteries. Ann then began talking about the book, *A River Runs Through It*. I had never heard any of the participants discuss novels before, and I remember thinking this is great. Adjectives like self-motivated, initiative, sophisticated, literate were going through my mind.

Then at the end of the session that day, Ann asked if there was any food packaged up from breakfast or lunch. She had no food at home and no paycheck from her job as a part-time elementary school custodian for another two days. I also learned from Julie that she had no heat because she couldn't pay the bill and no money to prepare an Easter celebration for her two young children.

When learning about Julie's financial circumstances and Ann's lack of food I was surprised by the gap between their life circumstances and the richness of their book sharing. This awareness was very significant for me. Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988) explained an important discovery that "education and literacy cannot be used interchangeably. We found family members who were highly literate, and yet they were not educated in the traditional sense of the word" (p. 200). I also experienced this disjuncture and in the process found I held stereotypes and images that needed examination. If I had heard the "book talk" and not seen the talkers, I would have assumed the conversation had occurred between two formally educated, middle-class women.

Recording Fieldnotes

Hammersley and Atkinson write, "There are several methods ethnographers use for recording their data, most notably fieldnotes, audio-taping, video-taping and filming" (1983, p. 145). "Fieldnotes are the traditional means in ethnography for recording observational data. In accordance with ethnographer's commitment to discovery, fieldnotes consist of relatively concrete description of social processes and their contexts" (1983, p. 145). Delamont (1992) writes that writing is an essential part of the qualitative research process. Writing was the major medium I used for recording data. Even the audio-tapes were transcribed into printed, written text.

From September, 1995 to June, 1996, I sat with six to thirteen adult participants twice weekly in a school-like setting in a church activity hall. We sat around a large rectangular table made from two smaller tables pushed together. There were piles of three-ring notebooks, spiral notebooks, math, science, social studies and English workbooks, pre-GED standardized test booklets and answer sheets scattered on the table along with plastic containers of pens, pencils, markers, staplers, scissors, white-out and so forth. I sat with the participants with my yellow legal pad ready for notetaking.

Delamont (1992) explains that:

Fieldnotes are most awkwardly and almost certainly incomprehensibly full of abbreviations, speed writing and personal shorthand, impossibly cryptic. It is possible that all observers regard themselves as poor, lazy, or sloppy notetakers. Most researchers are self-taught, and possibly fall into errors. Most researchers are protective of their fieldnotes. They are rarely seen by anyone other than their author and are not discussed. (pp. 54)

I know that my field notes are not ideal. They are a strange mixture of a daily log of events and a record of the language used, including phrases repeated over and over again. I also wrote elaborated descriptions of events that occurred during the sessions. I did not tape record the sessions as I felt this would be unnecessarily obtrusive.

Writing notes on the conversations, interactions and behaviors was a challenge. I found that I could not wait until after each session to record my observations since I could not clearly remember the language phrases. So I kept my yellow pad with me at all times and wrote while trying to stay involved with the conversations and activities.

I experienced tension from managing my role as a volunteer aide, and as a researcher. Additionally I juggled which aspect of the situation I should record along with writing it all down quickly enough so I didn't distort what was occurring. And when I did write, I often did not want the participants to read what I wrote. I awkwardly placed program worksheets over my yellow writing pad to conceal what I had written.

My notetaking on the yellow pad became part of my trademark at the sessions. On the last day of the year, Jill, commenting on how different everything felt on this day, and noting the absence of my yellow pad, exclaimed "and Linda, where is your yellow pad, you're not writing anymore!"

Expanding Fieldnotes

I recorded notes on every twice-weekly session from September, 1995 to June, 1996, and I wrote descriptions of home visits and off-site events. Beginning in the fall of 1995, I wrote reflective pieces at least twice a month. In these pieces I included elaborated descriptions of events and conversations recorded in my field notes. I also included my personal reactions to events and interactions. Through writing, I developed an understanding of the field notes.

In the spring I began to write pieces on individuals I interviewed, and I continued meeting with a campus-based writing group. These meetings helped me to make sense of my field experiences and to discern emerging issues.

Developing Trust

During the fall I became more and more acquainted with the adults attending the program. In addition to helping individuals with learning tasks I sat at the long work table and chatted. Some of us shared frequently in great detail. I was generally guarded in what I shared, although I initially disclosed some details about my immediate home life. I wanted the group to accept me, and I used my situation as a single parent as a way to establish a connection with the participants. I mentioned my sons and their activities. I talked about my cat; my house; my undependable car and eventually about my personal social life. I was spotted with a male friend and his daughter one night, and this became a topic for discussion and conjecture for the rest of the school year. I included this male friend in the end-of-the-year activity. My sense was that a manner of reciprocity was developing between the women and me (Lincoln, p. 15).

Interviewing

"An interview is ...'a purposeful conversation usually between two people that is directed by one in order to get information' (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982, p.135). The major purpose of an in-depth ethnographic interview is to "learn to see the world from the eyes of the person being interviewed" (Ely, 1991, p. 58). Kvale explains interviewing in qualitative research as a "conversation that has a structure and a purpose" (1996, p. 6). Kvale writes that the qualitative research interview is semistructured: "It is neither an open conversation nor a highly structured questionnaire. The semistructured research interview focuses on the subject's experience of a theme" (p.27). My initial purpose for interviewing selected individuals was to gain a deeper understanding of their lives in order to develop and explore an expanded notion of literacy.

Selecting Women to Interview

The staff members often suggested women who would be good to interview because of their life histories and their stories of overcoming unfortunate circumstances. Yet I made my own decisions about who to interview and when to approach individuals. I attempted to include a balance of women. Some women were very receptive and eager to participate and others expressed fear and reticence. I conducted three tape-recorded interviews with Tina, Kathy and Christine before the winter holiday break. In the spring I interviewed Craig, Christine's husband, Julie and Reba. I purposively avoided participants I considered to be particularly vulnerable due to their immediate and complex life situations at that time. I chose each individual for different reasons.

Fall Interviews

Tina was the first woman with whom I conducted a tape-recorded interview. She had been recommended to me many times by the director and the teachers. According to the staff, Tina had experienced a dramatic personal transformation and had emerged as a leader in the group.

I asked Christine to be interviewed for contrasting reasons. Christine appeared to be a quiet, passive woman who didn't become actively involved in the social aspects of the program. She was a heavy woman whose loose baggy clothes, hair style and facial complexion suggested little attention to current fashion. I respected that Christine didn't participate in the rowdy goings on of the larger group; I sensed a quiet strength. Christine was not a verbal leader; yet her perseverance and integrity really impressed me.

I asked Kathy for an interview because she also appeared to be an outgoing, leader figure in the group, however flamboyant. (The day she was going to be asked to leave the program due to nonacademic participation and unacceptable progress towards her goals, Kathy wore a strapless black top that revealed much of her figure. The director told me that he couldn't bring himself to approach her that day because of her provocative physicality.)

Of all the tape-recorded interviews I conducted, I felt my conversation with Kathy was the least successful. I believe that Kathy was very sensitive to what actions and appearances constituted appropriate, successful, healthy middle-class living. So I suspected that she answered my interview questions in ways that would gain my approval. (Perhaps revealing the true nature

of her life would be untenable for her.) I was unable to develop a high degree of mutuality with Kathy. I felt we related on a superficial level.

The fall interviews provided limited information about the participants. Tina, Christine and Kathy were very selective in what and how they disclosed personal information. Christine hesitantly worked her way into telling me personally painful information at the end of the interview. Tina never told me a coherent story during our formal interview sessions.

Spring Interviews

During the spring I interviewed Craig, Reba, and Julie. The spring interviews were more relaxed and provided more in-depth information due to our growing trust. Craig and Julie had had very candid, honest conversations with me as a result of the dialogue journaling we engaged in months before the interviews took place. I chose to interview them because of our shared comfort level and developed trust with each other.

I chose Reba because of her extraordinary commitment to attending the program. She appeared to pursue her articulated goals with quick intelligence. Reba had three young children under four years old and she typically arrived carrying diaper bags and bags of baby equipment. In spite of our acquaintance and familiarity with each other, she never directly told me of a significant yet painful family situation in her life during the interview. Reba's sister later explained to me the circumstances which caused their frequent moves as children. I believe Reba was shy about talking in front of the tape recorder.

I also interviewed the director and two program aides who were graduates of the program. Additionally, I had numerous conversations with all participants (Ely, 1991, p. 57). These interviews and conversations were very important and served to deepen my relationships with the participants and to provide valuable information. One participant specifically did not want to commit to be interviewed; yet we had many, many exchanges and discussions.

Interview Location

I believed that the program site was a relaxed, comfortable place for the women, especially with their young children being cared for in the infant and/or toddler and preschool rooms. Therefore, I conducted the interviews during the session times and at the site. I did these interviews with Nan's full cooperation. She allowed the women to sit for interviews at various times during the adult education work period from 9:30 to 11:30 am. The interviews occurred in lieu of participants' planned program activities. I didn't ask to conduct interviews during the scheduled breaks because these breaks were coveted personal times.

For the interviews, we sat in a corner of the large adult education room on a couch and overstuffed arm chair. We were far enough away from the larger group so our voices could be heard but not our specific words. (See Appendix B for a list of interview topics.)

Asking Questions

Through questioning, I encouraged respondents to weave back and forth between their past of growing up and their present circumstances and problems. I asked questions in different ways about the same situation or topic in order to get further elaboration or to validate the responses.

Within the context of the interview, at times I maintained a balance between listening, interacting, and encouraging. I believe that at other times I was too directive. I thought I was helping the participants feel comfortable with the interview by asking leading questions. Other times I think I was too gushy positive and empathic.

Collecting Documents and Artifacts

I collected copies of women's written pieces produced during the family literacy program. These written pieces include: family essays, holiday essays, personal vision statements and goals and a program portfolio.

I initiated several projects with the participants which included carrying out literacy digs, constructing social maps, and writing in dialogue journals. These texts added depth to the data collected on the participants.

Nan, Kathy, (the adult education teacher aide) and I took home a half-page chart in which we recorded all the writing and reading we did in one day. I showed the completed charts to the participants and encouraged them to try recording for themselves for one day. Two or three women did fill out the chart and they expressed surprised that they did so much reading and writing in a day.

I was able to sit down with Reba and Christine and show them how to create a social map. They drew a circle in the middle of a sheet of paper and in this central circle wrote their names and the names of their immediate family members. Out from this circle they drew lines connected to other circles which contained various chunks of their lives. These circles included names and activities with friends, extended family, personal hobbies, activities at home and during holidays, and job. A networked richness of relationship connections, shared activities revealed literacies to them and to me.

I gave a presentation on the power and benefits of reflective journal writing. Again Nan and Kathy supported this effort by offering personal examples of how they wrote to gain clarity on very emotional situations. Craig and Julie were the most enthusiastic and consistent journal writers. Craig wrote his life history in his journal. Julie composed poems and short stories and wrote responses to my questions and prompts.

ANALYSIS and INTERPRETATION

In May of 1996 I phased out my data collection and began to focus more on analysis and interpretation (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). At the end of the program year I attended the program sessions weekly and participated more as a volunteer than as a researcher. I felt, as Ely (1991) describes:

The final phase of data analysis ... takes place when the researcher has left the field and sits alone. This is the time to begin to tackle the question that lurked in the

back of so many of our minds all along the way, as we wrote copious field notes, yet another analytic memo, transcribed various interviews, and collected every bit of social evidence that the study demanded: 'What do I do with all of this?' It is time to start taming the chaos. (p. 140)

Initial Analysis

During the summer of 1996, I began my analysis by working with the data I collected about Tina. I chose to begin with Tina because of the numerous times I spent with her outside of the family literacy program, primarily in her home. Her story had powerful indications of critical literacy that I wanted to analyze and examine. My process in analyzing the data occurred in three ways. In the initial stages I repeatedly reread the field notes and interview transcriptions. I wrote notes on the interview texts, and tagged blocks of information and quotes from Tina I thought were significant. I had pieces of data written and noted on multiple sheets of paper and in numerous written forms that I cut apart and tried to place in a fashion that would make sense to another reader. I was able to distill a list of themes that reflected the data. From this analysis, I attempted to write my interpretation of Tina's story which became a working draft.

From these efforts I worked back and forth between lists of themes, my rough drafts of Tina's story, expanded field notes pieces, interview transcriptions and field notes. I looked for further evidence of themes in the data and I worked to more authentically structure and frame Tina's story.

After I had Tina's story arranged in what I thought was a coherent manner, I revisited my original research questions and issues. I rewrote the rationale for the study, specifying my purpose. I went back to Tina and checked again for metaphors and clusters of themes. I repeatedly scanned the written texts and wrote notes on what themes and categories I was discovering. (See Appendix C for a list of strands, themes and categories that emerged from Tina's data.)

Finally I left data from Tina for awhile and went on to data concerning other program participants. I selected five other women to highlight. I selected these five women because of my familiarity with them at the family literacy program and at events outside the family literacy program. (Jill invited me to her baby shower and I visited her at the hospital after the birth of her baby.) During the selection process, a major theme emerged. Within the circles of their everyday lives, these women exhibited resourcefulness in the face of adversity.

To analyze their data, I went through the interview transcriptions and field notes of the five women organizing the information in two columns on paper. In one large column I recorded excerpts I thought were revealing and significant. In the second column I recorded the issue, category or theme I believed the data supported. I made lists of the issues, themes or phrases that I noted within each data set. (See Appendix D for these lists.)

Data Analysis Process

I related to Ely's description of a researcher's different analysis styles (1991): In addition to that basic act of settling down to work in the first place, many people have come to realize that there are different approaches or styles to planning and

carrying out the work. Lofland and Lofland identify the 'steady plodders' who work a little each day, methodically and laboriously building up their analysis and the 'grand sweepers' who write very little text at first, but rather work out the entire report in detail in the form of outlines and organized notes. Others of us prefer to work on chunks. (p. 142)

I was a 'steady plodder' who worked in chunks in nonchronological ways. I would spend days reading and taking notes from books I thought would help me make sense of the data. For example I read or reread included *Hidden Literacies* by Voss (1996), *The Violence of Literacy* by Stuckey (1991), *My Name's Not Susie: A Life Transformed by Literacy* by Sharon Jean Hamilton (1995). As I read these books, I discovered that:

The analytic process of writing is paralleled by that of reading. As writing is a positive act of sense making, so too is reading...We draw attention to the need to read and to use "the literature" in order to generate ideas and analysis. (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p. 110)

After reading, I would incubate, examine and study the data and then write. When writing I would get my thoughts down, take the hard copy and revise and then write again. This could be a seven to ten day stretch of writing and revising and adding information. I would get caught in junctures where I didn't know where the writing was going. At those times, I felt stuck, panicky and in need of a break. I would go running out of my house in search of people to talk with, at the coffee shops or the library. I scheduled lunch and dinners with friends and other graduate students; I needed mental distraction. I tried to work in three blocks of time during the day; morning, afternoon and evening. Getting immersed in the data in order to get beneath the surface words was hard for me.

Later Interpretation: Going Beyond the Data

During the summer and fall of 1997 and winter of 1998, I moved from coding data to narrative writing; from analysis to interpretation. How to present my interpretation became a critical consideration. I resisted for months moving from the phase of data analysis and writing up the analysis to representing the research in elaborated story-like ways. I originally believed I was not being honest with the participants with this type of textual representation. I believed I was taking inappropriate liberties with their disclosures. As I struggled with presenting my interpretation, I came to understand that "Thinking about how to represent our data also forces us to think about the meanings and understandings, voices, and experiences present in the data" (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p. 109). I discovered that:

All forms of textual representation involve some degree of "fictional" work...Here the ethnographer-author explicitly draws on literary conventions to construct a fictionalized but authentic account. Tierney (1993, p. 313), suggests that such ethnographic fiction helps to rearrange events and identities 'in order to draw the reader into the story in a way that enables deeper understanding of individuals, organization or events themselves.' (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p. 123, p. 127)

I was aware that, as Michele Fine writes, "we need to invent narrative strategies that tell stories but do not romanticize individual tales of survival" (1995, p. 138). It was a struggle to find a balance among important considerations.

I wrote two chapters in the story telling approach. One chapter tells Tina's story, the other chapter provides glimpses of the five women's lives constructed as vignettes. I was able to write Tina's story as a story when her life became clear images in my mind. I wrote Tina's chapter ignoring all the themes and categories I had previously analyzed. The vignettes of the five women I also wrote with no worry of how to integrate my analysis into the text. I had been obsessed with the integration of each woman's portrayal in relation to larger themes. Writing their stories with no worry of how to integrate analysis was like slicing through soft butter. Through this process I focused on three or four themes. I made choices of episodes to include in the vignettes based on the most consistently apparent themes.

Each story chapter is followed by a chapter that summarizes and reviews the larger issues. These chapters explicitly summarize issues and themes, and relates them to broader ideas and concepts. This was done in a fashion similar to Coffey and Atkinson's "abductive reasoning" (1996). They explain that:

We start from the particular. We identify a particular phenomenon...We then try to account for that phenomenon by relating it to broader concepts...abductive inferences seek to go beyond the data themselves, to locate them in explanatory or interpretive frameworks. (p. 156)

Specific themes were consistent across the chapters of Tina and the five women. Other themes and issues were unique to each chapter. These themes and issues relate to the larger theme of these women living as bricoleurs negotiating multiple discourses and social class.

At the end I wrote an epilogue to the study. In this epilogue I answered my original research question of how my learnings from the study could be used in the classroom.

RECIPROCITY and MUTUALITY

Until March, 1998, none of the women had read what I wrote about their lives. The consent documents had no provision for the participants in the dissertation to read my interpretation of their story. Yet I felt I wouldn't have satisfactorily implemented Lincoln's (1996) reciprocity and mutuality without an attempt to locate the women and invite them to read their piece in the document. In early March, 1998, after I felt satisfied with my textual representations, I called Drew to ask if he had addresses of the six women in the study. He was able to provide me with his most recent phone numbers and addresses for each woman in this study. I plan to attempt to locate each woman. If they are interested, I hope to share this document with them and receive their feedback.

CHAPTER THREE

TINA

What is certain is that we now extend the idea of "being literate" to other areas of our lives which have no direct connection with reading and writing the language we speak (Meek, 1992, p.38).

INTRODUCTION

Initially I thought the women participants of my study, including Tina, had no resources available with which to live. Over time I came to understand the nature of the multiple literacies and other resources Tina and others used and had available for themselves. These were resources I would have discounted a year earlier because they appeared different from those I knew well.

