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UMI
A Narrative Inquiry into Home: A Space Called Anywhere

by

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The theory explicated in *Home: A Space Called Anywhere* was born in the experience of leaving home after 25 years. The focus is the universal yet particular concept of home, the sentiment of 'at home', and its function in how the world is viewed and understood. The phenomenon of changing geographic and personal space is examined within personal, social and educational contexts of spaces we call home to discover how behaviour is determined and knowledge created in a world of change and uncertainty. On a continuum of a physical move at one end and a mental move at the other, a dialectical notion of experience exists. Changing space, and separation, exposed the complexities of adaptation and harmony. The traditional concept of home was no longer a fixed permanent space and the sentiment of 'at home' was freed of any fixed location. The resolution of an image of home is critical in understanding the sense of belonging that this emotion evokes.

This study is the narratives of three families and settings of home. Multiple issues surfaced guiding the inquiry into narrative, folkloric methodologies. The data was composed of interviews and participation in the activities of my participants. An eclectic collection of documents such as journals, death and birth certificates, historical texts, recipes and perusal of artifacts presented an historical and cultural profile of familial and personal lifestyles. My participants are elderly, deeply rooted, and have a vast reservoir of practical knowledge. The intimacy of story revealed the sentiments that shaded and built memories. The hermeneutical quality of story rendered the multiple perspectives of cultural realities.

Tradition implies preservation and permanence. Inclusion of photographs complements the text, adding permanence to moments.

The universality and familiarity of home can be a benefit and
detriment in the context of schooling and educational research. Images of school as home can establish a sense of interdependence and community. Other images suggest an absence of harmony, a separation of space and sentiment. A generational and conceptual gap establishes an ironic relationship between today's society and the past, between my elderly participants and students in today's schools.

Leaving home is an educative experience one can presume many encounter; a life experience about adaptation and for some painful.
Prologue

Today I am fifty one years old. It is not my birthday. That was two months ago and it is only May 5, 1995. It is my rousing. I have come to the realisation that I may only have twenty years of quality productive life left. After this year it will be nineteen years and then eighteen. The teenage years are always ones of anticipation, excitement, fear, risk and action. After all, this is about aging and time(ing). About change, life, living and impending death. Not just physical death but the death of legacy, tradition, narrative, and history.

Hi Deedee. It's Emy calling. It is Friday the 22nd. (September, 1995) It's about 9:00 o'clock at night. I'm um with Nina in the nursing home and she's um terminal and we're just taking it day to day. Um she's not in any pain. We're keeping her very comfortable. Um she's pretty much unconscious. Um you can call me or the nursing home. I just want to keep you updated. I'll try and leave another message. Um whenever. Thanks. Bye.

This phone message didn't reach me in time. She died during the night. My favourite aunt, a woman who raised me till her death, was captured by the future before I had a chance to freeze the present.

As I write, my living chronological age is approaching the age of my father's death.¹ He was 54 on that Sunday, August 6, 1972. This is significant. There becomes a strong sense of presence and the present in this final act of absence and the past. Temporality and finality, preservation and decay.

About time. I must begin writing. Composing while decomposing. I must begin gathering the remnants and re-structuring the beginning. Chance, luck, and serendipity are all participants in this narrative. If by chance and luck my twenty years are up and I am still functional and alive, then I will hope for another twenty. After all I will only be ninety by then...

On May 5, 1862 the Mexican army won a great victory against a French army sent to install Maximilian as ruler of Mexico. Although it would take Mexico another five years of war to finally expel the French and get rid of Maximilian (he was

¹ I have surpassed age 54 at this time of writing.
executed), Mexico considers this date a national holiday - a day of independence. The battle took place near the city of Pueblo and the Mexican army fought fiercely against the French invaders. This day is celebrated with great reverence. (Cesar Rodriguez, Personal communication, June 12, 1995)

So let it be known that on this reverent Cinco de Mayo, 1995 at 4:30 AM, I, too fought fiercely and wrote the first sacred words of this text. The date is purely synchronistic. The significance is not. It is symbolic of freedom and independence. Free of the bondage of the notion of home in one place, of harmony unlimited and unbounded by structures and remnants.
Introduction

Home is the centre of our lives. Only a fool - a determined, not a true pessimist - would tell you otherwise. Home is not just people. Home is what people dream: a bed, a window, food, a blanket. Something, anything, kindly to remember. For horses, the smell of hay and other horses. For cows, the mother-smell of milk. For us, for humankind, a photograph of someone loved, the taste of marmalade, curry, wild rice, the scent of snow. In a trunk or in a suitcase, in a mind or in a memory, something carried everywhere. The permanence of nowhere, nowhere made somewhere, because you have it in your hand. I am here - and, with me, who I am. (Findlay, in Rooke (ed.), 1997, p. 67)

The title for this text was chosen in 1993. My mention of this is relevant since it was not only a title but also a theory. The term at that time had little meaning and was just a word in journals. I also knew that I had no theory about what I was about to do. At least I thought I hadn’t. Home: A Space Called Anywhere. Could that be? That ‘anywhere’ can be home? I looked back in my journals to find a very confused persona in a search for home surrounded by rhetoric, change and discontinuity. I thought that this period in my life was an unusual historic event but discontinuity was always a presence in one form or another. The peaks and valleys in a pictorial chronological history of my life were quite obvious. At a meeting on March 28, 1995 I was asked by Brent Kilbourn, one of my committee members, if I was operating under the assumption that we all need a concept of home, an anchor, a sense of space. My other member, Ron Silvers, asked me what is home or ‘at home’ when it is not attached to a space. Can there be a sense of home without the sense of specific spaces? My answer to all of this is yes. My question is, does our identity which I define as recognising, understanding and accepting one’s own personal diversities allow for the kinds of adaptations we need to create in life experiences. Sachs (1996), Connelly & Clandinin (1996), and Bateson (1982) speak of identities that need to be created, ones in which the person is redefined by experience. What is it that mediates the transition from experience to experience, space to space?

2 This chart was the result of a course assignment in Curriculum 1300 with my advisor Dr. Connelly.
Almost two years later in February of 1997 my advisor asked me why up to this date, had I not written about my academic life, my 'intellectual home'. I had been living this life for almost four years and not a word about moving into or (out of) this community. He was right and I was astonished. Since my purpose and move was to return to academia, where was the story? I can think of several reasons why I hadn't included OISE as home. I was able to establish my own comfortable spaces that implied home but I never thought of it as an 'academic' home. This space was an intellectual sanctuary whose walls were lined with the essence of freedom - personal 'author'ity to explore, go beyond and assume responsibility for the trust and confidence enhanced by Dr. Connelly's tutelage. However, the security, safety, and purpose created a silenced prisoner, one whose fear of separation of one day moving out of this sanctuary created a dialectical context. If one studies this analogy, the emotional content, the pain of separation (and union) prevented me from confronting a story characteristic of narratives with a beginning, middle, and an eventual and predictable end. The chronology of my historic events is not a linear concrete sense of time but a metaphysical anachronistic abstract continuum of emotional situations. My curriculum as "something experienced in situations" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 22) had emotional and aesthetic dimensions that embraced the nature of narrative. This narrative continues to evolve not in a vacuum of discontinuity and disassociation, but in an isolated awareness of an academic purpose steeped in a complex narrative of narratives attempting to distinguish and articulate what 'is' narrative - the story (the facts) and what is 'about' narrative - the meaning (the fiction). They speak of 'readiness' in educational circles and I just wasn't ready to write about this overwhelming compelling intellectual sanctuary that I knew I would have to leave. To confront this reality was like a premature death. Perhaps in my non-imposed isolation-in-writing my identity as a member of the OISE academic community was so intimate and personal that its presence was implicit and the need to make explicit was 'waiting' for a clarity not yet exposed. If I was negligent in acknowledging my presence in an intellectual stream of thought, it was not intentional.

Narratives of dialectics and discord continue their metamorphic recordings embedded with language peculiarities beginning as early as childhood. Today only remnants of the narratives exist ready to be
reconstructed, to "make meaning of experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988 p. 24) by telling and retelling stories about our selves that "refigure the past and create purpose for the future" (ibid., p. 24).

As life is being constructed with remnants so is this text. This study explores the phenomenon of moving, of changing geographic and personal space. Within this theoretical framework traditional cultural settings are experienced and described from an anthropological perspective. The focus within the cultural setting is the universal (yet individual) concept of 'home' and sentiment of 'at home'.

The paramount notion under question is how our concept of home functions in how we view and understand our world. The purpose is to examine personal, social and educational contexts of spaces we call home in an attempt to discover how behaviour is determined and knowledge created in a world of change and uncertainty. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1988) knowledge, or 'personal practical knowledge', as it applies to an education in the broad sense, is embedded in narratives of experience which are felt, valued and aesthetic. It is part of our curriculum, something that we experience in situations (ibid., p. 6). To Schutz (1971) "The symbolic character of the notion of 'home' is emotionally evocative and hard to describe. Home means different things to different people" (pp. 107-108). Doll characterises a post modern curriculum as one which posits "a fascinating, imaginative, realm (born of the echo of God's laughter) wherein no one owns the truth and everyone has the right to be understood" (in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 501). Editor Constance Rooke (1997) found the idea of home so beguiling, "so insistent as a subject in itself" (p. ix), that when she invited Canadian writers to write about home, the invitation became more open. They could write about anything at all, whatever it conjured up for them. What are the personal, cultural and social consequences of these individual and different constructs we call home?

Outcomes are structured by concepts of old and new space and according to Dewey (1934, 1980) are bound up with its interchanges with its environment in an intimate way. There is the notion of a dialectical and dialogical experience embedded in a physical concrete move at one end of a continuum and an abstract mental move at the other. Efforts to reach some kind of balance among tensions within this continuum resulting from
attempted resolution among the various emotions experienced at each end, creates its own inquiry. In a traditional universal sense the term home evokes a sentiment of 'at home', a kind of harmony, an 'intimacy with space' which has its own dimensions especially when viewed in the context of moving, changing space and separation. " 'To feel at home' is an expression of the highest degree of familiarity and intimacy" (Schutz, 1971, p. 108). In our present rootless society of evolving family and geographic structures how the individual constructs, reconstructs and stories these concepts is the essence of the study.

When I began the study, literature was scant on the topic of home. Within recent years magazines like Harper's and The Atlantic Monthly have featured articles and memoirs about home and relics or ancestral artifacts. In 1993 CBC in its series 'Ideas' featured the family which largely focused on concepts of home. One only has to scan the shelves of bookstores to notice the number of recent books on Feng Shui. This ancient Chinese art refers to the 'feel' of a place (Walters, 1991), this place being home. Literally 'Feng' and 'Shui' signify wind and water. Its principles are “concerned with order, the harmony of heaven and earth, and with the ways in which humanity can best keep the balance of nature in tact” (ibid., p. 10). Practitioners match personal characteristics to their clients surroundings in an attempt to ensure environmental harmony and inner peace leading to happiness, success and fortune.

But what if that space is constantly changing? How does one maintain or find continuity and harmony in this context?

This inquiry began with a personal experience. I left a space that was home for 25 years. As I moved into new spaces the sentiment of 'at home' metamorphosed from safety, familiarity, and belonging to alienation, tension, and discontinuity. Identity became problematic, intertwined with self and culture. The personal identity wanted to go back in time, reclaim childhood and delve into family history. The group identity wanted to reclaim a Latino ethnicity that had all but disappeared with the deaths and dispersals of ancestors. These desires were significant in that the tension extended beyond the self to global social issues, especially in view of contemporary horrific ethnic wars and genocide in defence of home and the thrust of multiculturalism in North American schools in support of group identity
and diversity (or commonality and stereotyping). Home has its political context. The Atlantic Monthly published two very powerful and influential articles which to this day still haunt me. In “The Coming Anarchy” Robert D. Kaplan speaks of a bifurcated world where the healthy, well-fed, pampered by technology person and the other larger condemned to a poor and short life person, are both threatened by environmental stress. The former will master it and the latter will not. He claims we need to understand “the environment for what is: the national- security issue of the twenty first century” (ibid., p. 58). Water will be in dangerously short supply in many diverse regions prompting mass migrations and group conflicts. This was February of 1994. In December of 1994 Matthew Connelly and Paul Kennedy followed with “Must it be the West Against the Rest”. This article was a critique of sorts of Jean Raspail’s The Camp of the Saints, a chilling and controversial novel about mass migration. The review was so provocative that I had to read the book.

Many members of the more prosperous economies are beginning to agree with his vision: a world of two ‘camps’, North and South, separate and unequal, in which the rich will have to fight and the poor will have to die if mass migration is not to overwhelm us. (ibid., p. 68)

I mention these articles because first, they have influenced my way of thinking about home in a political context. This is where immigration and multiculturalism take centre stage whether it’s the lone immigrant or a mass movement, whether it’s in North America or Eastern Europe. And secondly, there are implications here for the ways in which we envision home in relation to global issues such as population growth, poverty, cultural diversity, nationalism, ecology, to mention a few. The emergence of identity within this political context of home is relevant to my discourse and crosses many boundaries which I believe need to be explored.

I would argue that people who move, leave their home, experience the same kinds of emotions and constructions of knowledge in adapting to these changes that I have experienced. The traditional concept of home was no longer a permanent space. ‘At home’ was freed of any fixed location. The resolution of an image of home in today’s mobile society is critical in
understanding the sentiment of ‘at home’ and the sense of comfort, belonging and safety that this emotion evokes. Multiculturalism, with its claim of tolerance is an attempt to deal with this issue but not a successful one. This very complex dilemma situated in this political and social debate is a concern of this writer. It has taken on profound meaning in a daily awareness of issues of identity, belonging and empathy and has extended my inquiry and construct of home to a much broader homestead.

I found it necessary to explore non-moving and non-changing contexts in order to establish those qualities and values that create a traditional ‘home’. How capable are we to adapting values and qualities to changing spaces and what mediates the adaptation?

A pilot research project conducted early on in my Ph.D. program was seminal in the choice of my participants. I engaged in an ethnographic study with elders in a housing project which sparked my interest in their wisdom and values. My participants reflect this experience. They are elderly, deeply rooted, know who they are and have a vast reservoir of practical experiential knowledge. Our long term friendships and their traditional life styles and values rendered a situation for inquiry. I too am a case study. I am the mover, the non-traditional quasi-elder engaged in a diaspora typical of my Latino ancestry but not searching for the American Dream. I’ve had the dream and it is time for reality.

A methodological framework within the discipline of folklore emerged as narratives in the form of oral histories composed the data. This strong tradition of narrative establishes moral dimensions of humanism, empathy and social conscience that is articulated through the narratives, artifacts, and history. Grounded in folklore the research exploits the common person, the ‘folk’ in its preservation of customs, beliefs and traditions.

There are two themes that orbit the concept of home. One is the scientific concept of adaptation that the changing of space requires. The other is interdependence. This theme permeates the affective adding the emotion of empathy. One cannot exist without the other. Both of these notions will be developed in the text.

Beyond the personal and social setting, Dewey’s (1938) idea that school...
ought to be an extension of home provides a context for the sentiment of ‘at home’ in an educational milieu. As a former teacher with 25 years experience I observed that many of my students felt more ‘at home’ at school. They felt safe and had a sense of belonging. In today’s society I believe we have a culture not connected with sentiments of ‘at home’. The case studies I am conducting reveal data of a culture steeped in history and rooted in tradition, whose sense of home is connected to identity and the literal and metaphorical sentiment of ‘at home’. In contrast I believe there is an absence of harmony, a separation of space and sentiment in today’s moving society. This generational as well as conceptual gap establishes an ironic relationship between today’s society and the past, between my elderly participants and students in today’s schools. There is a universal knowledge of the term home and an individual knowledge of its meaning. “The symbolic character of the notion of home is emotionally evocative and hard to describe. Home means different things to different people” (Schutz, 1971, p. 108). The construction of empathy around the pain of moving and separation involved is the metaphorical bridge between the two cultures. Images of school as home can establish a sense of community and identity. Greene (1993) speaks of a diverse community as who not what they are. The experience of harmony, of the sentiment of ‘at home’ should be a part of every teacher and student curriculum.

There are specific questions that address the inquiry. However, there are two global questions that drive the research and construct an ethical and moral paradigm for study. My every movement is directed by the question, will my research enhance students’ learning? The relevance of this question lies in the broad interpretation of ‘an’ education, individual and collective, separate from but not necessarily exclusive of ‘schooling’. And secondly, will the world be a better place to live in as a result of my research? If these notions have no reality in the process or product then in my opinion what I am doing is meaningless and worthless.

The research relationship in this study is unique. The participants have been long term friends. Their case studies represent better than 20 years of interaction. As a result of this intimate and personal involvement “the basis of your selection is within your own spheres of identities [note here my reference to the plural nature of the identities of the self], and that through a
recognition of the reaches of those spheres, you gain an authentic entrance into narratives that display the sentiment of home” (Silvers, email, 2/7/1995).

I too am a participant and case study. The process of slowing down my motion to direct my own (dis)course and place it into the text was delayed and difficult. In this sense I was a bit of an outsider in the writing, focusing on external events, the ‘is’ narrative. However, it was in the ‘about’ narrative, in the reflection, recovery and reconstruction that I began to position myself within the text and recognise the epistemological implications of this position.

The study explores mortality. The questions of legacy and death in the context of aging are compelling notions for discourse. Death and preservation have become even more pointed after the sudden untimely death of one of my participants during the data gathering. Concepts of home can be significant during the passage of consciousness from life to death as the process of aging continues.

There are several ‘troublers’ within this framework. One is the dialectic of tradition and change. I struggle with the balance and resolution. How much can there be of change and still maintain a sense of tradition? As I continued writing my thoughts on the value of tradition in a social and historical context, I took an 180 degree turn. Preservation and tradition were evolving into negative terms with negative consequences. What is so sacred about land and space? The news of violence against innocent people in the Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe and many other parts of the world for the sake of tradition and home has weighed heavily on my conscience.

Another is the question of identity and its personal and ethnic realities. My own definition of identity with its multiple beings is more difficult to establish than ethnicity. Perhaps that is why one is so drawn to the cultural context which is set by established terms, tradition and history.

I questioned, explored and made another 180 degree turn with the metaphorical ‘roots’ as it applies to identity. In my view it signified a lack of movement, of inflexibility and resistance rather than stability. There are those trees that cannot grow in the shade of others. They say, “I was here first. Find yourself another space.” Transferred to human terms this can almost evoke antisocial behaviour. My friend and participant June, as her land was being encroached by a housing development on her homestead, was quite adamant
about erecting a fence to separate her from her new ‘neighbours’. Past fences were for cows.

Another is my focus of (non) participants. As I review my data there is an imbalance. I seem to be drawn to June. Is it a gender issue, or mother substitute, or something else that will surface? My mother has become a very strong sub text. She has become a case study, perhaps not so much in the written but in visual renderings. This phenomenon will be developed in the study.

The text includes a juxtaposition of artistic and scientific processes. I view the science and art of research as interdependent. They both seek to understand and are creative. It is the expression of those understandings that is unique. My writing, having been referred to as ‘kaleidoscope analogy’, indicates to the reader there will be shifts. The data does not always adopt a linear or chronological approach to the recording and interpretation. My goal is to leave the reader with his or her own meaning. It is in this process where diversity and individuality unite. The self and others find common ground in their differences and meaning making. The essay as genre framed in Bensmaia’s (1987) work on Barthes best parallels my interpretation of my writing in that the essay is a practice of writing rather than an interpretive endeavor. Rather it is the reader’s task to “decipher the signification of words that spring out of chaos and the ‘perpetual movement’ of all things. It is for this reason that the essay is drawn to images and metaphors. For this reason, it can only manifest itself -- in every sense of the term-- through fragments ” (ibid., p. 13). The concept of Chaos taken by Bensmaia from Montaigne as it relates to the essay is -- “the multiplicity and diversity of suppositions, words, ideas, and things, the infinite variations of reality and life ” (ibid., p. 9). That is not to say that this text is purely essay but if one is critical of the experience of fragmentation in the reading then the work can be situated within this genre.

It appears that photographs should not need an introduction, as though they speak for themselves. However, some statement as to their function and relevance to the thesis needs to be made. The photographs are an attempt to include a sensual dimension of hermeneutics in a visual form. In my view they are an integral component of narrative inquiry. They 

...constitute a visual reality that can be shared with the readers.

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Dewey (1938) claims that 'there is no intellectual growth without some reconstruction, some remaking, of impulses and desires in the form in which they first show themselves' (p. 64). That reconstruction, that rebuilding of a narrative can be done through reflection of photographs. When we tell a story from a photograph we are recovering an important event in our experience. The narrative search pushes the inner search through reflection, creating meaning for inquiry. (Barter, DeCarion, Dunne 1993, p. 23)

The renderings are also grounded in work by Berger & Mohr (1982) that state photographs 'beg' for interpretation and without story there is no meaning. Compared to other forms of communication the photograph is weak in intentionality which means that the photographer only makes "in any one photograph, a single constitutive choice: the choice of the instant to be photographed" (ibid., 1982, pp. 89-90).

During the late winter of 1992, I was involved in a collaborative project where the relationship between the visual and written story was explored. This led to the development of a series of papers framed around the notion 'the truth about fiction' utilising photography and narrative as methods. The process of evolution birthed the term 'image generated narrative'. The power of the photograph to evoke interpretation based on prior experience established a relationship with the context. Our lack of knowledge regarding the context places the photograph as fiction and enables us to create our own virtual narratives. In this sense photographs possess an ambiguity and it is within this ambiguity that Eco (1989) defines the aesthetic validity of a work of art in "proportion to the number of different perspectives from which it can be viewed and understood" (p. 3). Certain 'ethnographic details' move Barthes (1981) to "accede to an infra-knowledge" (ibid., p. 30) that teaches him certain historical features. For Susan Sontag (1977) photographs "furnish evidence" (ibid., p. 5). It is proof that something happened. There is a presumption that something existed that is what's in the picture.

For the pause is a special moment that cannot be held in thought or imagination, or even in the sentiment of my body as memory. The pause is only about in my quiescence, only as I
move from the animate to the inanimate, only in the conjoining of myself with a vital form. Even the use of the camera in the pause is, paradoxically, a part of the suspension of action. The camera becomes functional as a source for the still photograph, and therefore its operation is an achievement of a 'still' movement. Within the pause, the camera receives a vital form, just as the eye and the rest of the body receives such form: without discrimination, without a code of meaning, without intention. (Silvers, 1988, p. 4)

It is the desire of this writer and photographer to combine the visual and written text into an 'open work' (Eco, 1989) where the reception of the work is both an interpretation and performance of it and where the work takes on a fresh perspective for itself. To relate this to 'home' when Barthes views a landscape, they must be *habitable*, not visitable. The photographs touch him and it is this emotion that I wish to embody in this text through the reader's image generated narratives. In 'image thinking' (notes 11/18/93) feeling precedes thought.

I have chosen not to include words with the photographs so that the viewer can create their own meaning within two dimensions of the context - the context seen and the context described. Titles and narratives for the photographs are included in the appendix.

So at the end I return to the beginning. My title and theory, *home: a space called anywhere*, is an inquiry into the phenomenon of moving, of changing space. Concepts of home and sentiments of 'at home' within this context of change is the focus. It is a space that is not necessarily fixed and is mediated by identity and adaptation. What is significant is the notion of a dialectical continuum consisting of moving as a concrete notion on one end and an abstract mental move on the other end. The research explores issues surrounding concepts and notions of home and sentiments of 'at home' that reflect feelings of belonging (and alienation). The inquiry is framed by how the individual constructs, reconstructs and stories these concepts.
The following chapter summaries are included to guide the reader and move the reader in (or out of) order.

Chapter 1 attempts to take the reader with the author through the experience that created the research problem. The term ‘moving’ appears to be a theme beginning at birth. I was moving then and continue to move. Not just from space to space but task to task, thought to thought, - the reason for metaphor and phenomenon. Everyone else is moving too.

Chapter 2 explores folklore, culture and narrative and delves into epistemological implications.

Chapter 3 is the methodology. We are constantly seeking evidence to validate our actions even at the most elemental levels. We create theories and want to prove them valid so we set up investigations and explorations and artistically articulate and craft them for our audiences. As human beings and researchers we communicate and collaborate with people who we believe provide us with ‘facts’ of their narrative lives to create the fictions in our texts through the reconstruction of the narrative.

Chapter 4 introduces my participants.

Chapter 5 describes our selves in relation to the narrative spaces we occupy and the tangible legacies that also occupy those spaces.

Chapter 6 is (auto) biographical. Here you will meet and know my ancestors and the peculiarities of my Latino culture. It is knowing about people I know nothing about. It is about a huge knowledge gap that is bridged by stories, artifacts, and narrative remnants.

Chapter 7 has been the most intriguing. The terms (or lack of them) in constructing a concept of home have been challenging to me and my audiences. They have become an obsession. I never realised the binary quality of terms and how inadequate our language is especially when it comes to particularising the universal term of home and the sentiment of ‘at home’.

Chapter 8 situates myself and home in a different context. In this chapter I will make connections among home, ‘at home’ and school. I will blur the boundaries of my professional, academic and personal lives and explore home in an institutional milieu.

Chapter 9 itself is an interlude, an aside from the larger piece inserted to present situations, events and experiences that have influenced the text
‘along the way’.

Chapter 10 is the moral writing, addressing those ethical considerations that seem to spiral as the process continues prying into photographs, appropriations, ‘outsider’ participants, exploitations, and intrusions.

Chapter 11 is trying to decide if this process of going home is a journey or voyage. Is it one way or round trip? The discourse is reflective and constantly positing the question ‘will I ever get there?’ where ever ‘there’ is.
Acknowledgments

This thesis is about portraits. They are not identifiable by a photograph or paragraph but they are there. They are invisible, hiding behind each page. I see their uniqueness and I hear them questioning, inspiring and criticizing, driving me to levels of thought, passion and action I never dreamed of. This section is an attempt to recognize and thank the individuals who were significant in the creation of my thesis and the shaping of my self into the person I am today.

I wish to extend my deepest appreciation to my committee members for each of their contributions to this incredible collaborative accomplishment. Ron Silvers was my poet. His art, writing, coursework and art-related readings gave me the confidence and knowledge to pursue the aesthetic dimension of my academic passion. He kept me dreaming without which there would be no imagination.

Brent Kilbourn was my anchor providing me with a metaphor early on. He kept my feet on the ground and head focused. Through his writings, coursework and openness to my choice of practicum the anchor was loosened and a notion developed into my topic. Our many conversations about family and home filled me with ideas and direction.

My advisor, Dr. Connelly, was alot of everything to me. I don’t know any other way to say it. Over the past six years our relationship extended beyond the composition of the thesis. He encouraged me to pursue a variety of educational experiences entering me into new areas of academe. He has been my most severe critic yet dressed me with wings freeing me to experiment and explore in the true spirit of the scientist. He encouraged the artist in me to write with heart and passion, an experienced authenticity that extended beyond the boundaries of the thesis. Perhaps Dr. Connelly’s greatest contribution was the introduction of narrative. The meaning it has had on my life as a person and professional has been profound.

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Thanks to my cousin Emy for her interest and encouragement and bringing me back into the family.

The narrativist in me wants to continue to name, describe, and express gratitude to the many people who influenced this phase of my life. The pragmatist in me tells me to stop with the notion that all my friends along the way know I am forever grateful.

ⅹⅹ
Dedication

To Clara Kisko
who shared her home with me making all of this possible.

Posthumously to my father William Willis DeCarion
who would be so proud.

To my mother Dalila Bofill DeCarion who would also be proud
if she could only understand.
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Chapter 1

Moving as Metaphor and Phenomenon

All really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home.
(Bachelard, 1958, p. 5)

A Point of Departure

After almost one half century of my life in years and one fourth century of my life in a profession, I found myself by choice uprooted, and in a sense ‘homeless’. My desire for academia and change was stronger than my need to be rooted, to accept and maintain a status quo in my life. In order to necessitate this change I had to move, leave my home. For months I sorted and sifted, categorised and prioritised. I judiciously and mechanically went through the motions. I gave away or sold anything I didn’t want or need or could not fit into a small living space. I rented my house to total strangers. And I said goodbye to a personal, geographical and safe place that was mine for the better part of my life.

Deirdre was moving, not only with her belongings and cat, not only to a different country, but moving with her life. ¹ The preparation was a monumental task. Not only physically, but emotionally as well. Twenty five years of meaningful artifacts had to be either liquidated, discarded or stored. Since storage space was limited, the alternatives appeared the most logical solution. Her strong sense of sentiment being one of her character flaws, was going to make this process very painful.

Her first chore was to narrow choices of furniture. The new Toronto home was pretty well furnished except for the one room that was to be hers. With her four favourite pieces - an oak work table made by a friend, a china closet that belonged to her Aunt Nina, her parents’ secretary, and an antique pine ice box,

¹ Many times I write in the third person in my journal. It’s a form of reflection as taking a writing photograph. I am observing my actions separating my self from the context, like the “multiple ‘I’ ”. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 9)
she followed the same procedure for clothing, books, toys, dishes, tools, art, linen, appliances, and all the other life-long collectibles that were tucked away in countless drawers, closets, shelves, attics, basements, sheds, and barns. There were four categories: take, store, sell, give away. Many nights were spent sorting. It was difficult enough having to disassemble a life. But not having the presence of another human being who could share the joy or sorrow of the memories sparked by these artifacts was emotionally devastating. Many tears were shed in silence and in solitude.

This was only half the separation job. The other professional life at school also had to be dealt with. This was just as difficult. There were lesson plans, curriculum plans, notes, diagrams, collections, etc. etc. that had accumulated over 19 years of teaching and supervising science. She had a classroom lined with cabinets, drawers, and filing cabinets and an office surrounded by more filing cabinets and storage cabinets. She gave away what she could and what was wanted by her colleagues, threw out some of the stuff, and left the rest. (When she was to return years later, her things were still in the filing cabinets as she had left them.)

The one feature that made this ordeal a little more comforting was that when guests were at the house and something was admired, it was theirs. They were friends and the artifacts created a gift-giving occasion. She felt as though she was giving a part of herself, leaving a piece behind.

Tag Sales are quite common in Connecticut. It is the ‘Yankee’ way of recycling those items that one cannot quite force oneself to take to the dump. She bought a small ad in the local paper, invited some friends to participate, and spent the night tagging and arranging. In the wee hours of the morning she finally went to bed. The sound of a very heavy rain was both relaxing and disquieting. Her worst fears were realised the following morning when she woke up with that kind of sixth

2 When she returned in the spring of ‘97, her things were no longer there. She did not inquire as to where they had gone.
sense that tells you something is not quite right. The silence of the rain and the violent roaring of the river were the first signs. Even Hurricane Gloria did not provoke this kind of tumult. As she looked out the window, the flood level of the river was the highest she had ever seen. She knew she was safe but that sixth sense sent her to the basement where all the tag sale items were neatly stored. She noticed all the boxes and items were being reflected by 3 inches of water that had seeped into the basement as a result of this unpredicted, torrential, and freak rainstorm. She listened with dismay as the radio reported impassable roads due to washouts.

The tag sale was not much of a success. Water damage increased dump runs and lack of customers decreased profits. She wondered if this type of luck was going to continue, if this event was some subtle hint that maybe she was making a mistake.

A Mother’s Story

As I surveyed my immediate spacescape, my mother was also being uprooted. Her years were approaching a century. Her involuntary move was the beginning of a social death for her and a reexamination of life (and death) for me. Not only did she lose her home but she lost her autonomy, her friends, and many of her personal artifacts that were recklessly discarded during short term hasty moves from her home to a space with my sister, to a space in institution, to space with her granddaughter, and to space in institution again. None of these being a happy solution, none of these places home.

One of these moves particularly affected me. I had given my parents many paintings and drawings as I pursued a minor in art. Several of them were self portraits of an era in my life where I did a lot of growing up. My faces assumed the pain of these periods. The landscapes reflected the strains of people and nature. When my sister decided that my mother could no longer live on her own, my artwork disappeared. It too had been hastily discarded along with all her belongings except what she could fit in a suitcase and what odds and ends satisfied my nieces whims at the time. There was no thought
I wrote this
one day
ago. I felt
better today.

I hope you can
understand this mess.

Dear Uncle,

Just a short note to let
you know I’m O.K. I’ve been so
much kept in this new place, it’s like
a place for lost souls. For some
somewhat confused, I hope to go
back to the place I was and
everything will be O.K. again.
I’ll call you soon again. I was
going to call you on the phone.
But I lost it in the hall where
there is a lot of traffic. I’ll
call you as soon as I get a chance
to don’t have any privacy in
my bedroom and as soon as I have.
He called you, as you can see from this letter. I'm messed up too, I'm fine and will have soon. Get things get in order.

I just got an idea; you can write to me to Idona's address.

I see her very often, but since she here I haven't seen her.

You can write to no address.

I see her almost every day and can call her any time. I don't have a phone or address here. Hoping to be out & breasting.

3429 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte, NC 28215
704-532-7000
I wrote this letter about a week ago. As you can see, it's late. Everything is the same now except I feel better today. It's Sunday and I'm going to get busy tomorrow. I'm looking for another place. I hope to hear from you soon. I'll be much better soon.

I'm looking forward to see you again later this week. Things are OK, and I'll write to you soon again. Love, [Name]
to the future, to tradition, to sentiment, the past, or even the present. I was never consulted and had no opportunity to claim what was mine. When I did finally go to the condo since I had decided to rent it, all that was left were cupboards of reused plastic margarine containers in various sizes shapes and colours. When I asked for the artwork, no one knew anything.

These moves occurred over a period of about four years during which my mother suffered from depression brought on by over medication and loss of self, home, and dignity. Old age dementia had set in. Short term memory was effervescing into uncontrollable displays. I am to this day convinced that her condition was exacerbated by the variety of pills she was taking for her ‘high’ blood pressure. In between one of her moves, she came (quite accidentally) to live with me for three months. As I observed her behaviour and physical symptoms and as I educated myself to the long and short term effects of the medication she was taking, I saw a relationship between the two. My concern over her loss of short term memory, her terrible mood swings, lack of motivation to perform even the simplest of tasks, anti social behaviour, dryness of throat, bouts with vertigo, and nonsensical responses to conversation convinced me something more was wrong. I could no longer be a bystander to the suffering. I called her doctor in North Carolina who refused to listen to me and would not take her off any medication. He told me if I wanted to stop the medication I could also accept the responsibility for the stroke she was going to have as a result. In fear I backed off. I watched anguish as my mother became more irritable and disoriented. The more I tried to please her the angrier I got. I wanted to be rid of her. The situation was affecting my job, my life. I was a wreck at work. I couldn’t trust her at home alone. Each day was a new disaster. Once I forgot to prepare the coffee pot. It was one of those drip ones with the cone paper filter. This arrangement was foreign to my mother who was used to the old aluminum percolator type with the glass bulb on the top that pulsed and tinted as the coffee brewed. Her innovative construction did get her a cup of coffee and also ruined the pot. I had to get up extra early to prepare the day for two people. Lunch was particularly a problem because my mother was not much of a sandwich eater and I could not leave her anything to be heated. Not to mention that during these times she was very difficult to please.

3 My mother was living in a condo in Charlotte, North Carolina that I financed for her.
I wanted things back to normal. What was supposed to be a two week hiatus for my sister to find her another facility after an aborted one year stay with my niece, was now into its second month with no signs of changing. The worst part was that I was projecting this situation upon myself in my old age but with no daughter. Worse yet I felt that there would be plenty of folk wanting to make decisions for me. I decided that I would live far away from everyone who might think that they have any authority over my life so that they would not know if I left the keys in the door or put the milk in the freezer or lost my wallet, as my mother had done.

I took her to my doctor for a full exam which she needed for her entrance to the new ‘facility’ that my sister found. Her blood pressure was not ‘high’. She was told to throw out all the pills. She did. Her temperament improved within two weeks. The throat dryness disappeared. Her lack of understanding conversation was partly due to a blocked ear canal which was healed by drops. Unfortunately, I believe that the medicine overdose had already taken its toll on her delicate nervous system. Her condition did improve. She became more alert and social. I was happy to see the change. For a while.

I often wonder if I didn’t do her an injustice by heightening her awareness. Was she better off not hearing, not understanding, not in a conscious healthy physical state? Then she wouldn’t wonder or question or be apprehensive about where she was going, where ‘home’ was going to be and who was going to be there to communicate with and share what time she had left. Imagine being 80 years old, suitcase in hand and being delivered like a beef cow going to slaughter to a facility (or home) that you didn’t choose, that you will spend the rest of your life (or death) in. To see this person who 5 years ago would go sailing with me, jump off the side of the boat to be in the water which she loved, evolve into this sullen unmotivated frightened stranger who was robbing me of every ounce of empathy I had, was an experience that is now well chiseled into memory. When she found out she was going back to North Carolina to her new ‘home’ I could hear her crying herself to sleep at night. At times I cried with her. This will not happen to me I said. I will have control over my destiny. My advisor asked me how will I accomplish this. One is distance, being far enough away from those that think they can control you so that they cannot make judgment on your life style.
The other is assisted suicide. In August 1993 I wrote, "I plan to live, as I am older, in obscurity. Alone, far away, where no one can tell me what to do and how to do it. I have it all figured out."

The following letter was written by my mother in July 1994. She had just been moved into another 'home'. This institution eventually became her permanent 'home'. I have included the original text for your own interpretation.

I wrote this one few days ago. I feel better and hope to be out soon.
Keep in touch love you Gummy
I hope you can understand this mess.
Dear Deedee,
Just a short note to let you know I'm O.K. I've been so messed but in this new place. It's like a place for lost souls. I'm somewhat confused. I hope to go back to the place I was and everything will be O.K. again. I'll call you soon again. I was going to call you on the phone but it is in the hall where there is a lot of traffic. I'll call you as soon as I get a chance.
I don't have any privacy in my bedroom and as soon as I have it can I'll call you. As you can see from this letter I'm messed up too. I'm fine and will have soon get things get in order.
I just got an idea: You can write to me to Karin's address. I see her very often but since I'm here I haven't seen her.
You can write to me at her address. I see her almost every day and can call her any time. I don't have a phone number or address here. Hope to be out of here very soon. I'm going to get busy tomorrow looking for another place.
I wrote this letter, about a week ago. As you can see, it's late- Everything is the same now except I feel better. Today is Sunday and I'm going to get busy tomorrow looking for another place. I hope I'll have better news soon. I'm looking forward to see you maybe in a couple of months when the weather is better. Maybe I can make a trip up there. Well, things are O.K. and I'll write to you soon again.
Love Gummy
According to a study I read, loss of autonomy and lack of privacy is the major cause of the prolonged sleep habits of residents of elderly facilities. My mother sleeps during the day now. I never knew her to sleep during the day.

**A Daughter's Story**

Having lived in Toronto for several months, I returned home. This experience was a turning point in my life, a kairos, and a point of focus for inquiry. In the retelling of our stories we come to know our experiences in new ways (Gomez and Tabachnik, 1992). I felt like Schutz’s ‘homecomer’ who “has tasted the magic fruit of strangeness, be it sweet or bitter” (1971, p. 116). The home is not the same home that was left and the homecomer is not the same homecomer (Schutz, 1972). As I recounted my feeling of being an outsider in my own home, of my presence being ignored by the flora and fauna that I had once cared for, of this place no longer reflecting my beliefs and values, and of the stories from this home no longer bearing my signature, I realised then, that I was not coming home but leaving. Separation. I was severing the strands that were tying me to this now strange place. The sense of loss was at first devastating and I was compelled to confront the phenomenon of moving, of changing space. I had begun to ask some very serious and relevant questions, questions whose relevance went beyond my own. I began to wonder about this space we all call home.

On August 9, 1993 I wrote:

*When I say it was mine I mean that the house reflected me, my personality. My likes and dislikes, ---some antique some other furniture, an eclectic collection. My beliefs --- the yard - live and let live lots of space for everyone. Now someone else has tamed the yard. Others have placed their signature on the stories within the walls of 'home'. Other voices resonate with their hopes and fears in my 'home'. Now I'm in someone else's home. Their things, values, beliefs surround me, sometimes choke me. I don’t feel free. Free to place my signature here. Does freedom have something to do with 'home'?*
Arriving at a concept of home began to take on special significance. My own personal notions were not enough. As I questioned others about their concepts of home, different stories assumed similarities. I was discussing my thesis with two colleagues whose dissertations centre on second languages. It was interesting to discover that our topics blurred boundaries. Spanish is my second language. When I hear it spoken, whether it is on the street or in a store, I experience a kind of nostalgia, a combination of melancholia from longing and joy from be-longing. My friends shared the same sentiments as they heard their native languages spoken. We questioned the origin of these emotions. Are they cultural sentiments of ‘at home’? Is it the harmony one feels when one thinks of family, tradition, ethnicity, and history? Is it the language part of our ancestral roots that ground us into stability and continuity? What about those who have no second language? Or do ancestors provide everyone with a second language embedded in an ancestral home?

That all human existence is spatially defined (Lane, 1988) assumes special meaning when that space is changing. Geographic mobility, voluntary or compulsory change, and existential conditions began to imply multiple homes. This was opposed to my ideological cultural view of one home. My Qualifying Research Paper reflected my childhood centred in traditional Latino culture deeply rooted in extended family. This, however, came to an abrupt end at an early time in my life. I began a series of moves from structure to structure and space to space, not staying long enough in one space to feel ‘at home’.

*After she completed second grade, her parents got their own apartment. Her spirit was broken. She missed Mama and Nina and Titi. She missed Emy. Her world was too small now and she was smothering (DeCarion, 1992, p.10).*

**Multiple Images**

Home as multiple images and conditions introduced new meanings to terms such as belonging, identity, safety, ownership, acceptance, separation, detachment, loss, strangeness, freedom, comfort, and transition. To extend beyond the limits of a cultural concept is to present a pre-cultural view that helps us to define (or redefine) our sense of home, akin to harmony, which to me is the essence of this study. As Dr. Silvers pointed out to me it is the ‘call’
of home rather than the ‘naming’ of home. The holistic ethnographic view of
culture as patterns of (observable), and for (mentalistic), behaviour (Jacob,
1987) situates changing space as experienced as the actual physical concrete
move on the one hand and an abstract affective move on the other. How
these two moves are storied by the individual transcends the concept of home
and posits identity (or confusion) as a personal and social consequence
resulting from the experience (Dewey, 1983). Thinking of life as a whole we
tend to think narratively and “tell stories about ourselves that are historical,
explanatory, and foretelling of the future ” (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988, p.
24). Situating and narrativizing home on this type of concrete to abstract
continuum creates exploratory dimensions through its ambiguity. The
continuum continues to stretch and the points move back and forth from one
end to the other in perpetual motion.

This cultural practice of changing space is a daily phenomenon,
automatic and unnoticed. When the continuum of the phenomenon is
skewed towards the cognitive or abstract or even skewed towards the concrete
where a heightened awareness of physical space creates tension, it can cause
us to delve into our past, searching, confirming and doubting our memories,
revealing huge stores of knowledge or even greater gaps. Discord and
harmony share the same plane providing the motivation for the search and
research. Most of the time the move from space to space is unproblematic.
Other times the change can be significant.

To put this in a different context I was reading a doctoral thesis that
included a story familiar to my own experience. The story told of a child that
was asked to change his seat in class. This situation precipitated a
confrontation between the teacher and child because of the child’s resistance
to the move. I immediately related to this. How often do we enter a room,
look around, read and flex (Hunt, 1992) and proceed to choose a space that
makes us feel comfortable, only to be told that we must move. My reaction to
these situations was always negative. As the boy in the story, I had chosen my
comfort and safety zone and that was being violated. I was (am) always
torn between rebellion or passivity, move or stay. This moving example, though
involuntary, shares many of the same feelings I experienced in my voluntary
move. Changes of space assume different dimensions. Terms, objects, people,
spaces take on new meanings. This study is about wandering and wondering,
wondering, in arriving at (or leaving) home, in exploring new meanings and reconstructing old ones. Ironically, the very separation that caused such tension also found me closer to home.
Chapter 2

Points of Convergence

Roots are history, past, people, places and events that shape the individual. They are an integral part of the self. Roots are portable, adaptable, they are a source of a personal freedom that allows me to feel "at home" in a variety of places and languages with out ever forgetting who I am or what brought me here. (Bissoondath, 1994, p. 21)

Culture, in its essentials, is about human values, and human values are exclusive to no race. (ibid., p. 71)

The Hope Centre Experience

The idea for this thesis had its dawn in a course and project conducted at the onset of my Ph.D. My committee member and mentor Brent Kilbourn guided me through this extraordinary fieldwork. The project was an ethnographic study in a senior centre which focused on aging and elders' life histories.

These are the people who rarely find their way into history books, but whose knowledge and experience shape our lives and teach us about the place we each call home. (NY Times Magazine, 1993)

My interest in these areas was aroused because my mother was experiencing a move from independent living to a form of institutional living. Prior to this experience I had been enrolled in a curriculum course with my advisor and mentor Michael Connelly that introduced me to narrative. The combination of praxis and theory launched me into an inquiry whose methods and ideology constructed a framework and origin for research.

As I began my work at the centre, I wanted to collect stories and histories. However, I found this difficult. I made several mistakes, the gravest of which was advertising my group as a writing group. I should have known
from my experience with my mother and aunt that most elders have little interest in writing and the transmission of culture was oral in nature. My involvement with one of my participants led me to the discovery that she was functionally illiterate. I prodded her to come to my group. Finally, she took me aside and said, “I don’t get along with Margaret and I don’t want her to know that I can’t read. I didn’t go to school much as a child. I was a bit sickly and my father would let me stay home whenever I wanted.” An embarrassing situation was created by assumptions I made. Many of the women did not think that what they did during the course of their lives was worth writing about. Most said they got married, raised a family, and that was all. And there were those that were just not interested. Technology was another issue. I remember a rather grotesque accepted definition of aging by theoretical gerontologists that has some meaning here. Aging is “the normal, inherent, irreversible, and progressive deterioration of biological function, terminating in death.” (Esposito, 1987, p. 10) Its appropriateness has its place in an inappropriate comment I made to this ‘aging’ group concerning technology.

_Things have changed quite a bit. In 10 years you won’t believe the changes that you will experience._

_Well we won’t be around to see them._ (Field notes October 3, 1993)

They all looked at each other and snickering, agreed. My audience ranged in ages from 85 to 93. They were right. Chances were that they wouldn’t. I experienced two responses. The first was shock in an awareness of their own mortality and the second was silence because I felt stupid and didn’t know what to say. I wonder if this broaching of the subject of mortality was the awakening that prompted recognition and interest in my own mortality. I knew I had to change my approach. In terms of definitions I preferred elder Marion Ferguson’s who said aging is “a matter of health and interests, not birthdays” (1990, p. 29). Fortunately, today doctors and authors like Deepak Chopra and James Weil give more hope to our aging population. Their ideologies are holistic and based on changes in lifestyles that can reverse many aging processes and drastically improve our quality of life.
I began my encounters with informal readings of fairy tales but not the modern romanticised versions. The discrepancies between what they had heard all their lives and the original Grimm tales peaked their interest. As they became more comfortable, they began to tell their own stories. The combination of the fairy tales I read and the histories I heard, was a combination of content and method akin to folklore.

**Space and Culture**

With the many folkloric genres, its music, myths and legends, forms of art and communication, methods of investigation and diverse epistemologies, I found I could combine my passion for art and science. It was a way I could integrate my ethnicity and interests in history, people and literature. The following is an early journal entry recorded in 1992.

*The most significant indicator that folklore had the possibility of becoming a thesis topic was the connection between the isolation and loneliness issue among the elders and the concept of home that folklore tradition teaches us about. I began to think about how building a body of literature that related to their histories and traditions within the ‘folk group’ might help in establishing a concept of home. I began to realise there was a cultural dimension in the struggle to find voice. My own cultural experiences and images exposed a tacit knowledge. When I sensed feelings of isolation, like I was beginning to lose myself, I could feel my roots growing deeper into my heritage, my ethnicity. There was comfort there. There was warmth and acceptance there. There was home. And here was a possible topic for a thesis. Raw. Undeveloped. Unnurtured. (DeCarion, 1992)*

This entry was one of my first inclinations towards the topic of home and its cultural implications. Is culture home? Is ethnicity home? There was a recognition of isolation of being an ‘outsider’, an enigmatic theme in my struggle to understand the relationship of identity and cultural difference or cultural commonness, discovery of self in a cultural context. I could feel this was developing into a theme providing a multi perspectival construct that
moves the image of home from an individual/personal to a more global/multicultural image. I would like to claim that these transformations are crucial in our development of a pluralistic society consisting of acceptance, difference and a sense of community grounded in the interdependence of its members.

Folklore, Culture and Narrative

As my inquiry into folklore deepened so did my understanding that embedded in this discipline (Dorson, 1976) were some very basic tenets that were compatible with my nature and beliefs. First of all folklore offered the concept of tradition. Having been raised in an extended Latino family, tradition was valued. Our language, holidays, music, food, were all practiced and preserved through tradition and my grandmother (who was a very proud non-English speaking Puerto Rican). Traditional values would eventually become the focus of my participants' narratives.

Secondly, and more importantly, folklore as a definitional discipline had the kind of episteme crystallised in experience. The fact that folk denote the common people and lore was a kind of knowledge gained through experience, created a construct for a 'natural' personal interest for inquiry. As I reflected on my acquisition of knowledge, books (theory) were not my primary teachers. Conversation, natural phenomena and objects were. Trial and error, common sense and intuition were my ways of establishing logic to sensual experiences. Oral prose, personal experience stories, the oral process is the turf (Dorson, 1976) of the folklorist.

In my opinion the most important role of oral history in the field of education is to authenticate the experiences of all human beings which would support Dewey's (1916) idea to provide a balance of the various elements of the social environment and provide each individual with an opportunity to 'escape the limitations of the social group in which he was born.' (ibid., p. 20) (From Comprehensive exam, May, 1993)

My knowledge of marine environments was learned through oral histories from 'old salts' who worked the commercial fishing boats out of
Freeport, Long Island. The skills I acquired are with me today and are a very important part of my boating repertoire. It is a line of inquiry (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990) which focuses specifically on story.

The study of narrative allows for a depth of thinking and personal connection. It is about “how humans make meaning of experience by endlessly telling and retelling stories about themselves that both refigure the past and create purpose in the future” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 24). Inherent in narrative is the concept of personal practical knowledge. It is related to past experience and a particular way of “reconstructing the past and and the intentions for the future to deal with the exigencies of a present situation” (ibid., 1988, p. 25). In applying this concept to my writing I went back to an artistic rendering I did in 1992 of my life history. I discovered that I focused on their idea of education as a narrative of experience that goes beyond schooling, whose experiences are felt, valued and appreciated (ibid., 1988). This kind of self education, this knowledge of chance so to speak, which allows us to deal with real issues of life, is related to their view on education in terms of “cultivation, awakening and transformation” (1995, p. 82).

Cultivation is mainly found in the intentional hard work of schooling and in the unintentional lessons of play and other forms of daily life; awakening is found in the romance of becoming aware of the possibility of seeing oneself and the world in new ways: and transformation is found in the process and outcome of falling into living new ways of seeing. (ibid., 1995, p. 82)

Hollingsworth’s (1993) work on social construction of knowledge also provides a theoretical base. She places her concept of “knowing through relationship, or relational knowing” (p. 9) in Connelly and Clandinin’s realm of personal practical knowledge. Belenky’s, Clinchy, et al. (1986) distinction between knowledge and understanding further contributed to epistemological implications. According to foreign word derivatives, understanding implies “personal acquaintance with an object (usually but not always with another person)” and “involves intimacy and equality between
self and object" (ibid., p. 101). Knowledge however implies "separation from the object and mastery over it" (ibid., p. 101). These notions suggest interaction with and close relationship to participants within personal experience methods such as oral histories.

As the inquiry projects me into related historical, biographical and fictional literature, the role of oral history and its significance is realised in its ability to reveal moral values and social-historical realities (Dilthey, 1976). It aids in the analysis of historical events and exposes the attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices of people at a given period in history (Laubach, 1989). What is important to this writer is that some highly respected historians believe that we should rewrite and rethink history upward from organisational units of family and local communities, not from a purely nationalistic viewpoint. (Sitton, Mehaffy & Davis, 1983) Curator of the collection left at the Viet Nam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. comments that the uniqueness of the collection is that the items were not selected by a museum curator. “History is being written from the bottom up, instead of from the top down” (Duery Felton, p. 83 in Harbutt, 1995). I agree with this view since embedded in oral histories are broader, more interesting (and perhaps less biased) historical perspectives. As I read Tony Morrison’s Beloved, this fictional account of slavery was more real to me than what I learned in my high school U.S. History classes because I knew that her stories were based on slave narratives and accounts. The personal experience stories that described the conditions of slavery had more validity and reliability to Morrison. The consequences from the actions gave a more accurate representation of the ethos of slavery. What is notable is the choice of genre for the issue being discussed.

The third aspect of folklore is the diversity and commonality dialectic which I referred to earlier. Folklore exploits both of these terms. Within the construct of culture I am attracted to and puzzled by this dialectic. Its attraction rests in the personal experience of being drawn to my own ethnicity as I reflect on the past and discover my self in a cultural/spatial context. The sharing of values, customs and beliefs within a group can be comforting and introduce a feeling of harmony and identity. But they can also create a negative social structure. Hitler used a folkloric paradigm to promote his white supremacist values (Dorson, 1976). As a result of his journeys, Michael
Ignatieff (1994) had to rethink the nature of belonging. He describes a fear of its intensity. The stronger the bonds of belonging to your own group, the more hostile and violent the feelings towards outsiders. I am puzzled by the conflicts centred around ethnocentric culture-bound groups. We live in a world of differences. We live in a world of community and interdependence. To use folklore as an agent of separatism (Dorson, 1976) and exploit the passions of identity and community to create a diversity (or commonality) that is hegemonic is a paradox. Can ‘diverse communities’ be created? Can this be accomplished by the articulation of common goals? Is our view too narrow? To refer to Ignatieff (1994) again he claims that nationalism itself is not the problem. Every people must have a home but it’s the kind of home that nationalists create and the means they use to seek ends. Home to all or home to their own. It is “the battle between the civic and the ethnic nation” (ibid., p.21). Upon reflecting on her return to Africa after being exiled Doris Lessing said that a country also belongs to those that feel at home in it. Is the world as home a realistic view? “Can we adopt one that is holistic, that embraces surface and depth, a view which allows us to experience the world not just in terms of facts to be discovered but also in terms of stories to be imagined and heard, something larger than the space of explanation?” (Romanyshyn, 1989, p.184).

Similar Sentiments

Within the context of personal and group identity and difference enters another sentiment, that of empathy. Nel Noddings (in Belenky, et al., 1986) makes a distinction between projection and reception. She does not project. She receives the other into herself and she sees and feels with the other. In an artistic, literary sense Oatley (1994) discusses the proposal of a classical psychologist who bases the aesthetic experience on empathy in which the reader or beholder projects some aspect of him- or herself into the text or work of art. In an essay by Bob Shacochis (Harper’s, November, 1995) writer Bharati tells him a story about a doctoral student whose paper attacked her for writing about lower class immigrants of whom she knew nothing since she was far too privileged. Bharati considered this assault as an assassination on her imagination. Shacochis goes further with his argument in saying that the only way he as a white male can empathize with a black female is to imagine
his way into her life. "Solipsism leads to absurdity and, worse, to the death of empathy" (Shacochis, 1995). Oatley (1994) uses the term sympathy as a distinct psychological process used to enter literary worlds. It is a mental link made to another person. These sympathetic and empathetic emotions, according to George Eliot, are intended "to be productive of change in ourselves: we come to understand others and their plights from perspectives other than our own" (p. 62). I cite these examples of empathy in literature and art because I believe that this emotion is the connector between the elders in my case study and the youth in today's schools. It is the rush of meaning-making between the traditional and the non-traditional, the elder and the adolescent, the moving and the fixed, the separation and interdependence, the 'at home' and the outsider. Narratives unmasking the pain of moving and whispering the emotions of sympathy and empathy shared in separation have their own spaces in our search and knowledge of what is real and meaningful, of what is joy and pain.

When tradition, experience, culture, and narrative combine to form a compound with such seductive elements, how can one ignore the desire to experiment with this equation? So this was the beginning of researching a search for home as narrativist and folklorist.

She has not thought of this research experience as a journey although she supposes it has been one of sorts. But there have been too many changes of direction, too many diversions, too much backtracking, too many forks, too many wrong directions. To construct a map, which is usually what accompanies a journey, would be relatively impossible for this one.

A Capricious Metaphor
This was a journal entry made in 1992 as I was exploring folklore and thinking about what it was about home that was so appealing. Many metaphors went through my mind as I went through this process. My interest in science provided the perfect one. I chose to reconstruct my experience around the metaphor of molecular transformation or changes of states of matter. The correspondence to the capriciousness of this experience was
perfect. But even more important is the concept of energy that molecular transformation provides. "To question, to look forward and back, to stumble and struggle, to synthesise and analyse, and to perform the countless other tasks required of research all takes energy" (DeCarion, 1992). This metaphor has been valuable as a referent to the process and product. At times I have felt like molecules whose high energy state lacks form and direction. Perhaps this is where my discourse becomes fragmented and assumes the descriptive "kaleidoscope analogy" as I attempt to articulate these states. But as the ideas developed the energy transformed towards a more stable state, one of form and structure and focus, yet still energised, moving, and vulnerable to transformation. Schutz (1971) states that the knowledge of a person who thinks and acts in a world of daily life is not homogeneous: it is incoherent, only partially clear, and not at all free from contradictions. This state of fluidity and flux within natural phenomena penetrates the very nature of a social reality we attempt to interpret and understand.

The phenomenon of moving exposed the complexity of adaptation, of adjusting to new environments, new spaces. Harmony shares this complexity as it exists among change and discontinuity. For Dewey equilibrium comes about because of tension. It is these times of discord that induce reflection. I share Dewey's (1934) view that the "moment of passage from disturbance into harmony is that of intensest life" (p. 17).

For me the tensions created in achieving equilibrium take many forms. One tension is the attention thoughts of death and dying demand from me. As I have previously mentioned, the more I think about life the more the notion of mortality becomes an object and subject of inquiry. Since I began this text with issues of death (and life), I will end with a thought on death. Considering my notion of moving as metaphor and phenomenon within a death context some interesting facts come to mind. Death as phenomenon is when a form of motion ceases. We stop moving. We have no hope of establishing a home. Death as metaphor suggests an ultimate act of moving. We have no control over where we are going.

It is a point of departure and convergence.

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4 I define this term as a comparison logic grounded in similarities of a series of changing notions or concepts.
Chapter 3

A Space for the Living

Our life is a faint tracing on the surface of mystery. The surface of mystery is not smooth, any more than the planet is smooth; not even a single hydrogen atom is smooth, let alone a pine.

(Dillard, 1974, p. 143)

Anticipatory Moments

The research techniques have bred a unique situation for me that include sensations of intrusiveness and safety that accompany my entrance to my participants homes. They heighten the sentiment of 'at home' and manifest themselves in a special phenomenon. It is a moment, an 'anticipatory moment' (the moment before the moment) that occurs each time I approach their entrances. The North side of June's home beckons me to a side door that enters into her work room. As I advance towards the door I strain my neck to see if the inside door is closed or opened. Opened means she's home. Standing on the cement stoop with my nose against the screen I then extend my gaze to the kitchen where she is usually at the counter providing me with a profile view of her working on some project. I knock and let myself in.

My approach for Earle was quite different. I didn't get out of the car. I sat and honked to let him and Mokey know I was there. As I heard Mokey bark, I got a fix on his location. Reaching into the glove compartment for my supply of dog biscuits, I diverted his attention from my body to food. Facing East towards a spectacular view of the Connecticut River, I slowly walked into his yard stepping over the debris of wooden boat constructions towards the corner of his home. It is lack of 90 degree sight which creates this anticipatory moment. I had to wait until he rounded the corner searching for the intrusion. Company for him was just this. Except for me.\(^5\)

This 'anticipatory moment' is characterised by physical and mental changes. It is a kind/type of curiosity, an alertness or attention. To me it is a common enthusiasm in inquiring minds and the heart of the scientist and

\(^5\) I had to change the tense of the verbs in this paragraph to the past as a result of Earle’s death. It was a painful experience.
artist. My heartbeat increases, an acuity in vision, hearing and sense of smell develops as I explore and savour the space. The muscles in my arms, hands and face tense as they prepare for some form of intimate embrace. My mind is focused on their presence or absence, shifting from the present to the future, from joy to sadness, back and forth until their presence or absence is established. There is a dissonance similar to that experienced in the methodological search for a truth. Then all is in equilibrium. For the moment I am now a participant. I am 'at home'. I have entered spaces for the living. I am ready to share their space as researcher and friend in our collaborative searches for truths and meaning.

The text at times takes juxtapositions whose connections may not be immediately apparent to the reader. One of those shifts that make explicit the discontinuities of life is from an anticipatory moment as I approach my participants' home to a roadkill. This discourse is an attempt to distinguish between technique and method and to point out the similarities and (and differences) in the aesthetic and scientific approaches to this research. The kinds of cognitive, emotional and physiological changes experienced in anticipatory moments, especially those encounters with my participants, as well as those accompanying scientific exploration for me are the same. My intent is to separate and connect the processes of science and poetics. As Oliver Sachs (1995) writes it's the discontinuities that we seek to bridge, or reconcile or integrate by recollection and beyond this by myth and art. I choose to go beyond.

These moments also echo a behaviour akin to entry into a new milieu like someone's home. We are reminded of the importance of this space and the identity of the person inhabiting this space. It tells us about who that person is.

It was when life was framed in death that the picture was really hung up. (Henry James, in Schama, 1991, p.322)

Spaces for the living are created by its dialectical death. The phenomenological as well as metaphorical meaning of death has methodological and epistemological implications. Life is about death. The more one contemplates death, the more one contemplates the living.
Problem/Hypothesis

Approaching the curve I could see a body in the road. It looked peaceful, like it was half asleep, trying to crawl out of the way but that was an illusion. As I got closer the shape showed colour and hinted to its species. The black and white form was in the wrong place at the wrong time. There is virtually no traffic on this road. The chances of a car coming along at the instant that this creature wanted to cross the road seemed so remote that to me it was incomprehensible. I thought about this event because of its significance to the notions of mortality, chance, luck, and fate. And its connection to methodology?

The pain I felt with this sensual reality of death, so has there been pain in the research and writing. The reader may find the intrusion of emotion in the midst of scientific method ironic. However, it was emotion that created and blurred the line between methodology and research technique. It has been important to envision them separately yet as a whole.

I began my methodology scrutinising documents of a morbid sort. Mass cards and death certificates. First my grandmother. Then my father. Then one of my two favourite aunts and since the writing of this text, my other aunt and one of my participants, Earle Brockway, has joined the stack of cards.6 The reality of mortality, this proof of death in the cards, this fact (as science would put it), caused me to question where the proof of life was? Is that contained in a birth certificate? How does one prove one has lived? or anyone has lived? Is there a life certificate? Can one’s living be preserved by gathering evidence? Is that ultimately what this thesis or methodology is all about?

Observation

When I returned several hours later, there was nothing left except the bowels, a well-defined rib cage, and a furry tail. I saw the two of them sitting high in a dead tree savouring their meal, probably. I never knew vultures were such fastidious feeders. I was compelled to photograph the remains. The revulsion I encountered was countered by a sense of awe.

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6 Earle died suddenly on October 23, 1996. This story will be a separate discourse.
Annie Dillard, in her book The Writing Life (1989) says that “how we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives” (p. 32). These concrete particulars of daily life are the substance of life, the living. In the exploration of concepts of home as I attempt to fill the space between the facts of birth and death (or birth and present), I find myself immersed in techniques to ‘prove’ a life or lives. Dewey (1934) says that true understanding requires a commitment to finding out about interactions of people and their objects, an ordinary experience. This human involvement and my understanding of home must involve the living and their interactions with space. “The career and destiny of a living being is bound up with its interchanges with its environment, not externally but in the most intimate way” (Dewey, 1934, p.13). How does one do this with the dead? Is it in the cards? Must memory be the only source? Are stories, histories, events and objects that shape worlds and give meanings proof?

Fact

The skunk forces me to examine birth and death. To a certain extent the birth is planned. Skunks mate during warm spells of weather in late February or March. In early spring blind and deaf babies are born. At six or seven weeks they leave the den, not alone. Death is never planned, usually. That’s the fear or the delight. Think about it. Any one of us could cross a road at that incomprehensible moment.

I hope the reader is not offended by my preoccupation with mortality. The more I think about preservation and permanence, the more mortality becomes an issue. My desire for permanence is overwhelming. I keep reverting back to the scientific concept of extinction. Nature is my teacher and I am responsive to its delicate essence. Themes of preservation and adaptation continue. Only memories remain and even those are hard to recover as I am experiencing with myself and my aging mother whose testimony could be most valuable in searching for roots and identity.

Fact

The striped skunk is the most common of the three skunks of the northern forests. They are omnivores but prefer insects.
Some farmers welcome them in their fields because of the numbers of grubs and mice they can eat. They are also fond of eggs and will eat turtle or snake eggs when they come upon them. Skunks primarily feed at night. In winter they sleep during the coldest parts in protected dens and will venture out for food during warm spells.

This study is grounded in several traditions. I have shifted from the anthropological to the psychological to the ethnographical to the historical to the critical only to find that all of these fit and work. I feel like what Denzin and Lincoln (1994) refer to as "bricoleur", employing a variety of methods as this construction emerges. If the essence of research and education is the understanding of some aspect of life and the ultimate goal is lifelong learning and making the world a better place to live in, then one cannot ignore the personal, cultural, social, and moral aspects of living (and dying). The concept of home and sentiment of 'at home' within this context of changing space with so many variables is not grounded in one tradition. However, the most compelling is history. We make meaning of experience to refigure the past and create purpose for the future (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). Time and space create a framework for living (and dying). Dilthey (1976) stressed the importance of history in gaining knowledge of humankind. "Man, in a word, has no nature; what he has is...history" (p. 73). History is a record of the past. In systems of oral tradition it relies solely on memory. According to Rubin (1995) the evanescent property of sound requires that oral traditions be maintained in human memory. The very survival of tradition is stored in memory and passed on to a person capable of storing and retelling. In other systems it also relies on memory. Even the selection of events is based on memory. Life becomes retroactive.

The notion of identity is a significant theme in this auto/biographical text. Freeman (1993) draws on history to define the self. He asserts that the idea of the self and the idea of history are mutually constitutive. The self is constituted, defined and articulated through its history.

**Observation**

*The next time I drove by the corpse only the skeleton of the ribcage was left. The bowels were gone. I saw a large black crow*
sitting off to the side. I assumed the obvious.

So what is the purpose of my discourse with the life (in text) and death (in life) of the skunk. I constantly find myself validating my use of narrative and passion, story and emotion. I find myself creating a process where elements of science and art, facts and aesthetics position themselves in the scientific method as I believe my discourse on this very simple level illustrates. I made an observation conflated with an emotional event. I sought to explain the presence of the facts by abduction, the logic used by the infamous Sherlock Holmes and semiotic term used by Pierce (Colapietro, 1993). It is a kind of reverse reasoning backwards from effects to causes. One infers an explanation for how it works or asks the question, what produced the facts or observations? It is something we do all the time, always searching for explanations (K. Oatley, personal communication, April 6, 1995). This emotional observation of this animal caused a cognitive dissonance as to the nature, meaning and value of the event. As Dilthey (1976) suggests we are not capable of forming a world within us by the creative process without something being given to us through the senses. I researched to gain more ‘factual’ knowledge in an attempt to understand, to go beyond what Dilthey (1976) calls “intuitive understanding” and “intellectual intuition”. This narrative structure (Schafer, 1981), archetype of discovery, ends in the inference or interpretation of the facts and observation that we as part of the scientific community call ‘conclusion’. Distinctions will emerge about what ‘is’ narrative and what is ‘about’ narrative. All is a blend of art and science of aesthetics and objectivity of passion and detachment. The research techniques will provide the data and I, as scientist, artist, folklorist, teacher, researcher and narrativist will recover and reconstruct meaning through analysis and interpretation.

Summary
The last time I drove by the death site there was no evidence that a live or dead animal had ever existed. This puzzles me still. I cannot even begin to speculate as to what happened to the remains. There was not even a trace of hair or bone left. Who or what could or would have taken it? I don’t understand this.
Empathy. A theme of the living and this text. The fortitude of physical pain, the pain (and joy) of separation, a new identity, moving from one state to another bonding all the living.

METHODOLOGY

I have engaged in a variety of techniques in gathering data. Some conform to the traditional methods and some do not. I have created a section on 'paramethodology' to include those techniques that in my opinion do not fall within convention. Because I have taken an historical approach to the phenomenon of moving and because the topic of home is so broad, the techniques are numerous and varied. Much of my data is derived from written records such as death and birth certificates, recipes, genealogical materials and letters. Visual records in the form of photographs and oral history complement the written data. There are gaps in the data, especially on my father's side, due to his untimely death. The searching and composing of his history will go far beyond the time allocated for the completion of this project. The deaths of my two aunts, Nina and Titi, who were most involved in the Latino culture and who could provide me with the most colourful and true stories, create not only a loss of data but a loss of history found in living and life and the present not in the past. Perhaps this is what writer John Brinckerhoff Jackson (1994) means when he says that our awareness of belonging is shared in a sense of time rather than place.

Documents

The accumulation of documents continues to trigger responses and actions. They are like diamonds, multi-faceted facts composed of the life giving carbon yet inorganic, void of qualities of a living organism. I am now allowed to be biographer and novelist inventing the lives of the dead and recording the lives of the living.

Forms of data and techniques continue to evolve with time and context. The notions of death and mortality gave birth to this research. As previously mentioned the first documents I examined were mass cards and death certificates. They provide information which research institutes say are valuable for medical purposes. Sometimes a medical family tree can make the
difference between life and death and links have been made between some 'incurable' diseases and inherited allergies to common foods. As the writing of this text continues so does their accumulation. The death of my friend and participant Earle sets the all-too-familiar process in motion.

If good things are coming, it will be a pleasant surprise, said the seer. If bad things are, and you know in advance, you will suffer greatly before they even occur. (Coelho, 1993, p. 107)

As my temporal focus shifted I was compelled to have birth certificates as well. Then I could fill in the spaces. After many mail exchanges with the Departamento de Salud in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico I finally procured my mother's certificate. The Bofill side of the family is traceable. It's my father's side, the DeCarions, that is so difficult both emotionally and logistically. In all the genealogical searches I have conducted, the surname never turns up. Surviving members know very little about my father. I couldn't even remember his sister's name. I knew it as a child because he had spoken about her. The conversations however were of a joyless nature. He regretted not seeing her more often. It seemed as though he wanted her included in the family portrait but for some reason that I will never know, she never really fit. Neither did my paternal grandmother. My lack of knowledge of the DeCarions and the barriers preventing me from getting that knowledge are disheartening and bear heavy on my spirit.

I asked Norm Spencer for his birth certificate. His response was, "How does that enter into history? Of what value is it?" At the time I wasn't sure and couldn't answer the question to my satisfaction. But having connected the documents to ancestry and to origins the names, places and towns became significant. They began to give a sense of place and time a context within which notions of tradition, roots and identity become operative. The documents can reflect the culture of the time. For example as I examined birth certificates I found that they were gender specific. On the female certificate there was no space to list the occupation. We can assume from this that females did not or were not supposed to work. Freeman (1993) suggests that the concept of the self is relative to time and space. By this is meant that the concept of the self we hold is to an extent, culturally-bound.
This is so painful. I have nothing but death certificates and funeral cards. Titi's been dead almost ten years. My father almost 20 years. I don't want just the ending. What about the beginnings and the middle? (Journal entry, October 21, 1993)

**Journalising**

*January 12, 1959*

_Dear Diary - I went to Sunday School and Church this morn. and behaved very well. Tina didn't go to church. I forgot my offering and bought candy with it. I also went to youth fellowship and what a riot that was. At the end Randy and David locked Tina and I in the closet and we couldn't get out. Roger had to break the door down to let us out. We weren't really scared but we pretended to be just to scare the boys and they were._

*February 23, 1959*

_Today is Monday and a holiday. My mother and I went shopping and wasted the whole day. I didn't buy a thing. My mother was mad and disgusted because I didn't like anything the stores had._

As early as 1959 at age fifteen I kept a diary or journal. These entries were more like a chronicle. Most were void of any reflective process and if it was present, it was accidental or intuitive although they must have had meaning and significance otherwise I would not have recorded them. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1994) children and adolescents write journals in an attempt to make sense of their experiences. Journals in a research context create field texts contributing to the form of empirical narrative of narrative inquiry in which this kind of empirical data is central (Ibid. 1990). It is a powerful way for individuals to give accounts of experience.

I began a detailed journal in the early seventies as a course requirement that demanded I back pack for three weeks through the black fly and rain infested wilds of Newfoundland. This document includes visual as well as textual renderings of events and locations that would have otherwise been tucked away in memory never to be recalled. I refer to this journal often since it is now 20 years later and yields a link to my new life in Canada. The
pleasure I have derived from this journalising experience has been a strong influence in my continuing this process through the years. The entries have become more sophisticated, more in tune with personal experience methodology where most of my writing of accounts is an intentional attempt at self exposure and vulnerability. Some are quite passionate and others particular and mundane. I am sporadic with the entries. I can go days without an entry. I journalise when I am paralyzed. That is when I can’t write. Even if I am only chronicling events during those times it forces me to articulate recollections and therefore begin the complex process of concretizing thoughts and ideas.

My participants have not kept journals. Both families are rich in their expression of their interests and daily lives and willing to share but not in recording them on paper. There is no interest and if I asked them to they would tell me they were too busy. I’m not so sure they could see the purpose.