This chapter focuses on Tina, a twenty-six year old single-parent mother of two children, Jennifer, age ten, and Zach, age five. I write about Tina as I came to view her, a young woman literate in many ways. During my association with Tina I was able to understand her multiple resources and literacies. These include personal ingenuity, strategic thinking and planning, along with concrete mechanical skills, small business planning and other funds of knowledge and savvy within discourses.

INCLUSION: TINA'S EARLY CHILDHOOD

Neighborhood as Extension of Home

Twenty years ago, Tina's parents bought one of the first houses in a new housing development located in a rural area of the county. Today, this area of the county is still considered rural with its farming and country living landscape and in its location away from the more densely populated areas. Twenty years ago, an elementary school, grocery-convenience store, post office and twice-monthly bookmobile were clustered within walking distance of the neighborhood's houses. One could believe that they lived in a village insulated from the rest of the world. Tina recalled, "I watched the neighborhood build, we were one of the first ones out there. It was a good place for the kids, and the school was great, I like the school." Tina's memories create a sense of her neighborhood as an extension of home. Tina believed she had lived with a sense of community that included the close proximity of general store, post office, library and school within walking distance of home and other activities. She remembered a safe space where kids could explore and discover.

Father and Daughter As Jack-Of-All Trades

Tina's parents lived in Maryland before moving back to this region. In Maryland, her father worked on a farm until she was three or four years old. When her family returned to this area, her father, who never completed high school, took a number of different jobs. These jobs included working in a fiberglass shop, working as a mechanic in a sewing factory, and owning a

plumbing business with his brother. Tina attributed her savvy in electrical wiring, dry wall finishing, furniture refinishing, wood working and linoleum floor laying to her father's ability to work as a "jack of all trades."

Tina's mother, Carol, stayed at home with Tina and her three siblings until Tina was 11 years old. Carol then went to work part time in the elementary school cafeteria. Tina did not feel like her family was poor because they "didn't really go without, though there were times we got food stamps." Tina remembered that she and her siblings shared one bicycle, "the kind that have the hard tires," until Carol began working part time and they could afford to purchase leisure/hobby items.

Being Close

Extended family members were part of Tina's younger life in different ways. She was close to her great-grandfather and worked with him in his garden. In fact she would skip school to help him pick berries. Her great-grandfather paid Tina for her work, and she bought her first pair of Nike tennis shoes with this money. In order to make this early purchase on her own, Tina put the shoes on layaway and very gradually saved enough money to buy the shoes.

Tina also spent a significant amount of time at her grandmother's house which was near her parents' house. Tina remembered that "I was close with her [her grandmother]. We'd, you know, [do activities together]. I would just stay there with her. She would do for me." Her grandmother had daughters not much older than Tina who also participated in the household activities with their mother and Tina.

Family Time

Tina's family did not spend time and money doing things together as a family unit outside of the home, other than an occasional Sunday drive through the country. For a long time there was no family car. There were no vacations, no church or sports or other activities. She played at home with her brothers coloring, drawing, and watching TV. Tina recalled that "as brothers and sisters we would sit and read and stuff. I can remember me and my brothers that's all we would sit around and do is color, draw and compare our pictures to how pretty they were." There was no newspaper. Carol, Tina's mother, bought and read pleasure books for herself "like the Enquirer or something, or the TV Guide." Carol never read to the children but did read for herself. Tina remembered her mother "sittin' around reading that TV Guide." Carol demonstrated reading as entertainment, an aesthetic literacy.

Bookmobile in the Neighborhood

Tina recounted her experiences with the bookmobile which was parked down by the store and post office during the summer months. She distinctly remembered her mother repeatedly reminding Tina to return the library books. Just as often, Tina and her brothers forgot to take the books back to the bookmobile on time. Tina could:

remember when it [the bookmobile] first started runnin' over there. We would go down, she'd [her mother] tell us what days it was [bookmobile parked in the post office parking lot] and we could walk down to the post office and get onto the bus

[the bookmobile]. We did that a lot cause she'd [her mother would] get mad, [because] we wouldn't take [the books] back on time! Yeah, we would do that, especially through the summer, that's what we would do a lot [go to the bookmobile]. In this instance, reading became accessible to the children; it was not solely an adult practice.

4-H Club

While Tina's parents did not drive Tina and her brothers to after school events, dance lessons, art lessons, music lessons, recreational sports, or girl or boy scouts, she did have a childhood history with the 4-H club. The 4-H adult leader would come by her house to pick up Tina and her brothers. They would go to the local library to do activities: "We could put on a show, dances, you know, just different acts." In addition to planning, organizing and implementing entertainment, the kids would research and write reports on topics of their choice. Tina remembered the sense of accomplishment she felt with this "after school", school. The 4-H is 'bout the best thing I think we had growin' up. We were being more creative to where we liked it. We was so tickled, we thought we was doin' something. Which we did!" This learning environment occurred outside of the public school structure and discourse. It crossed into Tina's sociocultural context.

INCLUSION TO EXCLUSION

Redneck Chick in Middle School

Carol, rushing to get herself ready for work, had resorted to giving Tina only one chance to get up and ready in time for the school bus. She called to Tina just once on a school morning and no more. Tina's father had already left for work, catching a ride with her uncle. Billy, her brother, came into her room and kicked her in the side. Tina screamed and rolled over muttering, "I'm just a damn redneck, why should I even go to school?" Billy laughed and responded, "That's right, just a redneck chick." Tina, retorted, "You only go so you can catch a ride to the Lytton house!" Billy walking out of the room said, "Yeah, tough luck."

Tina got herself up and out the door in time to catch the bus, although she had no time for breakfast. On her way out the door, she took two cigarettes out of her brother's jacket pocket.

The best part of the school day for Tina was PE, especially when they were playing basketball. Her PE teacher had told her last year that she could play on the eighth-grade basketball team. But Tina would not stop smoking cigarettes. At the beginning of this school year, the PE teacher even gave Tina some herbal tea to help her stop the smoking habit. But Tina did not really want to stop smoking.

Having caught the school bus, Tina saved her cigarettes for after school. On the way home, she rode the school bus to her neighborhood, but got off at the first stop, down by the post office. She met four other eighth grade girls and they walked into the nearby woods to smoke and talk. Other kids, some high school age, joined them. By the end of the school year Tina was doing as her brother had been doing for some time. She rode the school bus to the middle school, and then caught a ride with some friends who drove a car. The group of kids drove around, smoking, drinking some, and talking. At times they gathered in an empty house to have social gatherings.

Hating and Blaming About School

Tina's conflict with her mother increased and her failing grades did not help this relationship. Tina later concluded that her parent's attitude toward school did not support school success for her. Tina felt her parents' lack of involvement with her school indicated they didn't feel school was important. She could not recall a time when her father ever came to her school. Her mother visited only to register Tina for school. Tina explained her actions in school by saying, "Yeah, but I think that's cause nobody was involved, and I hated it. I hated school with a passion. If we didn't go, our parents never found out, we would ride the bus to school just to get a ride out of there. Then we were at the school and get with a friend who had a car and we were gone." Tina added, "I always run with older kids, what I don't want my kids to do, I did. I was like thirteen and everybody was seventeen."

Learning the Evils of Life

An opportunity presented itself when Tina's aunt offered to have Tina come live with her family in Florida. Tina hoped this arrangement would relieve the tension between her and her mother and allow her to complete high school in Florida; a different environment. Billy put her on the bus to Florida and Tina later believed that this experience away from home significantly changed her. As she explained, "I learned the evils of life in Florida."

In Florida, Tina attempted to attend the local high school. She characterized herself as a white country girl, a "redneck", from the mountains who tried attending a school with a black student majority. Tina felt she was unfamiliar with the students' behaviors in the high school during school hours and with the predominance of black students attending the school. She didn't know how to act; she said that she felt overwhelmed by the strange environment and was scared to go to school. Tina eventually stopped attending school. She continued to live with her aunt, but lived her own life, separate from the family with which she was staying. Tina remembered that during this period she began to drink heavily and to use more and more drugs. She stayed with her aunt for a year and then took the bus back to her hometown.

Home Coming

Tina was the first person off the bus from Florida. Billy ran up and gave her a hug, gathered her bags and once in the car, popped open a can of beer, handed it to Tina and said, "welcome home." He asked Tina what she was planning to do back home. Tina responded that she planned to get a job and save money. Tina obtained a job at the sewing factory, and continued to work at the factory through the birth of her first child. Billy often took Tina with him to parties. During one party, she met Ted. By the age of sixteen, Tina was married to Ted, pregnant with Jennifer and living away from her parents' house and her childhood neighborhood.

EXCLUSION TO ISOLATION

Married Life

Tina's life with Ted was difficult. Her relationship with Ted was volatile in that he would abuse alcohol and drugs and be physically violent with Tina. At home, Tina felt isolated. "I mean, a lot of people, they didn't carry on like we did. I didn't have friends, I didn't have friends the whole time [she was married to her husband]." When Tina tried to make friends, her husband would become verbally aggressive in their company. The job at the sewing factory provided Tina with access and exposure to people outside of her marriage; however, she did not believe she had a community of friends or much participation in a "normal life" other than her co-workers at the sewing factory.

Going to her job was a relief for Tina. She felt these co-workers became her family and gave her support. Tina remembered:

I had two friends from when Jennifer was four, and Ted run them off one time, and they never came back. Even at my apartment [much later when she was divorced and living separately from her exhusband], he'd kicked the door open, and I had to pay for the door. He'd tear my apartment up. Even my neighbors, they'd see him coming, and they were scared. I felt so bad they couldn't feel comfortable. That's how I had to live around people. I hated him.

In addition, Ted closely monitored Tina's time away from home. Shopping at the grocery store was one way Tina could get out of the house, although her husband allowed her only thirty minutes to get there and thirty minutes to get back.

Running Down to the Bridge

Tina recalled her efforts to escape from Ted's surveillance. On one occasion, Tina bought two six-packs of beer, one for Ted, which she put in the refrigerator, and the other for herself. It didn't go in the refrigerator because Tina hid it behind the woodpile. The next night, when Ted went out with friends, Tina fetched the six-pack and carried it around the back of the house and down the hill to the bridge. She hid it under the bridge, wedged in between some rocks in the water. Tina quickly drank one beer knowing Ted would be back at any moment to drive her to visit other friends.

The next day, Sunday, Tina planned to hang the wet laundry outside on the clothes line. With the sheets blocking her and the back of the house, she could run down to the bridge and have two beers in fifteen minutes. Tina knew Ted would be drunk, lying on the sofa watching TV. Thus, Tina continually invented ways in which she could get out of the house, away from Ted and away from her troubles.

Pulling the Trigger

As the marriage continued, Tina related that, "It got worse physically; he'd pulled guns on me. He'd pull the trigger and laugh and then reload it. We could have killed each other."

The ups and downs, the fighting and physical abuse, fear, figuring out how to survive in this situation took its toll on Tina. She continued to cope by drinking, feeling more and more

desolate. "I had gone through spells where I would drink myself to death. I wouldn't eat. It's like I wouldn't speak to nobody. I was at a point where I was about ready to go."

Tina tried to protect her family from knowing the real extent of her physical abuse. She would not visit friends or family because of the bruises on her body. She felt very ashamed. When her mother or brothers wanted to come visit, Tina made up excuses saying that she would not be at home. "I wouldn't tell my parents for years. They never realized how mean he could be, they never really knew. I felt like it was such a struggle."

Counting on Nobody Else

The situation became so intolerable for Tina that after two years with Ted, she, together with her young daughter, left the household. Tina found places to live in the immediate area and managed by accepting food stamps and other assistance. Tina, who was pregnant at the time, moved from place to place, and continued to have the support of her father-in-law. This support continued even after she was divorced from Ted. Her father-in-law provided a trailer on his property where she could live, even though this living arrangement kept her close to Ted. Tina recalled that, "He was my maintenance and my helper. He always would be over [and offer] to come and do whatever. I couldn't count on nobody else before that to do it [provide support and assistance]."

Sleeping With Her Clothes On

The abuse from Ted continued even when Tina lived apart from him. He threatened her and broke into the house or trailer or where ever she was living. During this period, Tina lived in a constant high stress readiness mode. She remembered that she never slept well at night. Ted would attempt to cut the phone lines and enter her house or trailer at unexpected times during the night. Tina slept with her clothes and shoes on, everything packed, kept close at hand, and her car backed into the driveway in case she had to get away quickly.

Once, when Tina was living close to Ted, he drove to her house during the night and kicked in the basement door. She had Jennifer and Zach asleep in the back bedroom. Tina was lying on the couch because she couldn't relax and really sleep in her bedroom. Ted walked up the basement stairs and crept up to the living room. He grabbed Tina off the couch and held a knife to her throat. He then threw her to the floor and stabbed the knife into the floor next to her throat.

Moving Back

Finally, it seemed that living apart from her exhusband was not going to work. "I had been fighting him to keep him away for such a long time. I thought if I didn't move back in, he'd kill me." So Tina, although officially divorced from Ted, in an attempt to stop the physical, emotional and verbal abuse, moved back with her exhusband. "All I wanted was just to live a normal life." In order to give herself some type of protection she scraped together \$67.00 in coins hidden in a sock and purchased a gun.

Back in the family again, Tina continued to act as rescuer and caretaker for Ted with the assistance of his family. His father provided a car. Tina bailed Ted out of jail, took him to the

doctor, to court and so on. During this period, authorities were called numerous times by neighbors to their house on domestic dispute calls. Tina decided that she didn't have to keep living this way. "And I finally just started standing up I mean, it took me forever. But I knew it was really hurting my kids for me to set back and take it, allowing it to go on."

Shooting All She Could

One sunny December afternoon the temperature began to drop. Tina could tell because the living room was feeling chilly and the window panes were beginning to cover with frost. Wondering where Ted was and concerned about the mood he would be in when he arrived home, Tina called out to Jennifer to come help her bring in firewood from the side porch. Jennifer ran out the kitchen door without a coat. She chose two pieces of wood to carry into the kitchen. Tina followed her and brought in five more pieces. Zach, dragging his stuffed dog behind him, stood in the doorway and watched his mother and sister. Tina hurriedly shoed everyone out of the cold air and back into the kitchen.

Then she efficiently shoveled ashes out of the woodstove and poured them into the ash bucket. Jennifer asked her mother when they would finish decorating the Christmas tree in the living room. Tina explained that she needed to start this fire in the wood stove so they could get warm and then they could get back to the tree.

She asked the children if they were hungry, and Jennifer said yes, she wanted to have pizza for dinner. Tina, who kept glancing at the kitchen clock as she placed small pieces of kindling into the wood stove and arranged larger pieces of wood on top, told Jennifer that there was no money for pizza that night. She would make sandwiches. Her daughter made a face and ran back into the living room. Zach started crying and asking for his Daddy. Inwardly Tina was crying also. She was worried and scared, very scared. Ted had left late the night before; he'd been angry and jumpy. Tina had found the needles from his drug use after he'd left. She had been thankful she found them before the kids were up and about.

The kids heard the truck first, roaring up the dirt road to their house. Tina heard it and instinctively pulled the kitchen chair over to the cupboard and climbed on it to reach the gun hidden in a sock in the back of the shelf. She put the loaded gun in the front pocket of her sweatshirt. All three of them heard the sound of a loud thud when the truck rammed into and then rolled over the bank along the road. The sound of breaking glass and crunching metal persisted as the truck rolled down the hill. Tina stopped, frozen, not knowing what to do. Jennifer and Zach looked at her silently, and Tina matter of factly began getting out bread, meat and lettuce to make sandwiches.

Tina carried the sandwiches into the living room and set the paper plates on the floor for the kids. She continued trimming the Christmas tree. A short time later, Ted walked into the house from the kitchen door with no greeting for anyone. Tina thought she was going to throwup as she helped Zach put an ornament on the tree.

Ted walked slowly into the living room from the kitchen with the butcher knife in his hand. Ignoring Zach's cries of recognition, Ted had his eyes focused on Tina as he walked toward her with the butcher knife raised in his hand. Tina didn't wait to see what he would do next. She pulled the loaded gun out from her pocket and shot at him hitting the side of his arm. She remembered later, "I shot all I could, I just wanted him to quit."

Jennifer, without any hesitation, ran out of the front door and went straight to a neighbor's house to call the police and an ambulance. When the authorities arrived, Tina collapsed on the living room floor, head in hands, crying, "ya'all got to help me." Years later, when Tina was retelling this story to several of the family literacy program teachers, she explained that she shot at Ted, "cause he damn well needed it."

ISOLATION TO TRANSITION

Life's Too Short

As a result of the Christmas gun/butcher knife incident, legal and social services officials threatened to remove Tina's children from her and Ted's care unless significant changes were made. In addition, Tina's other brother was killed. She noted, "If I look at it, I think when my brother died, it just showed me that life's too short to live that damn miserably, and I wanted to go and do things I wanted to do."

Tina agreed to receive court provided weekly counseling by a court appointed psychologist, social service intervention by a social worker as well as public assistance. The social worker, during one of her weekly visits, told Tina about a family literacy program in which she could work to pass her GED and have a preschool situation for Zach.

Running Back and Forth

When Tina began attending the family literacy program in the winter of 1993-94, she was still living in fear of her life from Ted's threats. Tina lived in a trailer that had no heat, electricity or water. So she, Jennifer, and Zach would move in with her brother when the weather was really cold. Daily survival was a struggle for her and her children. Tina remembered the period as hectic because she:

was running back and forth to court, welfare, home visits, Radford to the counselor, bum money and ADC [aide to dependent children]. And I was going to the family literacy program then and I would have all this stuff on my mind, trying to go to school. I didn't know if I was coming or going when I first started school, and I was scared to tell anybody cause; I don't know, they'd think, well ya know, I was a piece of crap and wasn't taking care of them [her children] and like I said, I didn't have friends.

When she began the family literacy program, Tina exhibited a hostile attitude generated by her feelings of shame and isolation.

Learning From a Safe Spot

Other women in the program gathered around the adult education table and settled in for the twice-weekly morning sessions, while Tina retreated to a far corner of the room. She arranged books and art supplies to ensure that a barrier was in place between her and the rest of the group. In this safe spot, away from the possible questions and judgments of the others, Tina worked alone. She completed GED preparation workbooks, focusing primarily on the math workbook.

While at the sessions, Tina couldn't help but listen to the other women across the room. The women discussed local and national events in addition to exchanging information and

opinions about parenting, mothering, boyfriends, exhusbands and current husbands, welfare, ADC and passing the GED test. Tina never missed one class, although she wouldn't talk to anyone in the program. Anne, the program aide, approached Tina every session and for a long time received a quick and fierce response of "Keep away from me!" Tina would emphasize her demand by throwing books and other items at the aide. Tina remembered:

But after I got into that [the family literacy program], Betty and Kathy [program teacher and aide], their attitudes [were so accepting of me, friendly and helpful], ya know, and they'd make you laugh, and finally, I would talk [to the staff and participants in the family literacy program].

Finding Help Out There

During the family literacy sessions, Tina sought out information and counseling concerning parenting and Zach. One day, it was breakfast time at the family literacy program and Tina was sitting in the corner, her eye on Zach as he ate breakfast across from her. She explained to the staff counselor how Zach had kicked in the bedroom door with his foot yesterday afternoon. Judy, staff guidance counselor, explained again, how transitions are hard on children, the effects of family conflict, how children need to learn the difference between appropriate and inappropriate ways to express anger. But Tina needed to know step by step how to appropriately express anger and frustration and hurt. She wanted to know for herself and how to teach Zach different behaviors. Tina remembered:

I never knew, since I've been with [the family literacy program], I know there's help out there. I mean there's places out here to help you and people don't know about them. They really don't. I never knew of [the family literacy program].

She continued:

That woman, [Judy, the staff counselor], I liked her, I could talk to her and she'd tried to tell ya [how to implement positive and effective parenting ideas]. The kids used to get me under the weather, I couldn't think of how to deal with them, what to do [when they wouldn't listen to me]. I finally started venting out [expressing opinions and feelings] more [during the family literacy program sessions].

Tina continued to experience life as pressure. Every day she got Jennifer ready for school and twice weekly attended the sessions in spite of their difficult living conditions and the continuing volatility with Ted.

Ted had been granted visitation rights by the court with his father's supervision. When her children spent time with Ted, Tina worried about the parties, drinking, and other social events that took place at his house. Jennifer reported to Tina of the activities that occurred at Ted's house. This included the time that visitors to her father's house were socializing without clothing from the waist up (male and female). "I worried about the effect on the kids, partying, I would insist that the grandfather be there. One night Jennifer called me because some boy had just cussed her. I went over there and took the kids home, I said, 'get out of the way, I'm taking em'."

Tina's pressures also included her former mother-in-law's threats to charge Tina with child neglect and abuse. Tina believed this threat resulted from her recent refusal to continue to tolerate Ted's substance abuse, his criminal behaviors, and his physical violence.

Becoming An Architect

Over several months Tina developed a comradeship with the other women who attended the family literacy program. One morning before the announcements, Tina showed a letter to Jill, another woman participant. The letter was from Ted's lawyer requesting a court hearing in order to negotiate increased child custody arrangements for him. Tina, Jill, and another woman reflected emphatically on exhusbands, money and custody arrangements. Tina exclaimed, "How can he do this [referring to Ted]? He [Ted] was just caught for breaking and entering again. He'll go to jail this time! What is the judge thinking?" Then, gesturing to Jill, Tina said, "What does this all mean? [Referring to the legal language] What am I doing on February 20th [date of court appearance]? I need to find somebody to help me figure out words. Where is Drew [the program director]?" Tina's personal goals, written during the family literacy sessions, [a program requirement], revealed Tina's evolving sense of accomplishment, her sense of personal autonomy, and her emerging self-efficacy:

In two years, I anticipate on having my G.E.D. only then can I decide on whether I want to continue to be a housewife or choose a career. I enjoy very much being at home. I now feel needed and complete this way. If and when I choose a career. I want it to be something with adventure. Something with a real challenge. I suppose a real accomplishment to myself would be an architect. To be able to take part in the upcoming of new construction. To be the one that actually came up with the design itself. I don't really know much, but for now I know I want to be home. I want to be able to have control over my own life as it is. Right now I feel that my future is in my hands to choose when I desire to choose. I have worked hard for the biggest part.

Seven months after writing this entry, Tina took and passed the GED exam. This was a year and a half earlier than she had planned. Shortly thereafter, in June, when the family literacy program was in recess for the year, Tina unexpectedly visited Kathy, the program aide, at her home. Kathy told me of that visit:

One night, after the GED test but before we got the results, Tina showed up at my house. I was surprised and wondered what she really wanted. Well, we had just finished dinner and were sitting outside when she appeared. Tina explained, "I just wanted to see what a real family does." I told her we were just relaxing after dinner, that the kitchen was a mess, that my husband was out of town and that we were planning to catch lightning bugs (from interview with family literacy program aide, 6-6-96).

TRANSITION TO SELF-EFFICACY

Gaining Employment

When Tina left the family literacy program she found a job at a manufacturing plant. She found the job by reading the classified section of the newspaper and making phone calls. Tina persisted and made many, many phone calls, week after week, to area manufacturing businesses before she was offered this job. Tina explains that she would, "Just call around and just go in, if they was doing interviews, go in for appointments." One manufacturing plant had jobs that paid over twice minimum wage and Tina called the personnel director consistently for months in an

effort to be offered a job in this plant. Yet she was not able to secure a job in the plant. Tina also applied to work in a public school cafeteria.

Tina had used the services of a job resource agency in order to have her resume written. She didn't spend time for counseling on how to interview or how to dress. Tina wanted the services of the agency for learning how to write a resume and for word processing and text formatting work.

She remembered:

I got with her [person working at job resource agency] last year and she made me up resumes so any time I need an adjustment I'll go out there. I mean I shocked her one day, I didn't really want to go through them telling me how to dress or talk or whatever so she just helped me out by giving me my resumes so she typed it back up out there for me and gave me a copy.

Sleeping With the Law

Tina told me the story of how she met Bud during the summer of 1994. She had completed one semester of the family literacy program the previous spring. Someone had run over her mailbox in the trailer park where she lived with Jennifer and Zach. Tina called the sheriff's office and registered a complaint. "A young sheriff came to my trailer to investigate." Tina continued to call this sheriff to inquire about the progress of her complaint. She explained, "I kept calling him on any little thing I could think of. One evening, I was a lot lighter [weight-wise] than I am now, and I had on a short little tank top. Me and my kids were on our way to eat pizza, and I saw his truck at the dumpsters. I stopped and we talked and then I asked him to kiss me." As a result of that encounter, Tina and Bud, a county sheriff, began spending time together. Tina took no small pleasure in explaining, "I had always been on the run from the law and people, and now I'm sleeping with the law!"

Raking and Building

It was a cool autumn afternoon, in the fall of 1994. The trees in Tina's front yard were still shedding their burnt orange and red leaves. Bales of hay were arranged down by the driveway next to the road that swung to the right and climbed the mountain in front of Tina's house. Pumpkins and wooden, painted witches were arranged on and around the bales of hay. Ghosts made from sheets floated down from nearby trees.

Tina and Jennifer raked leaves in the yard, piling them into small mounds in front of the side porch. Zach raced around on his hot wheels, periodically jumping off the hot wheels and landing in one of the piles Tina and Jennifer had raked high and deep. Later, both Jennifer and Zach jumped into the piles while Tina continued to rake the leaves forming more piles. After some time, Tina quit raking. The kids began painting pine cones on the side porch table, while Tina went inside to heat up dinner. Bud came in from work and the four sat together for dinner.

Talking Soft

During dinner, Jennifer (in fourth grade) shared how she read a Dr. Seuss book to the

kindergarten class that day at school. Jennifer felt she was able to very successfully read the book aloud. "I remember when I couldn't read that", she said, "but Momma, when I read it to them kindergarten kids, I could fly through that book!" Before Jennifer could finish telling her story, Zach was kicking the table leg with his foot and Jennifer began to swat at him. When Tina raised her voice to yell at both Zach and Jennifer, Bud gently laid his hand on her arm. All three turned and looked at Bud, who said to Zach, "was there something you wanted to say?" Zach, looked at Bud and asked, "Why do you talk like that?" Bud asked in return, "Like what?" Zach replied, "You talk so soft."

Later, after the kids were in bed, Tina sat on the couch while Bud cleaned the ashes out of the wood stove before starting a fire for the night. Tina told Bud about her conversations with Judy that day at the family literacy session. She explained her concern about Zach's violent behaviors and her worries about Zach when she starts working full-time. Bud suggested that she should think again about her idea to start a cleaning business. With a business of her own, Tina could work only during the hours the kids would be at school.

A week earlier Jennifer brought home an improved report card and the four of them, all dressed in nice clothes, went out to a restaurant for a dinner celebration. Other times Tina and Bud drove the kids to a nearby river and everyone got out of the car and played around on the river bank. On his days off, Bud often would do house and yard projects like cutting and stacking firewood, cleaning and setting up the wood stove.

Cosmos, Petunias and Marigolds

I called Tina in July 1995 to ask if I could visit. By that time she had left the family literacy program. After working at a manufacturing plant for several months, Tina had quit to be home with her children. She appeared to welcome an opportunity to visit. I explained that she was an important part of my research and I needed to know more about her life.

Tina's house was the white clapboard one-story house with black shutters that sat in the crook of a curve in the road. I noticed Tina gardening in her front yard. She appeared to me as a petite young woman with shiny shoulder-length blond hair dressed in a purple sleeveless knit top, blue jean shorts with white socks and tennis shoes. I parked my car in the driveway and decided to carefully study each section of the yard. Cosmos, petunias, marigolds, snap dragons, red salvia and black-eyed susans bloomed in various places in the front yard. Angel, deer, bunny and elf ceramic figurines were nestled, along with seashells, among scattered flower beds. Two cloth banners hung from both sides of the front of the house; one with purple irises applied on it and the other with a "welcome" stenciled on it surrounded with red hearts. A plastic basketball net stood at the end of the driveway.

I could hear country music ("I'm tired of chasing rainbows") coming from inside the house. One of Tina's two goats wandered around the front yard, released from the pen in the back yard, next to the turkeys. Jennifer called out from the back yard where she was trying to set up an inflatable swimming pool and Zach dashed from front yard to back, between mother and sister.

Sandwiches, Telephones, and Rides

As I walked up the hill to join Tina and her children for lunch, Zach called out to me. He

wanted me to look at his frog and turtle housed in a large plastic bucket sitting on the open porch next to side of the house.

Tina and Jennifer joined us at the plastic lace covered white table. We sat in matching white plastic chairs eating ham and cheese sandwiches with BBQ chips and chocolate cupcakes Tina had baked earlier that morning. We watched as Tina's brother and father drove by. Tina was planning to use this car for her house cleaning business. The car needed some repairs and Tina had purchased the necessary parts so her father and brother could install them.

During lunch, the phone(s) rang every ten minutes or so. (Tina had four or five phones, one out on the porch and at least three in other parts of the house.) Tina talked with Ted or to her father-in-law concerning arrangements for her kids to be picked up and taken to their father's house for an afternoon visit.

After lunch, Tina's former father-in-law drove up the driveway. I remained on the porch while Tina escorted the kids into their grandfather's truck. When she returned, Tina offered to show me her house and the changes she and Bud had made.

Repainting, Rewiring, and Refinishing

This was the house that Tina shared with Bud, Jennifer, and Zach. According to Tina, this house and yard didn't always look cheerful, homey and well-maintained. Tina showed me how she cleaned up the outside and made repairs. She ripped out one wall and replaced and painted the dry wall herself. She rewired parts of the house, put down new lanoleum in the bathroom, fixed the roof, painted the walls and put down new carpet.

The kitchen now appeared roomy with a wooden table and four chairs. Silver-colored candlesticks were placed on the kitchen table. A wooden shelf above the table held some silver-looking knick-knacks and a framed copy of a policeman's prayer. Tina pointed out a stack of school supplies sitting on the kitchen table. She had bought these in preparation for the forthcoming school year. These supplies included 3-ring notebooks, spiral notebooks, a trapper-keeper, glue, pencils, pens and a backpack. In addition to a wall phone next to the refrigerator, another phone sat on the kitchen counter. Flowered curtains hung at the window over the kitchen sink and no dirty dishes were in the sink. In addition to the refrigerator, sink and stove, Tina had a wooden storage unit next to the refrigerator with a microwave oven stored in it.

Information from the local public school announcing the school calendar for the upcoming school year was taped to the wall, next to the refrigerator. Two calendars were displayed in the kitchen; one on the wall, and another taped on the refrigerator. Also a sheet of paper was taped to the refrigerator displaying Tina's schedule for the day. Yellow highlighting marked the day's activities and the time of day. According to the schedule, I (identified by the name of the family literacy program) was to arrive at 11:30 am. The children were to leave for their dad's house at 12:00 and return by 3:30. A person from the Big Sister program was also expected to arrive at 4:00pm on this day. Tina juggled kids, their summer activities, and her cleaning business.

In The Living Room

In Tina's living room, pictures of her children and her brothers' children were mounted on every wall. Clean throw rugs covered the blue carpet. An overstuffed couch and a matching upholstered chair that looked newly purchased, sat along the wall to the right of the kitchen. A

magazine rack held magazines and newspapers behind the chair. Another upholstered chair also sat in the living room. Two tables with glass lamps were placed on either side of the couch. A shelf with a stack of books, brass candlesticks, and a brass bird hung above the fireplace. Books included in the stack were: *Small Business: A Women's Guide to Starting a Business*, and *Child Custody: The Custody Handbook*.

A wood stove sat in a corner between the double glass windows facing the front street and the door leading out to the side porch. Next to the wood stove a TV stand held a TV, VCR, CD player and speakers. A collection of CDs and movie videos were stored underneath the TV and VCR. On the wall across from the front windows was a plaque commending Bud for valor and bravery in his position as a county sheriff. Tina's closets were neatly organized with linen shelves and space for the vacuum cleaner and other household cleaning supplies.

Tina's children each had a bedroom down the hall from the living room. Zach's fish tank was impressive in his room and Jennifer had a shelf of books that included a set of encyclopedias. Both children had pieces of furniture Tina had found at yard sales and refinished.

Taking Care of Her Family

Tina told me that the next day she had a job refinishing a person's wood porch. Her children would be home part of the day with Bud. In the afternoon they would go with Tina's mother who lived up the road and over the ridge. In response to my question about how she obtained the refinishing job, Tina explained that she advertised her part time cleaning business by posting flyers around the area. She said, "Running flyers off, I get out and advertise a little, [I] put [the flyers] in apartment complexes."

Tina was then negotiating with an apartment complex property manager about contracting to do cleaning. Her ideal situation would be to clean four houses a week. If she cleaned the apartments, she wanted to be paid by the job and not with an hourly wage. She was in the process of checking to see what licenses would be needed for her cleaning business. She related to me, "I told Bud, if I can't do my house cleaning business, I want to take a part time job. I want to be with them [her children]. I don't like to feel overwhelmed, I want to be able to take care of my family." Tina had intermittently received food stamps, Aide to Families with Dependent Children and Medicaid during the past ten years, according to her life circumstances. Yet Tina said repeatedly that she did not "like being in the system."

REVISITING THE PAST, PARENTING IN THE PRESENT, DOCUMENTING FOR THE FUTURE

Revisiting Tina's Past Journey

After giving me a tour of her house, Tina sat down on her couch, while I sat in one of the upholstered chairs across from her. The phone(s) continued to ring every ten minutes or so as Jennifer called to ask her mother questions and continue to discuss transportation arrangements. I set up the tape recorder and Tina and I revisited her life going back to her childhood in her neighborhood. At times Tina was in tears remembering painful memories from the past. During these moments I felt as if I were her close friend and offered support. I reminded her of how far

she had come toward generating constructive and significant changes for herself and children. She told me this process of looking back was good for her; she needed to cry.

Raising Kids Right

Because of her past attitude and experiences in school, Tina worried about her own children and their success in the public schools. Tina talked often during family literacy sessions and during our conversations of her concern for her children. As a parent, she wanted to stay involved with her own children as a way to protect them and guide and nurture their successful growth. Tina told me, "I want to raise the kids good. That's my prayer everyday. Just to raise these kids good." She felt it was her role as a parent to worry and think about her children and school. Tina wondered if she worried too much, "I think it's your place to worry about how they're [one's children] doin', you know. I think if you're more involved, the kids don't mind it so much."

Tina related activities she planned for her children after school and on the weekends. She reinforced school-like activities at home. Her daughter was in Girl Scouts and Tina put a copy of the Girl Scout motto on the outside of her bedroom door ("to treat others good"). When Jennifer brought home pages of blank faces from school, Tina and Jennifer sat together drawing in the different emotions on each face that one could hypothetically feel in a week. Tina cut them out and arranged them in a display on Jennifer's bedroom wall.

Talking to Jennifer's Teacher

Jennifer brought home a report card that Tina felt showed questionable grades. She had also brought home schoolwork to complete that she could not explain. Tina became concerned about Jennifer's work habits and reading fluency. She decided that Jennifer needed more individual attention from the teacher. She went to the elementary school and asked the teacher and classroom aide, "if they could just maybe call on her a little more or when it was something they felt she didn't understand. Kinda [provide] one-on-one [assistance] a little bit more often because Jennifer would not ask them. She would just let it [her confusion] go on and then she'd get home and say, 'I don't know what they was talkin' about'. Well, I don't know what they're talking about if she can't tell me!" Jennifer was receiving Chapter One reading services because, as Tina explained, she was a slow reader.

One evening after Tina and the kids had been out in the yard playing and raking leaves and then eating dinner on the outside porch, Jennifer got up and went into her room. She appeared fifteen minutes later with a double-sided two-page report that she had brought home from school to finish writing. She read the report to her mother. Tina guided Jennifer's reading of misspelled words, helping her to correct and re-read the words. Tina related:

Then she sat and read it [the report] word for word to me and even some of her misspelling [in the report], she wouldn't know what she meant by it, and she'd re-read it, and I'd let her correct a few words here and there, so when she reads it, she'd understand it.

Tina explained her efforts to help her children with school work:

I think if you're more involved, the kids don't mind it so much. I mean, I'm

trying to teach Jennifer everyday, if you learn it as you go you won't hate it so bad. Within this week, to voluntarily go writin' that two-page report, that shocked me. She sat there and read the whole thing to me, and she's slow. I was reading a paper they gave her, Chapter One funds won't be there next year.