The Field
It was Earle and me. I stopped to pick up a couple of cups of coffee and for him a blueberry muffin. I did my usual. Sat in the car and honked so as not to get bitten by Mokey (who as he ages eventually tires of his guard dog status). He didn’t come right away so I got out of the car and walked around to the side of the house. He was sitting on a stump with his back to me amidst an array of empty tar cans, greying remnants of wood, rusty tools, stumps, etc. I stopped and went back to the car to get my camera because I thought it would be a good photo when, as I turned around, he was approaching me. He called out my name. For some reason that action was special. I guess I half expect him not to remember me. But Deirdre came out loud and clear. I felt so good.

I followed him to where he came from. He said that he had a ‘campfire’ going. He was going to cook something to eat. I looked at a tar bucket that had a faint hint of smoke and a makeshift grill on top. Close by was another bucket. This one had a cushion on it next to another with a top and roll of toilet paper nearby. My immediate reaction? He must ‘live’ out here.
He told me that he had not gotten to bed until three AM making boat models. Then an interesting exchange occurred.

"I have your model on my desk at school," I said proudly thinking I was flattering him.

"You're not the first one that has done that. A man that bought one of my models has it on top of his TV and when he's tired of watching TV he shuts it off and looks at the sailboat. That was not my intent." said Earle.

"What was it then?"

"They are for kids to play with. To use them as toys as I did as a youngster. I remember wanting a toy sailboat and going around to the different toy stores and not being able to find one. They were all kits that had to be assembled. When I finally found a complete one that I could sail it was too expensive. So I made one. I was constantly down at the river playing with the boat."

He said all of this with a smile and passion. His memory of this time was quite clear and pleasurable. Now that he knew people were not playing with them he has redesigned the boats where they have a deeper rounded keel more aesthetic to the eye than the flat bottom 'sharpie' lines. They are also more expensive. No more toy boats for now.

This encounter is part of my field notes of September 5, 1995. Keeping precise field notes was a difficult process. I couldn't always discipline myself to begin writing after these encounters. I didn't take notes during informal sessions. I felt self-conscious. I'm not sure if it was because of the age of my participants, their lifestyles, my relationship with them, or the setting.

The atmosphere was not one of academe. My time with my participants was intense, their lifestyles and conversation always intriguing and active, adding to my involvement and subtracting from my ability to document. When I left them I required distance to allow time for an interlude with no agenda/images in mind. Research mentors do not
recommend this procedure since memory fades with time or as in the "death of certainty", it becomes "that irrecoverable distance between events and their narration" (Schama, 1991). I personally find this an advantage since I can tell my 'tale' (Van Maanen, 1988) with some poetic rhetoric.

Earle was a particularly difficult participant. His lifestyle imposed some unusual restrictions. I could not always count on seeing him because of his unpredictable work schedule. I never knew if he would be awake or sleeping.

"So what time do you get up in the morning?"

"Well uh (laughs) I don't know whether it was morning or afternoon when I got up today. It was exactly 12 o'clock. (laugh) I'm just beginning to get going now. I don't know if I, I get workin' on somethin' and I uh, like the toy boats last night and I uh wanted to keep going until I accomplished something. I didn't realise that it was that late."

Our meetings were literally in the field, always outdoors and at the mercy of the weather. He could/would not invite me into his home. I suppose you as reader would want to know why. Earle's home is not the normal structure. His home provides shelter in the most primitive sense. Broken windows do not protect him from the ravages of bad weather. Absence of a modern effective heating system does not keep him warm. Broken electrical receptacles provide minimal energy for anything from cooking to cleaning. I must note here that this is a grave concern of mine. I worry about his health and safety especially when he tells his tales of how he heats water indoors and provides heat in winter.7

Earle's house was always so smoky you couldn’t last more than 10 minutes or so in there before your eyes would sting and you couldn’t breathe. Time spent was limited to how long you could stand outside talking in the cold and wind (e-mail, October 20, 1997).

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7 One month prior to Earle’s death I had delivered a working kerosene heater that I had not been using.
The smoke was not from cigarettes. Earle would burn wood in a steel barrel to heat his house. He told me that his oil burner was broken and was never repaired.

In view of all his uncustomary ways adapting my technique was a constant delightful challenge. For example even though my best time was the morning, I never went to Earle’s before noon as per his instructions and knowledge of his sleeping habits. I also kept an eye on the weather since it was a factor in my access to Earle as well as the type of clothing I should wear.

The Spencers were quite different. Their schedules were very predictable. June was more flexible than Norm. Norm had his coffee at 10 AM, Sunday sandwich at 12 with no exceptions, but your presence was welcomed. June’s waking and sleeping hours were fairly regular but what occurred in between was determined by weather, visitors, customers, seasons, etc. They are both early risers, a leftover from farming days, so I would plan my times with them in the mornings. I usually sat at the kitchen table while June worked at her counter arranging her dried flower petals onto cards or performing some other craft related activity.

Earle never worked during my visits. June always did. At this time in my writing I’m not sure why Earle didn’t. I would encourage him to go about what he was doing but he never would.

Well I was jus heatin’ some water. I was gonna shave. (laugh) Now I can’t....Now that you’re here I have to wait until after. I keep puttin’ it off you know all the time different things and I got an old uh green Cadillac that I uh... you remember that and uh I was supposed to turn the regis... uh it’s no good for out on the road uh now but I might use it around here at the boat yard but I was supposed to turn the registration in in May and I still haven’t done that yet. (Tape transcription, September 5, 1995)

Until I got used to this, I felt like an intruder. If I sensed that I was keeping him from something, I cut my visit short.

My field notes were of two types, formal and informal. The formal sessions consisted of specific questions, observations or ideas formulated prior to the encounter. For these I went with notebook in hand. During some of the
sessions my participant was absent because I was observing their work space, house, or some other aspect of their lives that did not require interaction. The informal sessions were just that. They were interactional, personal and intimate. I did not take notes but recorded my observations later. The distinction was quite accidental. It was one of those moments of adaptation where notebook in hand did not ‘feel’ right. At other times it was appropriate. Field notes pertaining to my mother were always informal. It seemed as though my hands were always busy with chores related to her mobility or care. I also felt self-conscious about taking notes in her institutional home.

Doing the toes is really disgusting. They are all full of gunk and it flies in my face and hair as I cut. She pulls her foot away and I almost cut her. She complains that it hurts and she doesn’t recognize me still. Rosemary asks ‘is this the daughter you talk about and my mother says ‘where’. She has a bad sore on her right foot from her shoes. I put some cream on it and find a band aid. Socks and shoes. She says the shoes hurt but when I want to change them she says no. She does need a lot of help. She could barely put the shoes on. Need to get her another pair of scuffies. Slipper type or moccasins. (Field notes, April 26, 1997)

Tapes

I taped many sessions which were similarly structured to my field notes. Some included specific questions or notions I wanted to explore with them. There were informal taped sessions that were also personal and intimate. I always had the recorder with me in case either of my participants went into some oral history that I intuitively guessed would be lengthy and full of facts and stories. Conversations with Earle were particularly significant in that he has no documents except some photographs. All of his history is confined to memory and oral history.

As a technological device the tape recorder can be considered somewhat familiar and primitive and therefore not terribly intimidating to folk like the Spencers and Brockways. However, I felt very self-conscious each time I exposed its simple, moronic face. I noticed this object was intruding on an intimate moment creating a mechanised imitation of self and others
and in the process minimising the passion of our stories. It was particularly offensive when it gulped its last bite with an annoying ‘click-cluck’ demanding to be reset so that it could continue its menacing presence.

In spite of all of this however, the playbacks had a profound effect on me. Not in the content but in the sound of the voices. Earle’s voice denoted a vulnerability and so did the Spencers, difficult to articulate in reference to kind. I believe here I am being a bit too interpretive but I cannot ignore my reaction. I wanted to gut the tapes. I wanted to destroy the very permanence I was striving for. It was too alive. I don’t know if it’s because of my close relationship or their age that signals the mortal knell surfacing this feeling. The Spencers have had intercourse with cancer and Earle’s lifestyle will not sustain him indefinitely. Death- stupid and impending. I fear they will join the stack of cards and I will have this fake living memoir.

Narratives Within a Voice

It is also here where the narrative within a voice is performed. The background sounds speak louder than the voices. The scrape scrape scrape of the corn being shelled or the gongs of the countless clocks tell their stories of rhythm and time and schedules. The Spencer’s kitchen - an enduring example set to the syncopation of activity.

The birds singing and the rustle of the wind in the leaves tell their stories of timelessness, of an enduring pastoral quality. There are no schedules here. The only time is when it’s time. Earle’s yard set to a diminuendo of inertia.

The Written Tradition

The Spencers have a strong tradition of writing. There are letters dating back to the Civil War from participating family members.

_The whole camp are getting anxious for some fighting as we have not had any for so long time. It is reported by the niggers that come in that the whole of the troops in Yorktown were sick and had to move out into the open fields some time ago. They_

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8 I wrote this in the Spring of ’95.
9 Since Earle’s death the tapes have assumed new meanings for me. Having written this was frightening.
had the measles and fever. They also say at the time our scouting party had a skirmish out about four miles from here that there was several of the rebels killed and they -------beat although there was over four thousand within a short distance of our party. Our party consisted of only twenty-five men and two lieutenants.

(Written by E.S.Jillson from Camp Butler, Newport News, Virginia, August 26, 1861)

There are published books on genealogy, history, and poetry written about them. "Yester-Years does not include those ancient houses of Guilford whose history is preserved already by historical organisations or by families long owning them. Its concern is with Forgotten History" (Griswold, 1938 p. 7). Much of the ancestral history of families like the Spencers are recorded in books such as this one which took fifteen years for the author to complete.

Not only is the chronological listing of deeds and wills of houses the subject of this book but narratives of its occupants reveal the customs and traditions of the times.

Dying in 1694, the Rev. Joseph Eliot left a will. Among other provisions he gave to his wife his two Negroes, Shem and Hagar, ‘the better to enable her in housekeeping with her young children’. (Hoadley, 1938, p. 50)

They gave their slaves away as they did their possessions. The following quote "poor old worn-out Candace, going here and there for the accommodation of the public, sometimes washing, sometimes making a wedding cake," makes reference to a slave whose freedom was earned at age 38 when her mistress died and no one had legal claim. I never knew that slavery was an institution in New England in the eighteenth century. I always thought of New England as morally 'pure', a bastion of freedom and democracy. It appears that some owners were generous with their altruism and provided for slaves in their wills. Hoadley (1938) also states that this tradition became extinct in Connecticut a few years after 1794. I wonder.
I was also fascinated with the many references to multiple marriages of spouses. Many of these were the result of early deaths particularly among the men. If they lived to be a ripe old age they were nonagenarians. Neither the men or the women stayed single very long, many having two or three spouses during their lifetime. I was surprised since my thinking was that they were religious and would maintain a loyalty to their spouses. It was not something I expected in the 15th and 16th century. Although I suppose that being a single parent was not the call of the time. From my reading these people were very patriotic, always ready to volunteer and raise arms against any threat to their property or town, especially against the British. Farming was a primary way of life, some earning money in trades such as tailors or commodities merchants. Their land was of prime importance and many were buried next to their houses.

It is rare and ripe sweet sylvan view
And strikes the eye indeed as something new,
When from the westside Spencer home lookout,
We stand surveying carefully about

And down the river, winding seaward, look
To see their way the vessels warp and crook,
The warning light, the steamer's passing hulk,
White swelling waves, the farther shores that bulk.

Blazing the way, as parent pioneer,
Came Samuel and settling, founded here
His family, that long has flourished well
and where still full as flourishing they dwell....

The sycamores, grown grey high overhead,
Beloved of those, o'er whom their branches spread,
Have seen the generations growing old
Which their protecting mighty arms enfold.
(Robinson, 1907, p. 229)
This excerpted poem is an epitaph to Norm’s great- great- grandfather Samuel Spencer, June 10, 1775 - March 16, 1871. His character is immortalised in a book by Henry Robinson published in 1907. Robinson estimates from records dating from 1646 that fifteen hundred former inhabitants are buried on the Guilford Green. However these burials were discontinued in 1818.

Hidden from all mortal eyes
Deep the sunken city lies.
(1907, p. xix)

It is interesting to note that this book contains approximately 54 biographical epitaphs of prominent families all written in anywhere from 20 to 30 rhyming couplets and I believe all original.

...a harvest chiefly of memories of the past, has been in a special way spontaneous. When moved to express regrets on the recent loss of a friend, visions of others rose before me and I continued to write, passing from one to another. (1907, p. vii)

This is quite a remarkable accomplishment. In addition there are introductory essays and sections of the book containing elegies also written in couplets. These books are but two examples of the written tradition in the Spencer family.

Letters

Because of the physical distance between me and my participants, letters have been significant allowing me to connect with and maintain a continuity through gaps of separation. In Earle’s case this type of communication was especially important. He had no phone. I called June and Norm for information. I wrote to Earle and hoped that he answered. I included a couple of self addressed stamped envelopes since the postage to Canada is different and I knew he didn’t get to the post office often.11

10 The ‘green’ is a park-like area in the centre of most New England towns.
11 “One thing though, what did Earle send you in all those letters? We found a whole stack of addressed and stamped envelopes from you in his bedroom. doug also found tax statements from canada? hummmmmmm. a gold coin would fit nicely in those envelopes” (email, January 22, 1997).
Letters are also, ...inhabited. In every one of these letters a human being is present: not just his beliefs and notions and moods, but something containing all these elements, that elusive essence of a complex personality which it usually takes a good novelist to purvey. (Flye, 1971, p. 2, introduction by R. Phelps)

I am not in very good health now. I have to take a $1.00 a day pill for high blood pressure - but my doctor is very nice about it - he says I still have that nice little heart murmur - but he says my rhythm is good. Well I always did like music. Can you play the piano. (Earle Brockway, personal correspondence, February 20, 1995)\textsuperscript{12}

Letters as a research technique and data source have caused me to examine their intent and function. One distinction that separates letters from other forms of communication is that they are private. 'Dear Deirdre,' is intended only for Deirdre; such a letter was put in an envelope and sealed so that no one else could have access. Laws protect its privacy. Its author assumes that the contents will remain in her possession. This has some interesting ethical and social implications. The letter sets up a very special relationship. Writer Russell Baker (1987) used letters to communicate to his sons to avoid their adolescent sneering at his advice. Letters exposed the fact that his mother had a secret love. These 'private' documents solved many mysteries that plagued him most of his life. On a personal level this writer doubts that the same revelations will occur with the research since the family was one of an oral culture.

A handful of letters hardly constitutes a corpus of information. However, the few letters that have accumulated reveal a personal emotional content. The following letter was written in February of 1993. When it made its first appearance in the text, I wrote the sentences from margin to margin. As I reached the end I decided to present it as written since I sense there is some kind of subconscious meaning in the way we form and phrase our

\textsuperscript{12} It is pure coincidence that I chose this particular excerpt almost a year prior to Earle's death for its humour rather than its reference to health.
thoughts. Unfortunately computers are making those decisions for us only allowing us to set up the margins. The excerpts were chosen for their example as 'inhabited'.

Thanks for the candy
and all the goodies.
2/5/93
I got George’s number from
   Susie.

Dear Deedee,
Just a short one to let
you know I’m all right,
except lonely and bored.
We are out here in the
sticks. No place to go the
stores and anything else is
out of reach except if you
have a car, no place to
walk to which I love to do.
I can’t go to most of the
places I used as we are so far
away from everything. Sometimes
I get a break and I get a chance
to go to one of the church I used
to go to. At least we go to Susie’s
every Sunday for dinner.
Can’t wait to get out of here.
I’m trying to find out who is
in charge of the condo but
nobody seems to know. I’d love
to go back there. I still have
friends there and so far
nobody lives in it.
I wanted to call George
DeCarion but don’t have
his number here. I
know he'd love for me to go
visit him. I think Susie still has it and I'll call
her and get it. (I did today)
Well, I hope you can read
this mess. Call me if you want
to at night. I'm usually alone
here then. My no. 704-531-2339.
If you don't want that, call me some
time. I'd like to come and see you too.
Well, good luck trying to read
this mes.
Say Hi to Clara
Love you, mom...
Call me any time because I'm
ready to leave as soon as I
know where I'm going, and I'm
not coming back. Maybe
I could get a place in those
homes you showed me.
This letter sounds crazy
and I hope you
understand what I mean.
Call me day or night better at night.
because sometimes I
go out to lunch or something.
Love
I sound like I've
lost mind, but not yet. ha. ha.
The stamps I got are too much.
Wish you luck. I
hope you can read
this messy letter.
I wrote this a couple
of days ago and haven't
chance to mail it yet.
I'm going to watch the 
mailman and give it to 
him, but most of the time 
I miss when he comes by.
Well, that's all 
for now, I'll try and 
call you 
"collect" if it's O.K. with you
Love, mom.
This letter is late, waiting for the right stamp.

The letter was indeed messy. Lots of crossouts. Her reference to a condo 
was her former independent home. Even to this day, she longs to return. I 
bought it for her in 1985 when they were converted from apartments. She had 
sold her house because maintenance was a problem, had made lots of friends 
at the apartment complex and did not want to move. She made the mortgage 
payments and I helped with other costs. Her social security and minimal 
savings did not leave much for any frills. Those days were happy ones for her. 
She still has some fond memories left.

Mrs. DeCarion is a delightful woman who has had decreased 
recent memory but has intact ability to calculate and is a pleasant 
person who can manage most of her activities independently but 
needs a safe environment. She would be a contributing and 
delightful addition to any rest home type environment. (October 
19, 1990)

She was 82 years old when all this dramatic change occurred.

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13 Excerpted from a letter by my physician referring to my mother's health in order for her to be 
admitted to an institutional setting.
thanks again for the candy.  

and all the good byes.  

I got a change from Miss B.  

just a short one to let you know I'm all right.  
except lonely and bored.  

We are out here in the sticks.  no place to go.  the 
store and anything else is 
out of reach except if you 
have a car; no place to 
walk to which I Love to do.  

Can't go to the post office if the 
place I used to be so far 
away from everything.  Sometimes  
I get a break and get a chance 
to go to one of the professional 
groups to go to. At least we go to town 
every Sunday for dinner.  
Can't wait to get out of there.  

I'm trying to find out who is
You wrote to know I still love you. I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want to call you. I want you to call me. You wrote to know I still love you. I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. You wrote to know I still love you. I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. You wrote to know I still love you. I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. You wrote to know I still love you. I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. You wrote to know I still love you. I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. You wrote to know I still love you. I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. I want you to call me.

I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. You wrote to know I still love you. I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. You wrote to know I still love you. I want you to know I still love you. I want you to call me. I want you to call me. I want you to call me.
3) Call me any time because I'm ready to leave as soon as I know where I'm going, and I'm not coming back. Maybe I should get a place in those homes you showed me.

This letter sounds crazy, and I hope you understand what I mean.

I'll write you a letter at night.

Sone

It sounds like I've lost my mind, but not yet.

Best wishes to you.
Wish you luck. I hope you can read this messy letter.

I wrote this couple 2 days ago and haven't chance to mail it yet. I'm going to watch the mailman and give it to him, but most of the line I gave when he comes by.

Well, that's all for now. I'll try and call you collect if it's O.K. with you.

Mom, M.

This letter is late, waiting for the right stamp.
The following information about my father was received from my Uncle George DeCarion in Florida. Actually he is my cousin but has always been ‘Uncle’. He is at the present my only source of information.

In response to your questions, Bill’s father was William DeCarion and was known just as Bill. I believe he died in the late twenties or early thirties. My father died in 1926, and I believe his brother, Bill, your grandfather, died several years thereafter. (February 12, 1996)

(These dates coincide with stories my father used to tell me about the depression. As the head of household at a young age, he was the one to stand on the bread lines.)

I would love to get together with you someday and go through the old photos that you have. It would probably jog my recollection. Having come to Florida at the age of 10, I had limited contact with other family members since they were all in New York until Phyllis and Claude moved south, but probably in 1937 or 1938. Your dad did visit us in Florida and while I was a bit younger than he, we paired off very well. We both shared a dislike of my aunt Lou, who Bill referred to as “Vinegar Puss”. (Excerpted from letter of George DeCarion, February 12, 1996)
Letters for me have not only been a form of communication but also of reflection. I have recorded each letter I have written to my participants and others who have maintained a marginal participatory role in the process. As I write of my experiences, my thoughts become unconsciously reflective and consciously reflexive.

I hope this letter finds you well. I was sorry to hear about your heart problem but do what the doctor tells you and you'll be fine. You always appeared to be a pretty healthy person all the years I've known you and your lifestyle is rigorous and rich and that's what's important. My happiest, healthiest years were when I had all my animals - chickens, geese, ducks, a goat, etc. I was outdoors at the crack of dawn feeding them all before I went to work and doing the same at sunset when I came home. My weekends were spent outdoors with some animal related chore but none of it was done begrudgingly. I enjoyed it all. No wonder country folk live so long. (Written to Earle from Newfoundland on March 20, 1995)

Recipes

Tita enjoyed this step enormously; while the filling was resting, it was very pleasant to savor its aroma, for smells have the power to evoke the past, bringing back sounds and even other smells that have no match in the present. Tita liked to take a deep breath and let the characteristic smoke and smell transport her through the recesses of her memory. (Esquivel, 1989, p. 7)

I've never considered recipes as documents that could be part of research but they are significant as cultural artifacts and forms of communication. As I reviewed some of these documents I found myself salivating and my sensual acuities heightened. The smells, the tastes, the sounds and the process brought forth many memories of family gatherings. I never realised how much social interaction transpired within the context of consuming food.

Pasteles are a traditional Puerto Rican food usually made during the Christmas holidays. They are not difficult only tedious and require a group
endeavour. As a child this was an exciting time for me. It meant everyone would be together and I got to spend ‘legal’ time in the kitchen (being only eight years old your presence was not usually welcomed in a busy kitchen) with my grandmother performing in my young opinion the most important job assigned. Us four cousins were at the end of a production line seated around a small kitchen table specially set for this purpose. Sheets of a wax-like paper were at one end and a wad of strings already measured out were placed at each of our settings. As far as I was concerned this phase deserved the most attention and skill. Since Nina was not allowed to cook, didn’t know how and didn’t want to learn even though she feigned interest, her intentions were good but she couldn’t be trusted. She was in charge of carefully wrapping the pasteles in this wax-type paper, a poor substitute for the banana leaves that were not available in winter in an Anglo town. (Years later my mother discovered aluminum foil, significantly cutting the time and effort.) I was glad because that meant Nina sat with us and I loved being near her. She would pass one of us a pastele which we carefully laid on the string set in the shape of a giant capital ‘U’. Then with some over and under, much like double-tying a package, the pastele was tied tightly and passed back to my grandmother who put it in a huge kettle to boil. Mama always made us ‘special’ pasteles with a rice ‘masa’ because as children we had not acquired a taste for the masa made with yautia (a kind of sweet potato) and platanos (large green bananas). The job of preparing the masa was another of Nina’s duties. She sat at the table for hours with the yautia and platanos grating them with a metal cheese grater into a fine dough-like mush so that they could be combined. The back of a large wooden spoon was used to spread the masa on the paper to a thickness of about one half an inch. I remember her knuckles being covered with band aids after this procedure. Then the filling consisting of pork, ground meat, onions, peppers, capers, garbanzos, and spices was put on top of the masa and the pastele was ready to be wrapped. I can still see the bright orange color of the special oil that was used in the filling and adorned the paper so the masa wouldn’t stick. I was always fascinated with the making of this oil because my grandmother was very

14 Many years later Nina would visit me in Connecticut and upon her insistence and direction, we decided to make pasteles. Having gotten the supplies after many hours of searching Spanish neighbourhoods in New Haven, she ‘forgot’ the most important step - cooking the filling which included pork. We all would have probably gotten a good case of salmonella. It was then she admitted she didn’t really know what she was doing!
attentive to the tiny aluminum pot on the stove that contained the red
achiote seeds that gave the mixture its color. At times this wonderful event
ended in a bit of discord. If there were any pasteles left over, some argument
would ensue about who got how many to take home.

It is within the sensual smells, sounds and tastes that images are
evoked and the memories come forth. Recipes tend to preserve tradition and
establish one’s own individual legacy. They are used by and passed on by
people. Recipes won’t change much though the stories set in a different
context may from generation to generation. History is recorded and preserved
in the narratives associated with the recipes that lie on this continuum of
narrative unity.

**Music and Rhymes**

Folk song calls the native back to his roots and prepares him
emotionally to dance, worship, work, fight, or make love in
ways normal to his place. (Lomax, 1975, p. xv)

According to Lomax (1975) the function of folk music is to produce a
feeling of security for the listener by voicing the particular quality of a land
and the life of its people and to the traveler. A line from a song may evoke
the familiar emotions of home. The senses of hearing and listening are most
often ignored in the accumulation of knowledge but are present in folk
music.

Music was always a very strong influence in my young Latina life.
Family gatherings culminated in song and all my aunts and uncles including
my father (the ‘gringo’) were wonderful dancers and enjoyed performing. My
Uncle Dave (Papi) played guitar and when he dragged it out to sing, I gazed
wanting to caress it. I thought it was the most beautiful object in the world
and knew then that I wanted to learn to play. When he was done he would
let me hold it. I remember how awkward it was because it was huge and
didn’t quite fit into the contour of my body. Yet, I finally had it in my arms.
The tiny fingers of my left hand stretched until they hurt. But that hurt was
nothing until I tried to make a chord. Tears came to my eyes from pain and
failure as I pushed the metal strings down with the tips of my tender non-
calloused fingers. My right arm tried desperately to reach over the top of the
guitar to strum whatever my left hand was creating. This was a frustrating experience since I was copying and nothing fit. But it was like one of my hand-me-down pair of shoes from my cousin. I knew I would grow into it. An intrinsic love of what all of this music meant and a desire to play this shiny magnificent combination of wood and metal was later responsible for my present skill with stringed instruments. I believe that my knowledge of the language and the preservation of events and culture were enhanced by music.

You told me you were sending the tape that I love of the Rafael Munoz records or songs and again I had very little if no recollection. I knew who Rafael Munoz was but I really could not have recollected one song with just that much information. And lo and behold once I put it into my cassette in the car I remembered every single word of those songs and it was just wonderful. (Tape transcription, Emy, January 15, 1996)

Nina taught us several rhymes that have survived in memory. My favorite was one where the context was more important than the rhyme. We recited this wish with a peseta in hand raised towards a waxing moon.

Luna Luneta,

Cuando tu llena tu cara,

llena me bolsas

de muchas pesetas.

When the moon fills its face,

it will also fill my pockets with many quarters.

(My translation)

\footnote{Rafael Munoz is a Puerto Rican orchestra leader who was my mother’s favorite. The lyrics are in Spanish and I too know them all.}
Images

To photograph is to appropriate the thing photographed. It means putting oneself into a certain relation to the world that feels like knowledge---and, therefore, like power. (Sontag, 1977, p. 4)

Since the Photograph is pure contingency and can be nothing else (it is always something that is represented) --- contrary to the text which, by the sudden act of a single word, can shift a sentence from description to reflection --- it immediately yields up those “details” which constitute the very raw material of ethnological knowledge. (Barthes, 1981, p. 28)

Although the phenomenon and metaphor I am exploring is one of movement, there is still this innate desire to stop the motion and preserve the moment, to control time and light. It is this desire that draws me to photographs as a source and form of data. I have had to ask myself some very serious questions as to the function of the photograph in the thesis. This awareness was heightened by my mentor Brent Kilbourn who cautioned me about including them for the sake of inclusion. I knew that I needed to examine my purpose and the images as well. The problem has become not what to include but what not to include.

They are also artifacts in everyone’s home. “Through photographs,” asserts Sontag (1989), “each family constructs a portrait-chronicle of itself—a portable kit of images that bears witness to its connectedness” (p. 8). She adds that “a family’s photograph album is generally about the extended family---and, often, is all that remains” (ibid., p. 9). And this is the focus of this section. Photographs play a major role in the memories and histories of narratives. Even if the photograph is not related or familiar to the viewer, the ‘image generated narrative’ is based on the personal experience of the viewer (Barter and DeCarion, 1995).

*He went around the corner of the house, disappeared for a few minutes and re- appeared with a stack of badly yellowed and tattered photographs.* (Journal entry)
I remember sitting with Earle on a couple of stumps in his yard going through these photographs. I had intended to ask him if I could make copies. He was quite proud of the schooner his family owned that was used for shipping goods up and down the Connecticut River. One other photograph particularly interested me. There was one of him quite young, maybe in his early twenties, on a small sailboat with a woman. I asked who that was and with a smile he answered,

\textit{That's a girlfriend. I was thinkin' last night ah she was from Canada. She was stayin' ah with some friends. She went sailing with another fella and I think with another ah. She must be 70. She was 19 years old then. She's probably about 74 years old now.} (Laugh) (Tape transcription, May 12, 1995)

After his death I began to question if he had ever been in love or ever made love. He led such a lonesome and secluded life. I hesitate to use the term 'lonely' because I believe Earle lived and worked alone by choice. I also wonder what happened to the photos. They were his only source of history since written tradition was practically absent and oral was all that remained.

In this textual presentation of my photographs I choose not to be descriptive or suggestive with attached titles or explanations. I prefer to leave the image generated narrative to the viewer without provocation. The titles are appended. The photos supplied by my participants are described.

When I traveled to gather photographic data I took three cameras. Two old Nikons (one with an irreparable light meter) and a more contemporary sure shot, compact, idiot proof Olympus. The 'newer' (1973) F2 Nikon was loaded with 36 or 24 exposure black and white film. The older (1971) F1 was loaded with color film as was the Olympus. Some of the photographs were color having been transformed to black and white with the new technology of laser printers. I averaged two rolls of film per visit which adds up to approximately one thousand negatives. This figure does not include photographs I had taken prior to my data collecting.

Within the visual text I am particularly drawn to portraits, close to the face. I want every wrinkle and hair, every mole and smooth plane, every detail that gives us a clue about who this person is and no longer a stranger in
our space. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) the tradition of portraits are based on metonymy. A picture of a body with no face leaves us strangers, but we look at the face for information about what the person is like.

Close-ups are difficult since the act is intrusive and most people are self conscious about a camera so close. My favorite portrait lens is an old Nikon 105mm and I wait for the right moment to appropriate my subject. My participant Earle tended to pose. It was difficult to have him continue his work while I worked. June and Norm were more ‘natural’ in their posing. Seems like an oxymoron but just as in writing, decisions and selections are made so nothing is really ‘natural’ or as we might say in the scientific world ‘objective’.

There are moral and ethical dimensions. Portraits are recognisable even though the names and contexts may be mysteries. I am only beginning to appreciate how powerful an image can be. I believe as Tony Morrison that a novel or book can change your life. My reading of her novel Beloved has had a profound effect not only on my knowledge of slavery but on my understanding of how history is articulated. I feel the same about photographs. I believe they too can change your life. My choice of taking a meaningful photograph is both aesthetic and ethical. This moral dimension arouses my own social conscience. There is a dialectical dilemma here in the presentation of a reality can be a romanticised version or as Sontag (1977) describes modern art as “lowering the threshold of what is terrible” (p. 40). Some of the recent portraits I have taken of my mother reveal her hopelessness and penetration of dementia. They arouse emotions of fear and guilt, the guilt a result of not wanting to acknowledge that this weak, vulnerable and unattractive person was once a real mother. The fear is that I may be like her some day.

Even though as Berger and Mohr (1982) state the intentionality of the photograph is weak, its hermeneutic qualities are strong. It is this relationship of the ambiguity of the image with the authenticity of the narrative that evokes such energy and authority.
When the words 'Vietnam' are uttered, I am haunted by a flashback of a photograph taken by a photojournalist of a young adolescent running in a street in Vietnam during a military assault. She was nude. She had a look on her face so horrific, description fails. I believe this photograph changed many lives. (DeCarion, 1996)

The concept of exploitation as a dimension of the moral and ethical dilemmas of photography is further explored in chapter ten.

**Time and Locomotion**

The time I spent with my participants was a serendipitous adventure. The first step was the traveling. Door to door from Toronto to Guilford is a ten hour trip, approximately 400 miles. My usual modus operandi was to spend a day or two at the cabin and then head for the East Coast. This would cut two and a half hours off the trip and I would be on the Thousand Island bridges at daybreak either viewing a spectacular display of hot air balloons or the spectacle of the St. Lawrence Seaway. I have measured my journeys by the light, the cosmos, road signs, flora and fauna and the seasons, at times flowing through all of them in a matter of hours. My most memorable was driving south along Route 81. I left the cabin\(^{16}\) at five AM. My shepherd in the predawn darkness was a full moon glowing brightly to the West. The luminous power reflected the immensity of the pastoral landscape creating Lilliputians of the cows and toys of the structures in this space. As the first light appeared, my attention was drawn to the East. As the sun rose so did the moon set. It was indescribable except for the photograph I took and even those images do not tell the story. I don't think I've ever been in such awe of an experience and I'm not sure why as I write. What was so special about this event except that I had never witnessed anything like it? The two most powerful objects of life sustaining elements to the earth appear and disappear at the same time. Was it one of those rare natural phenomena like a double rainbow or a meteorite that I may (n)ever behold again? Or is it because upon reflection I felt like a biblical nomad with a flock of sheep witnessing a natural phenomenon and in the absence of modern day discontinuity I was

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\(^{16}\) The cabin is located in Tamworth a small farming community north of Napanee. It is described in the section on paramethodology.
struck by this phantasm of exalted astronomical continuity.

My destination was Cricket Cottage, a name I gave to my best friend's house for the 'other' nocturnal sounds that accompanied my own breathing. This was my home base. Because there was always a collaborative household project, my time was not exclusively spent on my research. On one visit we installed a built in dishwasher. It was a good thing my friend lived near a family run hardware store whose personnel is not only knowledgeable about plumbing but also patient with do-it-yourselfers. Connecticut was also a time for me to renew and nurture my former teaching friendships. I enjoyed visiting my old school, sitting in on a team meeting and going out for an informal dinner.

Returning to my home (town) presented some unique problems. Still owning my house in Guilford, there was usually some business that required my appearance. I continue to store objects that I am slowly repossessing and maintain access to my darkroom and studio barn. It is painful to return to a space that once harboured an active creative energy and is now beset with cobwebs and silence.

The Unearthing

The sun reflected off the leaves displaying a bright green canopy that enclosed the yard like a planetarium. Sand sparkled from the ochre gravel driveway that dissected the property. Barn red vertical bands from the gate and shiplap barn boards interrupted the horizontal plane, giving signs of human endeavor and occupation. It was quiet except for the river as it made its way around the boulders and rocks that interrupted its path. I entered this mystical space with a sense of awe. I was coming home. I had been away almost a year to the day. I had lived in this house, driven down the same driveway countless times a day, for almost 25 years. Yet I felt strange. My presence was ignored. The grasses and the flowers and the trees were expecting someone else. They knew I wasn't the one who had rearranged the flower beds, planted the vegetable garden, trimmed the shrubs in front of the barn, and hung the new black and white mailbox - pink udders underneath. The changes were someone else's. Someone
familiar. Someone who cared for them. Someone who had made their mark on the land. Someone who had replaced me.
The house was the same. Or I should say different. There were changes there too. The kitchen was laced with cow motifs. I had chickens. Antique furniture filled the rest of the living space. I had an eclectic collection. Here too not a trace of my presence or past. (Written July 8, 1993)

A minimum of a week every four or six weeks from March 1995 through August 1997 gave me the opportunity not only to actually spend time in my participants’ homes, but to reflect and research other aspects of the thesis. Returning to my home (town) as a participant, I am immersed in a dialectical dilemma of severing threads and at the same time establishing stronger ones through my participants. This personal issue is a powerful source of tension constantly altering the intent of my visits with ambiguity and discontinuity. I never really feel like I’m coming (or going) ‘home’. I’m not sure why. During this period in between trips to Connecticut I traveled to Charlotte, North Carolina to gather data from my mother and sister and to Scranton, Pennsylvania to interview my aunt and cousin.

As previously mentioned my informants are long term friends. Therefore, I had some knowledge of their lifestyles. It was not difficult to become involved in their daily activities. Entry into this situation was not a problem.

My choice of Spencer and Brockway folk was based on their similarities, traditional, rooted, strong identities, (not) passing on their legacy to future generations.¹⁷ There exists here a dialectic which depends on rhetoric. If one interprets legacy as something passed on to direct descendants then we have no legacy. Earle is now dead and had no children. I have no children. The Spencers have children but both are not married and with no intent of providing the family with grandchildren.

As I become more familiar with each of the families, the differences become more numerous and unique as the reader will experience throughout the text.

¹⁷ When I wrote this I didn’t realise then that this statement was partially false not only for them but for myself.
Genealogy

By the 1970's leading genetic researchers knew that everyone in the world was related, and that we are all cousins, regardless of our racial origins. (The Genealogical Research Library, Inc., 1994, p. 4)

The knowledge gaps that exist for me regarding my ancestry compel me to conduct a search for my roots and ancestry. I use the present tense because the search continues. Ironically, while browsing through the genealogy section in a Connecticut bookstore, I came upon the address of a research centre in Toronto. Upon my return I had them conduct a search. I must admit I was disappointed. For $170 nothing new surfaced on my mother’s side and nothing surfaced on my father’s side. In fact in 1974 my mother had a commercial historiography prepared and there were less than 50 households in the United States with the DeCarion name. I have had several of these done, mostly at airports and tourist traps and the results have been interesting. This generic historical background had roots in France immigrating to New France or Quebec. I imagine I will turn many corners during this investigation of the mortal and the immortal.