Zach

Tina also worried about Zach. She believed that Zach "started getting mean" when she worked full time. Tina told me a story of a time when Zach kicked in a bedroom door and she had punished him by spanking. On another occasion, Zach used a BB gun to shoot out the windows of his aunt's car parked in the driveway. Tina talked matter-of-factly about the incident to me, saying that Zach's actions surprised her as she had worked hard to facilitate behavior changes for herself and her children during the past two years. Tina did not buy a trapper keeper for Zach as a consequence of the incident. Tina said that she wanted Bud, her fiance, to teach Zach how to use the BB gun in proper ways and with adult supervision. Tina shared with me her on-going attempts to implement more positive, less reactive parenting practices:

I don't know, I been trying to tell him more just out of the blue that I love em...I've been trying that one, because you know, they're, last week Zach was talkin so ugly. So now when he's been getting up I been saying, 'Good morning Zach, we gonna have a good day!' Just to get that into him, he's not gonna be mean to me. This week's went really good compared to last week, man, it [Zach's behavior at home] was killin me.

Struggles Continue

At the time of my visit, Tina was not receiving child support payments from Ted. He was in drug rehabilitation, and had temporary disability status until January, 1997, six months away. Therefore he was not required to give child support payments to Tina. Tina was in communication with a Legal Aide lawyer. She hoped to use legal means in January, 1997 to pursue receiving child support from her husband when his disability status expired.

Tina felt it necessary to document her parenting efforts. She was especially aware that her living arrangement with Bud provided Ted with legal leverage in issues regarding child support and child custody. Her parenting documentation included maintaining a photo album updated with cards, papers and awards for and from Jennifer. These items included; Mother's Day cards Jennifer made for her, the Good Citizen Award presented to Jennifer at school, and report cards and various letters from Jennifer's teachers, including a recognition of Jennifer as the most improved student in the class. Tina also maintained a manilla file folder containing copies of all the social service, police and legal documents, letters and citations from the last three years of her life.

EPILOGUE

Tina's retelling of her life experiences initially suggested a story with a beginning, middle and end. This story incorporated episodes of misfortune as well as personal/lifestyle transformation. Perhaps this story indicates Tina's success in achieving her family and home goals.

I asked Drew about Tina a year after my last visit with her. He told me that the teachers in the program heard that Ted had pushed for custody of the children and Tina was living with her mother. No one knew what happened to Bud or how Tina was doing.

CHAPTER FOUR

LITERACIES AND THEMES

The great divide in literacy is not between those who have learned to read and write and those who have not yet learned how to. It is between those who have discovered what kinds of literacy society values and how to demonstrate their competencies in ways that earn recognition (Meek, 1992, p. 9).

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I recount the literacies I found significant in Tina's story. My discussion of the literacies move chronologically through Tina's life as I know it and become interwoven with major themes. Resistance, (negative and positive), creating a safe space, a homeplace (hooks, 1994), and creating a life with a limited set of resources are themes that appeared consistently throughout my interpretation. I conclude the chapter with my learnings.

Early Literacy Experiences

Tina's early encounters and experiences including literacy events possibly provided her with a foundation. This foundation included home, school, family, community, and a sense of place that she later incorporated with her children. Hamilton writes:

our literacy encounters provide not just a stock pile of knowledge and skills to be tapped and utilized but also, at least equally important, a reservoir of vicarious experiences that can prepare us emotionally and intellectually for unforeseen or unpredictable situations. (1995, p. 58)

Snapshots of Tina's early life could indicate that Tina's neighborhood, which included elementary school, ("It was a good place for the kids and the school was great, I like the school"), was an extension of home. In this neighborhood Tina experienced a sense of community that provided a foundation for sense of home and place. The story of Tina working with her great-grandfather, getting paid and missing school, revealed the skill development Tina was exposed to during her childhood. Additional zone-of-proximal development (Wertsch, 1991) and fund of knowledge (Moll and Greenberg, 1990) experiences included the multiple skills she learned from her father, the "jack-of-all trades". Tina learned domestic activities such as cooking, cleaning, gardening, and occupying children at home when she spent time with her grandmother.

Tina described multiple sources of literacy as a young child. Carol, Tina's mother, as she read her magazines at home, continued to role-model and reinforce reading as entertainment, for enjoyment, an aesthetic literacy. The availability of literacy for Tina was immediate and accessible when the bookmobile came to her neighborhood, within the parameters of neighborhood as home. Through her participation in checking out books from the bookmobile, reading became accessible for Tina; it was not solely an adult practice. Tina was able to experience literacy developed and used for enjoyable and aesthetic purposes.

Tina's participation with the 4-H club involved a learning tradition that chronologically paralleled public schooling learning. The learning format was not as constrained in method and structure as in public school learning. The 4-H club enabled Tina to participate in activities that

were fun, different from school yet embodied a learning tradition. This learning tradition also came into her space, her place. When the 4-H leader traveled to Tina's house and provided transportation to the 4-H activities, Tina was connected in inclusive ways with the larger community, successfully crossing public and private boundaries.

VARIED RESISTANCE

Resistance to School

Tina's experiences as a middle schooler were very different from early life and a contrast to her stories in her neighborhood and with her great-grandfather and grandmother. Her neighborhood had been a protected social context, perhaps homogeneous in its working-class, rural orientation. Tina's sense of community and living within a neighborhood niche, inclusion with the world, seemed to disappear when she attended middle school. Movement into the next larger space, the middle school, did not seem possible other than within scripts of resistance.

Tina struggled to find success and a place in school. Eventually her niche was achieved with nonparticipation. Sleeter (1996) writes that student success in schools, or lack of success, can be understood as a result of the "interaction between students and the world in which they live" (p. 156). While the 4-H club provided means for inclusion into a mainstream tradition, no other bridges, such as a lifestyle and discourse that matched the middle school mainstream discourse, served to integrate Tina into school. Schooling became a foreign, unaccepting, uninviting place, no longer an extension of home and place. Tina experienced discontinuities between home and school and became more and more isolated from school. She found a niche in friendship circles outside the student middle-school setting.

Tina's strength was basketball, yet she chose not to participate in this activity because she smoked. Smoking was a way Tina could gain entry and acceptance into a social group outside of school. Smoking signified inclusion with out-of-school friends and exclusion with a mainstream social group who perhaps signified the standards for normalcy to her.

Tina's experience as an outsider did not change for her in Florida. Another sociocultural group, African-American, was the dominant group in the Florida high school. Tina believed that she was not able to find a reciprocal group in Florida.

Resistance to Circumstances

As a married teenager, Tina's social network was limited due to the constraints imposed by Ted. Tina was aware of the inappropriateness and negative aspects of her lifestyle with him. She felt shame and fear of being viewed as a bad parent because of her living circumstances. Ted's family provided support so that Tina would be the family member who shouldered the burden of Ted's behaviors, not his parents. Yet, instead of continuing to normalize the violence, isolation, shame and fear, Tina eventually took a stand to make changes. This was a daring act of resistance to her circumstances.

One way Tina worked to reclaim a safe space for herself and children was to gain an independence from her husband. More than an economic independence, Tina was seeking to create a sense of place, a notion of home free from physical threat and emotional fear. When she moved away from Ted and then moved back to the same house with him in order to minimize the

physical threats, she had no "safe space" from which to live (Fine, 1997). Her homeplace (hooks, 1994) was violated. Tina became her own resource when she moved away from Ted, had space to rediscover her self-efficacy and took advantage of support and resources in which to facilitate change.

Milestones in Tina's personal history acted as a catalyst for change and thrust her away from certain discourse communities and across sociocultural borders. She had connections and places in the drug and social culture from her young adult years, the home-based discourse (Gee, 1990) of her parents' working-class roots and "redneck" community, and the middle-class community she aspired to. Tina became adept at seeking and utilizing literacies that served her.

Developing Voice as Resistance

Contrasted to Tina's earlier forms of resistance as a middle-school student, and her excessive drinking as a wife, [which Giroux describes as "an unreflective and defeatist refusal to acquiesce to different forms of domination" (1988, p. 162)], Tina moved to another form of resistance. Giroux (1991) describes this resistance as developing one's voice:

There is a politics of resistance in which difference is explored through the category of voice. Central here is the need to engage voice as an act of resistance and self-transformation, to recognize that as one comes to voice one establishes the precondition for becoming a subject in history rather than an object. (1991, p. 22)

The family literacy program offered Tina the opportunity to develop her voice. She learned information and skills associated with mainstream parenting and family life. The acceptance Tina learned to trust from the staff members was in direct contrast to the distrust, conflict and lack of safety and stability with Ted and in her struggle to live alone with her children.

Participation in the GED preparation activities represented for Tina inclusion in school-type activities. This included learning math and English skills from which she felt excluded in middle and high school. Tina appeared to be highly motivated as she worked to learn math and writing skills. She seemed to take advantage of the parenting and support the group at the family literacy program offered. Informal conversations and discussions with staff members and participants provided Tina with alternative attitudes, perspectives and behaviors, thus widening and expanding her world.

Tina resisted her victim status in her world. She finished her GED in seven months instead of the two years she had originally anticipated it would take. She crossed the border from high school drop-out to high school graduate acquiring a level of inclusion. Passing the GED was a rite of passage for Tina from dependence to independence, from nonparticipation in traditional schooling to participation in educational endeavors. It symbolized her personal journey of rewriting her life.

MULTIPLE LITERACIES

If literacy can be described as possessing a "level of competence and thinking within a particular area" (Voss, 1996, p. 3), expressed not only in words but in performance, and if literacies can be used in various ways (Voss, 1996, p. 14), then Tina exhibited a fluent use of multiple literacies. These multiple literacies were her personal resources that kept her moving in a positive direction. Examples of her resources included mechanical, interactive, consumer, legal,

bureaucratic, linguistic, critical and school-based literacies.

Tina's personal resources of mechanical literacy were apparent through her home repair work, wood working and craft activities. She used mechanical literacy, creating and working with tools, in functional, reflective and flexible ways to make repairs and to create a home and yard. Here were a variety of leisure and skill-related activities and hobbies in this space including home and car repair, gardening, animal care, craft and hobby activities, cooking and child-related play (for example, painting pine cones and the water play). Tina's fluency in mechanical literacy enabled her to cross borders from living in survival situations to living in a home.

Tina possessed interactive literacy as demonstrated through her communication with a wide variety of people across groups and situations and for varied purposes. Tina became knowledgeable of available community resources such as the job referral agency in which the staff person helped construct a resume; she used the public library to find information on child custody laws to protect her interests of her children and read books on starting a business. Tina possessed a bureaucratic literacy, as was evident with her management of social services, the court system, welfare, police and use of community resources to find a job. Her consumer literacy was exhibited in management of home and children during difficult times.

Linguistic literacy was abundant through reading, writing and the availability of environmental print and text at home, including use of library books. Knowledge of school-based literacy was apparent in the ways she coached and guided Jennifer. Tina read the newspaper seeking job announcements and she read the custody letters from Ted's lawyer. She designed her business flyers and read the memos sent home from Jennifer's school. Tina read for multiple purposes. She wrote her job resume and wrote her job flyer. Tina wrote lists and composed daily schedules. She planned to write a job contract to arrange work for an apartment complex.

Additionally, Tina continually "read" her world (Friere, 1987), strategically taking actions that seemed the best actions in the immediate situation. Tina exemplified aspects of critical literacy in demonstrating self-efficacy and life agency through reclaiming spaces for positive change, "rewriting" her world, moving on her journey of self-transformation. Tina's comment to Kathy, the program aide, that she spent so much time and energy "running from the law and people and now I am sleeping with the law" is a powerful metaphor illustrating Tina's attempts to "rewrite" her world. She worked very hard to reinvent herself into a responsible adult and parent.

Tina demonstrated legal literacy through her proactive preparations with the Legal Aid lawyer concerning her fear of losing custody of her children. Yet, the legal system proved to be a double-edged sword for Tina. While the system provided Tina with incentive and almost a mandate for change, Ted's visitation rights were a threat to the type of environment Tina was struggling to create for her children. My hearsay information that Ted's threats to gain custody of the children were serious enough that Tina left her house and moved in with her mother, raise many questions.

BELIEFS CHALLENGED

I believed our society provides, if not equal, then multiple opportunities and education for all in spite of unequal resources. I was, in Sleeter's terms, a "reform liberal" (1996, p. 41). I had projected onto Tina an assumption that individuals are free to pursue goals and have upward or

downward class mobility even within unfair and unequal class structures and social systems. The individual was still the unit of analysis for me.

Additionally, middle-class living represented to me and to Tina a viable way to raise her children and prepare them for life. I thought Tina's drive, motivation and ingenuity to learn and incorporate lifestyle skills of middle-class living was admirable. It seemed to offer a lifestyle that had the positive aspects of life Tina felt missing from hers.

Hamilton writes that:

Literacy at the basic level of reading and writing is, as the cliché has it, essential but insufficient...Literacy at the functional level of getting along in society may be deemed by some as sufficient, but it is not liberating or empowering. Getting by is not reaching for the stars. Literacy is not just knowledge; it is knowledge that transforms. (1995)

Was Tina at the end of my story just getting by or was she moving toward liberation and empowerment? Tina was becoming literate in many ways that society values. Yet I interpreted the information at the end of this story that Tina experienced a set-back. Sleeter (1996) writes that we need to go beyond the individual to look at inequality across groups as "inequality across groups is more significant than inequality among individuals" (p. 43). Would middle-class resources enabled Tina to successfully counter Ted's threats? Tina lacked cultural capital not due to her illiterateness but due to class issues. I think that Tina believed in the myth of attaining middle-class only because she couldn't find other ways to interpret the world. Does my interpretation of Tina's life mask or hide the larger, critical picture of power and social class that maintains her instability?

From Tina I learned that people create and utilize resources in their sociocultural milieu. At times, the discourse within sociocultural circles stays intact. Yet more often, there are intersections with other discourses, primarily the mainstream middle-class discourse. These intersections produce hybrid sociocultural discourses. Dilnot (1986) suggests that there is emergence of:

new fields of cultural activity whose contours are still unclear and whose meanings and implications ...cannot yet be fathomed. Like postmodern culture, contemporary Western family arrangements are diverse, fluid, and unresolved. Like postmodern cultural forms, our families today admix unlikely elements in an improvisational pastiche of old and new. (p.245)

Tina cannot be viewed in familiar ways. She needs to be understood as moving dynamically through an awkward mix of the old and new.

CHAPTER FIVE

Julie, Pat, Reba, Christine, Jill

Culture is not a static concept but is a dynamic process, being formed by its carriers as well as received from cultural transmitters and, is therefore, always in need of discovery rather than being describable for all members of a group (Tabachnik & Bloch, 1995, p. 205).

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a collection of vignettes which portray snapshots of the lives of Julie, Jill, Pat, Reba and Christine. I discovered that these women were proficient at a wide variety of activities as they utilized available resources to meet the most immediate need or situation. From my experiences with each of them, I realized that resources of time, energy, transportation, organization, coordination and money cannot be assumed to be available in ways I viewed as necessary. These women made choices that from a middle-class lens could be viewed as inadequate. An alternative perspective suggests that Julie, Jill, Pat, Reba and Christine created and utilized alternative resources and practices available for them.

JULIE

Social Class: Rednecks, Grits and Preps

Julie, a petite dark-haired girl with deep blue eyes, dressed in sweat pants and a baggy long sleeve shirt, stood in the lunch line at the middle school, in a trance-like daze. She had spent most of the night before sitting in front of her bedroom window, in the trailer, staring out into the darkness thinking of her father. He had left again that past weekend and she sat alone last night, missing him very much.

Suddenly Julie realized that someone was talking to her. Another student, a girl, dressed in leggings with a matching top, was saying to her, "You know, if you took better care of yourself and bought yourself some nice clothes you wouldn't have to hang around with the people you hang around with now." Julie jumped back as if she had been slapped in the face. Blinking back tears she ran out of the cafeteria and into the girls' restroom.

Social Class Markers

One morning, seven years later, during an adult education session, Julie, Reba, Tina, and Jill offered opinions in response to a newspaper article Nan had shared with the group. The author discussed the need for students to wear school uniforms when attending public schools. The reasoning was that wearing uniforms to school prevented violence within school and additionally equalized class differences and obscured socioeconomic backgrounds. The author described how students got in fights over the brand of tennis shoes worn and reported that some students had even been killed as a result of conflicts over dressing in a certain manner.

Reba, Julie, Tina and Jill responded:

Reba said, "First of all we don't see this kind of violence in our town."

"Although," said Julie, "if one doesn't dress up in our town we are looked down on."

"Yet," said Tina, "I don't pay attention to all the preps. We are just hillbillies."

"There you go!" said Jill.

The group further concluded that it didn't matter if students wore uniforms in school because class differences could be discerned in other ways. Several of the women described such differences as the types of activities the students were able to do outside of school, if one smoked or not, the type of music one listened to and the recreational interests in which one could participate. An especially significant indication of class was the location and type of housing in which a person lived. It was noted if one lived in the county or in town. A further distinction was indicated if one lived in a federally subsidized apartment, or in a trailer on rented or owned property, or if one lived in a rented or owned single-family dwelling.

Money and Social Class Differences

As a result of this conversation I later asked Julie about her perceptions of herself and how and where she felt she fit in. Julie matter-of-factly replied, "I'm in the one at the bottom, the rednecks." She went on to explain that there were three social classes in our area: rednecks, grits and preps. According to Julie, rednecks were the lowest class. To her, these social class distinctions became obvious in middle school and continued into adulthood. Even though class distinctions "lose the little names, [yet] even as [one] gets older, people stay in a [social] class."

In Julie's experience, the differences between these classes were determined by the amount of money one could spend and the types of activities in which one was able to participate. She said, "I think a lot of it has to do with the money, because the richest kids are the preps, the poorest are the rednecks, the ones caught in the middle, they're called the grits. I don't know what that meant, that's what they were called." According to Julie, the grits dressed a little nicer and had more money. She remembered riding the bus to and from school hearing stories from other kids who were able to go roller skating and go to the large amusement park located four hours away in the state's capital city. Julie mused, "We didn't do nothing like that."

Julie believed that school grades, thus intelligence, did not matter in class stratification; she made good grades in middle school and was still considered a redneck. She continued:

My favorite teacher was my 7th grade science teacher, Mr. Calhoun. He made his class fun and interesting. I had a B+ average in his class. I even slept through a lot of his classes. Not because I was bored or anything, but that was the year Daddy left.

Commonalities as a Group

Julie explained that the people in the redneck category shared commonalities such as family situations, music, recreational interests. She recalled, "We did the things we could do." Julie elaborated:

We all listened to country music, we all started in the same place. Jill is a redneck, her brother is definitely a redneck [Julie previously dated Jill's brother], so you wouldn't see a prep in this class [referring to the women in the family literacy program]. Our clothes aren't new and come from used shops. Usually if you start in one place and unless you really, really work hard, [you're] going to stay in that same place.

Movement Across Classes

Julie explained that she wanted to make changes in her life:

I don't want to always be the one at the bottom of the ladder. I want to be able to give my kids the things my mom and dad weren't able to give me. I don't want to be where I am now. I want to be up a little higher. I don't want to always be low income, low class.

Julie wrote in her journal to me:

The reason why I decided to come to [family literacy program] is because I need to get a G.E.D. I want to become a nurse and to do that I need my G.E.D. That John [her son] gets to come was a bonus! He loves school and can't wait for kindergarten. Actually if John wasn't able to come, I probably wouldn't have. Day care is really expensive and right now unaffordable.

Julie outlined her goals of obtaining her GED, then moving from a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) to a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to a Registered Nurse (RN). She had worked in a nursing home, and hoped to work in the emergency room or in pediatrics in a hospital.

Universal Values of Family and Friends

Julie responded to my question, if I were her daughter's classroom teacher, what would she like me to know about her daughter and family:

As my child's teacher, I would want you to understand why she comes to school dressed the way she does or if you have a party why I can't provide the stuff you need.

But she is eager to learn. But if everything keeps getting as advanced as it is we're in trouble [resources and experiences she felt she wouldn't be able to provide at home, such as, computer literacy]. [I would want you to know that] I am a good person. If you're not going to come up and get to know me then you're losing out. I'm a good friend, I love to talk, I listen well, I'm a good mother. I love my children and I have their best interests. They have the things they need, not a lot of extras but they have food and clothing, they're taken care of.

Julie believed that she valued the same things as everyone else valued, family and friends.

Mother's Request

A week later Julie wrote in her journal to me:

I have always loved to read. I don't remember anyone reading to me when I was little, but I don't remember much about when I was real little. I have just always loved to read! I loved school. I really wished I had never quit. But Mommy asked me to and I thought it would make me, I don't know, more grown up I guess.

When her father left the family, Julie's mother asked her to drop out of school in order to earn money. Julie said, "When I was 15 I was with Mom and things were rough money wise. Mom and I talked a lot about bills and stuff and we were already on food stamps."

At the time it felt good to Julie to work with her mother in the cafeteria at a manufacturing plant. In addition it was satisfying to be able to pay bills. Julie said that if she had had a "regular" family, she would not have had to drop out of school. I asked what she meant by

"regular family" and she responded, "a family with both a mom and dad there. But I wish there had been some other solution, I really regret not finishing school."

Establishing a Family

Julie had two children, a daughter in kindergarten and a four year old son in the program with her. She was married and lived in a trailer with her husband, Kenny, on the top of a hill in an old section of the county seat town. Julie's husband worked as a janitor for a prominent motel chain. She told me that his official title was Maintenance Engineer. Kenny also did additional handiman work for a local surgeon. Julie met Kenny when she was working as a waitress at age 17 and he, at age 19, was a cook. At the time Julie was living with her sister in their grandfather's house which had no electricity. Shortly after meeting Kenny, Julie moved in with him and seven months later they were married.

Sewing, Gardening, Canning, Handy Around the House

Julie's grandfather drove a dump truck and her grandmother stayed home, gardened, sewed clothes and other household items, and canned food grown in the garden. Her other grandfather worked in the coal mines. Julie told me that in addition to her skill of cooking at the manufacturing plant cafeteria, her mother was handy around the house and could fix the furnace when it stopped working. Her mother also enjoyed sewing for other people, gardening, and canning food. Julie believed that her father could build anything with wood, brick and concrete. Julie herself liked to garden and work outdoors, but did not like to can or sew.

No Money, No Heat, No Friends

The day Julie talked to me about these topics had been a particularly difficult one for her. It was the week before Easter weekend. Many of the women brought goodies to the family literacy program in order to make Easter baskets for the children. Julie did not bring anything because she had no money. Kenny's payday was the Monday after the holiday. She would not buy anything for her children for the Easter weekend. Additionally, her electric bill was very high because she resorted to heating her trailer by leaving the oven door open. The furnace stopped working and she had no money to fix it.

Julie reported that she had no friends until she began the family literacy program and reestablished contact with people she had known from school. "Mostly it's me and the kids. Nothing against their daddy but he works. I lost my friends and girlfriends when I quit school. I had one friend I saw last year but she moved away to Little Rock. We send cards back and forth. I have no friends here, that's why I like this [family literacy program]." Her daughter's kindergarten teacher suggested that Julie attend the family literacy program. The teacher believed that her daughter was somewhat behind in school. She felt the family literacy program's learning environment would benefit both Julie and her son.

PAT

Getting Started

Pat's family story:

The way my family got started was one night me and my boyfriend met at Level Green Acres fair. And we went out for about a year. And then I got pregnant. And then we had a little boy. And now we are having another child. And we are one big happy family.

Missing VCR, Buying Drugs and Breaking Parole

Reba, driving the old Ford station wagon crowded with her sister Pat, and four kids, pulled into a parking space in front of Pat's apartment building. Today the car had run without breaking down and successfully transported Reba, her three daughters and Pat and her son, Mike, to and from the family literacy program. Pat shared the apartment with her boyfriend, Ray (the father of Mike and her soon-to-be-born second child). It took time to unload Pat and Mike and their bags of extra clothes, pampers and other equipment, including a car seat. Reba said good-bye to Pat in front of the building and drove away to her trailer further into the country.

Once inside her apartment Pat put her things down on the sofa and walked across the room to turn on the TV. Something did not look right in the living room. Pat noticed that the VCR was gone, yet her apartment had not been burglarized. She immediately realized that Ray, currently on parole for a number of convictions, including buying and selling drugs, sold the VCR in order buy more drugs.

Pat was frightened and torn by the incident. In her frustration and fear, Pat screamed, kicked the couch, and threw her purse against the wall. Mike began crying, but Pat ignored him. Ray had most certainly broken parole, but she could not call the police. Pat wanted to protect Ray from going to jail, but she desperately wanted him to stop using drugs. She also felt sure he would return to the apartment in a very volatile frame of mind.

In spite of her emotion, Pat quickly planned a course of action. She got her apartment key out of her bag. With the door locked, she jammed the key back into the lock and pressing hard, broke the key in the lock. She next called Reba, who wasn't home yet. She then called Nan to tell her that she probably wouldn't be coming to another session until she could find a new place to live, away from Ray. Nan listened quietly as Pat outlined her plan. She gave Pat some suggestions as to where she might look for shelter.

Reba, after getting Pat's phone call, quickly fed her three girls snacks and put them back in the car. She drove over to Pat's apartment again wondering if she would be bringing Pat and Michael back to her place for the night. If so, it could be an uneasy night. Reba worried that Joe, her husband, who was currently unemployed, would come home drunk. Once Reba arrived at the apartment, Pat pried the key out of the lock with a kitchen knife.

Pat and Reba waited together for Ray to come home. The kids watched TV in the living room eating cereal out of the box. Finally, when Reba was about ready to take Pat and all the kids back to her trailer to put them to bed, Ray arrived at the front door. Reba stood in the doorway and talked to him, blocking his entrance to the apartment, while Pat took the kids into the back bedroom. Reba told Ray that he needed to have a direction for his life, a life without

drugs. She emphasized that he couldn't stay in the apartment until they worked out a plan that night. Surprisingly he calmly cooperated. As Reba reported to Nan the next day, Pat adjusted her earlier decision by agreeing to live in the apartment with Ray for another month. Ray agreed to turn himself into his probation officer and participate in a drug rehabilitation program.

At the next family literacy session, Pat and Reba used the telephone during the adult education session to contact social services regarding Ray's situation. They arranged an appointment with the probation officer. Reba intended to drive Ray to the appointment.

Barney, The Birthday Cake

A week after she broke her key in her locked door, Pat became concerned about Michael's third birthday celebration. She was intent on having a Barney, the dinosaur, cake for his birthday party. Pat made a phone call to a grocery store bakery. She was told that a Barney dinosaur birthday cake could not be created for her. Pat called across the room during the adult education session and asked for help. Her sister and others told her to get the yellow pages in the phone book and look up bakeries. She kept calling places her sister referred to from the phone book. Nan continued her morning announcements with the group of women who sat at the adult education table.

Earlier that same day, Pat read newspaper ads, looking for a jewelry store from which she could buy a birthstone for Michael. She told us that Ray planned to give Michael a BB gun for his birthday. He would not be permitted to use it until age twelve or thirteen when Ray would teach him about its proper care and use. Pat commented that Ray was currently out in the woods digging a root plant, ginseng, that is native to the area. It is valued for its medicinal properties and can be sold at local stores.

Institutional Literacy

At another time, Pat, Jill and Crissy talked about how they were planning to spend their Earned Income Tax Credit (EIC). The EIC is an IRS refund for those earning less than ten or eleven thousand dollars a year. Pat made plans to receive her refund early through H&R Block's Rapid Refund program. I said that I had never heard of this program (even though I had received an EIC). She was incredulous that I was not familiar with it. Pat explained the procedure I would need to follow in order to participate in the program. She further explained that I would be able to receive half of my tax credit now and half later in March. I stared at Pat, marveling at her sophisticated and savvy knowledge of available resources.

REBA

Hopes, Plans, and Dreams

Reba's family story:

In five years from now, I hope that my husband, kids and I will have a nice three or four bedroom house of our own With some money in the bank. The reason I we [want to] have a house of our own, is because paying rent cost more money if you do it all the time. Maybe we can start saving money, instead of just throwing or giving it away for a short time. And moving from place to another. I myself hate moving from place to place. Plus if we can get a house of our own it won't be hard on the kids moving place to place. And that way we will have something to call ours. The reason I want to have money in the bank. Is so we won't have to struggle for money all the time. The way it is now we have to go week by week. And plus when the kids finish school, if they want to college we can pay for it instead of getting a loan. I will in courage all of my kids to finish school. Because it's very important for them to finish school. Because I didn't finish school, and now I regret it. And I don't want them to make the same mistake I did. I hope in five years we're at this point, it is important to me, for this to happen.

Reba's Home

I drove down a road leading out of town admiring the surrounding mountains, gentle against the horizon. The remains of a recent snow storm were a contrast to the muddy lanes and brown pasture land. I found Reba's driveway and parked next to two or three aging cars which sat on a mud patch. I stopped to look at the outside of Reba's trailer. Children's car seats hung from the porch roof. An assortment of brooms, car tools and plastic children's play equipment was stored on the porch and around the yard. I noticed the curtains hanging in the window as I knocked on the front door. Reba's middle daughter, who was then eighteen months old, came with her to the door where they greeted me. Reba held her infant daughter in her arms.

The home visitor teacher from the family literacy program had set up her preschool-type materials on the floor in front of the couch ready for a session with Reba and the kids. I went to sit at the kitchen with Ellie, Reba's four year old daughter. From the back bedroom, Ellie had carried a carton of markers and large pieces of paper.

While I sat at the table talking to Ellie about her drawing, I noticed the clean trailer interior furnished with worn furniture. Years of use were embedded in the floor and walls of the kitchen, but the surfaces were clean and the dishes washed. A couch, a TV stand, a book shelf and a collection of movie videos, a few CDs, and books filled the living room. Later Reba showed me the back three bedrooms. In one of the rooms there were books and more books, and games scattered all over the room.

Reba's Engagement With Her Children

I knew Reba, who was twenty years old, as a very positive, friendly, energized person with a great sense of humor. I remember one of my first impressions of her during breakfast time at the family literacy program. Women arrived leading or carrying babies, preschoolers and

toddlers, their arms full of diaper bags, car seats and extra clothes. Young children were placed in high chairs. They were watched by staff members as the mothers lined up to get their breakfast trays. I saw Reba place her eighteen month old daughter in a high chair. She animatedly talked to her child, telling her how much she loved her. Reba continued to relate to her daughter while she maintained supervision of her two other daughters.

On another day I saw Reba with her four-year old daughter, Ellie, after lunch. Ellie walked back to the preschool room where she got her blanket and stuffed animal from her plastic storage container and sat down on her napping cot. She arranged the blanket, put her stuffed animal under it and waited for Reba who was in the other room with her two younger sisters. Soon Reba came in and sat down on the floor next to the cot. Together they read two books, Reba pointing out that they had one of the books at home.

Reba's Christmas story focused on extended family visits.

Reba's Christmas Story

During Christmas my husband and kids and I usually go to his grandmother's house on Christmas Eve. There we eat dinner and open presents. His whole family is there; it's about nineteen people. It's very noisy there with all the kids running around and the grown-ups having mixed drinks and talking really loud. Then we all sit down and eat dinner. For dinner we have ham and all the trimmings.

After dinner we all sit down in the living room to open presents. We always go from youngest to oldest. By the time everybody gets done opening presents, the living room is a mess. So we all clean up the wrapping paper. Then after the paper is picked up, we load up the presents in the car. Then we take the kids home and put them in bed.

On Christmas Day we get up, eat breakfast, then sit down on the living room floor and open the presents. After we clean up the mess we get dressed and go to my mother's house to open presents. From there we go to my mother-in-law's house to open presents and to eat dinner. We have everything for dinner. Usually I eat until I can't eat anymore. Then we open our presents and then clean up the mess. By the end of the day the kids are ready to go home and go to bed.

Life With Joe

Often Reba appeared to me as an independent head of her family. Occasionally she revealed details of her life with Joe. One morning at the family literacy program, she told me how Joe didn't make it to work the week before because of a heavy snow storm. Joe's boss claimed that he had made a special trip to pick up Joe at his home and bring him to work during the storm. Joe thought the circumstances were too dangerous and declined the ride to work. Due to this incident, Joe's boss wanted to fire him from the job (installing telephone posts for the local phone company). Instead, the boss laid Joe off so he could get unemployment compensation.

Reba confided that Joe had come home drunk, thrown things around the trailer and threatened suicide. At the time, Reba had been caring for Pat's children as well as her own. It had been a particularly difficult night for her.

Later, Reba told me that Joe talked about going back to school to become a licensed

electrician (he had previously completed some course work from a local community college). The school Joe wanted to attend was forty minutes away. Joe's plan would entail taking out student loans and moving closer to the school. Reba told me Joe was hoping to get a job as a UPS driver in addition to going to school. The family might be moving to a house that was condemned for a faulty foundation and so was very inexpensive to purchase. A week later, Reba reported to the group at the literacy program that she was planning to get a job waitressing and would be moving in with her mother until Joe stopped drinking.

Reba drew a social map that visually described her world. In addition to cleaning, cooking and taking care of her kids, Reba watched soap operas, talk shows and children's cartoons on TV. She played with her kids, watched TV and visited family members by herself. Reba met a friend from middle school in the family literacy program and they became good friends. They frequently talked on the telephone. Reba liked to read recipe books, especially holiday and dessert recipe books. For fun Reba ate at a fast food restaurant and invited friends to her house. Joe's friends would also visit and drink, listen to music, play and "pick at the kids." Reba visited several members of her extended family who lived in the area. She also talked with them on the phone.

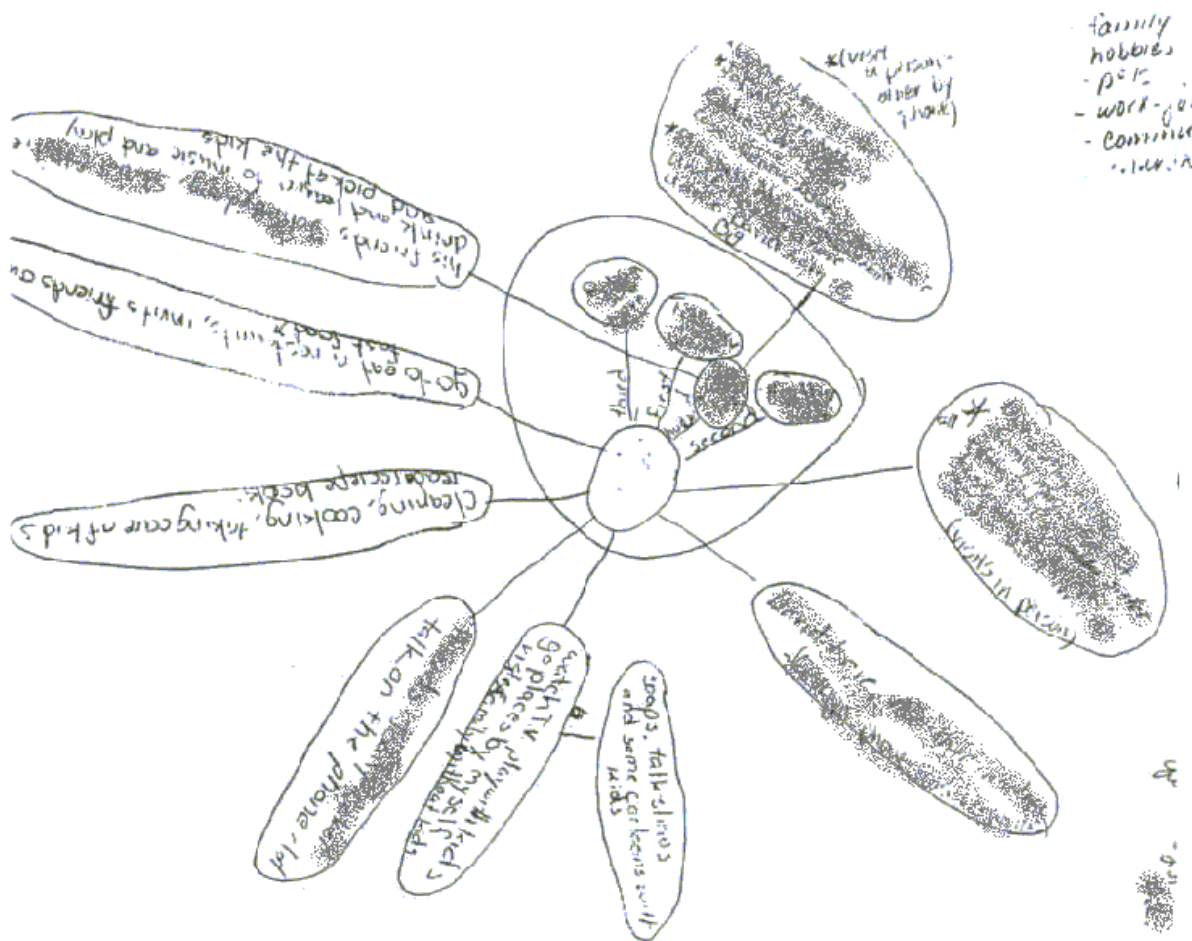


Figure 3. Reba's social map.