The focus of this section is not genealogical inquiry. However, I would like to make some comments and refer to quotations from a paper by Lenzo and Pillow (1995) that offer definitions and purposes of the inquiry. My purpose for including these quotations is they extend my previous understanding and traditional meaning of genealogy to reveal new challenging concepts.

Genealogy is grey, meticulous, and patiently documentary. (Foucault 1984a, p. 76)
Gutting (1989) describes genealogy as the analysis of “the development of bodies of knowledge out of systems of power” (p. 6).
Genealogy, as an analysis of descent, is thus situated within the articulation of the body and history. Its task is to expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history’s destruction of the body. (Foucault, 1984a, p. 83)
Genealogy 'disturbs what was previously considered immobile; it fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself. (Foucault, 1984a, p. 82)

In Lenzo’s and Pillow’s work genealogy’s usefulness is discussed within the context of feminist educational inquiry. They assert that because of the assumption of unity genealogical inquiry implies, it also denies the complexity, discontinuity, and difference in stories and lives. My purpose is to explore genealogy in its more traditional meaning that of tracing ancestry and in that venture leave open the possibilities for interpretation of Foucault’s reformulation of Nietzsche’s genealogy as cited in Lenzo and Pillow’s study.

This being said I will depart from genealogy as inquiry and focus on genealogy as a study of ancestry. My dilemma is whether to begin with the present or the past, the living or the dead.

My father will be the focus for the genealogical search. He is the one I know least about. He is also dead forcing me to begin in the past. My lack of contact and knowledge of his mother, my grandmother, whose maiden name was Leonard compels me to search for this missing legacy. No future except for knowledge and understanding.
PARAMETHODOLOGY

I have created this section out of a need to include non-traditional methods that have become part of the research process. These methods are marginal and have a significant role. I will attempt to define paramethodology and give examples.

The prefix ‘para’ according to the American Heritage Dictionary means near or beside, outside or beyond, or resembling or similar to. I have chosen this prefix to present methods that are not commonly found in qualitative research yet exist. If we view technique as a “systemic procedure by which a task is accomplished” (American Heritage Dictionary, 1989, p. 698), then there are techniques that are part of the process yet which do not fit in any categories of conventional methodology. There are several that fall within this methodological framework.

This section has also compelled me to create another eventual thesis entitled ‘Portrait of a Thesis’ which will articulate the process. I have been taken in so many directions that there is a calling to continue along this venue.

CRAFTING

The ‘crafting’ of the text is where I believe signature and voice meet with the author as crafter. Van Manen regards the writing of the text as the research. He believes “writing abstracts our experience of the world, yet it also concretizes our understanding of the world” (from Pinar, 1995, p. 438).

A unique artistic endeavor has developed during this process of research and writing that is related to the quote above. As a diversion from the reading and writing and out of my love for the smell and feel of wood and the use of my hands, I began to create walking staffs. These staffs have provided me with a metaphor for the crafting of the thesis. In the past two years I have made close to 100 and sold or given them away. I have exhibited in several art shows and people have requested my work. This has been surprising to me since I never dreamed there would be such an interest or market.

In the creation of a walking staff a certain amount of ‘nurturing’ takes place. I constantly feel the surface to find the rough spots so that I can smooth them out, make them visually sensuous, and cause people to want to touch
and caress them. I allow the object to direct its own individual form and design. In my proposal I wrote that I wanted to model Eco’s (1989) ‘open’ work whose aesthetic validity rests in the number of different perspectives by which it can be viewed and understood. These staffs have become artifacts and to some, symbols of tradition and identity. The crafted thesis assumes the same qualities. I ‘feel’ each page. Run my hands over it. Caress and nurture it until it is smooth and sensuous like the walking staffs, supporting Bachelard’s (1964) notion that an object can be transformed through caring. I have discovered that there is something spiritual (not religious) in nature, in this transformation but cannot articulate quite fully what it is. I do know that it is an emotion, a sensation, a way I feel and think as I work that is passionate and at times overwhelming. Many ideas for this text sprout when I am working on the staffs, when I am not thinking about what I should be thinking about. The annual rings that I observe as I work with the staffs add the dimension of time and history. Their patterns and story fascinate me. Their lives and life span are there for us to explore. I field test the thesis as I field test the staffs. I share my thoughts and writings with selected (the who is as important as the what) colleagues. As the staff is completed I put my signature to it and it speaks to an audience. Its voice is heard. The thesis is also an artifact, symbol of tradition and identity. Voice and signature, past and present, artist and scientist converge. I touch the staff, I touch the thesis.

FICTIONAL READINGS

Fictional readings have compelled me to explore narrative as a literary art form as well as an inquiry into method and phenomenon (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The readings uncover the psychological nature of the genre focusing on process: memory rather than the thing remembered and perception rather than the thing perceived. Fiction as a cultural object is more challenging than history. History is what has happened and fictional literature is about what can happen. Fiction is about possibilities. It is to understand the potentialities of human actions and interactions. It is not how we describe ourselves but how we experience ourselves. Reading novels gives us essential training in understanding others, in understanding people in their individuality.18 This is the essence of this discourse. Empathy, or

18 Notes from Keith Oatley’s class ‘Understanding Narrative’.
George Eliot would use the term sympathy, is a recurring theme in this text as it applies to the sentiment of 'at home' and belonging. It is the operative term that enables us to enter the psychological aspects of our lives through fiction and the vicarious experiences the readings provide.

RITUALS

You’re up at four AM. Can’t do the laundry yet because you’ll wake everyone. So you put the tea kettle on and begin to boil the water. Then you go into the living room, put the blanket on the floor and begin your 30 push ups (wimp style-knees bent). Then it’s the deep knee bends for the lower back. The kettle begins to whistle and you run into the kitchen hoping it hasn’t wakened anyone. You pour hot water in the pot and put the tea leaves in the tea ball. The tea pot is warm so you put the tea ball in the pot and add more hot water. Then you get the dumbbells. Six different exercises for those weak upper body muscles. You do them while the tea steeps. Then at last a hot cup. After exercise the vitamin and mineral supplements. More tea and back upstairs to the computer. Now you check your email. At this time of the morning no busy signals. You work until six AM and then it’s time to feed the cats. Work another half hour in silence and you can finally make your presence known.

These and other rituals have a role in methodology. I have read that rituals are an attempt to establish some sense of order to our activities. Research is writing and writing is loaded with ritual or ‘the getting readies’. It is during these rituals that ideas sprout and evolve. I believe that some of these rituals have to do with the body and motion and its role in thinking and writing.

To function as a writer, you have to do a certain amount of circling around, almost like a dog, before you can settle down to work. You have to straighten things on the desk, get the coffee cup just so, sharpen the pencils. You’re using environmental cues to help you destabilize whatever else is on your mind, get you out of that state, and stabilize the one associated with writing. (Putnam, p. 133, in The Power of Place, Gallagher, 1993)
Bergson (1911) discusses movement in relation to memory. Since so much of (auto)biography and writing relies on memory, his idea that the past survives under two forms and one of those being motor mechanisms is particularly interesting and relevant. (The other form is independent recollections.) He believes that the things which surround the body act upon it and it reacts upon them. Also in memory “the recognition of a present object is effected by movements when it proceeds from the object, by representations when it issues from the subject” (ibid., p. 87).

I have spent many hours writing at my home on Martha’s Vineyard. On one trip I thought I had a pad of my favorite kind of notepaper-blue boxed graph paper. I didn’t. I couldn’t settle down to write until I had this pad on a clipboard. After searching every store in Edgartown and Vineyard Haven that could possibly have this piece of stationery that I wanted to enrich with notes and ideas, my find was in an obscure drugstore in Vineyard Haven. I could finally sit down to fill the boxes.

You watch your thesis advisor take your writing and very methodically go through the same ritual of getting a clip, not a paper clip, the other kind with two handles and the triangle shaped clip. He carefully aligns the edges of the papers and places the clip at a precise 45 degree angle on the top left hand corner of your work. He does this only in the first couple of meetings. He then abandons the ritual. At the finale of my appointment in October 1996 as he was reading this very paragraph he looked at me and said, “Did you see me clip your papers today?” There was no clip. He looked at me and smiled. “I did it with the previous student but not with you. Kind of threw you off there.” “Why not?” I asked. “I don’t think I look at anybody else’s writing like this because yours is so fragmented. So much in fact it is a different quality.” I prefer to view these ‘fragmentations’ as juxtapositions and analysis as ‘kaleidoscope analogy’. It is in these situations that I’m not sure if I should be flattered or insulted.

SATERNITE WRITINGS

‘Other’ writings have also been significant. Ideas for other areas of research and writing have been formulated through connections to methodology.

I have been involved in a collaborative project entitled ‘The Truth
About Fiction' which is about the use of fiction to report and 'craft' research data. This theme seems to be a subtext of this text. I find myself referring to notions we have explored through the papers we have written. We used photographs to generate narratives and have coined the term 'image generated narratives' to describe the process. The images were utilised to establish a relationship among truth and fiction. In another paper the photographs revealed multiplicity of meaning and were used to explore cognitive and social pluralism. The focus was the reflective process of the reconstructed narrative and its implication for personal and professional development.

Even though the 'stories' were 'imaginary' they still held some truth for the narrator and the photographer. As we experimented with the relationship of the narratives, context, and truths to the photographs we found that there was more truth than fiction since narratives were based on past experiences of the narrator. (DeCarion, 1995)

This project was instrumental in my inclusion of photographs in the thesis.

I have also written an essay involving a car accident, a most unpleasant and horrific experience. I try to present the perspective of the car as 'turf' of the driver, as a symbol of power and security that no one dares harm. Pop psychology tells us that the car is a status symbol or sex symbol (Jackson, 1994). Further, he states that the relationship between a person who drives for pay and their car or truck is more complex and intimate than anything most of us know. Accompanying that philosophical view, one can almost suggest a pathological essence of 'home' and envision the kind of protection and defense embedded in that concept. I was the cause of the accident and the victim of this diseased essence of home.

I am in the process of collecting data for writing a book about non-alcoholic wines. Since I have seriously begun writing, I decided to quit drinking. I felt I couldn't afford to waste time in any state other than an alert one, especially since the death of time is a theme in this project. It has been quite an experience. The psychological effects have been astonishing. I'm not
sure at this point what role this has played in the creation of the thesis except that it has affected my social and moral life dramatically. Pre-dinner wine conversations bore the hell out of me and I have become less tolerant of drinking. On a more positive note narrative took on a new paradigm as a result of my attendance with a friend at an AA meeting. Wednesday noon at the OISE auditorium was the place and personal narrative was the agenda. I was awed by the courage of people from all lifestyles who stood up and told their stories of life failures and struggle to turn themselves around. Here the dark side of life was rendered. It was quite a powerful experience not only for the teller but the audience as well. Their losses were unbelievable and for some irreversible.

**EVENTS**

Events such as attendance at art shows, participation in courses and family reunions also have their meaning. These events are reflections of our individual and collective cultures. They visually and behaviorally display aspects of life that give us comfort and sometimes discomfort forcing us to think and come to new understandings.

My most memorable event was a week at Wooden Boat School in Brooklin, Maine. The setting is picture-book sea coast, conducive to high energy, creativity and labour. Breakfast started at six which fit perfectly into my kind of schedule. One could work as independently as one wished with the diversity among participants contributing to an interesting social and cultural exchange. Prompted by my desire to immerse myself in some traditional craft, I wanted to experience first hand the kind of endeavour that preserves our past and enriches our future. I learned to fashion half hull models. These were used by boatbuilders of early times as a method of testing out new designs. I can now appreciate the cost one must pay for this once utilitarian and now decorative artifact. I worked on two models from early morning to late night for a solid week and did not complete either of them. Laden with labour, they lie patiently awaiting the caress of a spokeshave and massage of sandpaper.

My cousin Emy hosts an annual family reunion in Scranton, Pennsylvania. If it were not for this event I would not have the opportunity to be with my ancestors or extended family since we are scattered all over the
east coast of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut. The informal moments are exchanges of personal experiences and the formal moments are presentations of family history discoveries, accomplishments of family members, changes of address, and recipes. The focus is mostly on the Bofills, the Puerto Rican tradition preserved temporarily by menu and language. My chicken pie is always a request and gastronomic success. The six hour drive home is filled with nostalgia and pride.

CAMERAS

Since I am the photographer seeking meaning, I decided to put my participants in the same situation. I bought three cardboard throw away cameras and asked them to shoot the role. I struggled with how to 'assign' them the task. This was very difficult. The teacher in me was really showing. I had three different assignments: 12 things you want to remember, 12 things to be remembered by, and 12 important things in your life. None of these were satisfactory. I felt they were too restrictive, prescriptive, and trite so I abandoned guidelines altogether. I finally said, “take whatever you want”. I did give them another assignment and that was to choose their favorite and tell me why. I am participating in this activity as well. It's the teacher in me that can’t expect them to do something I wouldn’t.

But the last one on the film of you and Ann, with me, I treasure.
The love and friendship that you both give to us - for being our 'daughters' - it means so much to us. (Personal communication, June Spencer, February 19, 1997)

Earle was quite a different story. It was the first time he and I had had a disagreement. When I gave him the camera, I asked him to take a picture of me and he refused. He refused to experiment with it in any form at that time. He wanted to read the directions first. Then he would take photos. I had hinted that I wanted photos of his work space hoping he would shoot some inside his house but he quickly countered that he liked pictures of nature. My recollection of him staring at the camera he held in his hands as he walked gingerly towards the house to carefully place it just inside the broken door is very vivid in my mind. I thought this posture odd. It was almost as if this
object was something very foreign and almost sacred. It was also the last time I saw Earle alive. I never did get any photos. Just an email from his nephew describing them.

As for the pictures in the disposable camera, I saw them briefly and I agree that many were not taken by Earle since he was the subject in some. There were some of the trees by the water and creek. Some of Mokey the dog (the dogs, by the way Earle grew used to but they were dumped on him by my brother). Knowing my brother, the pics have probably been thrown out by now. (email, February 12, 1997)

Textual interpretations of this process by my participants appear in subsequent chapters.

THE CABIN

This letter was composed at the cabin. My concept of 'cabin fever' has been transformed into 'cabin thesis fever'. It will truly be a 'cabin thesis'. It is where I am 'at home'. (DeCarion personal communication to Dr. Connelly, April 28, 1994)

Clarion Peak

The 'Lomook' (pronounced - Low-mook) is a small piece of wood cut from the strongest or sturdiest tree in the jungle in one particular certain kind of lemon tree, which we call 'Lemon de China'. It's one of the strongest of its kind, but very difficult to cut because of its abundance of thorns. You have to select the most straight and about an inch in diameter. Once cut the branches are removed as well as the bark - then sanded down till smooth. From one tree you can make as many as ten lomooks, depending on how long you want it. Then it's shaped by carving it to however you like it. Its main purpose to the Chamorro people is to mash hot peppers to make their meat dips called Finedine. But it can be used to crush garlic cloves, or whatever you want in food preparation also. (Personal communication, Toni Taitano, 1996)
Toni was a guest at the cabin in Tamworth along with her sister-in-law, Katherine and niece Ann. We all participated in a bit of wood carving which is what precipitated the making of Lomooks. Toni found the ruggedness of the cabin and trek to the outhouse a bit difficult, but adapted well for the three days we were there. She and her sister are natives of Guam and during the quiet summer nights while we sat around the kitchen table, I listened with awe to the stories of Japanese internment camps and occupation during World War II. To hear about their experiences first hand added another dimension to the role of the cabin and the crafting of the thesis. There is a strong oral tradition within the family and a desire on the part of my friend Ann to preserve those stories. Their narratives join the other narratives that invade the interior walls and natural spaces surrounding signatures to them. The people, the flora and fauna of Clarion Peak are the voices of those narratives.

The 80 acres on which the cabin is situated is my link with nature, a passionate and sometimes violent force in my becoming. The silence of the snow, the clamour of the crow, the trance of the trees are the narratives of this space. It is one of the spaces that answers my question, what is it that eases the transition from space to space? It is the familiarity, the memory of past experience. And it is the future, the creation of anticipatory moments within the space. The seasons. Sperm enter my nostrils fertilising my consciousness with its potential. Sunlight and warmth narrate the coming sleep, changing their clothes, and for those selected - death.

At times as I walk the land I am overcome by the stillness. I know that there is movement, activity. There are signs but I wonder where they are. Are they hiding from my intrusion or are they observing the inspiration I acquire as I wander among them.

Spent the night at the cabin. What a wonderful experience. I love it there. It is so peaceful, simple, natural, whole. It's light and makes me feel so free. I froze. My head was so cold. Although it wasn’t unbearable. Need to come up again this weekend. To think and write. Explore. Wander and wonder. Create. (Journal entry, September 8, 1993 )
WORK SPACES

Besides ritual the work space is most important and significant. They too can move and change and be subjected to discontinuities. They provide the methodology with its inspiration, atmosphere, and desire. Work spaces are embedded in the process, unconsciously and unintentionally. They have the power to write the life (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995). Work spaces have received more attention in the literature with positive and negative issues. These spaces can be defined in many different ways depending on the context. I will cite examples from the literature, my participants and my personal work spaces.19

Writers often comment about their work spaces. Annie Dillard (1989) wrote in an eight by ten prefabricated tool shed. She says you can read in the space of a coffin but to write you need the space of a shed meant for mowers and spades. Rybczynski’s architectural study (1989) identifies the writer with their dwelling, which is frequently their workspace. In contrast to Annie Dillard, Samuel Clemens’ nineteen room mansion was “extravagant and idiosyncratic” (ibid., p. 171). “Clemens (who coined the term ‘Gilded Age’ ) loved luxury, and the opulence suited him ---- and his alter ego, Mark Twain -----perfectly” (ibid., p. 172). My work space lies somewhere closer to Dillard, small, and furnished with a computer that sits upon a large oak work table hand made by a friend, book shelves and cases that line the floor and ceiling, filing cabinets, radio and CD player, rocking chair (which is constantly occupied by one of my two cats), couch (which is occupied by the one who lost out on the preferred rocking chair), and art corner with drawing table. My art work surrounds me with small collections of artifacts here and there adding to the clutter and comfort.

I am a bit disconcerted by some new innovations in out of home workspaces primarily office areas. Seems as though it’s a question of rhetoric and reality. Desks are no longer desks. According to an article in the Atlantic Monthly (August, 1996) they are called ‘work planes’ which are desks on wheels for use in offices where employees work in flexible teams. Most of the furniture is portable to accommodate a changing environment that is populated by ‘mobiles’ who are chiefly off site workers. Shared work spaces are called ‘commons’. ‘Work nests’ consist of a mixture of rolling components

19 As I write it is six AM and I am ‘working’ in a busy hotel lobby in Coronado, California, and the thoughts continue to flow.
and so on. What this indicates to me is a lack of permanence or rootedness in the work place. There is no home space or chance to develop a sense of ‘at home’. In my opinion there is an unnatural deliberate disengaging of person and space.

Earle’s work area was his dwelling and yard. I never saw the interior where he did his models. His yard was always open to public scrutiny. Neither space would be desirable by most people appearing disorganised and cluttered.

June and Norm work within their dwelling both having their own assigned work spaces. June’s flowers dominate most of the rooms while Norm’s tools and work bench are in the basement.

Their work spaces do not change. I have several work spaces, Toronto being where I spend the most time. However, my favorite is the cabin. The more time I spend there the more difficult it is to leave. At times I believe that I could live there as even with its lack of amenities. It would be difficult but challenging and ‘awe’ful...

**A Portrait of Passion**

Like great works, deep feelings always mean more than they are conscious of saying. (Camus, 1955, p. 17)

Mere ‘anxiety’, Heidegger says, is at the source of everything. (In Camus, p. 19)

I have chosen to include this section since as the title implies, passion has influenced the construction of the text. I envisioned this as a tool in the scheme of technique and method. Passions in my opinion are the forces in the expression and articulation of ideas and nourishing qualities and quantities in the method and inquiry of narrative.

When I first started this section the focus was on the term ‘depression’. William Styron (1990) prefers the term ‘brainstorm’ since as a description of a mood disorder it might evoke sympathy from an uninformed lay person. I prefer this term because the term depression has a very negative connotation and can be socially destructive to a person who has experienced this condition on any level. Granted brainstorm is a euphemism but one that I feel is necessary and helpful. I’ve thought about my own term ‘moodstorm’ which
is emotionally specific. This condition has received its own share of attention in social and personal contexts. It is predicted to be the number one health issue in the new millennium. When I visited my former school in 1996, the nurse was anxious to show me newly installed medicine cabinets, a result of an increase in inhalers and anti-depressant medications. This was in a middle school! Creative persons - particularly writers and artists - experience brainstorm. Since my readings and musings have branched into these emotions, I want to abandon the term depression in order to 'de'psychologize and narrativise the discourse. My own experiences have encompassed moods of joy as well as mild melancholia, the kind of joy that Aristotle characterizes as a result of being whole heartedly engaged in an activity. I desire to explore the narrative passions that have provoked creativity in my life and the crafting of this text.

William Styron's book, Darkness Visible, is a memoir of madness. His alcohol abuse over a period of forty years masked and calmed the anxiety constantly present as a result of a state of mind he didn't fully understand though he never wrote a line under its influence and it was his "magical conduit to fantasy and euphoria, and to the enhancement of the imagination" (ibid., 1990, p. 40). There are studies (Jamison, 1997) that show creativity and moods are linked. In a study of 47 British writers and artists Jamison found that 38 percent had been previously treated for mood disorders. Other corroborative studies have confirmed that creative individuals experience manic - depression more often than the general population.

Extreme changes in mood exaggerate the normal tendency to have conflicting selves; the undulating, rhythmic and transitional moods and cognitive changes so characteristic of manic-depressive illness can blend or harness seemingly contradictory moods, observations and perceptions. Ultimately these fluxes and yokings may reflect truth in humanity and nature more accurately than could a more fixed viewpoint. (Jamison, p. 49)

There are other disorders that contribute to creativity and some treatment strategies ignore the benefits these disorders can bestow on an
individual (Jamison, 1997). A case study of an autistic woman by Oliver Sachs (1995) describes a person consumed by a passion and intensity through adolescence and college that launched her career. After this time in her life she needed to calm down otherwise her body would destroy itself. She started on small doses of an anti-depressant and found that the medication took away much of her fervor. She admitted that if the medication had been prescribed in her early twenties, she may not have accomplished as much. She missed the emotions she once felt. A poet is also cited as being calmer, stabler on doses of Lithium for a manic-depressive disorder yet he felt that his poetry lost much of its force.

Passions. Depression. Creativity. How the death of Earle exploded a passion to write, to be creative. Have read that this affects other artists the same way. (Journal entry, December 8, 1996)

Am filled with such passion I feel as though I could write the whole thesis this morning. (Thoughts while driving, October 26, 1997)

Earle’s death had a profound effect on my moods and cognition. I made constant notes as I drove to Connecticut for his funeral. I thought about trees and if trees were free of man and disease if they would live forever and just keep adding their annual rings. Even though these thoughts have poor scientific basis since the principle of succession is contradictory, the images kept generating and my need for evidence proceeded with vigor and certainty. I searched for books. Anything I could get my body into that had to do with trees living forever. “Following the rhythm of the seasons, the tree, like the phoenix, regenerates itself, and therefore appears to be immortal” (Boyer, 1996, p. 14). Historically, many cultures perceived certain trees as being immortal.

Closer to our own time, the Romans and Celts venerated the oak and the yew. The yew gave warriors the wood for their bows, its branches provided the poison for arrows and also suicide. It is
under a yew that legend insists that Robin Hood lies buried, with his sword at his head, his arrows at his feet and his bow of yew at his side. Yews still haunt graveyards; some are a thousand years old or more. Their roots, it is said, become charged with the thoughts of the dead which their branches scatter to the winds. The yew’s slow growth and the density of its wood allowed it to survive the Ice Age. The Druids believed it was immortal. (Boyer, 1996, p. 22)

Like the trees I thought that Earle, too, would live forever. I never thought about his mortality but now my mind was racing from life to death. Back and forth. The trees themselves are evidence of death as they display their ‘living’ autumn color only soon to be followed by a cadaverous black and white landscape. Now I know what is meant in cinematic terms when they say ‘in living color’. Why not just ‘in color’? It is the prelude to death.

I wondered how Earle’s death would affect the Spencers. They are his age and have recent histories of cancer. The combination of that ‘anticipatory moment’, a new development in the temporality and essence of the text and a persistent solemnity contributed to a pregnant psyche. My first impulse was to go back over my data and look for references to illness. Then my mind raced to the visual - to examine my photos for evidence. Like my mother. Was there a different look in his eyes? Was it real or invented? An expectation? I was in a frenzy to explore and write.

Associated with this mood was passion and in my view no one can create or write without it. It is this particular state that is operative during my creative times, even though according to research, inactivity is characteristic of moods associated with sadness. I tend to be productive in visual renderings of life situations as much of the subject matter reflects.

Some of my best paintings and drawings were composed after I had been suspended indefinitely from a college in North Carolina. Many were vulnerable and agonizing self-portraits. Landscapes were dreary and gray and the structures gave the appearance of ‘diseased’ homes. This period in my life was artistically prolific. The paintings have since disappeared as a result of my mother’s moving. I feel as though in their absence I too am absent within this chronicle of time and history.
"Loss in all of its manifestations is the touchstone of depression----in the progress of the disease and, most likely in its origin" (Styron, 1990, p. 56). According to psychiatrist James Hillman moving is one of the greatest psychic shocks. Within this context of loss and separation is where I would like to place myself and the narrative. On a personal level loss and separation of home and the search for home in the past two years has precipitated periodic melancholia that has affected my physical as well as mental becoming. I was able to relate to some of the symptoms described by Styron and some of them are in the following chapters. I mention them because I believe that within the process of thesis writing this is not uncommon. I have discovered that the nature of narrative reveals a process of reliving a sometimes painful past with psychological implications. Psychiatrist James Hillman (1989) asks the question, 'What's the dream now?' My interpretation of this question is that we acknowledge our past but proceed to the present and think about our present in contrast to a Freudian past. This autoethnographic frame will be the seed for another thesis.

Hillman (1989) has a unique view on moods. To him low periods are the ways the individual connects with the soul. Soul is a perspective, a viewpoint toward things. It is in other terms the psyche. It is this inactive, slow, sad time that the individual connects with the self. This experience according to Hillman could and should be a learning experience.

Yet through depression we enter depths and in depths find soul. Depression is essential to the tragic sense of life. It moistens the dry soul, and dries the wet. It brings refuge, limitation, focus, growth, weight, and humble powerlessness. (p. 153)

Associated with severe forms of depression and in combination with certain anti-depressants is suicide. One of my favorite renderings of the notion of 'not' committing suicide is Dorothy Parker's poem. I quoted this bit of literature in my younger years during a low period in my life.

RESUME
Razors pain you:
Rivers are damp;
Acids stain you;

RESUME
And drugs cause cramp.
Guns aren't lawful;
Nooses give;
Gases smell awful;
You might as well live.

This phenomenon has become an interest which has been fueled by media stories and demographics. With the baby boomers approaching their 'golden years' and the emphasis on quality of life, much thought is on euthanasia and doctor assisted suicide. Many of the authors and artists I have read and read about have been victims: Anne Sexton, Virginia Woolf, Margaret Laurence, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Diane Arbus. Some living writers contemplate the phenomenon as they approach old age. Carol Heilbrun in her book *The Last Gift of Time* wanted to end her life at age 70 since she felt that would be the end of her productive years. Even I wrote in January of 1990:

*Time - as I look at the wrinkles on my hand and think of how little I have. I always thought I would die a violent death. For some reason, tonight I know I will take my own life. How wonderful to be in such control. Or is it?*

My journal gives me no clue as to the context of this entry but my imagination can certainly fill in the spaces. This thesis is as much about death as it is about life. And I suppose life and its quality just prior to death is the moment.

Weariness comes at the end of acts of a mechanical life, but at the same time it inaugurates the impulse of consciousness. It awakens consciousness and provokes what follows. What follows is the gradual return into the chain or it is a definitive awakening. (Camus, 1955, p. 19)
Maps and Charts

They had crossed some invisible bar, were no longer departing but arriving.
(Proulx, 1996, p. 32)

Charts and maps make visible what the imagination can’t. They display findings and emphasize particular aspects of the study. Maps give perspective on distances and represent the linear temporal travel contexts. That is why they are included.

A sense of space requires some point of reference. My data gathering took me over 10,000 geographical miles per year over a period of two and a half years with some extra miles on side trips. Not only is the mileage significant but the landscapes, their uniqueness, their sensual effect, their temporal quality, and their dialectic sense of alienation and belonging framed a narrative of its own. These thoughts are reflected in sentiments of ‘at home’ on the road. These experiences are described in other chapters. Maps ‘ground’ the journey.
Chapter 4

Who Are (Were) We?

Then he gave the child back to its trembling nurse.
Cathfa looked up from the chess-board.
‘She is to be called the ‘Troubler,’ said he.
And from that day ‘Deirdre’ was her name.
(Stephens, 1951, p. 10)

Introduction

The parenthetical (were) in the title is a recent insertion and refers to the untimely death on October 23, 1996 of my participant Earle Brockway. I suppose I could keep it in the present tense but the fact that he is gone needs to be a constant reminder in order to dwell within the temporal cyclic realm of narrative and the living (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). I feel about Earle the way I feel about my father. I feel their presence. Their mortality is a cyclic phase, a new dark moon revealing secrets and posing questions. I thought I knew both of them so well. I have known Earle for 25 years and he now appears a stranger. There were so many things I wanted to ask him especially since I began this thesis. The topic and space of home is so intimate and personal. Spending time with someone in that context with the intent of sharing notions of belonging and comfort builds a special relationship. Just the two of us on those sunny quiet days that permitted us to extend our time together were special. We sat under that distinguished tree which, like an ox burdened with a yoke whose view skyward exposed blocks and tackles and twisted wire rope, validated how important space is and how that space and time tell us who we really are.

D. But that tree must be a hundred years old.
E. I don’t think so no. Maybe it is.
D. That’s a huge trunk Earle for a maple.
E. 25 years older than me? (Laugh)
D. When is your birthday again?
E. August 20th. That oak tree there that I hoist boats out from
the limb there. I always remember I was about 11 or 12 years old when we first come here that tree was about that oh maybe 6, 7 maybe 8 feet and I was a kid then. I was hanging on the top bendin it down. I remember my mother saying 'don't do that'. Look at it now. (Laugh).

That's what this is all about. My understanding of time and its place among space is just beginning. We are reminded by Jackson (1994) that what brings us together is “not that we live near each other, but that we share the same timetable: the same work hours, the same religious observances, the same habits and customs” (p. 160). This sense of time and sense of ritual is what creates our sense of place and community / interdependence, our concept of home and sentiment of 'at home'. This cyclical sense of time, the recurrence of events and celebrations is what gives us continuity and unity in constant change. 'Primary groups', a term used by Schutz (1967) to describe life at home means to have in common with others at home a section of time and space. The content of the relationship is intimacy which Schutz (1967) defines as the degree of reliable knowledge we have about another person, group, etc. enabling us to interpret what the person means and forecast actions and reactions.

'To feel at home' is an expression of the highest degree of familiarity and intimacy. Life at home follows an organised pattern of routine; it has its well-determined goals and well-proved means to bring them about, consisting of a set of traditions, habits, institutions, timetables for activities of all kinds, etc. Most of the problems of daily life can be mastered by following this pattern. (Schutz, 1964, p. 108)

As I related this notion of routine and pattern to my participants, the negative connotation I always attributed to the presence of routine and pattern in my own life assumed a new meaning. What I have learned from them is that these recurring tasks give continuity to what can be perceived as an accumulation of fragmented activity. The significance to home is the presence of and continuation of traditions, institutions, etc. and the
awareness of the goals that make daily life organized.

Lots of background noise. Can't make out anything. The rhythm of the corn being scraped, the background sounds throughout this interview are more intriguing than the content of the conversation. There is something eerie, spiritual, about the rhythm and its place in the dialogue. Something else is going on. The sound and rhythm add another dimension. Can't put it in the text. Or can you? 20

This event reminds me of a quote by Bachelard (1964) from Henri Bosco’s *Malicroix* in which Bosco describes sound as lending color to space and in doing so confers a kind of sound body upon it. Perhaps this is what occurred. The space was colored by the rhythmic up and down of the scraper ejecting the raw kernels bit by bit into the bowl that would transform these crunchy yellow molars into a soft creamy winter accomplice to mashed potatoes. Sounds’ dialectic silence suggests unlimited space according to Bosco. The absence of sound leaves the space pure and gives the sensation of something deep, pure and boundless. The sound was not an impure intrusion but a reinforcement to the ritualistic ambient rhythm of June’s kitchen. Our interaction was bonded by something special.

This epiphany of contextual time and space enhanced by my reading of Connelly & Clandinin, Dewey, and Jackson has wrought a personal unity of theme and purpose. The ‘moral order’ that Connelly & Clandinin (1990) attach to cycles and is embedded in personal practical knowledge of participants frames a concept of time and tense that in my view values the present. My awareness of this hermeneutical and phenomenological concept of time is not only extended by the approach of aging and death but by the sharing of this time with people and spaces whom I desire and value. This segment of text introduces participants in the context of intimate physical spaces and their relationship to notions of home and sentiments of ‘at home’. To review an essence of my thesis the space experienced exists on a continuum that expresses an actual concrete physical experience and an abstract affective experience. There are also epistemological implications in

20 This was a reflective comment excerpted from a Spencer tape transcription dated September 6, 1995.
abstract affective experience. There are also epistemological implications in this non-educational non-institutional context, especially within Connelly & Clandinin’s view of personal practical knowledge and how our knowledge is shaped by concepts of home which we construct or invent in various contexts.

**Coastal Magic**

I have always been lured to the mystique and magic of marine coastal areas, its consistent and predictable performance of change and motion, moving like particles of atoms, like me, transforming to greet the next storm, the fisherman’s waders or the jaws of a backhoe. This space of coast land is Guilford, Connecticut, called Menunkatuck by the Indians and home to me for 25 years.

There is something compelling about coastal regions. One feels strangely drawn by the starkness, the constant motion, the crashing sound of water against the shore -- it is soothing and almost hypnotic. Here, the two great surface substances of the globe, land and ocean meet with a complex, never-ending dance of wind, waves, tide, erosion, and sedimentation. The profound dissimilarity of water and solid ground keeps the coast in constant change and adjustment, making it a blur of activity in comparison to the leisurely pace of most geologic processes elsewhere. (Bell, 1985, p. 73)

My love for the sea developed at an early age. My first memory is of being whisked to one of Long Island’s hidden sandy beaches in a 22’ hydroplane by my ‘uncle’ Paul (no relation, just a good friend of my parents) who was a professional racer. These traditional weekend jaunts allowed my sister and I to play around the beach, bare chested, in nothing but a boys’ speedo type bottom. I can still feel the bright red and white polka dot knit against what skin it covered. As I became older the ritual continued on a more sophisticated level. We no longer traveled by boat and I had to wear a top to my bathing suit. The car became our vehicle. Field nine at Jones Beach State Park was our destination. We packed very elaborate breakfasts that were
cooked over charcoal fires. Jones Beach is located on the south shore of Long Island, an expanse of ocean beach world famous for its fine white glacial sand and tumultuous surf. There are a series of numbered ‘fields’, each with its own unique facilities. Field nine, the smallest, simplest (the least amenities), and most isolated was ours. You had to get there by seven AM otherwise the parking lot was full and you were directed to another field. We knew practically everyone. Our bond was religious. We were mostly members of the same church group. After breakfast it was game time - volleyball, modified baseball, cards (for the elders). Lunch was a hot dog at the pavilion after which was a pre-digestion rest. And then home, exhausted, exhilarated and sunburned. These outings were intimate and continued throughout my high school years. The expanse of ocean and sand gave a sense of freedom balanced with a sense of community and belonging. There was to me an understanding of interdependence of the natural world and human beings, a sense of ‘be’longing, harmony of the finest example.

Sailing is one of my other sea-faring passions. The following passage is from an unpublished photo essay The Music I See : Harmony of the Soul.

Under sail with Eroica you are one with the sea. There is very little freeboard. No electronics or standing head room. But she cuts through the water with such grace and ease that I can honestly say, my seasick passengers have been minimal. I love being out on Eroica. I take delight in the control and lack of it. I rejoice in the silence and sounds. I revel in the purity of mind. Here I am detached from the duties on shore. Like a spider who left the web. I am free. I can weave another or return.

Although the ocean environment is spectacular, my favourite of all coastal features is the salt marsh. Here is true magic, wealth and beauty. They are sacred spaces and they compose the interstices of the coastline marine landscape. The stability and continuity they evoke compared to the constant change of other shoreline phenomena has always been a source of comfort and awe.