CHRISTINE

Catching up on Housework

Christine sat on the new rug in the living room of her trailer, surrounded with the inner pieces of a vacuum cleaner. Christine had planned to vacuum this new rug purchased with the Earned Income Credit refund. She and her husband, Craig, also purchased new beds for their two daughters, a living room couch, a TV and enough gallons of paint to paint the inside of their trailer. Today Craig was across the trailer court preparing an empty trailer for painting. Their landlord paid them \$5.00 an hour each to clean and paint empty trailers in the trailer court. Craig had been laid off from his "floater" position at the lumber mill and Christine worked part-time as a housekeeper at a motel.

Christine was home today, planning to catch up on her housework, but the vacuum cleaner wasn't working. She sat on the rug methodically taking it apart trying to determine if it needed a new part. Purchasing a vacuum cleaner part would be very problematic as she and Craig did not currently own a car.

Even if they owned a car, neither Christine nor Craig could have driven it. Christine never passed the driving test. She tried for a long time to pass the required test in order to obtain a driver's license. She studied and studied. Yet during the test, Christine experienced anxiety and couldn't remember correct answers to the questions. For his part, Craig had accumulated DUIs (citations for driving under the influence of alcohol) to the point that his driving license had been revoked. He did not have the money necessary to pay the accumulated fines. Christine sat on her new rug determined to fix the vacuum cleaner.

Watching, Learning, Helping

Christine learned to do household repairs from her grandfather. She remembered her grandfather sitting for hours taking apart appliances and putting them back together again, repaired. She remembered learning to make glue from him and recounted the recipe: "I use flour, and a little bit of cream of tartar and a little bit of honey and a little water to make it real sticky." Christine watched her grandfather:

At age fourteen I would just sit down and I had nothing to do, take something apart that was already broke, and track down if something was messed up or if a wire was loose, or whatever, but now I could fix radios, I could fix vacuum cleaners, I fixed our hot water heater.

Christine's grandfather worked as a foundry worker and her grandmother was a housekeeper. Her grandparents were very important to Christine because, "When I always needed them, they was always there, and support, guidance and anything I needed they always got me or helped me....they bend double backwards to do what they could for me."

Trying to Understand Loss of Home

Twenty years earlier, the six year old chubby girl with light brown hair hanging across her face clung desperately to her mother's waist and screamed in terror. Her mother, a heavy set woman, tears streaming down her cheeks and across her set jaw, slowly shuffled Christine to her

grandfather's car, the engine humming, in the driveway. Christine took a last look at her two sisters as her mother gently guided her into the car's back seat. With her maternal grandfather driving the car, Christine and her mother went to the nearby city where Christine would live in a succession of foster homes over a three year period.

Christine lived separated from her family until she was nine years old. Confused and angry, Christine did not adjust or adapt well to foster families or to school. She destroyed things, wouldn't let anybody touch her and would not talk to others.

In attempting to understand why she was removed from her home and parents, Christine recalled:

I try to talk to her [Christine's mother] and she said she would tell me, you know. It has somethin to do with a family member who was just bein mean and spiteful or somethin like that...she said she didn't wanna tell me cause it would make me probably hate the person that done it, so...I don't know what's goin on.

In remembering experiences at school when she lived in foster homes, Christine said: I didn't really pay attention, I just didn't really care. I was going through a period where I didn't want nobody to touch me, I didn't want nobody around me, I didn't want nobody to talk to me, I just hated everybody. I didn't know what was going on. I was just six years old and I didn't know what was going on. I was in my house and then I was taken outta my house and put in a strange house with strange people and I didn't know why. I still don't know what happened.

Adjusting to Home

At age nine Christine reunited with her family when they moved to California in order to live with and to take care of her father's parents. Christine recalled:

I mean, I was happy I was back home, but it just took me a while to get, to get over all that you know. To trust anybody, for a long time I didn't trust nobody. If a stranger come in my house, I would start screaming or yellin because I didn't know if they [were] coming to take me out again. It was rough.

In California her father worked on a ranch and her mother worked full time as a housekeeper. Christine's parents who had a 10th grade and 8th grade education respectively, were:

always telling me how important it is to get an education, to get a good paying job, or to get anywhere, you know, in the world, because education does count a lot. I passed that on to my own kids. I sit down and tell em, you know, later on in the years it's gonna be, they're not gonna be looking for no one with an 8th or 9th grade education. They're gonna want someone with computer experience. My 9-year-old girl already runs around and says, 'my mommy says I'm going to college'.

Christine had friends in California, but did not like to attend the high school in which she was enrolled. She said the fighting and violence prevented her from going to school. She and her sister participated in a drop out prevention program. In this program, teachers came to her parents' house to provide academic learning sessions for Christine and her sister. In spite of the drop out prevention program's efforts, at age 16, Christine dropped out of school. Shortly

afterwards she returned to her home state with her family and began working at minimum-wage jobs such as waitressing and cleaning motel rooms.

Married and Having a Family

Christine met her husband, Craig, through her brother. Christine's husband served four years in the Navy and learned welding, plumbing, and life saving skills. He worked 11 years at the foundry and had recently been laid off from his job as a "floater" at a lumber mill. In this position Craig knew all the jobs involved in the lumber mill and could perform a job when a worker was absent.

Family life was a priority for Christine. She felt as a child she never had a family doing family type things:

I didn't know much about family life cause I was yanked around so much and put here and put there. You know, I didn't have a chance to have a family. So now, when I got married and had children of my own, whenever they need me I stop whatever I'm doing and see what they need. All I said to myself when I was growing up, when I had a family that things would be different.

Celebration

Christine's youngest child, John, ran in the front door of the trailer. He had helped his father over at the empty trailer and now waited for the arrival of his sisters on the school bus. After the girls had a snack (slice and bake cookies), Christine was to sit with Tesh and go over her school papers. That night the family planned to celebrate their new TV and couch by popping popcorn and watching TV. The next day Christine had arranged for a ride to work with a neighbor.

Involvement with Public School

Christine attended to her daughter's schooling. She volunteered at Tesh's elementary school whenever she was not working and could find someone to watch her son. At Tesh's school, Christine reshelved books in the library and gathered supplies for the classroom teacher. Christine felt she actively supported her children's learning:

I read to them and anything I can do to support them, I tell 'em how important it is to read, how important it is to do their homework, and the biggest problem they have right now is they don't want to keep up with their stuff. I even approached the teacher [her daughter's fourth grade teacher] and made her sit down and talk to Tesh. I told Tesh's teacher what was going on [regarding losing school papers at home]. I tell her [Tesh]...put it in your book bag, set it by your bedroom door or the front door and when you're done, you can just go on to school and carry it with you. Her teacher told her the same thing. Tesh told the teacher, said, my mommy said the same thing.

Christine kept magazines in her home such as Good Housekeeping, Baby Talk, Field and Stream, TV Guide. Unlike several of the other women participating in the family literacy program, Christine said that she had friends. She spent time talking and visiting with them and acting as a counselor. "They rely on me," she explained.

Christine's social map indicates a life rich in interests, activities, friends and family. In addition to her job as a motel housekeeper, family responsibilities and activities with friends, Christine volunteered to clean house for an elderly man.

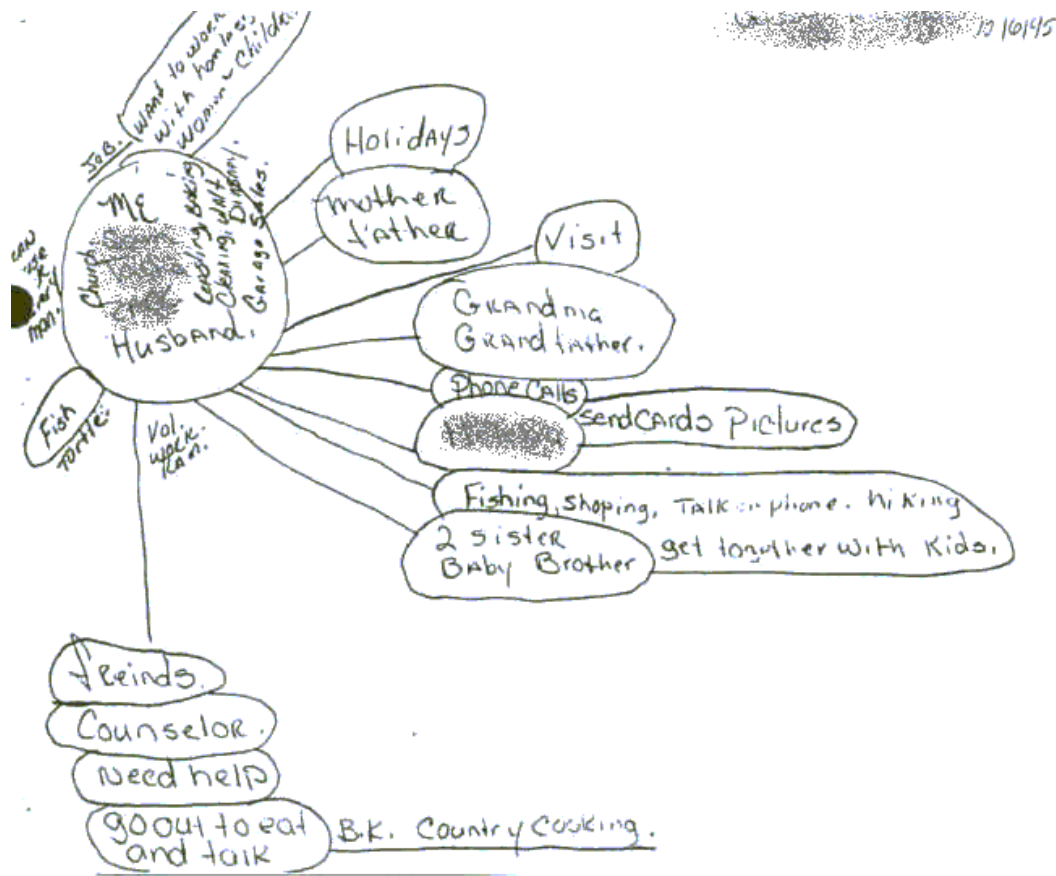


Figure 4. Christine's social map.

JILL

Introduction

Jill's family story:

I don't know how to start because my life is very weird. To begin with my name is Jill. I am 24 years old. I am a mother of two very pretty girls. My first was born on December 7, 1987. She was born at 12:27 p.m. at Mountain View Regional Hospital. I named her after her grandmother. My second was born at 8:15. Her name is Cassie. I've been married for eight years. I got married on May 22, 1987. At the moment my husband and I are separated. But I hope to be back together. I am expecting my third child in February. I hope to have a little boy. I hope to be a family again by next year this time.

Literacy in the Womb

Jill, just back from KMart, sighed and settled her 15-year old, eight-month pregnant body on her couch in the subsidized apartment she shared with her boyfriend. She removed a children's book on tape from the KMart bag, *The Gingerbread Man*. A tape recorder was on the brown plastic coffee table that Jill leaned over and plugged into the electric wall socket. She put the tape in the recorder, took the head phones and after inserting one end into the tape recorder, arranged the two ear pieces on her pregnant tummy. The voice on the tape read the story of the gingerbread cookie escaping from the old woman's oven. When the peep cued her, Jill idly turned the pages to the book. The story finished, Jill quickly put everything away as her boyfriend would laugh at her growing pile of children's tapes and books. Earlier that morning, just after breakfast, Jill read *The Little Engine That Could* to her unborn child.

Ten Years Later

Ten years later, Jill was fixing dinner in the kitchen of another, yet similar subsidized apartment. While she cooked, her elder daughter, Laura Beth, sat at the kitchen table reading *The Little House on the Praire* aloud to her mother and younger sister. Earlier, Jill helped Laura Beth practice her part as Mary Lincoln in the class play.

Jill and her two daughters sat down at the kitchen table to eat. As soon as they finished, the phone rang. It was Jill's mother, Betty, calling to report on her day (She was the owner of a residential and commercial cleaning business.) After work, she had driven to a nearby city to bring her two grandchildren home to her house. Jill's sister, Jody, couldn't be found. Jill and Betty assumed that Jody was out on the street again sleeping in a car in a nearby town. This was the last time Betty was willing to travel to get the girls. She wanted to adopt the two children.

During the phone conversation, Jill's mother asked if she had heard from her other sister. Jill lightly laughed. This sister explicitly identified herself as a lesbian, an acknowledgement that troubled Jill and convinced her that her family was not normal.

That same week, during the family literacy program session, Jill shared that Laura Beth had recently won first place in the county-wide Reflections writing contest for her age group. (She subsequently won third place in the state.) Laura Beth was her class president and made the honor roll for her report card grades. According to Jill, Laura Beth always had her "nose in a book." She frequently read books to her mother and her younger sister, including all of Laura Engels Wilder's books (*The Little House on the Praire* series).

Jill routinely watched the weekly televised adaptations of this book series. She even named her daughter after the main character in the books. She also planned to name her third child, if a girl, after the youngest female character, Gracie, in the book series.

In spite of Laura Beth's reading and writing fluency, Jill expressed to the group at the family literacy session, concern about her daughter's math learning. Jill had received a note from the fourth grade teacher concerning her daughter's math work and discussed this issue with others.

"What A Life"

At the family literacy program, Jill usually sat on the couch against the wall during the morning break, with her feet (swollen from pregnancy) resting on the coffee table. There she read

the newspaper. After several minutes she turned to me and commented on the fact that Pat, eight and a half months pregnant, was outside smoking a cigarette! Jill then asked Kathy, the adult education program aide, how her high-school-age son was doing and if he was planning to go to college.

Jill continued to share her personal medical issues with Kathy and me. In addition to the three antibiotics she was taking, she was five months pregnant and had diabetes. (Reba earlier brought in some printed information on diabetes for Jill to read.) Her doctor was trying to determine whether the diabetes was caused by the pregnancy in which case it would likely extinguish after the baby was born. At her doctor's insistence, Jill monitored her blood sugar level five times daily. She showed the equipment she used to prick herself and then read her sugar level. Jill explained that her level should be between 60 and 102 before meals, and 120 after meals. She recorded the sugar levels in a diary her doctor reviewed during visits. She demonstrated how the diary was set up so that she could not "cheat" on the blood sugar levels.

Jill confided that she and her husband, Robert, were not able to get along. She related their attempts to go to a marriage counselor. She hoped to have a baby boy but felt sure she would have a girl. (She had a boy). Jill explained how it was important to her husband that she have a boy. She sighed often during the conversation, commenting "What a life, what a life."

Later in the school year, Jill cried because her test scores did not improve significantly. Her reading score changed from an eighth grade, four months score, to an eighth grade, three months score. Her math score rose from a sixth grade, three months, to a sixth grade, eight months. She reported that Laura Beth read seventy-five books in three months, making her daughter eligible for a school sponsored sleep-over event.

Computer Literacy

One morning during another literacy program session, Jill sat down in front of the lap top computer. She volunteered to write a thank-you note to the Mary Kay Cosmetic representative who had spoken to the group. All program participants would sign the note.

Initially, Jill was not able to go from the screen with the different program icons on it, to a blank word processing page. In spite of her difficulty, she insisted that she knew how to do this and refused my help. Jill did figure out how to use the mouse, click onto the PFS Application icon and reach a blank word processing screen. Later she would need help figuring out how to create a graphic design on the front of the note. Nan showed Jill how to construct the design.

In regard to completing the assigned holiday essay, Jill said she would ask her daughter to help her with it at home. Here is the final draft of her essay:

Christmas to Remember by Jill

When I was nine years old I can remember going to see Santa Claus and the only thing I asked for was a pair of roller skates. So every day I asked for those skates and I think I drove my Daddy crazy. So Christmas Eve I went to bed at 6:00. But I could not go to sleep.

So finally morning came and I couldn't wait for nobody else. So I open the biggest box and it was a pair of white roller skates! I look at the skates for the longest time but never put them on. So finally the rest of the family got up and couldn't believe I was already up and didn't try my pair of roller skates on. But my Daddy decided to put them on. But they didn't fit his feet. But he tried his

bests. So he got up and as soon as he did he fell on his butt. Everybody laughed except me because I was afraid I might fall. But I became a natural in no time at all.

REFRAMING MY PERCEPTIONS

The program staff arranged a field trip to a local pumpkin farm. The adult education teacher, Nan, in planning for the trip, reminded the group that there would not be breakfast or lunch served on the day of the field trip. She suggested that parents prepare and bring a packed lunch for themselves and their children. Initially, Jill, Julie, Pat, Christine and Reba appeared reluctant to commit to go on the trip. They responded to Nan with blank stares. Tina, who had been talking to Jill, turned to Nan and said yes, she planned to go. Jill and others spoke up to say they would also go on the trip.

Tina asked Nan what to prepare and pack for the lunch. Both Nan and Kathy (the adult education aide), offered suggestions of lunch preparation ideas which they described as easy and inexpensive. Pat spoke up and said she would not fix a lunch but instead would stop by the fast food place to buy it. Julie nodded her head in agreement and explained that they did not have time in the morning to fix a lunch for themselves and their children. On the morning of the field trip, most of the women purchased lunch from the convenience store on their way to the program.

I later wondered if the suggestion to prepare a lunch had initially stopped some women from thinking they could go on the field trip. Easy and inexpensive lunch ideas may not have meant the same thing for Nan and Kathy as they meant for Pat, Julie, Jill, Christine and Reba.

CHAPTER SIX

THEMES and ISSUES

Elevator

by Lucille Clifton

down
in the corner
my book and i
traveling
over the project
walls
so the world
is more than this
elevator
stuck between
floors again
and home
is a corner
where i crouch
safe
reading waiting
to start moving
up

INTRODUCTION

The poem *Elevator* illustrates themes of resourcefulness, literateness and a recognition of retaining walls/barriers imposed by social class. In the poem a child creates a safe space in an unlikely and possibly dangerous place; an elevator which has stopped working between floors in a public housing project apartment building. The child is alone, attempting to create a safe space. She lives in a public housing project, a location of physical poverty and scarce middle class amenities. Despite this, the child works to develop a sense of security amidst a potentially unsafe space with the resources at hand. She acts as a bricoleur (Levi-Strauss, 1966) in that she creates a new environment for herself through improvisation with existing materials. The child's improvisation includes reading a book, a literate activity. Reading enables the child to know other worlds, to imagine other possibilities. Images in the poem create a context of resourcefulness, literateness, and the recognized restraints of social class that permeate the vignettes as described in Chapter Five.

MULTIPLE LITERACIES

Similar to Tina, each woman displayed multiple literacies that included interactive, linguistic, print, critical, institutional and consumer literacies. Literacies were unique to each, such as Christine's mechanical literacy and Pat's institutional literacy.

Julie exhibited reading and writing, print literacies, through her book discussion regarding novels she checked out of the library. (Recounted in Chapter Two.) She practiced creative writing when she wrote stories and poems to me in her journal entries. Julie was knowledgeable about the education requirements for becoming a CPN, LPN, and RN. She read her world (Friere, 1987), especially with regard to social class consciousness (Wright, 1997), and access to the middle class. Julie's awareness and articulateness revealed a critical reflection (Friere, 1987; McCaleb, 1994). Yet, like the child in the poem who read a book while waiting to move up, (moving up to her floor or symbolically, moving beyond barriers to a higher social class), Julie anticipated making changes but remained immobilized. She waited because her current focus was to provide the basics of living with limited resources to her children. While Tina exhibited initiative and action towards her lifestyle transformation, Julie's critical literacy did not move into an empowerment to take action (McCaleb, 1994).

Julie believed that literacy and schooling was the key to social class mobility (Auerbach, 1989), because schooling enabled more money. She supported her daughter's school-based literacy by attending the family literacy program at the classroom teacher's suggestion. Julie possessed knowledge and skill with gardening, food canning, and sewing. These funds of knowledge (Moll & Greenberg, 1990) she attained from her mother and grandparents through her family's community of practice. Yet, in Julie's eyes, these literacies lacked cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), and would not benefit her in positive ways.

Jill lived a literacy event with the Laura Ingalls Wilder books in her life; her family was a character reenactment of a historical novel written for children. She identified with the story of a family who survived a harsh frontier world with simple resourcefulness. Jill demonstrated her parental support of literacy through her activities with Laura Beth. Auerbach describes the unidirectionality of literacy interaction between parents and children (1989), "children who read to their parents on a regular basis made significant gains, in fact greater gains than did children receiving an equivalent amount of extra reading instruction by reading specialists at school" (p. 171). Jill was immersed in school-based literacy and a print-literature literacy through her involvement with Laura Beth's school success. Laura Beth read to her mother sitting at the kitchen table while Jill fixed dinner. According to Jill, Laura Beth frequently read aloud to Jill and her sister. Jill read Laura Beth's play script and took on the role of a play character in order to assist Laura Beth in learning her character's lines. She engaged in clever emergent literacy when she played the book tapes to her baby in the womb. Taylor, writing in *Toxic Literacies*, reveals how people develop literacies that are invisible and carry no value but are necessary for survival (1996). (Such as people who have family members in jail and develop expertise in the bureaucratic and legal systems.) In a similar fashion, Jill became very literate about diabetes and the tools and procedures for monitoring this disease.

Christine, as with Tina, exhibited a visible or explicit display of funds of knowledge (Moll & Greenberg, 1990). She obviously participated in multiple ways in a community of practice, watching her grandfather as he repaired home appliances. Christine had a fluent level of mechanical literacy. As with the other women, she believed that literacy and education would

prevent her children from living with the lifestyle limitations she did. Christine supported literacy in multiple ways. She exhibited knowledge of school-based literacy when she supported her children's success in schools by acting as an advocate and talking with her daughter's teacher. Literacy for personal and pleasure purposes was present in Christine's home through the various magazines to which she subscribed. At times Christine could not afford a telephone and she had no car, but she had print, text literacy sources in her home.

Auerbach lists indirect factors that positively effect literacy development (1989). These include: frequency of children's outing with adults, emotional climate of the home, amount of time spent interacting with adults, enrichment activities and parental involvement with the schools (p. 172). Christine made a conscious effort to provide these experiences conducive to literacy development. She took the time to cook and sew with her children; she conscientiously responded to them and planned afterschool activities that included a family night with popcorn and a movie video. Critical literacy was especially noteworthy in Christine's life; she read her world and found ways to improvise and meet her goals for her family. Her initiative, resolve, and family activities are especially significant when contrasted to her early childhood experiences spent in foster homes, separated from her family.

Pat was institutionally literate about community resources in her knowledge of and participation in the Rapid Refund Program. She did not exhibit the reading and writing literacies apparent with the other women. Pat and Reba were literate in ways similar to Taylor's study with people who learn, out of necessity, bureaucratic knowledge and skills (1996). Like Tina, Pat and Reba were literate about the legal system and social service system.

Pat publically discussed her participation with local, sociocultural group practices; groups that participated in activities such as hunting for ginseng, learning to use a BB gun as a child, and hunting for meat. Other women may have been involved in these activities but did not reveal that these practices were part of their daily life.

Reba possessed a rich, emergent literacy at home with her young children. She read stories to her children and had a supply of paper and writing and drawing materials available to them. During my visit to her home, Reba's daughter brought paper and markers from the back bedroom to the kitchen table. She and I sat at the table talking, drawing, and writing. Reba also read for personal enjoyment. Her reading included recipe books (especially dessert recipe books). She modeled reading for her children. Reba found the article on diabetes, xeroxed it, and gave it to Jill at the family literacy program.

All of the women had telephones in their homes except for Christine. Media literacy (as in audio, gestural, visual - New London Group) was available in all the households of each woman. Each had movie videos, TVs and CDs.

RESOURCEFULNESS: WOMEN AS BRICOLEURS

Tina exhibited exceptional resourcefulness as depicted in her story. Each woman shared this characteristic with her. Hatton (1989) defines bricoleurs as individuals who: are reasonably proficient at performing a wide variety of tasks. While these may include odd jobs, bricoleurs are not really odd-job persons. A more adequate characterization is a professional do-it-yourself person. In terms of abilities and skills the bricoleur falls somewhere between an odd-job person and craftsperson. (p. 75)

The indications of each women's resourcefulness are especially significant when placed in context. Each woman consistently maintained resourcefulness and a tenacity during times of threats to physical safety, physical health, home, transportation, money, and food. Julie didn't have money to fix the furnace in her trailer; she was not able to provide Easter treats for her children; and she talked consistently about her unpaid bills. Jill's diabetes created a grave uncertainty about her health. Pat lived with a volatile and, perhaps, dangerous personal and living situation. Reba scrambled to maintain her family amidst uncertain and unstable personal, living, and financial circumstances. Christine experienced challenging limitations with regards to transportation and money resources. Schein (1995) describes women who struggle with the "mother-provider" dilemma as "women of commitment" (p. 41). Jill, Julie, Reba, Pat, and Christine were "women of commitment" because:

despite all that happens to them, poverty, loss, broken dreams, they remain committed to their children. The men may leave, but the women do not leave their children. To do this, they have to be both the mother and the provider. (p. 41)

Pat cleverly managed the legal system, personal safety, and loyalty to Ray in the missing VCR incident. Pat cleverly managed the legal system, personal safety and loyalty to Ray in the missing VCR incident. When she used the apartment key to protect her from a possible physical threat, Pat acted as a bricoleur. Keys are used to open and lock doors. Pat used the apartment key to create a barrier for protection against a potential threat. She took one tool that had a primary purpose and improvised its function to suit her immediate need.

Christine revealed multiple instances of using existing materials to improvise. Her story of making glue, fixing the vacuum cleaner and learning to fix other household appliances demonstrate resourcefulness. Additionally, she and Craig appeared to work as a team creating a home with resources that appeared scarce. They lived in a rural area with no personal or public transportation, a difficult situation. Christine's social map indicated how she maintained multiple tasks, activities and interests. These included working at a minimum-wage job while managing her three children, being involved in the schools and staying committed to her family and friends.

Reba provided experiences rich in reading and writing literacies for her children amidst unstable and threatening living circumstances. Reba created options independently of Joe, such as her plan to move in with her mother when his drinking became problematic. Reba's trailer had children's toys and household equipment stored on her front porch, and cars parked in the dirt next to it. One could conclude that this is a picture of poverty. However, viewing it as a bricoleur, it is a landscape of stored finite resources.

Jill and Julie exhibited resourcefulness in the ways they managed their lives. Jill's stories about reading to her unborn baby with the earphones on her pregnant stomach indicated clever use of a tape recorder. Julie used her oven to heat her trailer when the furnace was broken and she didn't have the money to fix it. One could judge this action as short sighted and insufficient yet Julie improvised from resources she had immediately available. These women "may lack access to society's resources, but culturally have generated a considerable reservoir of strengths" (Sleeter, 1996, p. 120).

MEASURING UP/SOCIAL CLASS AWARENESS

Social class issues of safety, stability, opportunity, and economic resources are implicit in the *Elevator* poem. The child creates a sense of home in the corner of a stuck elevator in a public

housing project. These same issues were daily challenges for the women in my study and motivated them to seek assimilation into the middle class. Perceptions of self with social class issues permeated the women's conversations, writings, and interviews ("I'm the one at the bottom, the rednecks"; "We're just hillbillies."; "To begin with, my family is weird."). Each woman possessed internalized notions of what constitutes the traditional middle class. Distinctions, including subtle markers, between classes was painfully apparent. During the talk about housing circumstances, each housing circumstance indicated class differences and types of activities in which a social group participated. As with Tina, living a middle-class life was important to Christine, Julie, Pat, Reba, and Jill. This lifestyle appeared to offer safety, stability, and opportunity.

Julie and Jill expressed self-consciousness about their living circumstances which did not measure up to the picture of an intact, nuclear family. Julie believed that if she had grown up with a "regular" family, her life would be different. With a "regular" family, Julie believed she would not be so helplessly living in the "bottom class, the rednecks."

The deviations from this ideal picture Julie experienced in her life were painful for her, especially the ways they affected her children and their opportunities for access to the middle-class. Julie reflected that she did not appear to live with the resources and appearances of the middle class, yet she valued education and embraced a motivation to learn. She explained she might not be able to provide cupcakes for her daughter's class party, or her daughter may be dressed in second-hand clothes. Yet one cannot assume that either she or her daughter was lazy, or lacked motivation, intelligence, or that Julie lacked positive parenting skills. She lamented that she felt she was not valued for having personal integrity nor for demonstrating care and love for her children, family and friends due to her social class. Julie, in an articulate manner, recognized that she did not possess the cultural capital necessary to represent her as a valued person outside her immediate sociocultural group. She dismissed her knowledge and skill with canning food, gardening and sewing because it brought minimal cultural capital.

For Julie, it would be difficult to change social class, although she planned to try through her goals of school. Julie believed the critical features in determining class for people was money, as money enabled opportunity.

Jill joked about her family as being strange and different. Her reasons included her separation from her husband and her two sisters' living habits which deviated from the traditional mainstream. She experienced a dissonance between an official evaluation of her school literacy (her test scores and no high school degree status), and the school, print literacy fluidity Laura Beth experienced. Jill moved along a route between home and middle-class discourses in which the contrasts were immediate, personal and painful.

Pat aggressively worked to provide activities for her children that could engender a sense of well-being. Planning the birthday party, arranging for the novelty birthday cake and purchasing a birthstone are familiar rituals that invoke security and sufficient resources

Pat, as all of the women, uniquely coordinated and integrated aspects of the dominant mainstream culture with her mountain rural Appalachian culture. This movement between discourses exemplifies Rosaldo's "porous array of intersections" (1989, p. 20). Thus, Pat in one setting, pursued the birthday party arrangements, read the newspaper searching for the birthstone and promised to invite all to the party while she also discussed digging for ginseng and learning to use a BB gun. Digging for ginseng in the woods and learning to use a BB gun at a young age are phenomena generally attributed to a rural mountainous culture.

Reba responded to her social class differences not so much from a position of having questionable adequacy and personal worth as a person but rather as a practical way to live. She felt this life could offer her family security, physical health, emotional well-being and public schooling success.

Christine displayed the least amount of attitude regarding social class. She appeared to possess an acceptance of self and didn't feel as captured or frustrated by class as did perhaps Julie, Pat or Jill. Christine intimately understood and knew the dominant discourse. She integrated aspects of it such as approaching her daughter's teacher to increase public schooling literacy and her daughter's talk that she will go to college. I believe Christine felt as if she was making a difference for herself and her family as illustrated in her involvement with her daughter's school, using Earned Income Credit money to furnish her trailer and her availability to her children. This contrasted to her childhood biography. Christine created a lifestyle within available circles of resources. She appeared to accept the limitations and knew how to maneuver in and around her circle of resources.

REPOSITIONING PERSPECTIVE (Sleeter, 1996)

I continually negotiated with myself how to frame glimpses of these women as I had come to know them. Each family literacy session I attended had a surprise for me as my preconceived notions were both challenged and reinforced. Often it appeared that the women made choices that could be viewed as questionable, such as choosing not to prepare lunch but instead to purchase a fast food lunch to take on the field trip. I learned that each person attending the program had her own unique circumstances that could not be generalized against my lens.

Britzman (1991) writes, "If knowledge is viewed as already out there, complete and waiting to be acquired, the process of 'getting it' becomes an individual dilemma." I found that I initially adhered to this view. I was part of the dominant "perspective [which] holds that society is free and open to anyone who tries to advance, although one may encounter barriers one must work to overcome" (Sleeter, 1996, p. 120). I believed these women needed to just get involved with the planned activities and positive change could and would happen. If they would take advantage of the offered opportunities to "learn," to implement suggestions, they could experience improved lives.

The lunch and pumpkin farm field trip incident helped me to reposition my perspective (Sleeter, 1996). I remember having a number of conflicting reactions to this situation. Nan's and Kathy's lunch suggestions for the field trip made sense to me. Getting new ideas for lunches is always helpful information. I asked myself why these women didn't appear to take note and make use of the lunch suggestions. Initially, I framed their response as a lack of effort to provide healthy lunches for children. As an extension of this, I thought this "attitude" reflected a lack of interest and motivation in activities in which they should be engaged. I judged that Jill, Pat, Julie and others exhibited laziness and poor parenting skills (my judgement was characteristic of the dominant position, e.g., "deficiencies of effort, culture, family" (Sleeter, 1996, p. 119).).

After more thought I concluded that the teachers made assumptions ignoring the circumstances in which these women lived, however sincere their efforts to helpfully inform them. They assumed that each woman could keep paper lunch bags or lunch boxes, sandwich bread, luncheon meats, fresh fruit, sandwich bags, or plastic containers, box drinks, and other lunch-making supplies at home. Their assumptions were not unique to these teachers but were

embedded in the family literacy program's orientation. These assumptions were common in circumstances that embrace an instituted practice as a lens to a lifestyle standard.

I reframed my perceptions and realized that we assume the "required" or necessary resources can be secured. These women made choices that from a middle-class lens could be viewed as inadequate. Reframing these assumptions from a viewpoint of discovery rather than critique reveals that Jill, Pat, Reba, Julie and Christine utilized alternative resources and practices available to them.

NEGOTIATING SOCIAL CLASS AND MULTIPLE DISCOURSES

Christine, Jill, Julie, Pat, and Reba moved back and forth, maneuvering between home discourse and a middle-class discourse through a "porous array of intersections" (Rosaldo, 1989, p. 20). Issues of social class, economic resources, safety, survival and desires for opportunity, family well-being, and success created pressures for compliance to the "norm." Interplay between discourses created a demand for middle-class assimilation. A more middle class lifestyle appeared to provide solutions and opportunities.

Dilnot (1986) writes that "like post modern culture, our families today admix unlikely elements in a improvisational pasatiché of old and new" (p. 245). Each woman improvised responding to the demands of living and the dominant discourse expectations of adequacy. Their improvisation is to be discovered and used as a bridge to public classroom learning, not to be critiqued and dismissed as deficient.

EPILOGUE

Their story, yours, mine - it's what we all carry with us on this trip we take, and we owe it to each other to respect our stories and learn from them (William Carlos Williams, in Coles, 1989, p. 30).

Driving along the highway, 9:45 pm on a Wednesday night in April, I glance over to the right side of the road and notice a Chevron gas station, the kind with a minimart and at least eight gas pumps. A woman is standing in front of the minimart looking away from three children sitting on the curb. She is smoking a cigarette. I notice this because I notice my reaction to this scene. I am thinking, its late on a school night and those children are still out. I spontaneously ask myself, why aren't these children home in bed asleep? Isn't tommorrow a school day?

I began this study hoping to gain insights from women's lives that would inform me and enhance my teaching practice. I asked the question: What did I need to know about students' worlds occurring outside the school day that would have helped me guide and facilitate learning opportunities for them?

From Tina, Jill, Julie, Christine, Reba and Pat, I learned to listen and view my students in a different way. Students' lives outside the classroom are complexly embedded with unique creations of beauty, commitment, strength, energy, skill and initiative. My knowing of students is unimaginative and uninformed unless I listen, learn and reframe/reposition my viewing. So, I revisit the scene at the gas station and my instant reaction. I see clearly how I make conclusions and judgements based on appearances of compliance to a mainstream standard for parenting and family.

I learned, in this study, that inspite of appearances and nonassimilation to middle class norms, multiple funds of knowledge exist waiting to contribute to my learning and thus to act as a bridge to my students' learning. My students' have families who, in spite of their struggles, need expressions of their hope and initiative in their children's classrooms. These families need opportunities to make known their commitment to their children and to contribute in ways that earn them recognition in the dominant discourse.

Each student brings multiple literacies into a classroom. Some literacies are pronounced and culturally valued and others are invisibly embedded in their home discourse. The multiple literacies take many forms and appearances. Each student has a home context with a family unit which has a story of negotiating the pressures of living within multiple discourses. This story is unique to each family. I learned to value these multiple literacies, regardless of appearances, to search for indications of them and to respect the stories behind the literacies.

Perhaps barriers between classes can become less distinct, more porous and flexible when students and their families are constructed as living within new discourse configurations.