Life is so diverse and plentiful. Many species of fish use these marsh areas as breeding grounds. The rivers provide seed beds for a thriving oyster
industry. It is habitat to flora and fauna that sustain the nutritive and cleansing value of the Long Island Sound. At one point in our history we drained the salt marshes of their natural pockets of water and placed pesticide bait to control mosquitoes. Not only did we kill mosquitoes (temporarily) but we killed 'others'. Small fish that inhabit the pools of water that form in the marshes not only feed on mosquito larvae but they provide food for predators such as waterfowl. Left to its natural control we would have been better off. Many people call the marshes 'wastelands' but a walk on one of them among the rhythmic swaying spartena patens and alternalora with fiddler crabs darting about mud banks and sea lavender adding its blue and purple hues against the backdrop of luscious green would reveal a portrait that would change that perception. Today there are laws protecting their development and destruction. Because of space and time I cannot go into detail of the value of these areas, but I encourage familiarity with their ecological significance.

Salt marshes fringe the Spencer and Brockway homesteads. I'm not sure if this is coincidental or Jungian synchronicity (meaningful chance). I know when I visit with them and we sit outdoors I sense the harmony, that intimacy with this mystical space - and so do they. The birds and the butterflies are not afraid. They hover about the Spencer's yard with prolific hunger attracted by the variety of flowers rich with nectar biding their time until the sharp edges of June's scissors cuts short their lives to participate among her future floral creations. Earle's shade and tall oaks and maples attracted a different kind of natural visitor. But they were there. His birds sought the insects embedded in the woods of those branches too tired to ward off invaders. Sounds of hollow rhythmic tapping accompanied our conversations. A love of their land is shared. June wishes she had been more persistent in keeping their original homestead.

*My only wish for alot of money would have been to buy the land back and keep it.* (Field notes, March 19, 1997)

And Earle,

*The reason that we bought the uh that land across the road there wasn't to store boats or anything. It was so that wouldn't anybody build a house over there.* (Tape transcription September 5, 1995)
never regretted increasing his land ownership to surround his already bucolic setting.

The boundaries were already established when I purchased my house. Route 77, two established neighbours to the north and south and West River (which provides a fresh water marsh land) form my borders in Guilford. Not only does the river provide my drinking water but it is a haven to a variety of permanent flora and visiting fauna. Bloodroot, interspersed with Jack in the Pulpit cover the southeastern slope, while the moist banks of the river abound with skunk cabbage and false hellebore. The fish and turtles attract waterfowl and raccoons while the woodchucks prefer the uplands. Our settings compose strong identities centred within the natural experiential world. As Bachelard (1964) in his reference to inhabited space suggests the concrete evidence is the non-I that protects the I.

Glacial Majesty

Perhaps the other fascinating bond among us of this shoreline area is its history. Geologically it is glacial in nature. The many islands off the coast are evidence of bedrock and other glacial features such as moraines. As described by Bell (1985) Faulkner's Island, an irregular dollop of sand and boulders visible from the Guilford Marina is a moraine in origin and causing its knell, eroding at a rapid rate. The island had an historic home built in 1802 complete with lighthouse and keeper to warn mariners of the treacherous surrounding waters. To the west is a pile of rocks called Goose Island, a fishing ground teeming with excellent eating tautogs (black fish) but not good for boat keels. Due north of Faulkner's is a sand spit. My tenure as dockmaster and a captain in the marine patrol positioned me out there at least once a month towing a sailboat that had run aground ignoring the visual warnings. The buildings on the island burned down in 1976 and were replaced by an automated system much to the disappointment of local residents. Today Faulkner's is under the jurisdiction of the Fish and Wildlife Service and is part of the Stewart McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. This limits access to the public protecting it from further erosion. The island is not only an important navigational aid but it is also a facility for biological and geological research. It has the third largest endangered Roseate Tern colony in New England.
Connecticut's coast is sheltered by Long Island but the calmer wind and water does not mean that effects of tides and weather do not occur. As Bell says, "from a human point of view, the dilemma of the Coast is its transitory nature. By building homes and lives around the Coast, we seek stability where there is none" (1985, p. 94). It is within this tension of stability and instability that the Brockways, the Spencers and the DeCarions chose to settle among change.

**Ethnic Yankees**

Culturally Guilford has an unique history. It was purchased in 1639 by Reverend Henry Whitfield from a Sachem squaw named Shaumpishuh of the Menunkatuck tribe. Because of disease the tribe at that time only numbered 47 (Twelve Porringers 1975, p.8). "12 fathom Wompom, 12 glasses, 12 payer of shoes, 12 Hatchetts, 12 paire of stockings, 12 hooes, 4 kettles, 12 knives, 12 hatts, 12 porringers, 12 spoons, and 2 English coates" (In Twelve Porringers, p. 8) was the price for the town.

Its uncommon history lies in the presence of its farming operations. Two large families operate fruit orchards, produce farms and nurseries. They have made for a heterogeneous community, particularly with the infusion of Puerto Ricans who were brought to work the fields during the planting and harvest seasons. Both farms have always employed immigrants, particularly Latinos. I'm not sure what living conditions were provided but most of the workers were men who returned to their families in winter. I befriended several of them and managed to get a wonderful recipe for Puerto Rican black bean soup from 'Ellie' whose family happened to be from the same home town as my grandmother.

**Recipe for Black Bean Soup**

*(This recipe is from Ellie's original notes written on a restaurant 'dupe' check probably during the summer of 1972 or 1973)*

**Beef Consomme**

1 lb Blk Tender beans
1 med onion
3 stock of celery
--- Soak the beans in warm water for 3 hours
--- drain the water place the Beans in the pot, leveled with consomme (beef)
--- dice the onion and celery, saute with salt pork or bacon grease (or bacon)
--- mix with beans bring to boil until beans are tender
   Serve as is or may be pureed in blender
--- add salt pepper and sherry wine to taste.
(I have substituted a veggie or chicken stock for the beef consumme.)

Some, like Ellie, chose to stay and establish residence in Guilford. It
appears they were accepted into the community. The evidence was my
recollection of a neon sign in the window of one of the local taverns
advertising ‘bien fria’ which referred to the temperature of the beer. To me
this meant that Latinos were welcomed. When my parents visited from New
York, it was a ritual for us to stop in for a cold beer on a Saturday afternoon.
One of the men we had befriended brought flowers to my mother during one
of these informal gatherings. The tavern has since been closed and converted
into a hardware store. I don’t believe the town has ever had any covenant
laws and several black families have always been members of the
community, one of them sharing June’s maiden name, Walker. Charles
Hubbard in his description of River Street quotes:

Then came two or three houses occupied by negros and just
before reaching the home of Mr. Amos Hotchkiss was the town
pound close by a little brook. (1939, p. 18)

And what kindred souls one might meet on River Street: Uncle
John Hubbard driving home the cows, Henry Pynchon Robinson
out for a stroll and here comes London Butler with cheerful
 ebony face all lighted up with another of his stories born of that
ever active imagination. There is only one River Street. (1939, p.
18)

This diverse milieu with the Latino element gave me a sense of (be)longing,
that strange combination of desire and interdependence.
It is true, of course, as the future-tellers maintain, that technology is changing the world and that we must live with change. But man has not changed. He still breathes, eats, and makes love in hopelessly old-fashioned ways. He still wants to roam the fields and woods and swim in lakes and rivers. He still yearns to live with the tribe and be part of its rites and activities. And he still wants to give his place to live that personal distinction, that something that makes him feel he belongs. (Von Eckardt, 1967, p. 4)

A Maternal Fragment

Since the writing of this section, some changes have occurred. Seems as though my participants are in a constant state of flux. Additions and subtractions. Births and deaths. Texts and sub texts. My mother unintentionally appears more and more as a ghostly sub text. Memories and images of who she is and who she was keep making their way into this document. I take and choose photos of her. In December of 1996 I wrote:

The portraits of my mother are disturbing. Her face is one of a blank daze, showing little emotion except of despair. She has no signs of joy or hope that her circumstances might change. She is not smiling and when she does it is forced. The scars from drugs and at times a difficult life are there for all of us to see and hopefully never experience.

I focus on the meaning ‘that her circumstances might change’. Perhaps her lack of hope is that she knows they won’t change. It appears that I wrote this with the anticipation that her ‘home’ (or health) could.

Perhaps it’s my mother’s social and historical death that is so consuming and unacceptable. I use the term historical death to signify her lack of memory and dementia. In my view she has no means to establish history. She may on some level but it is not evident. Or is it her dementia and its slow process of consumption. Am I creating a time lapse portrait of a leaf through its seasons - a human time lapse portrait of budding bright green life, reds, yellows, and browns of deterioration, the separation, the fall to the earth,
and the black and white images of loss and impending death. Each time I see her there is something missing, not only in her personal belongings like her glasses and front tooth, that disappear from her room but in her persona. I wanted her to smile for a photo. Am I the one who is demented in my desire for a photo of this nature or do I want to render a reality with this medium? Do I want this memory in print and picture? I feel a strong sense of conflict and tension with identity and ethics.

**A Paternal Fragment**

My father’s birth in the text occurred as my lack of knowledge of his ancestors became more evident. I feel as though I didn’t know him because I never knew them. This must be what it means to be rooted (or not rooted). I have begun to learn this from my participants and research.

It had what I lacked and wanted: permanence, tranquility, a traditional and customary acceptance, a stable and neighbourly social order. I envied people like Lewis Hill, their ancestry and the sureness with which they knew who they were and where they belonged. (Wallace Stegner, Yankee Magazine, 1993)

My search for the DeCarion-Leonard family will be a project that will continue long after the completion of this text. So little information is available and there is no one alive that is related. The deaths in this family were young and sudden. No time to prepare.

**A Mortal Vignette**

The death of Earle is contemporaneous with the death of one of my cats, Neville. As previously mentioned Earle died suddenly of heart failure on October 23, 1996. Neville had a more untimely, unnatural and horrific death. At only seven years old, she accidentally fell off a second floor deck railing and did not perform the normal cat fall of landing on her feet. My loss was exaggerated by the fact that I was away at the time. I still expect to see her in one of her usual cat spots. She is mentioned here as a participant because she was my ‘thesis’ cat and responsible for the ‘hair balls’ that my computer

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21 This death’s discourse is subsequently recorded in another chapter. I do not want my readers to think that human death is subordinate to an animals’.
still spits out once in a while. She was also a plant eater, her favourite being the spider in the kitchen. Most people know what happens when cats consume plant matter. When she finally threw up it was all over the computer and keyboard. While I worked, her presence was unmistakable. She consistently positioned herself on whatever I was doing so that I had to work around her, never considering to disturb her. I used to love to watch how delicately she avoided stepping on the keyboard as she meandered about my work area. She was not only beautiful but intelligent. She was great company to me on those long lonely days that we as researchers experience during this challenging endeavor. I miss her terribly and still feel (and desire) her participation as I imagine her ‘at home’.

As this diversion leads me back to humans, the death of Earle and the life of my mother continue to weave in and out. I must admit though, as I drove to Connecticut for Earle’s funeral, I had a strong feeling that my mother was not going to be around for very long. Two years ago I wrote the same thing about Earle. In chapter three I stated that his lifestyle would not sustain him forever. Was this a forewarning? Why am I feeling this same sense about my mother?

An Intimate Crossing

This part of the methodology and narrative destroy several boundaries concerning researcher and participant relationships in qualitative research. First of all this researcher is a participant and case study. Her life has been reconstructed through the literary genre of autobiography. Secondly, the myth of typical anthropological distance is truly myth. Deirdre’s relationship with her participants is personal and intimate. That is why she chose them.

Norm’s cousin had put together a genealogy of the Spencer family, going to the early 1600’s in England. And the name Spencer was originally DeSpencer. He was a despencer (dispencer) for the I’m not going to tell you. I don’t know what king it was, the king and queen in England. ...eventually the ‘De’ was dropped and it became Spencer. And then they eventually came to New England. (Tape transcription, September 16, 1996)

22 My Aunt Titi used to call a spider plant ‘mala madre’ which translated means ‘bad mother’ because she throws her children out. Who are the children?
The Spencers have been like parents to her since she moved to Guilford. She has spent family holidays with them and frequently shares meals. She has stayed overnight in their home and entertained them in hers.

Deirdre bought her first wooden sailboat from Earle in 1968 and has maintained some kind of contact with him through the years talking boats and journalising her encounters with photographs. He was a bit of a hermit but as Dr. Connelly pointed out, he was out in the world with his work. June also shares this quality. In an informal interview:

She also told me about how someone in the neighborhood has characterised her as a recluse. She told them that she had no need to go out anywhere anyway. (Field notes April 11, 1996)

Her intimate knowledge of their lifestyles is central to this thesis. They represent in her opinion a disappearing folk group. They are the traditional, rooted, self taught, caring 'elders' or to use the more politically correct 'older' persons of this century. As so well expressed by Dr. Connelly, they’ve had a lifetime of struggling with and developing a concept of home and know what it is, unlike their younger contemporaries who are still in their formative years. Their knowledge is natural in an experiential sense and related to their ways of knowing and sense of home.

D. It's interesting that you use that word 'caring' with stuff at home. It seems like the things that you learn at home are more humanistic for people than the school stuff.
J. Yeah it was. I mean neighbours if someone was sick you always cooked to take to them and if anyone needed help you were there. It's just the way that our family was well I think Norm's family too. They were brought up that whoever needed help you were there. So it's- you never hesitated to do whatever you could. And I don't think that the families now the kids are going in so many different directions and there are so many outlets for them with all the soccer and the baseball, bands and all the extra curricular activity really that we didn't have so we didn't miss it. (Tape transcription, June 19, 1995)
During this same interview I told June that I’ve never seen her look so good and peaceful. I thought that in the past couple of years she seemed happier and more ‘at home’. She said that the reason was that there was no one else to take care of any more. She was no longer a caregiver and was free of those responsibilities. I made these comments to June as she described a letter she had received from cousin who had a similar operation as June.23 He explained to her:

...how fortunate they were to have a ‘second chance’ at life. June had not thought about her operation in these terms. That she had the operation and it was over and done with. That’s the end of it. She doesn’t give it a second thought. She can’t remember being in the hospital or what it was like and doesn’t think about it. She feels wonderful. (Tape transcription, June 19, 1998)

She mentioned in another interview that she would do what was necessary to get healthy even if it meant chemotherapy. Her health is important to her lifestyle and so is her tenacity to do what she wants to do. She is very strong willed. So is Norm and so was Earle. Can this be attributed to a tradition within this agrarian self-sufficient concept of home?

At School At Home

Their learning was not always dependent on schooling. They learned from ancestors and customs. Their home schooling was of a concrete nature compared to the conceptual nature of institutional schooling. This kind of life long experiential learning has followed Earle, Norm and June right through to their elder status. Following are some examples of the acquisition of this type of knowledge. This dialogue between Earle and me occurred while he was showing me some old photos and boat models.

D. Wait a minute Earle, don’t put them away yet. Did your father make this model?
E. Yeaup. That was one of the last power boats that he built.

(Looking at boat model)

23 June had been diagnosed as having colon cancer and underwent an operative procedure followed by chemotherapy.
D. This is what I was doing. He made the model and took the lines off this?
E. Yeaup. It was 1" to the foot. I think that model is probably around little over 30'30" long. He'd clear the whole shop out and lay... it was all laid out on paper. I don't know where he got the big sheets of paper.

The following conversation was a bit later the same day.

E. You can see the angle changes. That's the outside of the planking but then when you lay out to make the forms it's got to be on the inside of the planking. And, well, I built some too. He taught me that. I always remember that. Uh then we'd lay the measurements the lines out full size on the floor. If there was any little uh imperfection in the model it would show up in the full size measurement. Take the whole shop floor to do it. And um that was two or three days work to do it.

In boatbuilding terms this complex process is called 'lofting'. In the old tradition sections of the hull were laid out full size on the 'loft' floor and the curves penciled onto the floor. The steamed oak staves were then bent to the curves on the floor.24

Earle's knowledge of physics has always awed me. He works by himself and moves the boats around his yard as if he had a crew. From my own experience I know how heavy a Brockway 9' dinghy can be. In delivering a boat he would put a 16' to 20' scow on top of his old Cadillac with the help of an assortment of rolling logs, cables, and pulleys. All by himself he hoisted this sea beast up and over and drove off. To my knowledge he never had a problem. Following is a conversation from a tape transcription where Earle was discussing a delivery.

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24 Staves are narrow pieces of wood forming parts of the sides of the boat.
He had to get to New Haven to get his pickup truck and come back and we got to talkin and you know I wanted save him all that driving back and forth. I said it'd go up on top of your station wagon. Got it up on top of the station wagon. 'Oh no'. He didn't like the looks of that. And you know I do it all the time. I got that Cadillac that I uh I uh... The last boat was 15 feet long. I delivered it over to Waterford. If you' re accustomed to it.. Probably .. It's easier to tie 'em on and load 'em right side up. But since your going such a long distance it probably would be better to put it upside down and streamline the wind a little bit. (Tape transcription, June 22, 1995)

My understanding of Earle's knowledge of physics has been enhanced by my poor health during the past two years. My life had become quite sedentary as a result of foot injuries which caused my entire body muscle especially my legs to partially atrophy. I was weak and lacked stamina, a condition that was foreign and undesirable. I also experienced anxiety. I developed cramping in my shoulders as a result of working so many hours on the computer which produced a daily intolerable exhaustion. These health problems forced me to devise creative ways to perform tasks that in the past were effortless. As with Earle my knowledge of simple machines became an intuitive working one. Putting the kayak into the shed, assembling my new band saw, getting the new refrigerator into the cabin, doing all this by myself, required a combination of desire, ingenuity, ropes, pulleys, inclined planes etc. to transform a latent tacit knowledge into a concrete practical one.

Since my focus is experiential knowledge, I asked June to share her ways of knowing.

D. Now when you retired and got interested in the flowers how did you get interested in the drying and the cards?

J. Well the cards my aunt used to make them. And then Helen started, my sister Helen. And I- the first year we were down here, I would pick and press them, give them to Helen and then she said 'why don't you make your own cards'? So then I started. That was probably in '84 because that's when Grandma went into
the nursing home. Course I couldn’t of that here before that
because I didn’t have the room really and grandma was--I
couldn’t move anything in a spot. Everything had to be picked
up which was-- I mean I was used to that. If I was braiding rugs
everything was run in a corner. It wasn’t left anywhere it wasn’t
a mess or anything. If grandma could ever come back and see the
things I have around this house now...(laugh) To see if she ever
thought her dining table loaded up with dried bouquets and
pussy willows and cattails and other things. Oh she wouldn’t
know what to do. But I just I got into it gradually but I enjoyed it
and found that people are interested in dried flowers and cards
and things and so I picked it up as a business. And it’s just
mushroomed. I don’t have to advertise because people know
what I do and supplies I have.

D. But the furniture stuff comes from your father. Did your
father cane also?

I. Yes. My father taught us to cane. He taught Ruth and Helen
and Connie and I all went down for oh several nights until we
completed a chair. Connie has done a few. Ruth-I don’t think
Ruth ever did finish the one she started. Helen did finish and
then she started work on another one. Helen’s daughter Kathy
learned how to do it and the last one Helen did- She didn’t
finish. She couldn’t figure out how to finish it. I’ve been doing
chairs for forty years. And uh I don’t know how many hundred
I’ve done but it’s in the hundreds I know. I’ve always kept track.
I’ve got books. I could go back except the first few years probably.

But I just like to keep busy so I go from one thing to another.

They learned out of necessity and much was directed by the weather
and seasons. Home was functional in how they learned about the world. They
are a creative culture in which they make do with whatever they have and
much like the indigenous people that David Suzuki (1992) describes who
have “a profound and deeply rooted sense of place and relationship with the
entirety of the natural world” (p. 8).
Norm passes through and asks if I have seen the nest of annual occupants in the dried flower wreath on the front door. I said no and went to observe. They were sleeping. Norm pointed out that their scats are on the periphery of the nest rather than in where they sleep. That was an interesting observation. It created a decorative black and white border. (Field notes, April 2, 1996)

They spend a great deal of time outdoors and know how to do practically everything. There is something to be said of the kind of agrarian subsistence-type living that the Spencers and Brockways have experienced and the power of their spaces in this context. As Winifred Gallagher (1993) says:

Although we often overlook or disparage as romantic the effects of natural stimuli on our well-being, an expanding body of eclectic research shows that almost all of us rely on nature---whether it is sprouting from a flowerpot or stretching as far as the eye can see---to excite our senses, restore our nerves, invite us to play, enhance our social bonds, and supply meaning and metaphor to our lives. (p. 202)

There is an additional point of analysis here related to an agrarian lifestyle. During the Great Depression in the United States many families did not 'feel' its effects.

*Say, another thing. I always wondered about what the Depression was. We didn't have anything and didn't miss anything (Tape transcription, May 16, 1996)*

This was during a conversation with Norm about his family farm and how they lived together in the farmhouse. They had a garden and chickens and depended on the Long Island Sound for fish entrees. June's experience was similar.

*I - But my family didn't have... their finances were very small too so as Norm said with the depression. I don't remember*
anything different about it. It was just the way we lived. My uncle had a garden and we ate from that.

D- Now did you raise animals too?

J - No we didn't. We just had a small farmhouse, small garden, vegetable garden.

N - You had chickens didn't you?

J - Oh golly yes their were chickens. Uncle did a lot of clamming so there was always seafood. Another uncle was a lobsterman and fisherman too so there was always clams for chowder. And when we were at the shore in the summertime if we had company, my mother would send us down in front of the cottage to dig a pot of clams. (Tape transcription, May 16, 1996)

I explained to Norm and June that the situation was the opposite for my father. He lived in New York City and had to stand on bread lines for food.

They knew their ancestors, either personally or through narratives. There is a strong oral tradition and with the Spencers and an equally sturdy written tradition. They represent an image of home that signifies not only an experiential sense of 'at home' but also in the literal sense they are at home. One does not render an image of the Spencer's kitchen or Earle's yard without being enveloped by strong identities.

One other characteristic of Earle and Norm and June is their sense of humour. Norm in particular. I sent Norm a questionnaire asking him which of the photographs he took with the throw-away camera was his favorite. I asked him to be serious. His reply was "picking beans from stepladder because I'm full of beans anyway." I then asked why and what meaning does it have for you. His reply, "It means I had a successful crop. Nothing more, nothing less." June's stories at times involve practical jokes. Her twin brother, she tells, used to unravel golf balls and use the long rubber bands to stretch from tree to tree. He liked tripping the two 'maids' on their way to get an ice cream.

(Field notes September 1995) Earle's description of a hail storm shows a sort of metaphorical humor. "It wasn't just the gravity that was bringing them down, it was like shooting them out of a gun almost. Terrible force." (Tape transcription, June 22, 1995)
Shades of Currier and Ives! What buttonballs! Such barns with corn crib and yard, with white horns tossing over the wall! What a clamour of geese! Then Spencer's Creek and the nearby woods! He who has seen the Spencer place has seen New England. (Hubbard, 1939, p. 44)

The Spencers are no one special. They have not appeared on Larry King or Geraldo (thank goodness). I have known them for almost half my life. Our age spread is almost a quarter century. This puzzles June. In a conversation about this fact she said she doesn’t understand why I would want to be around old people and how we could be friends. She does, however, like being around young people. When I tell people I’m going to see my ‘friends’ in Guilford their image of who they are is quite different from who they ‘really’ are. Norm doesn’t question. He just accepts and his own culture becomes strange.

We talked about our relationship a bit and how my friend Ann and I have always thought of her and Norm as kind of surrogate parents. And she said it was very comfortable and how nice it is to have younger people around. She doesn’t understand fully how it works and why we would want to be around them. I told her that it was such a rich environment, that they’re interesting, warm, comfortable - it’s unique. You just don’t find people living their kind of lifestyle. (Field notes, June 19, 1995)

One does not share an encounter with Earle and not share his love of the outdoors. You were greeted outdoors no matter what the weather and that was where you conducted your business or pleasure. It was partly Earle’s preference and partly necessity. His house as I have previously mentioned was not hospitable to visitors.

I get tired of working all the time, but I love the outdoors. Oh I hate to be inside. Yeah. This is a good place to work outdoors. (Tape transcription, September 5, 1995)

It was cold and damp. Earle said he wished he could invite me
inside but his house was a mess. I told him I had been in his house years ago. He was surprised. (Field notes November 18, 1995) 

Similarity was one basis for selecting the two families. They established and maintained the same homesteads most of their lives and have lived a traditional lifestyle, an “inescapable continuity” (Von Eckardt, 1967, p. 8) of the present with that of the past. Earle said nothing had changed around his land in the last 60 years. The Spencer homestead has been in the family for almost 200 years. June became part of the household in 1951. Their only change was in 1981 when they built and moved into a new maintenance free home next to their old farmhouse. Earle Brockway and Norm and June Spencer are of the same generation.

June had an interesting interlude in her young life which breaks the continuity of being ‘at home’ yet I found to be perhaps a tradition among agrarian rural life. This story surfaced during one of the formal interviews whose content was education in the schooling sense and how that connected to home learning. This led to the question, “What did your parents do?” This was her reply.

J. My mother just stayed home. She took care of the family.
D. Always?
J. Always.
D. She never worked?
J. She did work a little bit during the war. I think she was a telephone operator before she was married and I think she did when there were shortages, I think she did go back to the telephone office for a little bit. Ruth tried to teach her to drive but that didn’t work out too well. Mom was home because there was always an uncle. My mother’s uncle lived with us and then in the late 30’s my father was quite sick and he had to go up to where he was born in Thompson in the north east corner of the state to his would have been his aunt’s home Aunt Grace. And he and mom and Helen and Bud I guess went up there for I

The interior was indeed ‘inhospitable’. My recollection of the dull barren grey kitchen with an array of empty tin cans and TV dinner boxes scattered on the floor continues to haunt me.
don't know how long.

D. What was he sick with?

J. It was a fever. They called it Malta Fever. It was caused from milk. Drinking raw milk. So when they went up there they sent me across the street to my great aunt and uncle. Dan and Daisy and I lived with them for seven years since before I was married. Ruth stayed home and another aunt came there to take care of the house and our old Uncle Charlie who was there. And then when they came back home I just stayed with my aunt and uncle until I got married.

D. So how come you didn't go with the rest? How come you stayed in Guilford?

J. Well because there probably wasn't room for me and my aunt and uncle had lost two baby girls when they were first born I guess and they had always wanted a little girl. And they would always I was over there alot and so it just seemed the natural thing for them to take me. They had an older son Elton who was, well he did get married in his late thirties. But you know there was never much extra to do anything. We used to go to the movies on Saturday afternoon. There was always a matinee.

One can only speculate as to the abrupt change of topic as June reverts back to the original schooling question as she refers to what we may think of as extra curricular activities. This must have been a very difficult time in her life, to be separated from the rest of the family, especially at such a sensitive age. She must have been right in the middle of adolescence. However, the structure of the family, especially the extended family was in place and stronger than today's, so the change may not have been as severe or detrimental. In my research I found a similar pattern occurring in an Appalachian rural family.

Now here in this [former one-room log house], I heard my father, I wasn't born yet, I heard him tell about when he was just a boy. There was, he was staying with these folks by the name of Moody. And they raised eight girls, no boys in their family, in
this little old room and up there [up stairs]. But they finally built a little lean-to right there where they had a cook stove and a cook table through that door right there. And so, the man needed some man or boy to help him lots, things maybe girls didn’t do. And so, they had my father stay with them five years before he was married, he stayed here. And there was Mr. and Mrs. Moody and their eight girls and my father lived in this. (Williams, 1991, pp. 55 - 56)

In reviewing the data I discovered that June made reference to her mother being raised by someone other than her own mother. The discovery of this pattern aroused my curiosity. I immediately called June and her explanation was quite interesting. Her mother was raised by her grandmother’s sister who had been childless and always wanted a daughter. This personal desire was coupled with economic factors. Some families were poor and children were raised by those members that could afford it. As I reflected on my own childhood, I envisioned a similar situation. I was raised during certain stages of my parents lives by my grandmother and aunts because my parents were poor and couldn’t afford a proper house. I think of children today being raised by step parents, a modern day version of an old tradition. As foreign as this practice was when I first learned of it through June, the lack of familiarity and the mistaken notion that a parent would give their child to someone else placed a negative value on the custom. My perspective has changed.

Lost Legacies

There is one other bond we share and because it is a delicate issue I separate it from the rest. Legacy. We all have no one to teach or transfer our culture, values, and skills. Earle and I never had children and at the present time my nieces and his nephews are not interested in what we do or what we know. My nieces are particularly hostile towards their Hispanic ancestry. I think a part of this comes from the part of the country they live in. The South has never been known for its acceptance of minority or marginalised groups. The other part is a long term feeling of animosity towards two of my Aunts by my sister. Over the years these emotions have been transferred to my nieces.
My fear is that if they ever become interested it may be too late and they will share the same frustration I am presently experiencing. June and Norm have children but no hope of any grandchildren.

J - There were seven generations of Spencers in the old house and there's been since 1700....In 1790 and from then on it's Spencers to 1981.
D - What about the idea of legacy. You have John and Carole but no grandchildren. How do you feel about that? Is there a way----
J - You mean what's going to happen to the house?
D - Or things that belong to you, things that you do, some future generation to pass on to.
N - Yeah that ain't gonna be possible.
J - Yeah it just won't happen.
N - You know there again I don't think I ever thought about it really. In some ways----
(The phone rang and interrupted our conversation. Norm tried to change the subject. He (and June) may have been uncomfortable with it which I had anticipated. I was very hesitant to approach the subject. In the following he switches to Earle's legacy)
N - To get away from this a bit. I heard there was a boat yard that was going to build Brockway boats.
D - Back to legacy. I have some very fine wine glasses I inherited from my grandmother. Who gets them. My nieces are not very sentimental or interested.
N - How old are they?
D - Rebecca is in her early twenties and Karin is in her early thirties.
N - Well you know in another 10 or 15 years she or one of them may be interested in genealogy and this sort of thing. I think this has happened to quite a few that had no interest as a kid but later in life they find this you know and wish they knew more. But there again I think that's a part of deterioration of our lives. A lot of people care less, throw it out, what not. As far as John (his
son) goes he could care less I know. Carole (his daughter) has some uh interest but how much can she handle? And I don't think that bothers me.

J - Carole now has quite a few objects that she has taken from here from my family and Gram, Norm's family but she can use just so much and her house is small so there's no room for any more. So what will happen I don't know. She told me once, she just--I asked her what she would do with the house when we were gone and she said she'd probably move in. But I don't think she'll ever come back to Guilford.

N - What would be the point?

J - There isn't any point.

I believe I can say with confidence that there is a concern over legacy. My research has indicated a typical pattern in today's society that children do not return to the original homestead. The lure of the city with its technological jobs is too attractive. June continues to go through letters and photos dispersing them among family members. What they will do with the contents of and the structure of their home is a mystery and ineffable concern.

Earle also expressed concern regarding his family tradition of boat building.

E - Uh that was when my first when my nephew first came up here, uh, that's been about 12 or 13 years. we had an old shop there, where those small trees are growing. And uh I like to be outdoors uh uh workin' and my nephew came up from uh down south. believe it or not he's out there in the shop right now. You'd never know he was there. (laugh) And he doesn't have any interest in uh I...I'm kinda disappointed in designing and building boats. It just isn't there.

D - What does he do?

E - He's supposed to be well not exactly helping me building boats and kinda taking things over. He's like a mouse. (laugh)

(Tape transcription, May 12, 1995)

What is significant is that all of us have acquired a recent interest in
What is significant is that all of us have acquired a recent interest in genealogy. June and Norm’s family is historically rich in written and oral history. Their concern, especially June’s, is to continue the traditions. In November of 1995 Earle shared his view that as a youngster he was never concerned about family history. He recently had developed an interest in people who had his same last name and was trying to establish a link to ‘Brockway Trucks’. He told me about a Peter Brockway who saw an article about him in the Boston Globe newspaper. He had built a boat for his children to play in and had sent Earle a photograph. He wanted Earle to write him of his family history. Earle was quite anxious to establish some kind of communication. Unfortunately, this never occurred because of Earle’s death. I am motivated by the research tradition, my lack of knowledge.

The ‘Moving’ Quasi-Elder

Never underestimate the power of the human mind to forget. The other day I forgot where I put my house keys—looked everywhere, then I remembered I don’t have a house. (Wagner, 1986, p. 26)

As for Deirdre she is the non-traditional quasi-elder. She represents another folk group which needs yet to be described. She is the ‘mover’. She is the one who shares the experiential sentiment of ‘at home’ in ‘homeless’ contexts.

In September of 1993 she wrote: The homeless aren’t the only homeless. Am I homeless?

Perhaps this ‘moving’ phenomenon and metaphor in her life comes from her early childhood experiences. She recollects rentals and temporary homes, most lasting only two years at a time. She lived in one of the first ‘Levittowns’ on Long Island which were mass-produced single-family tract homes built in 1947. These homes heralded the migration from the city and recently celebrated a fifty year anniversary. The first homes had a standard lease with an option to buy but the lease also stated that the home could not “be used or occupied by any person other than members of the Caucasian race” (New York Times, December 28, 1997). She was shocked when she learned this and doesn’t particularly remember being ‘at home’ in this
community. She started schooling here, skipped Kindergarten and went into first grade. She remembers being told that the schools were overcrowded and since she was a March baby, age was not a significant factor. What is relevant in this memory is that she went to school in a one room schoolhouse. It was the only space available for the class. She was bussed and took her lunch in a lunch box with a glass thermos full of milk that was warm and tasted terrible by lunch time. Recess was outside on grass. Inside it was a bit dark because everything as far as she could recollect was wood, worn and aged. The windows were small and the lighting was incandescent. She also remembers the smell of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches that drifted from the 'cloak room' and permeated the classroom causing her stomach to growl long before lunch. This first schooling experience was positive in that the atmosphere was small and intimate. No one was an outsider and the playground was safe. This schooling only lasted a year. She moved again probably because her parents could not afford to buy the Levittown house. This next move was to be with her grandmother and cousins, a real extended family. These were two very happy years for her. There was always someone to play with and Aunt Nina's treasured Sunday drives were born. These experiences are articulated in other chapters and the Sunday adventures introduce the denouement of this text.

Not only did we move from space to space on Long Island but as a child I spent several summers in Puerto Rico. One summer in particular was extraordinary. It was out of necessity that my sister and I were shipped off with my grandmother, Aunt Nina, and two cousins to a small wooden beach shack in Vega Baja. I mention necessity because we were forced to leave the house we were renting and had no place to go to live. My parents could easily shift from friends to family but not with two pre-adolescent tag-alongs. We spent several months in an unforgettable spectacular environment of palm trees, ocean, and rural living. When I returned to New York, I hardly spoke any English. These summers were full of adventure and discovery. We were like 'modern conquistadors'. Some of the experiences are described in other chapters.

I often wonder what meaning this had on my concept of home. The only way I can figure this is with the help of the notion of Connelly and Clandinin (1995) that:
If one remembered something with passion, then it was important to one's education though one might not know the reasons why. If something affected one profoundly, it was of educational importance. With these horizons the task for us and our students was to identify memories and movements in our lives and to create stories of them which helped us better understand ourselves and where we were going. (p. 74)

Maternal Fragment Part II

This brings me back to the title and theory of the thesis, *Home - A Space Called Anywhere*. The ghostly subtext creeps in like a tiptoeing child. I had just returned from North Carolina where my mother, who is in an institutional home, was celebrating her 86th birthday.²⁶ There were changes from my last visit that were encouraging and disheartening. I found her to be very frail and moving slower. Her sight had deteriorated which I don't understand since she had cataract surgery on both eyes. She was hard of hearing. Even with all these disabilities she was more docile and not as cantankerous as she had been. She seemed to have an aura of peace about her. I fear this in the sense that she has made peace with herself and finally accepted this space as home. Is this a result of some knowledge she has about her future? Is she getting ready for the inevitable? Not to hear her complain was encouraging but she did exhibit a bit of paranoia which I believe was partly due to her lack of hearing. If she thinks you are whispering she thinks you are criticizing her or making fun of her. Her level of awareness is such that she knows her limitations. She hangs out in the TV room and sleeps a lot. I believe her identity has been transformed by her 'home'. She has become like the rest. It took a couple of years but it happened. She is not slumped over in a wheel chair, does not walk around all day muttering to herself nor does she need a walker. But she does have a cane (which is the only object that hasn't been lost or hasn't disappeared) and she does sleep a lot.

²⁶ We had a family party for her on Sunday August 17, 1997.
A Watershed Experience
(Summer 1997)

Where are you from? I never hesitated to answer this with ‘Toronto’ until recently. I was at a conference in St. John’s, Newfoundland and when asked this question I didn’t know how to respond. I am not sure where I am from. Does this mean where is home? Am I being asked where I live now or where I have lived longest or where I was born? There are multiple answers and multiple identities. How do I choose? Does that choice need an explanation?
The Death of Earle

A Juxtaposed Chronicle

Congratulations! Yes, congratulations to each and every one of you... For you had the distinct honor and pleasure of knowing EARLE. I'm an interloper; I have not shared your wealth; I did not know EARLE...and I am the poorer because of this. (From text of minister at funeral October 26, 1997)

What a stupid thing to say. Why should we be congratulated on the loss of our friend? And how does he know how poorer he is? An interloper? A meddler? Then why are you there?

He continues:

It is difficult for me to say anything new and / or exciting about EARLE. Because you had the pleasure of knowing him, I am at a loss to add anything of significance that will increase one iota your understanding and appreciation of EARLE.

'One iota'? A cliche at my friend's death? Wasn't it improper enough that my visual sense was offended by the suit and tie they dressed him in instead of a flannel shirt and trousers? Now my auditory sense is bombarded with a cliche? I wonder why Earle is in capital letters in his text. Is it that he doesn't want to forget his name?

Final Moments

It was the first time in the 28 years I've known Earle that I was angry with him (and unfortunately the last). It was all over the camera and his refusal to take my photograph.

Short visit with Earle on 9/2/96 to bring him a veggie sandwich that I had promised him the day before. I wasn't in the mood to see him but I had to go and bring him the camera for his task. I
was late since we had gone to the Spencer’s for lunch. This was the last time I saw Earle alive. It was quite a contentious meeting because he did not want to use the camera. I begged him to take a picture of me and he wouldn’t. He said he needed to read the directions. He also didn’t want to take photos of things around his house or things that he wanted to preserve. He said he liked wildlife. (I just called Barbara Jette who was a neighbor of Earle’s. I wanted to tell her why I never got back to CT. I also want to get the camera that I gave Earle. I hope that she can find it for me.) (Field notes)

I’ve had many thoughts about the camera and its meaning in this context. I’m not sure why I was not in the mood to see him. This puzzles me. And now the camera as object and metaphor is a major role player in this death narrative. This last encounter was a desire to add more permanence to his life through his own photographs, his own interpretation of what was valuable to him in a visual sense. Is the presence of death more compelling than the life? The fact that I can’t see what he took, this absence of his own data adds more mystery to his life and more desire to mine to speculate on the contents of the film. The fact that the mechanics of a camera is synonymous with his death is ironic. He was shut out of life like a shutter in a camera controls light and speed. Instant light to instant dark. Just a click and a frozen lifeless frame is created.

My friend Ann called me at the cabin on October 24 to inform me of his death. (My participant, Norm, had seen the obituary in the paper and called Ann.) I immediately called Norm for the details and made plans to leave for Connecticut the next day. I was up at 4:30 AM and on the road by 5:30. My body was filled with passions. I played classical music and as my mind raced, I recorded thoughtful fragments. I questioned what the passions were that led me to delve into the paradox of life and death. There was sadness coupled with a kind of ‘anticipatory moment’, that moment before the moment filled with anxiety and curiosity. The sense of loss was at times overwhelming, tears blurring the vision of the road creating surrealistic images. Were the signs there? Did I not go beyond his aging face and the complaints of the cold? What about his references to stress and the concern for his nephew?
Fragments from the Road

10/25/97 While driving
I need to go through the text. I want to pick out references to stress, health, cold weather tolerance.

Along the Way (a chapter in my thesis) - Cricket Cottage [I was thinking about my destination and subconsciously about Grace’s comment about my traveling and which ‘home’ I am headed to or looking for next. Ann and her ‘home’ have played a significant role in this thesis and I need to include it.]

The walking staffs become a part of me. They have become a metaphor for the ‘crafting’ of the thesis. So much physical contact. Such diversity within the species. Nurturing. Touching. ‘Feel’ the rough spots. Touch the thesis.

I am feeling a strong sense that my mother is going to die soon. Would it matter? [I asked myself this question because I don’t see her. Her presence is not felt. Neither is her absence. Not like my father’s. Probably because he’s already dead and I know so little about him. And he’s been gone so long.]

Need to get to Earle’s TODAY! My last encounter with Earle.
CAMERA!

No music or art stores. [This is in reference to the changing commercial landscape on the CT shoreline. They were more prevalent in the past. No market? No interest in music or art?] For ‘Along the Way’ chapter.

He died ‘at home’ [I thought] but was he ‘at home’?

Earle’s last moments were tragic. He crawled to a neighbors house at one AM. He was on his knees when she answered the door. He told her to dial 911. He had no phone. Her son came down and helped him into the
house. He stayed on his knees and leaned against a chair. He told them it was a comfortable position. The police came first, did nothing and then called an ambulance. Time is of such importance in these situations. Barbara said that she could tell from the way he looked he was losing consciousness. When the paramedics came they gave him oxygen but he seemed to fade even more. She believes he died on the way to the hospital. She also wonders what if they had come sooner. Could he have been saved? She felt like it took a long time before anyone did anything. I wish I had been just a few days earlier. I could have seen him alive.

It's so difficult with him. I go there with all of these plans and ideas and I just have to let them flow with whatever it is that he wants to talk about or wants to do. Because um he's really difficult. He has his own ideas about things and he's really difficult to steer any other way and I suppose as a researcher and observer I'm not supposed to do although there are gaps that I want to fill. Maybe I can some other way.

Normally when I go to see Earle I don't feel sorry for him but for some reason today I do.

Today I saw him as a very lonely man and I've never seen him as that or felt that before. And I don't know what it is. Maybe it's the way he talked about his nephew being in the hospital and and going to see him almost like an obligatory thing.

I also had the impression that he didn't want me to leave that uh he sort of wanted me to stay and maybe talk about his nephew or something. I don't know. But uh uh I didn't I I just wasn't uh in the mood today. And um like I feel kind of anxious about getting to the Vineyard tomorrow after this hurricane and after this freak act of violence by the tenant. So I don't know but I almost wish, now that I'm driving home, that I had stayed with him a while. Although I just...you never can tell with him.

I told him I'd be back towards the end of the week to pick up the camera and he kept saying well don't be disappointed if I don't do anything. I've just got so much to think about and so much to do. (Tape transcription - Reflections - September 2, 1997)
There was frustration in my voice during this short discourse with myself. I left Earle's confused, disappointed, and regretful. To this day I can envision myself turning the car around and going back had I known it would be our last time together...

How we are driven by impulse and emotion to explore and understand has been a preoccupation since his death. First, I glanced over transcriptions and field notes looking for any evidence that would have bearing on his health. Were there signs that I missed? With the same passion I went through my photographs, looking at the old and the new the past and the present for more evidence. I thought his face was the same. But the images and the texts told me something different. I wasn't paying attention. As I reexamined some photographs I found one taken in the Fall of 1995. I looked at his body carefully. He never wore socks. As I adjusted my focus on his feet and away from his face I could see an obvious swelling in one of his ankles. The edema was there.

On my last trip to Connecticut I had two pages of notes written in July 1997 that were 'questions for new data'. There was so much I wanted to ask Earle. For example why did he never sign his name on his boats. If he had a new house what would it be like? If he ever was in love or wanted to be. Was he 'at home' at home? Did he ever go to church?27

There is a genre of History called 'imaginary history' and called history's parallel universe by Cullen Murphy (Harper's Magazine, August 1995). This is a 'what if' situation. We try to determine what would have happened if what actually happened hadn't happened. This offers access to a parallel universe, one that does not actually exist but one whose claims can never be disproved. I wonder 'what if' Earle hadn't died? What would the narrative be as I reencounter his life? What would the meaning be? How would the thesis be shaped? Is Earle's legacy complete with his death?

I have learned that the sentiment of 'at home' has a strong relationship to compassion. Knowledge by loss whether it be a space or human being is a painful experience - a compassionate experience. Is the transfer of this emotion automatic? Can we at this juncture vicariously appropriate someone

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27 Since this writing I discovered references to two of these questions. As I reviewed the data, it was apparent that Earle had a fear of fire. This was ironical since he constantly put himself in jeopardy by his unconventional heating devices. He suggested that a new house would be one made with cinder blocks. He didn't sign or name his boats because he wanted people to look at the boat and not the plaque.
else’s sense of loss and therefore become a more empathic individual?

**Epitaph for Mokey**

There’s a bit of an epilogue I would like to dedicate to Earle’s dog, Mokey. His last days were also tragic. After Earle’s funeral I went back to the house. I’m not sure why I did this. As I entered his yard I could hear Mokey howling. It was cold and damp and I could tell from the sound that he was tied up somewhere around the back. My first impulse was to find and comfort him but I couldn’t. I knew I would want to take some action and it was none of my business. Between his arthritis and loss of his master I knew he was in physical and emotional pain. I had to leave. There was nothing I could do except check with a neighbor about the care of the dog. I was told that someone was to take him to the vet to put him down. I later found out that no one had any money for the vet and he probably died tied to the house --- outdoors, hungry, his pain numbed by the cold, and alone.
Chapter 5

Narrative Spaces

Tell me the landscape in which you live and I will tell you who you are.
Ortega y Gasset

Where We Are Is Who

Oliver Sachs (1995) in his book *An Anthropologist on Mars* thanks the spaces he occupied for giving him the inspiration to work. He states “There are spaces, no less than people, that have contributed to this book by providing shelter, calm, stimulation” (p. xii). I too have experienced these spaces. Winifred Gallagher (1993) in her introduction to *The Power of Place* discovered her universal truth “calls for being in the right place at the right time as often as we can manage” (p. 24). “House as Autobiography” (Lautman, February, 1997) is a feature article in the magazine *House Beautiful* describing Thomas Jefferson’s home, Monticello, revealing his personality, character and history. In exploiting images of houses Gaston Bachelard (1958) writes that “the house acquires the physical and moral energy of a human body” (p. 46). He goes on to say that “a house that has been experienced is not an inert box. Inhabited space transcends geometric space” (p. 47). Images held by teachers of classroom space as home are vital in the research of Connelly & Clandinin (1988) and Clandinin (1986). Pinar (1995) describes pedagogical space as shared space whose contents have meaning for all. In his very compelling book Kaplan (1996) extends the notion of space in a travelogue genre *The Ends of the Earth* as he states his goal to “see humanity in each locale as literally an outgrowth of the terrain and climate in which it was fated to live ” (p. 7). These dialectic relationships of a kind of spirituality and sentiment embodied in physical space suggest an intimate interaction mediated by narratives of experience within these diverse spaces. These narratives, how our identities are defined by spaces and how spaces define our identities, the artifacts we place in them, and the significance in our daily lives are the foci of this chapter.

28 Image as interpreted by Connelly & Clandinin refers to “something within our experience, embodied in us as persons and expressed and enacted in our practices and actions.”

Scattered tires, wood, metal, empty cans once full of the black tar that outlined and filled Earle’s finger nails labeled, ‘Frontier Trowel Consistency Plastic Cement’. White plastic containers empty of the dangerous fuel filled containers that heated the water under his tub. ‘TRU HEAT Boat Stove Alcohol’. Wood scraps everywhere. Balanced between stacks of tires constructing make-shift workbenches. Browns, blacks and greys accented by the royal blue of plastic tarps covering something. Other dog Princess died right under the hinged door on the side of the house. Window is opened to accommodate bright orange electrical extension cord snaking to the ground ready to copulate with an electrical tool.

The house is a dark dirty-looking grey. A nice contrast to the bright green ivy clinging to its side. Clamps of all kinds scattered among the brown and orange carpet of newly fallen leaves. New wood and old wood. A hatchet with a broken handle sits atop a stack of 3/4” plywood. Some boats covered in clear plastic, others with blue tarps. Ready for winter. More ready than Earle. Circular saw all ready to go sits on the ground protected from the elements by random sized piece of plywood leaning over it at a 45 degree angle.

The oak tree sheltering us must be tired from the stress of all those years of pulling boats with Earle’s riggings of blocks and tackle. All of this and the splendour of the Connecticut River. Moving. Silently.

I too must move now. Am overwhelmed with all this. Not sure why except that this man and his space amaze me. Such a contrast to the orderly organised lives of the Spencers’.

These field notes describing Earle’s space were recorded in November of 1995. It was a cold and damp day. He was slow in responding to my visit. As he rounded the corner of the house, he was putting on a thin shell of a jacket
with no shirt underneath. He kept saying that he couldn't tolerate the cold any more but he certainly never dressed for it. I wonder what happened to the sweater I gave him.29 One day when I attempted to visit him, he kept apologising for his absence. He said that he was probably down at the creek testing one of his new toy boats since he had lost the original plans and was now making the keel longer to improve its course.

I was happy about his apologies. Made me feel like I was someone important in his life without him saying so. Earle was not one to express any emotion directly though he could get quite dramatic about the coast guard's flotation requirements and the price of electricity.

Well there is an awful lot of stress here uh. Well you know with the coast guard and everything and now I got problems with Connecticut Light & Power. I'm so mad I wish I could cut their electric wires off up there. They won't read my meter. They wanna read it and I want them to read it but they won't. I don't know30. Everything here is the same here as it was 60 years ago and so now I'm trying to think about, gee that sun is hot, uh think about generating my own electricity but gasoline is awful expensive uh I been thinking about a combination of a windmill and a generator. (Tape transcription, June 20, 1995)

He was at times, especially when I was taking photographs, apologetic about the state of his yard. Sometimes I got the impression that he was embarrassed because he would always say that he wanted to clean it up but didn't have the time. Once when I was taking a photo of his alternative method of bending wood (doesn't use a steam box), he thought I was featuring the disarray in his yard and didn't like it at all. One would look with fascination at this rig which consisted of an eight foot piece of 2' x 6' lumber fixed to the ground at one end and suspended in the air at the other end where large rock on the airborne end bent it over like a fishing pole whose fish was finally hooked. I never asked him how long this method took to bend the wood but it looked like it would work.

29 In a recent email (10/20/97) his nephew Doug stated that any clothes he was given he gave away to some one else the following years. He didn't want to appear like a charity case.
30 When they finally read the meter, Earle told me he was owed a credit of $500.
I need to cite another reference in my data to his lifestyle that disturbed me. Not only was it the context of the encounter but it was also the historical time in which it occurred. It was my last visit with Earle before he died. We were sitting outdoors and my purpose of the visit was to ask him to take some photographs specifically of the space where he crafts his boat models with a throw away camera. He got angry at the request. He said he liked to take pictures of nature and animals. "My house looks just like outside here!" I said, "Well, that's you!" And he replied, "No it's not. It's not me!" (Field notes, September 2, 1997) He was quite upset about how I perceived him. To this day I still don't fully understand since I've never known him to be any different. He did not want me or anyone else to see the inside of his house. His denial that it did not reflect his persona when to me it was so obvious puzzled me. Although Dr. Connelly pointed out in another sample of data, I was never judgmental about Earle. He has always been a friend and his appearance or the appearance of his space never made any difference. In fact it drew me to him. This interlude of Earle's space has some implications for ethical issues that are articulated by the participant himself. His signing of the model release or the study meant nothing to him. His narrative of real concrete space seem to be in contradiction with his virtual narrative of home. I refer back to my notion of a concept of home that occurs on a continuum of abstract to concrete. An abstract qualitative image of home dependent on imagination is quite different from an empirical observational concrete reality. In my view the narratives of these spaces in terms of Earle's quality of experience (Dewey, 1938) if I may generalize on this notion, construct a world of discontinuity and tension for him, myself and others.

In the past I was so focused on him and the boats that I never noticed the assortment of metal and plastic buckets that contained elements for a variety of necessities like the one whose smoke signal was rising upward through a metal grill.

I like cooking outdoors but I had had this little stove down there and I had another pail upside down here with a couple of hot dogs on it and I was ah startin a fire down there and the neighbor's dog come runnin' down through here and when I turned around two hot dogs were gone. [Earle is laughing.] (Tape transcription September 5, 1995)
Fluid Spaces

Against the backdrop of backyard greens and browns, a shiny white plastic bucket catches my gaze. It is adorned with an inquiring cushion and positioned next to one ornamented with a roll of toilet paper. I suppose it could be.

This is not only Earle’s yard but it is his work, play and living space. The data reflects his love for the outdoors and his desire to perform all tasks in this environment. This was his home. The geometric structure that once housed his parents and sibling was only shelter to him and a crude one at that. He was ‘at home’ outdoors. At times he even worked outdoors at night with a single light bulb hanging from the limb of a tree. Even though he was not a farmer, his lifestyle was very much like one. His activities were characteristically governed by natural light, weather, season and land.

Dodging clouds and patches of blue at 30,000 feet, I was in awe of the patterns below of farmsteads. They were not the usual square or rectangular patchwork visuals of grain fields. They were perfect circles of earth colours. I thought about this and decided that it was more functional for a tractor pulling a reaper or sower to negotiate a circle than a square. These patterns for some obscure reason made me think of Earle’s yard. His was not the geometrical, symmetrical, orderly planting and plowing of the fields but had its own harmonious dimensions. He nurtured it in his own way. Earle was ‘at home’. The fact that he mentioned a concern over the appearance of his space did not overshadow the fact that for the 20+ years I knew him nothing changed.

The study affords ample room for one. One who is supposed to be writing books. You can read in the space of a coffin, and you can write in the space of a toolshed meant for mowers and spades.

Appealing workplaces are to be avoided. One wants a room with no view, so imagination can meet memory in the dark.

(Dillard, 1989, p. 26)

In contrast to Earle order and pattern prevail at the Spencers. Their work spaces reflect these qualities.
10:15AM-June's room-sitting, thinking. 
More than the colours of the rainbow. To the south green above. 
Hanging plants - succulents and ivies. Her counter flourishes 
with baskets and jars filled with globe amaranths, hydrangea, 
pine cones, cattails, wheat plants, thistle, and a dozen or so other 
varieties that I recognise but cannot name. A union of the dead 
and the living. Side by side. Both exuding pleasure and beauty. 
Nice to look at. They gaze at the other side of the room. 
Stretching from one end of the room to the other, the handmade 
baskets sit or hang with their price tags waiting to be bought and 
filled with candles or flowers or wine. The washer and dryer in 
their alcove provide the rhythm for the dance that must shake 
them as their browns and beiges add colour to the stark white 
enamel. 

To the east is the door, the entrance with old familiar photos of 
the farm to welcome strangers. “How concrete everything 
becomes in the world of the spirit when an object, a mere door 
can give images of hesitation, temptation, desire, security, 
welcome and respect.” (Bachelard, 1964, p. 224) 

To the west another entrance (or exit) to the kitchen, the labour 
and smells of the life giving elements of the body. A mirror to 
the right of the passage and small grape vine wreaths hang from 
their ribbons pinned to the wall with the purple and pink 
flowers laced with ‘dusty millers’ adding contrast to the brown of 
the vine and the white of the wall. 

To the north-that’s where the baskets stake their space and two 
more doors provide exit (or entrance) to somewhere. Maybe the 
garage or basement. In the centre a table whose top is usually 
occupied by a rocking chair or oak pressback that is in need of 
caning. I stare at one just completed. The pegs and awls sit in 
their shallow baskets waiting for their next victim. 

Under the maple drop leaf table, still more. Boxes and barrels of 
dried flowers, twigs, baskets, a pair of Norm’s shoes and an 
aluminum stock pot. 

A wire implement that resembles a fish skeleton hangs from a
nail against the wall. I wonder what it is used for. It has a loop at both ends. I ask June. She says she thinks it’s for drying but not sure as to specifically what. When she received it as a gift, it was stuck with crab apples.


This is June’s work and play space. It is the entrance to her home and her heart. It is a nurturing caring space where death and life share a balanced continuum. During the planting and harvesting of her flowers, other rooms become filled with the same ambiance. No space is reserved. In fact she expressed the notion that if ‘Grandma’ (Norm’s mother who lived with them and was the traditional matriarch of the Spencer family) was alive, these projects would not occupy other rooms. But the spreading has its order. One gets a sense of organisation and intent. Moving about from room to room one experiences a harmony among variety, a tranquility and liveliness among the dead. June also shares her work space outdoors as does Earle. This they have in common. June loves to be outdoors tending her gardens. This array of colour and life is what sustains her craft and daily activity. Weather permitting there is always a tour of the gardens highlighting the newcomers. the healthy and the sick. In winter it is time for a short rest that will be interrupted in late winter with the scouring of seed catalogues and the propagating of new life. The cycle continues.

Norm’s work space is the basement, yard and Long Island Sound. His lathe, drill press, and saw share space with numerous antiques and dried flower overflow that don’t fit upstairs in June’s domain. Norm produces sundry wood containers for her crafts. He also repairs furniture. His outdoor activities include a large vegetable garden and seasonal shell fishing. I always like to be around for the harvest. I never say ‘no’.
Typical Days

As Annie Dillard says, "What we do with this hour, and that one, is what we are doing" (1989, p.32). I was curious as to how my participants spent a 'typical' day. What spaces did they occupy most of their time and what activities were they engaged in? The results were revealing. Earle's days were like his yard. No order, routine or pattern. He was very much like my father. He ate when he was hungry and slept when he was sleepy. His 'typical' day was atypical. The natural elements determined whether he worked on the boats in his yard or the models in his house.

D - So what is your typical day like. What time do you get up and what do you do.
E - Yeah. Well, I uh, it changes. I thought I was gonna to be able to work out here and during the days and work on the toy boats at night but I guess I'll probably give up working on the toy boats for a week or so and I'll work on this one (one of his standard fishing boats) because I got a deposit on it and uh, uh. There's more money. There isn't much money in making the toy boats. Did you ever finish your half model? (I laugh) No?
D - and then you slept till noon and then you came out here and started working on ..
E - And just getting started working now.
D - Is that what you normally do? I mean do you..
E - Yeah I guess so. I guess I told you or someone I used to get up early in the morning, you know, seven o'clock and and uh a couple of hours later I didn't feel good at all all day long. I, I didn't feel like going back to bed again, and I feel good now, and... I don't, as long as I accomplish the work I guess it doesn't matter hat (laugh) what hours I sleep.
(Tape Transcription, June 1996)

The Spencer's days are quite the opposite. They are as orderly and structured as are the displays of their interests.

They are up at 7 and eating breakfast by 7:30. Norm sits at the table and June eats on the run. Lunch is always at 12 and Norm
usually takes a nap afterwards. Almost every day someone stops in. It can be a neighbour visiting, a customer, or relative. June doesn’t necessarily look for company. She mostly works on her flowers for the rest of the day. Supper is around 5:30 and in the summer the event takes place on the sun porch or deck. After dinner June works on her greeting cards until about 11 and then to bed. Interspersed with her caning, flowers and cards is her canning. The timing for this tradition is directed by the ‘peak’ quality of the produce. This factor makes the schedule and is a joint effort. From August to American Thanksgiving (end of November) is the time for making dry floral bouquets for delivery to various retail outlets that sell June’s crafts on consignment. Weather is a big influence on the success of their flower and vegetable gardens which also affects their food bounty for the winter months. (Field notes, September 1995)

Their daily rhythm is determined by meal times. What happens in between can be serendipitous.

D - What is a typical day for you?
J - I don’t think any day is really typical. Who is coming. We get up at about seven. Norm goes for a walk before breakfast. I just get the house picked up, cleaned up. Get the laundry going. And start if I was going to make jam or jelly, start that. And then the noon time I’m picking flowers, pressing flowers and checking the gardens. Just checking to see what has to be done for the rest of the day. Yesterday morning when you were coming, you and Ann for lunch and Ruth, I made a quick run over to the National (local food store) and then came home. I had a pie in the oven before I went to over there. And I came home that was ready to come out. And I made preparations for your lunch. Went out and picked a few flowers came in and pressed them. (buzzer in background) (laugh) I have no set schedule really.
Sunday, Margie came over, needed a present for her niece and she stopped to buy cards and stayed for an hour. And after
supper another neighbour came in for after --- of an hour. My
days are not really planned. Things just happen.
(Transcribed tape, September 5, 1995)

Even though June asserts that their days are not planned, activities are
centred around a predetermined schedule of specific daily tasks. It seems as
though her belief in an unpredictable day is important and significant to her.

Talking in the kitchen about Ann and chores. June is at the
counter and Norm is outside. The phone rings and it's their
neighbor across the street. "There's a cormorant down at the
creek and it is acting strange." Norm and June drop everything
to investigate. June said, "See? You never know what's going to
happen." (Field notes, September 6, 1995)

Earle's typical day appeared to revolve around the time he awoke since
he worked late into the night and slept late. His rhythm was probably more
affected by the weather being that most of his work was done outdoors. He
also had work he needed to finish for customers. These unique approaches to
work I believe have historical meanings. Earle for most of his adult working
life had been fairly independent. Living alone he was able to set his own
rhythm without having to consider another person's needs. He was an
employee for a brief time in his youth. The Spencers for most of their lives
were employees where their rhythm was set by their employer. Living
together means considering each other's needs and warrants doing things
together out of necessity and practicality. In my view schedule and routine
complement this interdependent lifestyle.

My rhythm would fit somewhere in between. Most of the time I'm up
at 4:30 or 5AM and begin my day with some exercises. I will read, write and
daydream until seven. Breakfast can be anywhere from seven to nine. Lunch
can be between 11:30 and two and dinner is usually around seven to 7:30. I
spend most of the day like Earle, alone, reading and/or writing. My 'down'
times are mid-morning and mid-afternoon so I try to create an interlude in
the form of a walk outdoors and performing an errand or two at the same
time. I break the rules on the weekend in an attempt to fit into other peoples
schedules and vary the quotidian tasks of the week. I 'play'.

When I am at Clarion Peak (the cabin), the days are similar timewise but dissimilar in atmosphere. I am alone but do not feel lonely. I am physically active in that there is some chore that needs attention and this usually involves being outdoors. As participants and friends we all share our love of outdoor space. Gallager (1993) has an interesting idea that our experiences with plants, trees and water are things that will always be. They are as close to universals as we can find. Traditionally, the first day at the cabin I hike with the intent of finding a fine young cull that will become one of my walking staffs. It is appropriated, crafted, and field tested during the time I am there so that my artistic psyche is consumed with a project other than writing and I have another aesthetic artifact to take back to Toronto.

Toronto and Clarion Peak are partners in work spaces. I make this distinction because most of us have a 'personal' and 'public' work space. None of these spaces being 'private' as they are at one time or another shared. My public space is at OISE. I have been working as a member of an editorial board that publishes a teacher journal and we edit, argue, create, and design layout in this space. It is an office that I share with other students and can be invaded by anyone. My personal Toronto space is a room in a wonderful older home on a quiet street lined with enormous Maple trees and a third floor skyline view of Toronto and its famous CN Tower. What is significant about all inhabited space is that they tell who we are. Art work, much of it my own photographs, drawings and paintings surround me. Artifacts that have an intimate history stare at me triggering memories and recollections feeding the thesis as my walking staffs metaphorically do the same. I feel more productive at the cabin since there are less distractions and intrusions and I don't feel so confined. I embody a sense of freedom through a connection with the natural world. I am in awe of its mood. The quiet, the serenity, the unpredictableness of a natural event invade my imagination sprouting notions and realities. We attach "meaning and reliance on nature to excite the senses, restore nerves, invite us to play, enhance social bonds, supply meaning and metaphor to our lives" (Gallagher, 1993 p. 202). Several authors that cite this connection state that interaction between people and the environment can change the person (Dewey, 1934; Weil, 1997; Kuntsler, 1996; Gallagher, 1993). We get in touch with ourselves and realise our identity and
self worth. As Gallagher says we spend all but an hour a day indoors estranged from the vast mire of meaning, art and teaching that we evolved in.

In both spaces books and research articles (at last count I had 23 3" notebooks filled with relevant academic manuscripts) pervade. They are piled on my work table, scattered on the couch and lined along the floor. Shelves with books border the ceilings since I have run out of floor space. My computer, modem, and printer tell the tale of my craft and acceptance of technology which as a former science teacher I agonised over until I was forced to conform. I find it hard to believe that William Styron to this day creates his manuscripts without the aid of a computer or even typewriter. It's all in longhand. He does however have the luxury of a secretary who transfers his work on to a word processor.

Natural light has a strong influence on my daily life. Dawn and dusk are meaningful events in my rhythm. Both are awakenings. A 'Vineyard' expression for dawn is 'first light'. For some reason this term and situation has an emotional and aesthetic appeal and I am attracted to its images, sustaining a fascination for light that manifests itself in my interest in photography. In the context of home and space Gallagher (1993) asks the question of sunset, "Are you where you want to be when it gets dark?" (p. 219).

Sensual images of home include auditory as well as visual stimuli. Music as an element in the panoply of 'at home' sentiments is a very important part of my daily repertoire so both work sights have some means of permeating the air with opera, classical, or from my 'hippie and beatnik' days Joan Baez and other folk musicians. Creating music is as enjoyable as listening, so there is a guitar or harmonica or concertina to satisfy the desire for another kind of aesthetic experience.

The spaces we occupy are significant. They are home. We desire an identity within these spaces and it is overwhelming to consider the choices we make in our attempt to create comfortable safe spaces where we belong, and we can feel 'at home'. In a sense they are sacred spaces, spaces of ritual and worship. It is where we create, go for inspiration. Our narrative histories are on display.

There is a need to give the kaleidoscope a slight twist and explore the
meaning of objects that occupy the spaces we call home and help us create the sentiment of 'at home'. They are not images but real objects. They are concrete and tangible. They evoke sensual experiences and images that trigger memories.

Tangible Legacies

These things, these objects that I have chosen to bring with me to my various homes have assumed a special meaning. I have asked myself many times, 'why have I chosen to keep these objects?' My grandmother's mortar and pestle, my parents' secretary, the oak work table built by a friend, my aunt's china cabinet. Why didn't I sell them and buy new or different ones or give them away, as I did with many other possessions? Why did I choose to so carefully pack them, as if they belonged in some great museum? Why did I choose to load them in a truck, carry them up four flights of stairs, laboriously twisting and angling and squeezing up the narrow hallways only to have to repeat this maneuver some other time to some other place.

Continuity.

They connect my past to my present. In some (un)explainable strange way, they fill the abyss. (1994), In unpublished photo essay The Music I See: Harmony of the Soul. p. 38.

I lifted the ornate tarnished sterling silver-hinged top expecting to see my grandmother's hair pins. Pushing the tiny feathers aside I exposed a shiny green marble. I don't know the origin of the marble but I know the feathers came from a Newfoundland hawk. Amidst the dusty bottom were a few straight pins, a piece of crusty rubber band and two bent miniature brass coloured safety pins. I spilled everything out on top of my dresser deciding it was time after several years of accumulation to examine the contents and cleanse this metal box. It was a painful yet exhilarating experience. There were flashbacks of her life and death. I could smell the morning combing of the long silvery hair that hung to her waist. She braided it with a swiftness and flawlessness that defied belief to a clumsy seven year old. Then she wound it on the back of her head.
It was during this anticipatory moment that she too lifted the hinged silver cover so that I could hand her the hair pins that kept the long braid in place. The touching of this metal box accentuated her absence as well as presence. I never attended her funeral. My father did. And for some reason that makes me feel good. It was his first and only time in Puerto Rico. He loved my grandmother and she loved him more than her own sons. It was his time to share the warmth and lushness of her homeland that would claim her again. He was able to experience the geographic and social legacies of the Bofills. All this passion and history from a small silver box.

They sit in china closets, at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, on dressers, in cabinets with glass enclosures, at Guernsey's (a New York City auction house), and the special ones may hang on the wall in a shadow box or framed with acid proof paper and UV glass so time does not fade its past. They are artifacts, relics - those objects that we choose to keep, remnants from the dead that remind us of their living or our own objects that remind us of times past arousing sentiments of nostalgia and comfort, sometimes pain.

Ashes aren't so much ashes as fragments of burned bone, some large enough that I could observe the elegant tracery of the marrow's canals. These looked like lace, some white, others the color of rust; the rest was a fine gray dust that adhered to my fingers as I sifted through the remains. I withdrew my hand from the bag, sucked one finger, and felt the grit between my teeth. I licked the other fingers and my palm as well. Tasting what was left of my grandmother --- a woman made holy to me by love and by blood --- was something I did alone, behind the closed door to my study. (Harrison, 1995, p. 55)

Those private artifacts expose our private nature to a public space leaving us vulnerable and by their presence requiring explanation and interpretation, a context, a story to go with them. According to Harrison (Harper's, 1995, ) "the acquisition and veneration of relics reflect a primitive longing, one that has been carried forward from prehistory and has taken forms as various as cannibalism and Buddhism"(p. 35). She states that some cannibals are selective to the point that they eat a bit of the brain for wisdom.
or heart hoping to overcome their enemies, much like we would take a mineral supplement to defend us against disease. Pilgrimages to shrines were more spiritual than geographic, like some that ended in the viewing in Yangon, Myanmar (formerly Burma) of the four teeth plucked from Lord Buddha’s cremation pyre in 483 B.C.

In the same way that Americans visit reliquaries such as the Baseball Hall of Fame which enshrines Babe Ruth’s glove or the New York Public Library which has pieces of Percy Shelley’s skull in an attempt to draw close to the sacred (Harrison, 1995) so do we keep and cherish tangible legacies in order to draw close to the spirit or persona of its former owner.

All of us persist against reason in believing that some manifestation of the dead’s personality or spirit remains in his or her corpse, and our faith extends to include the dead’s possessions, especially those objects that come into direct contact with the body: clothing and tools used for eating or grooming. (Harrison, 1995, p. 59)

I think of my grandmother’s hairpin box, her set of crystal whose gold rims touched the lips of drinkers and whose beauty and delicacy always fascinated me as a child. My father’s wedding band which my mother had made into a pinky ring for me after his death and I never remove. His slide rule in a leather case which he taught me to use at a very early age. A leather pen and pencil holder - the kind worn on a belt that he cut up and attached screws and bolts to so that it is hardly recognisable although functional. A jade pendant and crucifix from my Aunt Nina. Nothing from my Aunt Titi except a friambrera 31. The secretary furniture piece that my parents owned since they were married. They are all possessions of people I loved, have significance, and tell me stories. As in the Vietnam Memorial, each name is a reminder and each tribute has a story. They say ‘I will not forget’ (Harbutt, 1995).

What do I have from my mother? What sensual artifact? What will I have?

31 This is a metal container with stacked compartments that was used by the workers in the sugar mill as a means to carry their hot meals. It is a constant reminder of my days with her on the central (mill compound).
D - What would you want preserved the most?
N - I would say offhand the furniture. Some of the furniture.
J - I have some beautiful pieces of jewellery. One is a locket that my grandfather gave to my grandmother before they were married. There is a pin that was his grandmother's that Aunt May/Aunt Dora gave to me. I asked Carole (June's daughter) and she took a couple of things. But with the locket there's a pin too that has a note with it that Aunt Elsie gave to my mother and my mother gave to me. There is a handkerchief that has never been used and it says 'with my love' on it. This is 1874. But what do you do? Carole is the only one. The things on the Spencer side - I have a few pieces. Like he has three nieces and two of them have daughters. Then Kenny, his nephew, has two daughters. They're in their twenties. They may marry. They may not. But I don't have enough to give something to each one of the girls. So that's a... There's a pin of Dora's. Remember that sword pin. The pieces of coral. I don't suppose the value is that great.

D - I guess we're talking about sentimental value.
J - It's the sentiment that's important. Dora has given, gave me a box to give to Carole with some old coin silver and the history of who it belonged to in the family. She had written down. And Carole at that point could have cared less. I don't know. (Tape transcription, July 6, 1997)

The Spencer home is reliquary personified. Their walls, cabinets, shelves, tables, anything capable of occupying space reek of history. I have been fortunate through my long term relationship to have inherited some legacy from them: an old egg scale whose wooden egg I use to darn my socks, two chickens - a miniature glass one and a brass one two inches tall to add to my collection of chicken motifs.

I am curious about Norm's response regarding furniture as his choice of legacy. What are the stories attached to these objects. What would he tell about the chair or couch? Is it the furniture they have shared all these years and are a testament to their comfort, love and commitment? Is the couch the
same one they necked on as a prelude to their marriage? Are they sensual filled with passion? Is it because these articles are his legacy from his family? Is it their value as antiques? I wonder.

June’s legacy is more specific, more people related. There is particular meaning attached to these objects she describes. They mean something to her and wants to pass them on to someone who will also give them meaning. This notion opens up a whole new area regarding these tangible legacies. In a conversation with one of my mentors Brent Kilbourn, we spoke about the emotional investment in artifacts that many of us have. This investment is in the form of caring. It is not so much in the treasuring of the object but in the caring that goes beyond any historical attachment. This value, this related concept to home is what June was describing in her need to think about where things will go. The caring has its nature in the narrative associated with the object. If there is no story there is no caring. Brent suggested that a generation is missed, that this caring is displaced when the object is passed on from someone who has an attachment or special sentiment associated to the artifact. I wonder then how do you pass on the caring? How do you teach this? Is it enough for the sentiment to be second hand from a ‘caring’ person?

Earle never spoke of any tangible legacies except that he treasured a model of a motor boat hull his father carved. He always displayed it as an example of what a model should look like and emulated this carving. It was always handy to show. The handful of photographs of Brockway schooners that transported goods up and down the Connecticut River were another of his tangible legacies. These photos represented his family history as well.