APPENDIX A

OFFICIAL PRESENTATION of the EVEN START FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM

A national program evaluation report (1995 Interim Report), the local Even Start grant application (1997), and a chapter from a text about family literacy (McKee and Rhett, 1995), provide a history and "official" perspective on the national and local Even Start program. The Even Start Family Literacy program is currently a federally funded initiative that seeks to improve the educational opportunities of low-income families by "integrating early childhood education, adult basic education, and parenting education into a unified family literacy program" (McKee & Rhett, 1995). The official literature states that the Even Start family literacy program supports education reform through its efforts to "help parents become full partners in the education of their children; to assist children in reaching their full potential as learners; and to provide literacy training for their parents" (1995, p. 158). It works to address three of the eight U.S. national education goals (Education goals 2000). These goals include: Goal 1: All children in America will start school ready to learn; Goal 6: Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; Goal 8: Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children (1995, p. 156). Promoters of the program believe that Even Start is an innovative approach because it combines adult, parenting, and early childhood education that build on one another. It encompasses an intergenerational and integrated family education focus (1995, p. 156).

The National Evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program final report explains that the U.S. Department of Education began the program in 1989 as a demonstration program authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and amended by the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, Part B of Chapter 1 of Title 1 (P.L. 100-297). In 1991, Congress passed the National Literacy Act (p.L. 102-73) stating that the Even Start's purpose is to:

improve the educational opportunities of the Nation's children and adults by integrating early childhood education and adult education for parents into a unified program...

The program shall be implemented through cooperative projects that build on existing community resources to create a new range of services. (National Evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program Executive Summary, 1995)

Local Program

The grant application written by Drew, the local Even Start director, to secure Federal money, states that the program has been in operation since 1991. The population of the county is 74,000 and is primarily a rural area with a high percentage of low-income and "undereducated" adults (grant abstract, 1997). Census data from 1990 indicates that 16.6% of the county's children live below poverty level and that 26.4% of the adults do not have a high school diploma. The program serves approximately 40 families per year, impacting 60 adults and 80 children. The program organizers increased the length of time with families from kindergarten age to include

infants as the "length of intervention is a significant factor in bringing about lasting change in families" (Even Start 1996 grant application, p. 2). Program staff members identify and recruit families through public service announcements on television and radio, flyers and posters posted throughout the community, reviewing records in area schools to locate "undereducated" parents with preschool age children, and participation in community events such as the Literacy Fair. Yet Drew writes that the primary method of recruitment is through direct referral from other agencies and from the participants themselves.

The grant application document explains how the program staff members screen families to ensure that they meet the program requirements. Priority is given to reviewers' assessment of families considered the most disadvantaged based on income and family size. Preliminary screening includes a staff member visiting the home to complete registration materials and to provide an official description of the program. Adult participants are assessed using the Test of Basic Education and the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (1997, p. 3). In an effort to develop an "individualized program" for each adult, staff members discuss the parent's educational history, personal goals, and expectations of the program. The children's development is assessed by using a parent questionnaire and through a battery of standardized tests: the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test and the Preschool Inventory (1997, p. 5). When families have needs beyond the scope of the program, referrals are made to appropriate agencies. These agencies include CHIP (Comprehensive Health Investment Project), the Department of Health, the Department of Social Services, the Women's Resource Center, the local Early Intervention Council, the Community Services Board, the school district's special education department, the local community college, Head Start and others. The local program is planning to add another feature in order to help parents make a transition into the workplace. The group is applying for funds to develop an apprenticeship program for the participants in collaboration with the Southwest Transition Center.

The Even Start program that Drew directed is based on the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Program model. Dr. Robert Popp, a program evaluator, reports that over 70% of children who participate in Even Start, achieved above expected levels on eight variables of school success (1997, p. 3). Two of these variables relate directly to parent involvement. Drew writes that there is an established body of research supporting the ideas underlying the Kenan model of family literacy intervention. One observation is that isolated approaches to assessing literacy are often ineffective, especially with low-literate families. More important than family income or number of parents are the ways families interact. Dr. Popp writes:

It is not the parent's socioeconomic and educational status that influences children's literacy development and subsequent success in school. Rather it is what parents actually do with their children that influences those things. Parental practices, not status, explain the influence. (Even Start Grant Application, 1997, p. 4)

Dr. Popp, who is conducting a program evaluation for the local Even Start program, believes that a families' "sociocultural context" is a critical variable in family literacy program success (1997, p. 4). He explains in the grant application that:

low-literate families may not respond to interviews in the same manner as educated, middle-class families, nor will one low-literate family function the same as another. We need to understand how an individual family interprets the intervention. The families' 'system of meaning' is the key. (1997, p. 4)

In the grant application Drew explains that the local program works to develop activities

which are closely related to a family's home life in order to connect with the systems of meaning and to begin helping families develop their own set of literacy practices (1997, p. 4). The overall goal of the local program is to provide an integrated family literacy program effectively combining elements of adult education, preschool education, child development, and parenting education, PACt (parents and children together), home visits and social support.

Evaluative Conclusions - Quantitative Success

Official records assert the program's success. The national program evaluation executive summary reports positive gains for both the children and the parents in a national study (1995, pp. 1 & 2). The report concludes that the Even Start family literacy model has "added benefits for children beyond the expected benefits that are generally derived from a traditional early childhood program" (1995, p. 14). This is concluded because of the research that supports that "there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the amount of time that parents spend in parenting education and their children's Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test" (1995, p. 15). The percentage of adults who attained their GED was significantly increased and there was an improvement in functional literacy in reading.

Of the local population, 58% of parents showed improvement in reading as indicated with an average reading gain of more than 1.5 grade levels; 68% of the parents showed improvement in mathematics as indicated with an average math gain of more than 1.5 grade levels. 84% of the children showed improvement on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test; the average gain was 1.5 months of growth per month of participation; 90% of the children showed a gain on the Preschool Inventory; the average gain was more than twice the amount expected through normal development growth and 100% of the children showed growth as measured by the Child Observation record (1995, p. 16).

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW TOPICS

Family History

Extended Family History

Significant Person in Childhood

Wise Person in Family

Strengths and Positive Features Gained from Family

Household Resources

When something breaks at home (both as a child and now), how is it repaired?

Types and Nature of Family Activities as a Child

Types and Nature of Family Activities with Family Today

Social Circle Today - Type of Communications with Others

Use of Telephone, Movies, Radio, TV, Books, Magazines, Newspapers in Current Home and During Childhood

Family Participation in Community/ School/ Church Activities Today and as a Child

Family Vacations, Social Events, Friends as a Child and Presently

Memories of School

Story of Dropping out of School

What Could Have Made a Difference

Nature of Participation with Children's Public School Teacher

What Strengths Would Like Public School Teacher to Know About your Child and your Family

Personal Goals

Do you consider yourself a Reader, Writer, Speaker?

APPENDIX C

THEMES AND CATEGORIES IN TINA'S DATA

Victim to circumstances

Crossing borders

Biography of trauma, misfortune and struggle

Literacy - life chances, active agents in world

Social network - isolation, substance abuse, lay offs

Minimum wage jobs, survivor, outsider

Can't conform to "normal"/dominant standard, boundary crossing - economic, dress, language, ambition, intelligence, insight, social skills, strategic, decision-making, motivation, types of jobs, perseverance, persistence, hope/resilience, independence from past, self-sufficiency, contradictions, threads of agency.

Multiple Literacies

Hidden Literacies

Rewriting World

Discourses

Sites of Hope and Promise

Basic Literacy

Critical Literacy

Reading signs in environment

Reinventing self

Reclaiming self

Safe Spaces

Sense of Home

Sense of Place

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE OF ISSUES & THEMES FROM JILL, CHRISTINE, REBA, PAT, JULIE DATA

Rejection	victim to circumstance	living week to week
goals	ambition	
poor	few family activities as child	
uncertainty	always moving from place to place	
grandparents as support	self-reliance	value education perseverance
good mother		
no support in school or for school as child		was never read to
volunteers at daughter's school		outsider
no support in school		identity as bottom of socio-economic classes
	no choices for economic reasons	
contradictions	good grades	set apart by lack of resources
country music	all began in the same place	external appearances
good mother		
love	consider best interests	kids are
best accomplishment		

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Wright, E. (1997). Class counts: Comparative studies in class analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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EDUCATION

Doctorate of Philosophy candidate, Curriculum & Instruction, Elementary and Middle School Language Arts, Literacy, Teacher Education. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), Blacksburg, Virginia. Dissertation Topic: Sociocultural Understandings of Literacy: Women as Bricoleurs Negotiating Multiple Discourses and Social Class (May 1998 graduation date). Advisor: Rosary Lalik

Scholarship: Jean B. Duerr Memorial Scholarship Award for community service and academic achievement, 1994-95.

Master of Science in Education, Curriculum and Instruction, August 1988. Radford University, Radford, Virginia. NK - 8 Endorsement.

Pre-primary Montessori Teacher Certificate, May 1982. National Center for Montessori Education, Damascus, Maryland.

Bachelor of Arts: Sociology, June 1974. Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia.

TEACHING - PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

NCATE Coordinator August 1997 to August 1998
College of Human Resources and Education, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060
One year administrative faculty position to work with Associate Dean to plan and organize arrangements for NCATE/Virginia State Continuing Accreditation Site Visit (April 4-8, 1998). Worked with unit wide faculty to prepare program area curriculum folios, interim reports and state program descriptions; coordinated monthly Professional Education Committee meetings (unit wide governance); planned and coordinated multiple site visit arrangements (e.g., site team interviews with university and college administration, faculty, students, public school personnel). Analyzed program area documents in order to prepare NCATE unit wide report and documentation of technology, multicultural perspective, partnerships with schools and systematic program feedback and evaluation in professional education unit. Prepared, collected and organized unit wide documentation for NCATE Standards. Coordinated preparation of site visit document room. Served on Educational Technology Task Force committee (implementation of technology standards in professional education programs).

University Instructor August to December 1996, Fall semester
Department of Educational Studies, College of Education and Human Development,
Radford University, Radford, Virginia

EDRO 414 Reading: Teaching and Remediation

- Instructed thirty-three education majors (two sections) in reading theory and teaching practices. Hands-on, cooperative-learning, inquiry-based course included the following topics: reading theories, reading process, emergent literacy, reading-writing connection, word/text analysis strategies, comprehension, vocabulary development, multiple approaches and materials for reading instruction, language and literature, study skills, content area reading, assessment, classroom organization and management, readers with special needs.

Graduate Teaching Assistant January to May 1996, Spring semester;
August to December 1995, Fall semester;
January to May, 1995, Spring semester

Division of Teaching and Learning, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia
EDCI 4964, EDCI 5964 **Virginia Tech Outreach Program in Schools (VTOPS)**

Mentoring Field Study

- Designed and developed new program for College of Education in collaboration with College of Arts and Sciences, and the University Service Learning Center. Service learning field study provides opportunity for Virginia Tech undergraduate and graduate students (university-wide, all majors) to mentor K-6 students through individual and small group academic and personal support activities.
- Program has grown from Virginia Tech student participation in one inner-city elementary school to three schools: one urban, inner-city elementary school; one rural elementary school; and one university community middle school.
- Designed field study syllabus, developed course requirements, recruited Virginia Tech students and selected texts to supplement field study experience (Multicultural education).
- Instructed Virginia Tech students in weekly seminar sessions.
- Coordinated placement of Virginia Tech students with schools. Served as university liaison between school principals, teacher contacts, and field study mentoring program.

Graduate Teaching Assistant January to May 1995

Division of Teaching and Learning, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia

EDCI 4744: **Teaching Language Arts in the Secondary School (grades 4-8)**

- Instructed 15 pre-service teachers (graduating seniors in their student teaching semester - fourth through eighth grade placements).
- Designed syllabus and selected texts emphasizing the following concepts and issues: language arts; literate lives/literacy history; reading-writing connections; self as reader-writer; emergent literacy; spelling; adolescents; adolescent literature; lesson planning; unit planning (thematic/topical, author, genre, novel units, basal/texts extensions); behaviorist - constructivist classrooms; writing process; writing workshop; reading workshop; literature circles; design and use of mini-lessons; teaching strategies and tools in the curriculum; assessment; biographic literacy profile; final course portfolio; multiple theory-teaching paradigms.
- Developed and implemented whole class, small group and individual activities to foster reflection, active engagement and experience with course concepts, issues and teaching practices.

Graduate Teaching Assistant August to December 1994

Division of Teaching and Learning, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia
EDCI 3504, **Teaching Problem Readers and Writers**

- Instructed fourteen undergraduate and graduate pre-service teachers.
- Directed and supervised students and their elementary student tutees in twice-weekly reading/writing clinic.
- Designed syllabus and selected texts emphasizing the following concepts: what is teaching; what is a teacher; what is tutoring; what is literacy; reading-writing connections; developing literacy-rich environments for reading-writing learning; emergent literacy; developing instructional strategies for teaching reading and writing; multicultural issues; assessment; spelling; observing language learners.

Graduate Assistant August 1993 to May 1994; August 1992 to May 1993
Division of Teaching and Learning, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia

Student Teacher University Supervisor

- (1993-94) Supervise Master-level student teachers, K-8, in student teaching placements for academic year in Montgomery County, Virginia.
- (1992-93) Supervise undergraduate student teachers, K-6, in student teaching placements for academic year in Montgomery County, Virginia.
- Organized professional seminars, observed, assessed, evaluated, conferenced, provided feedback, guidance, and support.
- Served as liaison between university model director and county principals and cooperating teachers.

Research Associate 1992

Management Systems Laboratories, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia

- Researched, wrote, and produced training materials for the Westinghouse Environmental Management Company of Cincinnati, Ohio in preparation for a Joint Response Emergency Preparedness Exercise. Training materials included overheads and learning materials for eight modules.
- Facilitated twelve training sessions at Westinghouse for the Emergency Operations Center staff.
- Evaluated the Emergency Operations Center staff during a Joint Response Emergency Preparedness Exercise.
- Researched, planned and produced sponsor deliverables, i.e. grant academic plan, annual report, continuation proposal.

Research Associate 1990-1992

Management Systems Laboratories, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia.

- Responsible for papers, presentations, and class document production for lab director. Created and developed abstract and paper topics; researched and wrote abstracts and papers.
- Responsible for organizing and managing lab director's graduate and undergraduate classes in Industrial engineering. Developed class curriculum and syllabus, prepared instructional materials, advised students.

Classroom Teacher 1989-1990

Linkous Elementary School, Montgomery County Public Schools, Blacksburg, Virginia

- Planned and implemented fourth grade curriculum. Successfully managed class, team taught and planned in-class activities and field trips, conducted parent conferences, completed student assessments, and served on school-wide committees.

Classroom Teacher 1998-1989

Belview Elementary School, Montgomery County Public schools, Christiansburg, Virginia

- Planned and implemented second grade curriculum. Successfully managed class, planned and taught learning activities, conducted parent conferences, completed student assessments, and served on school-wide committees.

Teacher's Aide 1985-1986

Montgomery County Public Schools, Christiansburg, Virginia

- Assisted teacher in self-contained LD classroom while in graduate school.

Classroom Teacher 1982-1985

Blacksburg Montessori School, Blacksburg, Virginia,.

- Lead teacher in afternoon preschool program. Planned and implemented curriculum. Directed summer school program 1983 and 1984. Trained substitute teachers, and performed bookkeeping duties.

PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Papers (Journals and Conference Proceedings):

Lalik, R. V., N. J. Hicks, and L. C. Pacifici, "Staring with the Learner: A Focus on Assessment for Democratic Classrooms," *Reading in Virginia, Journal of the Virginia State Reading Association*, volume XVIII, 1993, pp. 8-13.

Kurstedt, H. A., Jr., L. A. Mallak, and L. C. Pacifici, "Expand Quality Management into the Customer's Environment to Establish Effective Measures and Standards," *Proceedings of the 1st International Symposium on Productivity and Quality Improvement*, February 1992.

Papers (Summaries Presented at Meetings):

Pacifici, L. C., Buhner, M. A., Hoover, G., and Hollandsorth, J., "Literacy as Active Participation in the World: Imagining Possibilities and Creating Spaces," *National Reading Conference*, December 4-7, 1996, Charleston, South Carolina.

Pacifici, L. C. and James Garrison, "Emotion, Imagination and Inquiry: The Teachable Moment": *American Educational Research Association*, San Francisco, April 18-22, 1995.

Lalik, R. V., L. C. Pacifici, R. A. McLachlin, and A. J. Langston, "Considering the Dialectic of Theory and Practice: A Reflexive Conversation on Emancipatory Praxis," *Journal of Curriculum Theory Bergamo Conference*, October 23, 1993, Dayton, Ohio.

Lalik, R. V., N. J. Hicks, and L. C. Pacifici, "Literacy Teacher As Transformative Intellectuals: An Examination of Practice," National Reading Conference, December, 1993, Charleston, SC

Lalik, R. V., N. J. Hicks, and L. C. Pacifici, "Developing and Sustaining A Context For Teacher Growth: A Study of Community," National Reading Conference, December, 1993, Charleston, SC

Pacifici, L. C., L. A. Mallak, and H. A. Kurstedt, Jr., "The Use of Art to Stimulate the Generalist Perspective in Undergraduate Engineering Management Education," ORSA/TIMS Joint National Meeting, ORSA/TIMS Bulletin, No., 31, May 1991, p. 108.

Kurstedt, H. A., Jr., L. A. Mallak, and L. C. Pacifici, "Myths In Applying TQM In Service Operations," Production and Operations Management Annual Meeting Presentation, November, 1991.

Conference Workshop Presentations:

Hicks, Nyanne, and L. Pacifici, Alternative Assessment Conference: Promises and Possibilities., Montgomery County Public Schools, September 24, 1994 "Participatory Assessments (Middle School)".

James-Deramo, Michelle and L. C. Pacifici., Phi Delta Kappa, Virginia Tech Chapter, School Showcase Program "Virginia Tech Outreach Program in Schools (VTOPS)" March 23, 1995.

Southwest Virginia Association for Early Childhood Education, Roanoke, Virginia, October, 1989.

AND

National Association for the Education of the Young Child National Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, November, 1989.

"Developing Personal Awareness: Tools for Increasing Satisfaction and Effectiveness of Early Childhood Teachers."

Virginia Association for Early Childhood Education, Annual Conference, Charlottesville, Virginia, May 1990. "Developing Personal Awareness: Tools for Empowering Early Childhood Teachers."