Capable of being ‘touched’. This means tangible. Something ‘handed’ from those gone before. ‘Handed’. The hand, touch. Touching in my view is nurturing. I touch the walking staff as I create it feeling for the rough spots that need to be finished. I touch the thesis as I create it. As I touch artifacts we inform each other of the narratives of “an experience” (Dewey, 1934, p. 35). nurtured in memory. As Harrison (1995) says:

For those of us who do not invest them with miraculous power, relics of the dead offer more pragmatic and humble gifts. They help us toward the challenging task of thinking about not being. And they comfort us through their mute witness, their not
allowing mortality to mean erasure: the dead, they testify, *were.*

(p. 59)

So we keep and cherish tangible legacies to be close to the soul and spirit with whom we have loved and shared spaces.

**Loca Sacra**

There is a part of the myth of home that denotes a spiritual nature similar to Belden Lane’s (1988) idea that landscape is a connector of the soul with being. However, Lane’s spirituality is more of a religious nature and I wish to address it in a secular way. I attempt to accept spiritual as meaning the invisible part of the visible. In my view it is like conducting a silent discourse with the invisible on the essence of the space. It is a kind of mystery similar to Lane’s (1988) notion of the “holy as masked in the ordinary” (p. 40). Landscape, in its rural and urban forms can hide and reveal aspects of the splendour and grace or terror of the divine (ibid., 1988). Another example can be found as Witold Rybcynski (*Ideas: Family*, CBC, 1993) describes his experiences with house builders and developers. Some take thirty seconds to make up their mind about a house. It is called ‘curb appeal’. It is an emotional and spiritual response to a house. If this response is not quick and positive then no matter what the house is like, people will not warm up to it. I had an experience similar to this when I bought my Guilford home. Poking through three foot weeds, I saw the crudely written ‘for sale’ sign and a phone number. Driving down the driveway to see what was behind this piece of neglected land, I knew I wanted this house. The sight and sound of the river was enchanting. I peered in a window and imagined a romantic moment in that room that contained a Franklin Stove garnished with a magnificent granite hearth and chimney. This was going to be my home.

Gallagher’s (1993) idea of ‘turf’ is another example of spirit of place. She says it helps provide identity, privacy, intimacy, and protection from stress. It can be dispersed from home to office to car to club. With reference to the car as ‘turf’ at this writing, this notion has assumed a negative and at times violent social behaviour called ‘road rage’. This phenomena has become a concern of law enforcement and political institutions.

Von Eckardt (1967) expresses the sentiments of architect August
Heckscher in his description of spirit as the phenomenon that an individual requires not necessarily a plot of ground but a context, a place, where he can expand and become himself. Von Eckardt (1967) believes that a sense of place must manifest itself visibly before it can be felt and experienced. Bachelard (1964) writes intimately of the spirit of a house in terms of memory and imagination, of the experience of a house in its “reality and virtuality, by means of thoughts and dreams... An entire past comes to dwell in a new house” (p. 5).

Landscapes or natural environmental spaces also evoke emotional and spiritual responses. ‘Topophilia’ is a name given to describe the attachment we feel for particular spaces (Lane, 1988, p. 3). They can create a visual sense of harmony and belonging. My friend and colleague Bev described her drive home from Toronto to the prairies. As the mountain range that separated her from the visible flat lands disappeared and she began to descend into the prairies, she felt an emotional rush. Her drive to home became more compelling. As I head south towards the Long Island Sound on my return to Connecticut, I feel the same rush as I am embraced by the stone walls, the deciduous trees of maple, ash, and oak and the smell of the air that hints of brackish marsh lands. I read (Baker, 1998) about a restless 57 year old woman who set out for Europe but instead found her way to Africa. She was struck instantly with a profound sense of belonging. She said it was the landscape and the skies that gave her an overwhelming feeling that she had come home - a physical feeling that that was where her body belonged.

As I reflect on specific geographic spaces I find myself inhabiting and preferring islands since a very early age. “Spatial concepts emerge from constant spatial experience in our interaction with the physical environment” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 56). I spent most of my growing years on Long Island. Puerto Rico is an island. Faulkner’s Island and Grass Island are just off the coast of Guilford providing me with the lure and myth of island living. Martha’s Vineyard is an island and I choose to spend holidays on small islands. To many islands remain an idea instead of place. According to an article in Harper’s magazine by David Guterson, islands are paradoxical places. They liberate and confine. ...” The moat of water that keeps others out also keeps islanders in; the moat of water that makes an islander feel secure also makes an islander feel imprisoned “ (p. 33). For me
island spaces are unique and have a special call. They have symbolic and metaphorical meaning. I feel insulated and freed. I become disengaged from secret and cover stories and engage in sacred ones. My own secular spiritual nature becomes operative.

I envision the nature of this spiritual dimension on a sensual to emotional continuum. I believe this is one way we experience the essence of space. The meaning we attach to space is so compelling, it can pull us through difficult times. We reconstruct a sense of belonging as we move from space to space, as we become separated from comfortable and safe situations.

**Space Tells the Story**

There is another interesting aspect of space worthy of mention and future examination. Gallagher (1993) explores the notion of the relationship between behaviour and space. She says that spaces give us clues about what to do and what not to do. “The basic principle that links our places and states is simple: a good or bad environment promotes good or bad memories, which inspire a good or bad mood, which inclines us toward good or bad behaviour” (ibid., p. 132). If that environment is a school, there are many implications. The amount of school violence at the time of this writing is a major concern especially in US and Canadian urban areas. Gang violence as well as heinous individual youth crime is escalating. In my view the lack of concepts and constructs of school as home evoking sentiments of ‘at home’ shared by youth today are major factors. Narratives of where you are, narratives of space, should evoke a sense of belonging, of familiarity and intimacy, a connectedness for all youth. They should be narratives of harmony rather than distress and those narratives should include an environmental history that promotes the social morality of good memories, good moods and good behaviours.
Chapter 6

(Not) Knowing Ancestors

It is just as important to know what these people were rushing from as it is to know what they were hastening to.

(Tony Morrison, 1992, p. 33)

Introduction

She was a Mexican Bandit they said. They said that because she paid everything in cash. The airline tickets, the house in Kew Gardens, New York, the doctors fees, everything. She didn’t know what credit meant. She only knew that her youngest daughter was going blind and there was hope from a specialist at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. That hope was soon diminished by an examination proving permanent damage to the optic nerve and the best for my aunt was to learn braille. Having sold their land holdings and house in Puerto Rico and like other islanders the mainland being the ‘land of opportunity’, they stayed and made their home in New York City. They were the Bofills guided by Mama, my maternal grandmother. She was a gentle and generous woman. She was quite a bit younger than my grandfather. When I questioned my aunt why she married so young to such an old man, I was told that she had been living with an aunt and was unhappy. Her parents were apparently strangers to her and marriage was a way out. Another family secret. Home was a small town called Cabo Rojo where her maiden name Irrizary is quite common. Exploration of this ‘secret’ and family home is another genealogical inquiry.

“Catalán Cataluña
Comen mieldsa
En las uñas.”

My grandfather Bofill whom I never knew except by way of story, used to recite this poem about his own ancestry, according to my aunt Titi Baby at the 1996 family reunion. She told it with a sheepish grin and I too laughed. I dare not translate.

The Bofill name has its origin in the region of Cataluña which is in the northeastern part of Spain bordering on France and the Mediterranean.
The main city is Barcelona. We are known as Catalan and folklore has it that we have the worst tempers in all of Spain. The Spanish surname Bofill possibly originates from the Catalan word for oxen, according to one family history search. It is also written that the Bofills can trace their ancestry back to the Cartessians who appeared in Spain circa 1000 BC and are considered the first inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula. They had a culture based upon sea borne commerce and perhaps this is where I derive my love of the sea. Name searches indicate that surnames may be of occupational origin, location, patronymical, or of nickname origin derived from a physical attribute of the original bearer ‘as strong as an ox’. Coats of Arms were often granted, along with a gift of property, to those who had served the king well in battle. The coat of arms of this search suggests a lamb, symbol of suffering and faith. This does not compare to a version I have whose symbols are an ox and a castle. I had another commercial computer name search done whose origin was French. Variations such as Beaufil, Beaufille, Beauville, Boville were given. The name was first found in an ancient province of France called Limousin. This search suggested that many migrated to ‘New France’ or Quebec. In true Jungian synchronisity my search brings me back to Canada. This coat of arms has two castles which is compatible to the one I have.32 One fact these searches agree on is that the name is not usually found outside the Catalan speaking regions of Spain and is even more rare in North America.

"Hay Bendito"

"Hay Bendito" was a favourite expression of my grandmother’s and is one of mine. It touches the very spirit of my ancestry. There are probably many interpretations of the term among Puerto Ricans. None of us knew exactly what it meant in our younger years but we had an idea. My translation of the term as I was growing up was one of bad luck and/or pity, oh you poor thing. She used it most with one of my cousins nicknamed ‘Ben’, short for “bendito”. (His real name was Brian). He was a good kid, gentle, quiet, and respectful. My grandmother protected and defended him because she felt he was picked on. I don’t remember specific instances but there must have been cause. I wrote to my cousin Brian for his recollection of the name.

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32 See Coat of Arms in the appendix.
So when I was a little bughead, and crying, Mama used to say 'aye poor bendito'. Then as I got older my mother called me 'bendito' and hence Davey (his brother) called me 'Ben'. (Letter, March 19, 1997)

Shorris (1992) in his book *Latinos* uses 'bendito' in a cultural context describing the Puerto Rican community as a "minority among minorities, different somehow, without much luck" (p. 86). He refers to the word 'blessed' in the Puerto Rican self-characterisation but with irony, as most do not believe themselves blessed. The Velazquez dictionary (1966) says "sainted, blessed" (p. 103). This composite image of a personal and objective translation echoes of joy and sadness.

Stories of my aunts and uncles as children fill me with intense joy building pride in my knowledge that they were sensitive fun loving people. I used to love to sit with my aunts Nina and Titi on the porch of the house in Santurce, Puerto Rico and listen to stories of my grandfather. They told me he used to have a trunk of masquerade clothes and when my grandmother went out for a social event, it was time to play. They would hear a knock at the front door. Cautiously approaching the door, they would call out but no one would answer. There was a mysterious tap on the window. As they fearfully followed the sound, there was my grandfather revealing himself dressed in a black broad brimmed hat and long flowing cape laughing at his children's trepidation. He had an assortment of costumes to fit the mood and occasion. I'm sure my aunts and uncles were wise to his antics but we all know that there is always that element of doubt and mystery that deems this kind of child's play dreadfully adult.

I was also told that he was very talented and generous. He was an architect and engineer by trade and designed and built the local movie theatre in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. The owner of the theatre owed him money and in lieu of the cash, he was given a permanent box at the theatre. My aunts and uncles took full advantage of this and became quite the theatre goers, much to the chagrin of the owner. Titi told me that during the reel changes my Uncles Dave and Joe used to get up on the stage and play the piano that they couldn't play. In order to gain access to the piano they had to open the curtain which involved another form of entertainment for the audience. They used to hang
from the curtain pulls until the laughing softened. I’m sure the owner regretted the deal he worked out with my grandfather. I heard that when my grandmother was at the theatre she was quite proper and appalled at the behaviour of her sons and daughter. (Rumour had it Titi was an accomplice to many a prank).

*By the way, your grandfather’s name was Don Raphael Bofill.*
*He carried a title. (Personal communication, Titi Baby, December 12, 1994)*

I have always wondered if this sense of humour and practical joking was characteristic of my ethnicity or peculiar to the Bofills. I’m learning that it is a little of both. Earl Shorris (1992) asked Puerto Ricans to define their essence in a word and the answer was most often ‘partying’ (p. 89). I would use the term ‘playful’. From my journal dated February 18, 1980 I wrote:

*Watching the people, their behaviour, their playfulness, idiocy, freeness, affection, all of this is so familiar to me. I know now where I get my own idiocy from. Funny how I never noticed this before. I just was never that observant.*

I believe that I too have inherited these characteristics. I love to play. When I was teaching there was a day I always looked forward to - Halloween. I taught in a middle school and we had the option of dressing up. I always accepted the challenge and used to laugh at myself getting dressed. I either went as a witch or a bag lady. Once one of my students asked me ‘Miss DeCarion, aren’t you embarrassed?’ I replied, ‘I love every minute of it.’

My work space always has toys. We all need to play and laugh. One of my favourite quotations comes from May Sarton who said,

*Each day, and the living of it, has to be a conscious creation in which discipline and order are relieved with some play and pure foolishness.*

As I reflect on these actions they portray an historical persona in an ethnic context with an intense desire to explore and exploit this cultural space. It feels ‘at home’.
Fajardo

Housed everywhere but nowhere shut in, this is the motto of the dreamer of dwellings. (Bachelard, 1958. p. 62)

The town, founded in 1774, is situated on the western part of the island. In the early 60’s the surrounding countryside was quite wild and undeveloped. The hilly terrain provided magnificent views of the Caribbean and surrounding islands. Cows and goats roamed freely among the native trees and shrubs. We rode horses among them and once I witnessed a calving. It was during these wonderful days in the hills that I decided I wanted a farm and a goat when I grew up. That did eventually happen with ‘Shalimar’ who was my friend and pet goat in Connecticut for 12 years. However, all this has changed. The hills once alive and natural are now in my opinion dead with urban blight. Condos, housing, and hotels invade the landscape. The roads are clogged with traffic and there is no room for the horses and goats. The luxurious Conquistador Hotel with its sprawling private villas and golf courses occupies the most spectacular and desirable piece of property. This development of a space that was so influential and significant represents my sorrowful side of “hay bendito”.

This ‘home’ was one of my favourite places. The dwelling and surrounding landscape had a magical and open quality. At a very impressionable age I felt the greatest freedom. The irony was that my uncle was very old fashioned. He was strict with behavioural expectations but his other qualities far outweighed the typical teenage anger I sometimes felt with rules. I was comfortable bringing friends. Uncle Carlos was generous with his hospitality and made people feel like honoured guests. He was proud of his island and wanted to share that sentiment. I always felt ‘at home’.

Uncle Carlos was an engineer in the sugar mill and was well respected in his position. He loved his job. I never knew him to miss a day of work. He was a proud man and among the privileged class. However, my uncle never displayed any signs of privilege or prejudice. Attitudes were more like warnings or cautions that not everyone can be trusted. There were never any stereotypes that I recall. This ‘Batey Central’ (the sugar mill compound) in Fajardo had a large, plantation-like space surrounded by a huge cyclone fence with guards at the entrance gate. It was quite safe and had an elegance about it.
Now that I think back that elegance was steeped in a kind of class exclusivity which was not apparent to my young mind at the time. It was the ‘turf’ of management, not labourer.

The house we lived in was big, old and made of wood. In its day it was desirable. The current houses are made of concrete, cheaper to construct and able to withstand the ravages of storms, humidity and termites. I actually saw the termites eat through the TV cabinet and leave nothing but the cheap plastic veneer. We had no idea this was happening until my uncle went to move the set. It literally fell apart in his hands. He then touched one of his ‘Saints’, part of a valuable collection of antique wooden religious artifacts, and they too crumbled. It was the only time I heard my uncle mumble Spanish expletives. Eventually the house too had its demise at the jaws of these evolutionary diehards. The batey central is also gone. The sugar industry laid prey to technology, competition, and insects.

There is another aspect of my ethnic identity that I wish to mention which is relevant to the term ‘conquer’. As Puerto Ricans defined their essence the term ‘conquered’ was mentioned often. Shorris (1992) makes the distinction that to be conquered and to have been conquered are entirely different situations.

Puerto Ricans consider themselves conquered now---not occupied, not defeated, but conquered. Occupied nations live in the expectation of overthrowing the enemies on their land. Defeated nations hope to fight again, but those who are conquered have neither the wherewithal nor the will to overcome their situation; they live in hope that some external force will free them---gods, spirits, Russians, the lottery, or death. A conquered people cannot be other than fatalistic. (Shorris, 1992, p. 90)

This description saddens me because from my perspective this is true. Sovereignty is always an issue on the island but the financial stakes from various corporations are too high to allow the people anything but thoughts. This small diversion has strong political meaning, an area I was hoping to avoid but too alive in me to do so. Building a concept of home around a
feeling of ‘conquered’ does not invoke sentiments of ‘at home’. Many times I have witnessed the loathe Americans feel for the very people they control. There have been too many years of lack of self esteem and self respect among Puerto Ricans and that ought to change. I have been disengaged with the politics of the island as a result of two factors. From the time I can remember, a sojourn to the island was a yearly event. Since the deaths of my Aunts Titi and Nina, my pilgrimage has taken on new meaning, that of tourist rather than resident. Secondly, I have not returned since 1986 because a friend and I were mugged instilling betrayal and fear. I have yet to resolve these issues. I feel like the ‘conquered’ and until the island assumes its former status of home and I feel ‘at home’ my thoughts of returning are only thoughts. However, these circumstances have not clouded many wonderful and joyful memories nor distracted my desire to continue the narrative of my search for ancestry.

I struggle with change and culture in the same way that Wolcott (1994) writes of the concern of the Old Man that “old Indian ways are just going to die out” (p. 292). This is my fear too, that no one is going to remember the language, or the ‘arroz con pollo’, the ‘pasteles’, the songs, laughter, jokes, life on the batey central, etc. However, Wolcott (1994) follows that things, whether societal or individual, never remain the same. The old ways are undergoing continual modification. I guess I want to leave through the writing of this text the ‘cultural templates’ Wolcott (1994) describes that will keep the culture ‘alive’ in the present in addition to it living in memory. I only wish I had begun this process sooner. I must rely primarily on my own memories and those of my cousins and my only living Aunt Titi Baby who is still sharp. On a visit to Charlotte in the summer of 1995 I didn’t even bother to ask my mother any questions about her history. I was afraid. First of all, I knew she would or could not remember, and secondly when she can’t remember and she knows she can’t, it upsets her. She admits she is confused. She used to love to tell me stories about her childhood and the pranks they pulled. But a look into her eyes tells a different story. “Hay Bendito”. And aren’t these the narrative remnants that keep us ‘alive’ in a literal and figurative sense?

In a metaphorical sense the legacies appear to die with this generation. Earle had no children and June and Norm have children that have no
interest or capability to continue the Spencer tradition. I have no children either. There are no grandchildren among us. We are all in a state of dying. Death seems to be a recurrent image of certainties, traditions, lives, and people. There are social deaths, the unwanted death of persona and identity, as experienced by my mother and others like her still alive and physical deaths as experienced by my father and more recently my aunt Nina and friend Earle.

**COWBOY FOOD**

Adults will do anything to make kids eat even the most unappetising food. My grandmother was no different. My youth was preoccupied with dreams of the wild, wild open West. Gene Autry, Hopalong Cassidy, The Lone Ranger, Sky King, The Cisco Kid, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, etc. were my video stars and role models. Anything they did couldn’t be all that bad, even eating cowboy food. And that’s how a combination of corn meal, that was the consistency of polenta, and a meat mix topping that looked like mush, got its name. At this time I don’t know the nature of the recipe but we ate it and I remember looking forward to its next appearance. For those of you who would like to try it, here’s the recipe that I was able to get from my Aunt Titi Baby. It is her original version.

*To cook cornmeal*

1 cup cornmeal
1 cup cold water
1 teaspoon salt
3 cups boiling water

Mix cold water, cornmeal and salt. Stir cornmeal mixture into the boiling water. Cook and stir until thick. Lower heat. Cover and cook 15 mins. Stirring as needed to keep from sticking. 6 servings

*Filling*

1 lb. chop meat
chopped garlic - (one) or 1 tsp. of garlic powder.
1 tsp. salt
2 tbsp. oil
1 can tomato sauce (small)
1/2 green pepper chopped
1/2 onion chopped
cilantro (optional)
oregano
Add any other seasoning you like. Put the oil in the pot. Put the meat & brown. Add all the rest and brown. Add tomato sauce and cook. Put on top of cooked cornmeal. Eat hot.

I have tried this recipe and it works. I modified it by making a vegetarian version substituting Kasha for the meat. You can also use bulgar or any other grain of preference. It still had the same taste, smell and sight that evoked wonderful memories of all of us at the kitchen table sharing and relishing in the intimacy of being 'at home'.

**Knowing Ancestors**

Just to let you know that um Nina had a setback last night. It is eight o'clock in the morning. I'm here uh in the nursing home with her right now and the only measures we're doing because any testing or any medical intervention produces like a crisis situation in her, is just to keep her comfortable. Uhm she can be roused a little bit and I think she knows I'm here. And I'm going to be here for a while and then I'm going to work. My number at work is 717-963-6781. (Phone mail October 20, 1995)

Hello Deedee. This is a message for you. It's Emy calling. It's about noon time on Saturday the 23rd and I'm calling you to let you know that early this morning Nina very peacefully uh passed away. She had nursing care private with her up until 9:00 last night and uh whatever needed to be done for her was done. We are planning to have two viewings tomorrow Sunday and the funeral Monday. Uhm I hope you get this message and um call me with any questions. Whatever- I know that you're very very involved and your prayers and your thoughts are with me and with her regardless of whether you can be here or not. Um. do whatever you need to do. Take care. Emy. Bye.
Nina died in her sleep at 2:00 AM on Saturday, September 23, 1995. She was 87 years old. She was born in 1907 and would have been 88 on October 21. Her death during the writing of this thesis is significant. As I previously mentioned my preoccupation with death is not accidental. It is in the recognition of mortality that preservation, legacy, tradition and life exist. Timothy Leary now dead of inoperable prostate cancer said that one has to approach dying the way one lives one’s life - “with curiosity, with hope, with fascination, with courage and with the help of your friends” (New York Times, 11/26/1995). Controversial artist Damien Hirst whose interest is death and decay, creates sculpture out of a rottong cow’s head or a giant tank filled with formaldehyde and a lamb. He strives for a sense of tragedy and loss, of strong emotional feeling. My aunt’s death at this time connotes a sense of urgency to historicize and preserve. My regret is that I wasn’t with her. Emy told me that during her last conscious moments she was frightened. She knew she was going to die. No tubes. No pain. No loneliness.

My father died suddenly on August 6, 1974 at the age of 54. As I approach the age of his death and continue in this research and search for home, I experience a sense of his presence. It takes the form of wanting more knowledge of him and his family (or my family). I never knew my paternal grandmother or I wasn’t allowed to know her. My mother always limited her contact with us and I remember being told that ‘Grandma Betsy’ was not a good woman, that she was not good to my father when he was growing up.

Your grandmother, Betsy’s, maiden name, was Leonard. I really don’t have any knowledge of the estrangement between your father and Betsy.  
(Personal communication, George DeCarion, February 12, 1996)

I never questioned what any of that meant. I just accepted it. Now I wonder. Where to go and who to ask. I’m embarrassed that I don’t even know my father’s sister’s name at this time.

Your dad’s sister’s name was Louise. She married an accountant who was called Eddie, so I assume that his name was Edward. His last name

33 At this time of editing I turned 54 in March of 98. 
34 George DeCarion is my father’s first cousin. My past contact with him was limited. I have established a recent relationship in my effort to trace my father’s ancestry.
was Mitchell. I believe that Louise did office or secretarial work. I am under the impression that Louise had two children. She died very young of, I believe, a heart attack. I judge it would have been in the late 1950's or early 60's. (Personal correspondence, George DeCarion, February 12, 1996)

I could get angry at my mother for depriving me of the contact even though I never knew her motives. I could get equally angry at my father for allowing it to happen. My uncle did say that the Leonard side of the family was involved in theatre and that Betsy did some acting in her younger years. Was she, were they such awful human beings?

Some DeCarions I knew. One group lived out on the eastern end of Long Island - in Southampton and Stony Brook. Another group lived in Mt. Kisco, New York. I believe they were the more prosperous and conventional DeCarions.

My mother was very self-conscious about alcohol. She recognised a predisposition on my father's side. I recall her telling me that certain members of the DeCarion family were alcoholics and that was what ruined my father's youth. He rarely spoke of his childhood. There were no stories of traditional family gatherings, no photographs of sports or play times or picnics, no stories of exceptional aunts and uncles. There was one aunt who left my father some jewellery which my sister and I inherited. But she was not spoken of too kindly. I remember her characterised as selfish and domineering.

Searching for the DeCarion ancestry will not end with this thesis. The stories are somewhere. I've heard enough of the 1930's Depression stories. My father has a military record which I hope to obtain. I finally found his dog tag. I believe I have enough information from George DeCarion and a name search that will bring me closer to the surviving Leonards and DeCarions. If I obtain nothing then I will have to be satisfied with past recollections and record them for future generations. Hopefully they'll be interested.

35 I only have two photographs and both appear in the text.
Chapter 7

The Rhetoric of Home

The incapacity to name is a good symptom of disturbance.
Roland Barthes

Introduction

Establishing some kind of rhetoric in order to arrive at concepts of home is at issue here. Dilthey asserts,

We know the world through our feelings and strivings as well as through our sense impressions and thinking. The real cognitive subject is the whole human being, conditioned by the functioning of his body and by social and historical conditions, who not only perceives objects but knows and evaluates them in terms of the concepts he has learned and the way they aid or obstruct his activities. (From Rickman, 1976, p. 15)

So what does rhetoric have to do with home? There is a 'way' we speak about home. This is the 'way' we conceptualise. We reform our notions through language and our understanding of terms. As I think about these notions I am drawn to the title of the thesis and the terms I used - A Space Called Anywhere. I have explored and examined many spaces in an attempt to clarify terms used to describe various spaces. The task instead of closure provided entry into the limitless possibilities of meanings in the context of text and in the context of story. There are shifts in genre which have allowed me to assume a moral and political position as essayist and an empathic position as narrativist. It is an opportunity to think about and articulate notions of home in different ways.

The intent of this chapter is to begin with thoughts on rhetoric and connect it to the terms associated with concepts of home. I am attempting to take the ambiguity out of the communication of knowledge and in Adler's (1972) terms come to terms or use the same words with the same meanings. Communication is two minds with a single thought and terms need to be
thought of as a “skilled use of words for the sake of communicating knowledge” (ibid., p. 98). It is interesting to note that Adler (1972) states the important words are the ones that give you trouble. The terms ‘home’ and ‘at home’ have indeed been troublemakers not only in the shaping of the text with relation to shifting, juxtaposed genres but in the shaping of concepts and in that context validates the need to enter into rhetoric.

Ambiguity. It means obscure, indeterminate, enigmatic. It swims below the surface of the text adding a new dimension to a notion that previously was clear. The familiar term ‘home’ has become novel. With each new context or person or artifact a new meaning of the meaning is established, a new interpretation made. That is the purpose of this discourse; to explore the language of home that creates concepts that shape experience. Dewey’s work on experience (1938) parallels this notion in that principles become concrete in the consequences resulting from their application. However, these personal and collective concepts are not static. They are dynamic and this is the paradox. The continuum shifts from the abstract to the concrete. Both are operative. One is informed by the other. An example of this can be found in the philosophy of interior decorator Mario Praz who introduced the term stimmung to mean the sense of intimacy created by a room and its furnishings (In Rybczynski, 1986, p. 43). It is a characteristic that has less to do with functionality and more to do with the way that the room conveys the soul or spirit of its owner. The concrete spaces exude an abstract concept of ‘at home’ whose hermeneutics are as varied as the artifacts and interior ambience present in the space to create the sentiment. As an example of this phenomenon and relevant to the thesis, I would like to extend the concept of stimmung from Praz’ room and furnishings to the larger context of house and landscape and cite examples of how changes in spaces and reconstructed narratives affect the actors and actions within the story.

The American College Dictionary defines rhetoric as “the art or science of all specially literary uses of language in prose or verse, including the figures of speech” and it continues to include the classical oratory definition of the “art of influencing the thought and conduct of one’s hearers” (1960, p. 1041). The American Heritage Dictionary states that rhetoric is “the art of effective expression and the persuasive use of language” (1983, p. 591). There are two definitions from the Chatman (1990) essay that apply to my
theoretical constructs. One is quoted by narratologist David Lodge who says "'Rhetoric' is Professor (Wayne) Booth's term for the means by which the writer makes known his vision to the reader and persuades him of its validity" (Chatman, 1990, p. 190). The other puts rhetoric into a two-part complex of technical choice and end. He believes that technique cannot stand alone and that the 'end' is a type of (per)suasion. Rhetoric as a means of communication in Chatman's view is too simplistic a definition. Hermans and Kempen (1993) present a view of rhetoric that is couched in narrative and stems from the theatre.

Rhetoric is the disciplined use of gestural and oral behaviour for the purpose of persuading and convincing others of the propriety of the actor's values and conduct. In classical conceptions rhetorical acts emerge when people are involved in solving their urgencies and exigencies. (p. 20)

I would like to follow these examples with rhetoric of home. What I feel is significant in the meanings is that technique and influence or (per)suasion go hand in hand. I see it as an element of commitment to what is being said, how it is being said and to what end the rhetorical act is significant on the part of the narrator and author.

A Rhetorical Interlude

He stopped at 'corn pone'. It means 'corn bread especially of a plain or simple kind'. Before this he was stretching his legs and sort of rubbing them together as if he was cleaning them. At times he would rub them against his long black striped cephalothorax. Then he started. Before he took a step he touched the surface with his antennae. Not simultaneously all the time but first the left and then the right, left, right, left, right together, left, right etc. etc. The cadence of the antennae matched the pace of his walk. He's bored with the 'c's page 270 and has moved to the graph paper on my clipboard. I'm not sure why I have no fear of him except that he seems to be uninterested in my actions.

36 Chatman prefers 'suade' rather than 'persuade' to emphasise that rhetoric concerns the urgings of the text rather than its success or failure with real audiences.
unlike my intense interest in his. The movements are fascinating. Slow and deliberate. Curious and exploratory. I’m not sure where he came from but I’ve had several this weekend. It’s spring. Things are hatching all over. Maybe he is sluggish and shy from the long winter. I hope he doesn’t sting me as I sleep tonight.

Discoveries I have made in this attempt at rhetoric are that the familiar has become novel, the singular has become multiple, the linear disjunctive and the particular global. What I will explore in this chapter is the concept of multiple homes. This is connected to rhetoric in that in our peculiarities of daily life we continuously, consciously and unconsciously create ‘homes’ so that we may feel ‘at home’ in the environments we experience. In my view we seek to establish some sort of identity with the space, that is identity being defined as recognising, understanding and accepting one’s own personal diversity. This notion of multiple adaptive identities helps us create a discourse, a set of terms, a form of communicating (narrative) to give ourselves plausible definitions of the spaces we occupy that are literally defined by our physical occupancy and metaphorically defined by our sense of belonging, safety and comfort that in abstract terms define the sentiment of ‘at home’. Some writers feel that this interaction of intimacy with space must include interaction with another human. However, I believe that this interaction has validity with the self and its 3D space, perhaps in memory. The artifacts we choose to display are profound examples of our personal connections with the past, an invasion of nostalgia.

The Diseased Home

My thoughts wander to the notion of homes that are not homes in the traditional sense. How would one story a non-home or ‘diseased’ home? A home where there is an absence of the sentiment ‘at home’? As there are changes in the landscape and changes in structures we occupy so are there changes in the meanings of terms. The vocabulary evolves in the biological sense. The terms develop a history. They expand taking on new meanings developing their own identity as the context changes. Can the term tradition

37 I use the term ‘diseased’ to suggest that there can be a cure.
in the classical sense even apply to a ‘diseased’ home? I would like to expand on this notion of disease with an example.

In Freeman’s (1993) book *Rewriting the Self*, Sylvia Fraser’s autobiographical account of her father’s incestuous sexual abuse has an extraordinary effect on her concept of home. She saw her house as a place where danger lay. It was the only thing that was really feared “which by guilty association became the house that knew” (Freeman, 1993, p. 153). “The usual childhood reality was reversed. Inside my own house, among people I knew, was where danger lay. The familiar had proven to be treacherous, whereas the unfamiliar...still contained the seeds of hope (ibid., p. 153). In addition to repressing these encounters, she also had a significant measure of displacement in that her terrible fears of her father had been transformed into “a profound aversion toward the house in which the Fraser family lived” (ibid., p.153). To Sylvia Fraser this house remained a diseased house to never assume the sentiment of ‘at home’.

How we reconstruct, redefine, and narrate concepts of home is the focus of this chapter.

**The Meadow Ghetto**

My participants and I have experienced a *stimmung* of sorts with diverse consequences. The Spencer homestead, which began in the early 1700’s, had at one time forty acres with all but eight acres sold off over the years. When June and Norm built their new retirement home in 1981, they kept one and one half acres. The farmhouse, barns, and remaining land were sold with the understanding that the homestead would remain in tact. They had a spectacular view of a saltmarsh meadow and their own Spencer Creek that eventually meanders into West River and ends its journey in the Long Island Sound. Efforts by the Guilford Land Conservation Trust to buy the property and keep it as open space were futile. It was too expensive and rallying human interest was low because of a poor economy and soft real estate market. The area surrounding approximately fifty percent of their land was sold and subdivided to accommodate new, spacious homes on only half acre lots that were long and narrow placing the structures close to one another. And that’s how their land came to be called the ‘meadow ghetto’.
Visitor - What a beautiful area.
June - It's being fought over.
Visitor - Is the fight over? You could be living in the Bronx!
(Field notes, May 12, 1995)

The density invaded a space that was traditional to their agrarian lifestyle. Farmers are ‘land’ rich. Land and lots of it is not only important for their livelihood but has an intrinsic value that connects them in an emotional and spiritual way. For months the Spencers witnessed the daily destruction and loss of not only their landscape but their legacy and tradition. Home and ‘at home’ was changing. Adaptation for the Spencers in its truest sense had to occur. What about their identities with this physically changing landscape. How would one define home and the sentiment of ‘at home’ to accommodate this change? Can adaptation be taught through rhetoric? An acceptance of terms through images that have a language of their own?

D - With the building going on all around you has it changed your feelings or sense about this house?
N - I don’t ...No. Course I am sorry that, you know, how everything came about. It could have been prevented. At the time I thought that what I did was right and you can’t change things now. If I could do it again I wouldn’t. I would have kept it open and either sold it to Fonicello’s or just kept it open - somebody else could sell it I was long gone and could care less. But otherwise you know... I ... We STILL have a great view. I think it’s a nice spot. And I think we’re less that way than if you know we aren’t completely surrounded by houses.
J - Oh it’s bothered me but I don’t need to associate with anybody else if I don’t want to. I can still be by myself in my yard. We have one couple who lives in back of the barn. They’re very pleasant. They’re not as old as we are but they’re retired and she’s interested in gardening and I’ve had some nice conversations with her. But the rest of the people I have no idea.
(Tape transcription, July 6, 1997)

38 This is a local farmer and operator of a nursery, market and hardware store who leased some of this meadowland from the Spencer family to grow produce.
It is interesting to note the different adaptive meanings each assumes in this bit of discourse. Norm’s perspective is with the change in the physical landscape and June’s is of the intrusion of people.

In contrast Earle bought land so that he could maintain his concept of home and sentiment of ‘at home’. He lived on a dead end street and his boatyard, house and sheds were on the eastern side. His love of the outdoors and lifestyle of solitude compelled him to buy several acres across the street on the western side. He wanted assurance that no one could change his ‘outdoor’ home. He must have known that a change in landscape would be a change in ‘something’ else. What that something was we can only speculate. He didn’t want his very ‘being’ threatened. He didn’t want to be separated from himself, the identity that was firmly located in the open non-intruded spaces he occupied outdoors.

As for me my landscape in Guilford changed. West River is a boundary line of my land. When I bought the house the land across the river was all woodland. There were foxes, deer, quails, pheasants along with the common woodchucks, opossums and raccoons. Then one Monday morning I heard the grisly tearing massacring sound of chain saws followed by the moaning menacing motor sounds of bulldozers and backhoes. I knew this was the beginning of the end of my private wildlife area. Fortunately, the only house visible was built on a cul de sac and the surrounding land was declared ‘open space’. So my privacy and wildlife sanctuary wasn’t totally invaded. Then the land across the street was subdivided. I thought about buying a lot but I couldn’t afford it. I reconciled it was far enough away that I couldn’t see the new ugly raised ranch and jennitted driveway through the barrier of trees across my front yard. Invasion minimal (again). At this point I knew that there was no where else they could build or intrude so I adapted to the change but not without feelings of betrayal and encroachment. My space was still able to assume the language of comfort and belonging but not like before. My intimacy with that space had been affected. The ‘naturalness’ that influenced me to buy the property in the first place was gone. Over the years many of the animals disappeared. Their homes had been affected by loss of habitat and their deaths eventually imminent. Evidence of this was in the road kills I witnessed in front of my property. The image changed, the ambience changed and so did the language. The landscape was no longer as safe at least not for
the local fauna and flora. The neighbours complained about my chickens and their dog killed one of my ducks and injured one of my geese. The fences I had constructed provided little protection for my animals or from this domesticated menace. My concept of home in terms of the landscape at 446 Durham Road was being shaped by very different experiences.

In a sense we all moved without changing space. Our geography, environment, ecology, and ‘neighbourhood’ were transformed. The mood of the landscape caused us to move even though we had no desire to do so. Author Carol Shields said that we could be born in the wrong place. But as we go through life we seek our ‘true’ home, where we belong, where our mind and body are at rest, where we will die. We all thought we had found our true homes but we had to move, to adapt to a foreign landscape that was being created around us and embrace a new culture, a new identity, a new rhetoric. Even Earle with his desire for a non-changing environment was burdened with the fear of change evident in his purchase of more land. I will always wonder if he really felt ‘at home’ at home.

There are those who want to harvest this land. Build massive homes. There are those who want to conserve space. A walk in the woods has become political. (Ferguson, from Writing Home, 1997, p. 53)

Tensions have been created by the narrative histories we all share. Our sentiments of at home are threatened by the changes occurring around us that we cannot control. Our concepts of home are being challenged and we need to reconstruct new images.

I am reminded as the text develops of a poem a friend wrote in the summer of 1963. We were both young, twenty years old and very sensitive to the visible over-development that was bludgeoning Long Island as we drove along the highways. The following poem represents our sentiments.
Reflections While Driving Along Meadowbrook Parkway

Garbage trucks dump their rubbish on the
virgin land
Sea-gulls relish and smother themselves
in filth.
Bull-dozers rape brutally the trees
that give comfort
The soil is awakened by nerve-racking machines -
All for the honour and glory of the queen of virtues -
progress
Litter is strewn on our -
narrow homes
Yet still the simple bird fights the nauseous air -
and
soars to sunlight.
Still he sings of spring - while
underneath him lies this
desecrated land -
His dead song
(Author, Sharon Monahan, Summer 1963)

The psychological empirical principle of causation sets into motion an 'in and out of' narrative mode. My discourse switches to one of essayist assuming a moral and political nature as the content involves issues of the environment and land development. Ever since childhood I have struggled with this tension. Living on Long Island where in my opinion land was unnecessarily stripped of all its naturalness before development, has prejudiced my moral authority. Images of multiple neighbourhoods with hundreds of generic houses situated on a sterile landscape still haunt me. On two occasions these houses were 'home' to me, though I'm not sure if I was 'at home' in them. The sight of a bulldozer signifies death to me. All land moving machines frighten me. They are destroyers.
A THOUGHT

The steamroller
That crushes a butterfly
In its path has not won
Anything
Only destroyed something.

Brute Power
Is not superior
To a flower.
( May Sarton, 1994, p. 27)

Yet they are creators. They are icons of progress, by definition movement forwards, but they can also take us backwards. A prejudiced moral authority tends to ignore the stories of the people in the cabs of those machines. It also shades the stories of the occupants of the generic houses. Their narrative histories are ignored. And so is their diversity. My empathy bears an immunity to truths not characteristic of the narrativist researcher. Though these movements are unintentional they do exist and are part of a representation of observations and experiences within this chapter and my narrative history.

Multiple Images and Notions

Early on in an attempt to establish a focus and understand the term 'home', I conducted an informal survey as to what home meant to friends and colleagues. I was curious as to whether or not anyone else was interested and how they expressed their views. There were several notions that began to surface. First of all, there was interest. The responses were as similar as they were different. Many stories were told relating familial and personal experiences, some sad. To some home did not connote harmony. One story described a family home life defined as one of neglect, a recent realisation in this individual's life - situations like his mother never washed salad greens and the memory of the grit in the greens still haunts and perpetuates a distrust of food. However, his home would always be the 'family' home. To
me this was a very traditional approach and suggested other notions. Why was it so important that the family home, the hometown, remain home, especially with memories of neglect? Was there no other way to define this ‘diseased’ home other than home? What kind of an image of home does a person from an abusive environment need to develop in order to experience harmony, to feel ‘at home’? Secondly, many of these people had moved geographically several times resulting in confusion over where ‘their’ home was. Within this context I too have experienced this confusion.

The themes of tradition, roots, adaptation, preservation, and identity have emerged throughout the text. As the text is crafted so are the terms. At the onset of the thesis these terms seemed to be self explanatory. They had one meaning. However the meaning of the meaning has evolved, some into dialectics for each of the terms based on the nature of the term and the context. Tradition has evoked change and innovation. Roots have sprouted wings. Adaptation has yielded confusion. Preservation translates into loss and identity, that individual quality that separates us from each other becomes universal and ordinary, uniting us in articulating a search for the similar.

An Evolution of Terms

Roots to Wings

When you’re in one place you can’t wait to get to the next.  
When you get there you go somewhere else. (Field notes, Bruce Beebe, 4/17/97)

As a group of graduate students we sat in the local hangout at Memorial University, Newfoundland discussing my thesis topic and someone said instead of roots we should have wings. I agreed that this was a more appropriate metaphor. As I thought I came to the conclusion that we were travelers or nomads of sorts and were not able to identify any one place as ‘home’. Eliot Wigginton in his Foxfire 2 book says that:

We’ve become a nation of nomads with no sense of that security

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39 Bruce is a former middle school student of mine. He and his wife (also a former student) live in Madison, Connecticut, with their two young children and own a very successful marina.
or serenity that comes from being able to say, ‘Here is where I belong. Here is my place, my time, my home, my birthright, my community. Here I am loved and known, and here I love in turn’. (1973, p. 15)

Most of us at this time were fifty or over, single and searching for something to do. Roots were no longer symbols of stability, security and continuity. They represented immobility, inflexibility, unchangeability. They were lacking in their essence of time. Wings not only symbolised movement but they evoked a cyclic, rhythmic nature as well. I think of the butterfly and its insect relatives when I think of wings who not only comprise the largest group of living things but also experience metamorphosis as part of their life cycles. They can account for change and the encountering dialectics and repetitions in daily lives. I feel as though I have been this route of being winged thirty years ago in my twenties and even ten years before that as an adolescent. As I stated in my prologue these present years are repeat teen years - a reverse countdown.

I would like to include a poem by Milton Acorn which gives the reader another metaphor. This plant was a common resident of my Connecticut landscape and reminds me of that home. The liquid from the stem is an excellent antidote for poison ivy. (Another common resident of my former landscape. Ironic how they live side by side.)

Touch - Me - Not

There is a flower called touch - me - not, which means, of course, touch me, for it depends upon touch for propagation, as humans do. The blossom may be two tones of orange, the darker exquisitely freckling the lighter, or a clear lovely yellow, an elegant aperture, inviting entry by winged emissaries of imagination actuated by love. The seed pods are made of coil springs laid straight in the pod’s shape: ripe, the seeds are restrained in suspension of tension. Touched, they fly.
Wings put life into a rhythm and it is this cyclic experience of time (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) that operates with the discontinuity and uncertainty of living. It is here at the border between cycles and rhythms that language and its meaning as expressed by Connelly & Clandinin have meaning for me in my metaphor of wings. "Rhythms are cycles translated by an individual's experience and are, therefore, personal. Cycles may be described in objective terms; rhythms require a language of affect" (ibid., p. 39). They further describe rhythms as being "felt" and as "subjective, aesthetic, and moral orderings" (ibid., p. 40).

Roots have an ancestral as well as metaphorical meaning. When one questions and explores one's roots one is questioning ancestry, descent. Ancestry usually implies a distant person, a forefather. As I refer to roots I mean the ancestral version of the term. As I trace roots I trace ancestry. There is part of my identity. As wings fly me through spaces I trace and create history, the self in a rhythmic cyclic motion.

**Tradition to Change**

*Have taken a 180 degree turn on my ideology. Fuck tradition. It's tradition that causes the disease. It is the sanctity of the space that does it. If we need tradition then let's invent it.* (Journal entry, 1997)

This acute awareness of tradition is a modern phenomenon that reflects a desire for custom and routine in a world characterised by constant change and innovation. Reverence for the past has become so strong that when traditions do not exist, they are frequently invented. (Rybczynski, 1986, p. 9)

Tradition. Dictionary meanings suggest the handing down of information by word of mouth or example from one generation to another without written instruction, an inherited pattern of thought or action, and cultural continuity in social attitudes and institutions. Folkloric interpretations are more ambiguous. Some researchers (Jones-Jackson, 1987; Knudson & Suzuki, 1992) acknowledge preserving and clinging to the old ways with minimum technological influence. The very survival of the
culture depends on the ability of the people to "bequeath its traditional expressive culture to the next generation. Without the living context in which that expressive culture arises, cultural endurance is by no means certain" (Foreword by Joyner, Jones-Jackson, 1987, p. XVI). The Foxfire Books by Eliot Wigginton are an attempt to preserve the lives, customs and tales of the people of Appalachia. In contrast some (Berkes, 1992 from Johnson, M., ed. 1992) question the term 'traditional' since societies change with time adopting new methods and technologies making it difficult to define what kind of change would affect the label of 'tradition'. Many of these knowledge systems are deeply rooted in the cultures interaction with their land, their close contact with nature. The land and animals especially for indigenous people (and farmers and outport fishermen) represent their history, their culture, their meaning, their very identity (Knudson & Suzuki, 1992). They have also acquired much of their knowledge and skills through hands on experiences. This strong tradition of being bound to the landscape was evident with my case studies and myself. The term tradition, the continuity it implies and the heritage it carries to folk cultures according to Wigginton and Jones-Jackson is a source of strength that enables one to cope with the upheavals of life and a reservoir of hope, energy, and self-assurance that would carry one through hell. The irony I find here is that if the wars in Eastern Europe, Africa, the 'turf' wars in U.S. cities are examples of 'hell' then I must say again to 'fuck' tradition. As I attempt to set the terms out of the context of the text, to arrive at a true meaning, the multiplicities surface contradicting my theoretical frame. I view tradition not only as a strength but also a weakness.

My inquiry was developing around the concept of traditional homes. What image does home as traditional evoke? What is the relationship of these traditional concepts to harmony? And what about non-traditional connections to harmony?

In one context of home, space was not strange but new.

G -You must be very adjustable.
D -Why do you say that?
G -Because you are constantly moving. You don't seem to have a single home. You have three places that you might call home.
and appear to be comfortable in each one.

D - I never thought of it in that way.

G - Let me give you an example. You did not move to Lockwood Road you merely changed location. And being with you here in Athens (Georgia) I see you settled in and getting right to work. You seem to be comfortable in any setting.

D - But that's the paradox. That is what my research is all about - the search for 'home'. And in that search I suppose is a desire. This conversation has given me a new perspective, a new notion. (Conversation with Grace Bunyi, January, 1995)

A distinction begins to take place between moving and changing space. Not sure what that is just yet. But if we create some type of a home in the spaces we occupy then moving is not the correct term.

As my personal concept of home evolves, it has meaning as a structure, a concrete physical space functioning primarily as shelter from the elements. It has something that is mine. I could claim some form of ownership in the sense of it bearing my signature. There are stories embedded in this structure of family, culture, self. There are objects, artifacts that occupy spaces within the spaces that are mine. As I begin to realise that the stories have multiple origins, that no one structure can claim title to home, this concept is no longer useful. It doesn't say what I want it to say. Also, what happens when the structure is gone? Then what are the stories about? There are other aspects of this space that are missing. There is something more. The whole is not the sum of its parts.

Dictionary definitions speak of the noun home as a residence, a social unit formed by a family living together, a place of origin, a congenial environment, or the objective in various games. The adjective form of home the descriptive element was missing. This form of the word forced me to recognise that describing home was as important as being there. Relaxed and comfortable, at ease, in harmony with the surroundings, on familiar ground. This was 'at home'. Feeling 'at home' was quite different from being 'home'. Home no longer was where. It was no longer a place. Its meaning was far greater than anything I had imagined. Home was now a question of what. Home as an image was not 'home is' but 'home as'. It seems now though to
reverberate back and forth. From concept to construct, abstract to concrete.

We shape our dwellings,  
and afterwards our  
dwellings shape us.  
(Winston Churchill)

**Fictional Homes**

The term ‘fictional homes’ does not connote fake, unreal, or nonexistent homes. What it means is that in my view homes are created in the spaces we occupy. These homes exist on a continuum from the abstract to the concrete, from the imagined to the structural. We do this out of a need to belong to feel ‘at home’. We discover as Von Eckardt (1967) did that a good place to live must have identity, a sense of place. We live in many spaces sometimes many times a day. In creating that identity we describe, either in discourse or 3-dimension, our space. The terms we use to construct our meaning of home begin to assume emotional qualities as we move on the continuum from the concrete structure to the abstract sentiment of ‘at home’. Within the context of moving of changing space or of the diversity of situations, the discontinuity becomes evident requiring new understandings, new adaptations, new harmonies. These spaces take on meaning either personal or collective and can be very powerful in our interactive social and personal identities. A negative yet interesting example of this phenomenon can be found in the short story ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’ (Gilman,1995). The main character is driven insane over a period of three months by the wallpaper in her room. Her physician husband had ‘prescribed’ a rest due to a diagnosed depression and chose this particular room for her. She reacted to a strangeness and eventually began to imagine things in the torn and patterned wallpaper. These illusions finally overcame her rationality and she eventually lost touch with reality. The power of this space totally transformed its meaning and her identity.

Bachelard’s (1964) statement that any space bears the notion of home resonated with my evolving construct of home. I began to think about past homes, spaces where I felt ‘at home’. Not all the spaces that I occupied had the same meaning. I had created and reconstructed these meanings from
memories. Spaces as home formed many images. In memory I have revisited each of these 'homes' to reconstruct why they were home to me and search for terms to describe each of these spaces. But to visit them physically, to experience the memories and emotions the concrete image might evoke, that is the dream. The last time I returned 'home', that being where I did most of my growing up, was in 1981 at a High School reunion. My recollection of the town was one of disappointment at the overdevelopment and commercialisation. The landscape had changed and lost its 'quaintness', a simplicity that I found enchanting. Not only had the physical landscape changed but the emotional landscape was a void. There was no one there. No family. No friends. The irony of the whole situation was that at the banquet I received a trophy for the person who had changed the least since High School. How emotionally powerful is this conceptual language of home within a terra incognita.

These addresses are spaces within structures that I have occupied over the years. They are all in some way significant. Some I have inhabited longer than others. These spaces also share the common characteristic of bearing my signature. This signature assumed many forms. With some spaces it was pure sentiment. With others it was time. And yet with others it represented a space to store continuity and temporary permanence. My possessions were there. I experienced harmony. I discovered another aspect of my identity. I have chosen to call these spaces Home. (From The Music I See: Harmony of the Soul)

**9 Stowe Avenue**
**Baldwin, Long Island**

You peek through the entrance to the parlour and there is your mother's youngest sister on her hands and knees straightening each piece of fringe of the prized oriental rug one by one. Almost totally blind my Aunt Titi kept house for the family since she couldn't get a job because of her handicap. She was a fanatical housekeeper and as you can guess children were not allowed in the parlour.

You are told to smell the leather of the strap that is displayed in front of
your nose as you anticipate a mischievous act. Our family did not believe in corporal punishment so you never felt its sting, its poignant smell being enough of a warning. You still smell that odour when you recollect a situation that warranted its potential.

You are only eight years old. You have a pet duck named ‘Jimmy’ who follows you around. One day you decide to defy all the rules and go through the front door into the parlour. You think you have sneaked into this room where you are not allowed and you start exploring especially noticing the oriental rug and the perfectly aligned fringe. You hear a noise and think it’s your aunt. Remember she is almost blind but has an auditory acuity that beats the best of them. But it’s not her. You turn around and see Jimmy just as he is depositing one of those soupy green white and black droppings that ducks do in between the more solid ones that are easier to clean. Then all hell breaks loose. The front door opens, Jimmy is set aloft and you decide to take flight along with him.

You don’t get the strap. You don’t get to go out either. You get dinner but not dessert. You don’t ever go into the parlour again.

This is also the address that I was initiated into the world of playing ‘doctor’ or show me yours and I’ll show you mine. Perhaps subconsciously this is why this period in my life at this space was so impressionable. It was my introduction to my continuing curiosity and fascination with sexuality. His name was Joe, a neighbourhood playmate. I can’t remember if it was our garage or not. Although I don’t remember us having one on the property. It was dark. We didn’t say much except what was necessary to get the both of us to pull our pants down and examine each others ‘privates’. There was no touching, only viewing. It never happened again and we never spoke about this encounter. I don’t think we were even embarrassed.

Van Buren Street/795 So. Grove Street
Freeport, Long Island

My junior and senior high school years were spent at this address. The South Grove house was a 2 bedroom stucco cottage much too small for a growing family. It was a leftover from one of the first houses to occupy a wetland. It eventually was surrounded with a subdivision of working class ranch houses. Van Buren Street was a raised ranch built on a vacant lot next
to a stucco house that was to house an aging family. My sister and I were able to have our own rooms and the typical 1950’s architectural addition of a rec room hosted many parties as we worked our lives through the social structure of our teenage years.

Cerro Gordo
Vega Baja, Puerto Rico

There is a large crowd of adults and children walking along the beach laughing, playing and shouting “Vente, Vente al fiesta”. “Mama! is it OK if we go with them?” She looked at the crowd from the porch of the sugar shack\textsuperscript{40} and nodded her consent as she recognised faces in the crowd. “No quedas tarde! Vamos a comer a los cinco de la tarde.” So off we went. We followed the group along the beach for what was not a long distance and a few minutes later ended up in someone’s yard. Every one was in a festive mood. There was music and food. To my horror I saw a man come out of the house with a huge butcher knife immediately followed by a woman with a large aluminum pot. What I didn't notice was the pig tied to a table in the middle of the yard. Within an instant the pig was screaming, echoing a gurgling sound from its own blood pouring out of its throat that was being caught by an aluminum pot. It wasn't the sight of the blood as much as the sound. “Emy let’s get out of here, I’m going to throw up.” “Me too”. We ran home doing everything possible to blot out the images we had just seen and keep everything in our stomachs. We succeeded in not puking but the flashbacks to this day are clear. This flight led to another flight. That’s another story.

31 Maple Street
New Haven, Connecticut

My university years were spent here. It was a third floor flat. My landlords, Yetta and Aaron were orthodox Jews and the second floor was rented to a reformed Jewish Rabbi and his family. There were some interesting unavoidable religious discussions in this household. I learned a great deal about the Jewish religion. As a gentile I accidentally ‘contaminated’ Yetta’s kitchen several times during the Passover season. This was all taken in stride and jest.

\textsuperscript{40} This was my Uncle Carlos’ name for the primitive small shack we lived in which was situated on a spectacular ocean front. It’s namesake was a popular song.
446 Durham Road
Guilford, Connecticut

Twenty five years of my life were spent at this address. The stories are embedded and juxtaposed in the text. This was home to me. My professional life echoes within these walls.

299B Woodcock’s Mills Road
Tamworth, Ontario

This is the ‘cabin’, Clarion Peak. Its stories are also part of the text.

31 Lockwood Road
Toronto, Ontario

One of the present spaces I call home. These stories are being created.

Fictions of Homes

An implicit theory was emerging from the abyss of memory. I could no longer envision myself rooted in one place. The phenomenon of moving with its multiple narratives was framing a reality of multiple homes, the reconstruction of which I call fictional, ‘narrative fictions’ (Chatman, 1990, pg. 184) of home. They extend beyond the ordinary boundaries of what we name home. They are created, composed from our life stories, our own making meaning of experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). This very familiar term, home, was becoming strange.

Meanings extend beyond the personal. The image of ‘home as’ connects to one’s culture, to one’s world. In Williams (1991) study of folk dwellings in North Carolina he found that houses and oral history were more than categories to derive facts. Both are forms of cultural expression. He states that “between the narrative and the physical form of the house are the meanings and behaviours that shape the form of the house and the experience contained within, or attached to, the house” (pg.14). The terms we use to construct our meaning of home begin to assume emotional qualities as we move on the continuum to the abstract sentiment of ‘at home’. As teachers and learners our consciousness of the meaning-changes provide the material for exploration so that the personal or cultural conflicts that arise from diversity and discontinuity can be resolved into understanding and
knowledge. The term diversity presents several options as to how tradition can be viewed. In a narrative operative the stories we tell are important to our identity. They tell us who we are. On a personal level this 'narrative identity' (Widdershoven, from ed. Josselson, Leiblich, 1993) is the unity of a person's life as it is experienced and articulated in stories that express this experience. The contradictions I experience in my views of tradition are grounded in these personal and cultural stories of those 'outsiders' who choose to build their homes next to mine or the Spencers or the Brockways. And this is where the text shifts from the political essay to narrative. These stories invoke the theme of empathy. The very foundation of interdependence is empathy. I chose the term interdependence to mean a sense of community because its neon display accommodates a concrete rather than abstract image. This is where the empathic nature of narrative bridges images and concepts. Schopenhauer's term was compassion. He believed it was a fact of human consciousness and resided in human nature itself (From Murdoch, 1992). "Compassion impedes the sufferings; which I intend to cause another person. It calls out to me 'stop!', it stands before the other man like a bulwark, protecting him from the injury that my egoism or malice would otherwise urge me to do" (ibid. p. 63).

I have chosen to use the term 'outsider' to connote one who does not feel 'at home', does not belong or does not experience harmony. I thought about other terms such as stranger, foreigner, alien. I closed my eyes and tried to form images for each of the terms. 'Outsider' was the most concrete and analogous to the 'us against them' syndrome. I was taken back to my childhood where my recollection of the circle games we played on the playground involved someone on the outside trying to penetrate the already established perimeter. I remembered how awful it felt when we couldn't break into the group. We masked the understanding of alienation. We laughed then. It was only a game.

The linguistic multiperspectival constructs that render an image of home allows us to nurture folkloric traditional concepts in concert with non-traditional concepts. Abstract principles of human nature such as comfort, safety, acceptance, and freedom can become concrete as a consequence of application through experience (Dewey, 1934) with and knowledge of revised notions of home.
Through meaning it endorses, while through poetic expression, it opens up. (Bachelard, 1964, p. 222)

Following is a work I had written to express this new found vocabulary.

Moving from space to space.
Moving with life, moving with these words on the page.
‘Home’ and ‘at home’ - moving from concrete to abstract, from space to sentiment, from object to subject.
Moving from discord to harmony.

Establishing a whole new rhetoric of space and being.
Sanctity, sanctuary, comfort, serenity, conformity, safety.
No longer a spectator. Now a user.
Images and stories of harmony, of self, of others, of space.

Creating history.
Cultural and personal.
Struggling to preserve.
Struggling for permanence.
Yet moving.
(DeCarion, 1993)

Place to Space

Much of the literature on home makes use of the term ‘place’. I prefer the term ‘space’. The distinction to me is in the lack of boundaries that space implies. Space is more open to motion and vision both of which are operative in arriving at a concept of home whether the motion and vision be actually concrete or ideological. Home on the range, where my childhood dreams were in the western tradition, were the wide open spaces of the prairies. Not the wide open places. A different mood exists in a space compared to a place. Sense of place to me connotes an arrival, an ending, a stopping where there is the presence of an already established environment. Sense of space connotes a blankness, an openness inciting freedom and
creativity. It also has a dimension of time and in language, tense.

Moving among these open free spaces, on a daily basis requires constant adaptation, a flexibility in thought as well as language. Our language “is modified in the context of historical and societal changes” (Hermens & Kempen, 1993, p. 7). As I think of terms to describe this on going process I think in the scientific realm of mutation rather than transformation. Mutations are brought on by other than normal recombinations. In terms of the adaptive value the outcome is strictly random. In general large macro mutations do not get passed on since they can be harmful to an organism but the small micro mutations “are said to be the very ‘stuff’ of evolution” (Dictionary of Psychology, 1985, p. 460). Establishing a sentiment of ‘at home’, not to be an outsider, to belong, is to be creative in our terms of micro mutations in order to construct concepts in harmony with our space, to find continuity in ambiguity. Our souls and spirits are reflected in the spaces we occupy through our reconstructed narratives that enable us to adapt and cope.

**Tolerance to Acceptance**

The term tolerance is used a great deal in discourses regarding multicultural education and issues of racism. My vocabulary has evolved to the term acceptance in my discourses of identity. Tolerance according to personal and dictionary meanings is the ability to be patient with ideas that are different from your own. Acceptance means moving beyond the border. You receive the outsiders’ ideas. It is an act of believing in the interdependence of all human beings and of all things. This is a stronger, more committed term. I do not mean to imply that the reader appropriate the notions but to accept them and their narrative history.

**Empathy - A Rhetorical Theme**

So what does this bit on rhetoric mean? For me it is a clarifying of terms, constructs, how language as in Roland Barthes’ (1981) comparison of the photograph “contrary to the text which, by the sudden action of a single word can shift a sentence from description to reflection...” (p. 28) alters our conceptualisations. Or ‘getting it right’, Geertz (1988); Wolcott(1994).

*It’s more like this has been my [Deirdre’s] narrative history and*
I [Deirdre] can't stand what's happening to the changes and that's OK. And you may learn something. And this may not be a good thing to be happening in general. But that's another kind of argument. What you're getting at is the sense of home that's grown up and what challenges that. What makes you uncomfortable with it. You're sort of getting at the edges in here of this because you have these extreme cases. The woman who hated home because it was a place of sexual abuse. It was a dangerous place and then there's the idyllic place which you are and then the threats which the Spencers and you, your stories are. There's a tension between the narrative histories and the change that takes place. That's really what's going on there. (Tape transcription, Dr. Connelly, September 16, 1997)

That is what is really going on. It is change in the form of separation or loss of a particular landscape with its own language, mood and value. But the question is what are the narrative histories of all the agents, including those responsible for the destruction of the idyllic? What are the meanings each of us attach to the change? What are the images and the conceptualisations of home and the sentiments of 'at home' within this context of outsiders and change?

There has been a tension created by the many dialectics and ambiguities as a result of the many changes created by the intrusion of progress in landscapes. My ability to articulate these tensions and convince the reader of my dilemma and its relationship to home and 'at home' reveals a moral narrative rendition of the facts. And this is where the term and meaning of empathy enters into the discourse, where the genres become juxtaposed and the rhetoric assumes significance. As essayist I condemn the outsiders and their progress. As narrativist I want to tell my story based on my history and imagine theirs.

There is the moral side to rhetoric which I believe lies in the (per)suasion of the definition. As this chapter serves as some kind of a model for me I like to go with Wolcott's suggestion that the writing be provocative rather than persuasive. Hitler used rhetoric in a folkloric framework to build a nationalism in Germany to further his white supremacist ideas. I believe as
authors we have a social conscience that translates into a moral responsibility. That responsibility is to be as objective as we can in a very subjective endeavour.

I want to clarify and escape the euphemisms of home. Our images are influenced by the language we hear and read. I needed to come to terms with myself and my readers. This bit on rhetoric has been influenced by many interpretations caused by changes in images, the particulars and concepts as I search for home. I feel tension for example as I experience change in the physical landscape. I want to express that change and how I feel about the change and what kinds of behaviour I express as a result. This is about change. My narrative history creates an incredible tension between images of home and realities.
Chapter 8

‘At Home’ in an Educational Milieu

We need to teach the skills for coming into a new place and quickly making it into a home.
Mary Catherine Bateson

Introduction

In April of 1994 I set myself to a task related to a question that has plagued me since the thesis’ inception - to connect a study about traditional concepts of home involving older participants to a study situated in an educational milieu. I could not divorce myself from the narrative of an educator with 25 years experience and the part of life it occupied. If the overall question remains the typical so what or how will my research enhance students’ learning then I could not ignore the role of teachers, students, classrooms and schools in the study. I had to find a way to make the connection. My question and focus then became, what does the concept of traditional home have to do with schooling? How does it fit with contemporary society? To what extent is the concept of home and sentiments of ‘at home’ constructed in schools? Van Manen (1994) suggests that “family, school, neighbourhood and communities have changed and are less likely to offer the sheltered pedagogical spaces wherein children (and teachers) can find supportive and protective areas to live, play, explore, learn, and develop” (p. 147). Classroom privacy, according to Connelly & Clandinin (1994), plays an important epistemological function in that it is a “safe place, generally free from scrutiny, where teachers are free to live stories of practice” (p. 17). Within this framework my search for these sheltered pedagogical spaces led me to several unusual yet logical courses of observation. I began to look back on my own student and teacher educational experiences. What had I been offered in terms of safe spaces, of being ‘at home’ in an educational milieu? In a discussion of the Montessori school (Martin, 1992) if you translate ‘casa’ as house you get one meaning. Translate ‘casa’ as home and it takes on a moral, ethical and social dimension. It is this second perception of the translation I relate to and wish to explore.

I first looked at ethnicity since I grew up in a culture of second language and customs. The Spanish language was an important part of my history. It
was the only way I could communicate with my grandmother. It was the only way I could understand after-family dinner discussions—sometimes-turned-into-arguments by my Aunt Nina. However, in school it was different. I recently reviewed my report cards from elementary to high school and unexpectedly, I had forgotten the inconsistency and poor quality of some of my grades. To digress a bit there was a strong correlation between the teacher and grade. As I focused on the two I noticed that if my memory of the teacher was positive, if I ‘liked’ the teacher I had a decent grade. We had to take a foreign language in junior and senior high school. Naturally, I chose Spanish. My junior high teacher found my Puerto Rican dialect unacceptable to the Castillian Spanish. I never felt comfortable or that I belonged in her classroom and consequently never was ‘at home’. My identity was being subversively destroyed by this person in this institution which according to Jones-Jackson (1987) should be an agent of cultural enrichment not cultural destruction. In high school my Spanish teacher accepted my ‘handicap’. I remember I liked her and my grades improved. So did my self-esteem.

"there is some shit I will not eat."

(e. e. cummings)

Related to my ethnicity in an educational ‘home’ there occurred a more serious and personally destructive ‘miseducative’ (Dewey, 1938) experience. I was suspended indefinitely from a college in North Carolina for allegedly stealing beer from a Krogers drug store. I admit I was a non-willing accomplice, invited along for the ride. I tried to discourage my two friends because my intuition told me we were going to be caught. We were. They had no money so I paid for the beer and we left thinking the case was closed. It wasn’t. This experience has had a profound effect on my life and as Connelly & Clandinin (1995) acknowledge “education as transformation is a mixed blessing but one that few would consciously resist” (p. 84).

To set this episode into some kind of context, it was the end of spring semester during my sophomore year. I was hanging around waiting for a ride home to New York. I had put in for transfers to other universities feeling that this college was too small, expressed many blatant prejudices and didn’t offer me academically or socially what I wanted. Several days after the beer incident I received a message that the dean wanted to see me. I was not alarmed (or
forewarned) thinking he wanted to wish me well before I left. I was an average student and active in campus affairs. I entered his office and immediately felt the tension and the hate. I knew that well-wishing wasn’t his intent. The eye contact confirmed my suspicion. His words were (as close as I can recollect so many years later),

"Why’d ya do it?"
"Do what?"
"Steal the beer."
"I didn’t steal anything."
"Who was with you?"

I started to connect, got a rush of something throughout my body and became very defensive. Obviously my name was the only one reported. Since I denied the accusation from the start, he too had a rush of something and became threatening. I was scared. He called my mother at work.

"Your daughter stole beer from a local drugstore and is in my office being uncooperative. She is a thief and juvenile delinquent typical behaviour of a New Yorker."

As I was on an extension phone, I immediately interrupted,

"Don’t worry mom I haven’t done anything wrong and I’m OK."
"Deedee you do whatever you think is right. I believe you."
"Maam I am disappointed with your attitude and wish you would speak English." (My mother has a noticeable Spanish accent but spoke fine English.)

I remained in his office for another half hour - the object of harassment and threats. He wanted me to cry and I wouldn’t, couldn’t. I was too angry and humiliated. I had done nothing wrong and felt my integrity was being impugned by this narrow and bigoted man. Anger followed me for many years. There’s still some left even today. He wrote negative letters to the colleges I had applied to and made sure that I was prosecuted to the full extent of the laws of the institution. My ‘friends’ escaped it all. One lied said she
wasn’t there and the other broke down, cried, and redemption was her saviour.

“This is to inform you officially of the action taken by the Executive Committee of High Point College at their meeting of June 17, 1963, in which theft of articles from the Kroger Grocery Store in College Village was discussed. The decision of the Executive Committee was that you should be suspended indefinitely.” (Personal communication, J. Fryhover, July 25, 1963)

Letters (which are appended) were exchanged between my family and the administration to have my name cleared. My parents were poor, couldn’t afford a lawyer and Civil Liberties wouldn’t become involved because it was a private institution. To this day my transcript still reads ‘Suspended Indefinitely’. People along the way believed in me and for this I am grateful. I was given a second chance. At 19 years old I learned the valuable lesson of cultivation, awakening, and transformation (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995) that has continued to the present. And if there is a moral to this story it is this. As teachers we need to be sensitive when we ‘paper’ screen and evaluate students. For the first time after 22 years of a silence induced by the power of invented guilt, embarrassment and humiliation, I shared this story in Dr. Connelly’s 1300 course. After listening to my story a participant and educator responded she would never prejudge students again by what was written on their records.

I wish to share in another ‘miseducative’ experience. This occurred at a young age and is excerpted from my QRP Fall 1992.

Word Painting #3
Miss Scott
She was short and stout. Most of us were her height or taller. She had very short grey hair that only gave accent to a harsh face that displayed her nature. Strict and mean. She had very thin well-defined lips that never changed expression. She had a deep crease in the middle of her forehead that grew with her anger. She always wore heavy black shoes
that laced in the front and had thick heels. I felt sorry for the wooden floors. Her dark, short-sleeved, polyester dresses never hid her big stomach or flabby arms. The sweeping necklines bared her neck-less upper torso and the cleavage of two huge breasts. I don’t ever remember her smiling or offering a kind word. At least not to me. I wrote her a note once telling her that I hated her and signed another kid’s name. Of course I was caught. I didn’t lie in wait for the right moment to place it on her desk and I didn’t do a very good job of imitating someone else’s handwriting. The principal was not terribly pleased with this behaviour. Nor was my mother. But, this was just the beginning.

I resisted each day with a passion. I wouldn’t eat lunch and as a result got quite ill. My dedicated and powerless mother had to drive all the way across town, pick me up, bring me home for lunch to make sure I had eaten, and return me to school. Physically, I recovered but mentally I never did. I was as rebellious and uncooperative as I could be. I failed just about everything and was almost retained. I hated school and everything that went with it. I think the only thing that got me to fourth grade was Miss Scott’s intense loathing for me. The fourth grades were in another school.

As I reflected on this event, I realised that it wasn’t Miss Scott or the dark egg-crate school that was totally responsible for my unhappiness. My world had changed. Stowe Avenue, a space that was home, was gone. We had been living with my grandmother, aunts and cousins and these were very happy times for me. My parents had gotten their own place and I had to move, leave a school where I was ‘at home’ and enter this new space. This was only one of many changes that would occur during my lifetime and further influence my concept of schooling and education.

**Metallic Personal Encounters**

The recollections of experiences initiated a kind of thought that led me to seek and establish a connection between an image of home and an image of home in an institution. I began to look for signs. The formation of an hypothesis that began to connect school and home had its birth in a metal
object that about every student has access to. As I visited my old school and meandered through the halls during that very important social time prior to homeroom, the students were congregated in recessed ‘L’ shaped cubicles lined with tall narrow receptacles called lockers. Their narrowness could barely accommodate a coat and the shelf, 8 inches from the top, was not made for the school bags, books, lunches, and other paraphernalia students transported and stored. The insides of the locker doors were decorated with photos, bumper stickers, mirrors, balloons, ribbons and bows of past celebrations and various memorabilia that could be glued, taped, or somehow attached to this hard, austere, cold piece of grey metal some called ‘home’.

Don’t smother my rights because I am a woman. Don’t kill my feelings because I am a man. Don’t call me worthless because I am a child. I am the spirit that grows inside that will never be shadowed. Don’t call me nothing for I am a human being. Don’t call me a weakling for I am strong. You can’t dent my future my life because I am solid, never silent.

(Taped inside of student locker. Author unknown.)

What did this all mean? A little bit of self, identity in a large metal and cinder block building with 700+ students? So I set myself to another task. I wanted to assemble photographs with the intent of presenting an educational reality of teachers and learners in some context related to my notion that there are spaces created at school that embrace the notion of home and the sentiment of ‘at home’.

“So what is so special about having a locker?”

“It’s like your own and you can keep like stuff from school in it and um it’s just yours for the length of time you’re in school and you can do whatever you like with it.” (Student interview, March 20, 1997)
Armed with camera and an idea, I returned to my school. The photo session was a failure. I experimented with a new flash and the negatives were all underexposed. I also did not have a 'feel' for what I was doing. My sense of purpose was for some reason vague. I felt pressured. I did not allow myself the time I needed to compose and construct images that would generate the kind of narrative for my intent. I knew then there would have to be another pursuit for this knowledge I was seeking from students.

"Girls Kick Ass"
*(Taped inside student locker)*

Um well that's basically like well whenever I'm feeling bad about anything I can say well I'm a girl and I'm great and I can do whatever I want and just kind of like a little pick me up when I'm having a bad day.

And I guess that the license plate is kind of a reminder because my favourite place in the world is Vermont because we always go up there every weekend. We have a house up there and I love snow boarding and I just love being up there. *(Student interview, March 20, 1997)*

Within the context of the topic home and 'at home' an education for some may form itself in the image of a locker. It is a space whose absence of motion provides an interlude, a rest, a refuge from the daily presence of constant movement and change of classes, rooms, friends, teachers, books, and home. All of the students expressed some meaning in the artifacts they chose to represent a part of the self, a sense of identity related to belonging. Lockers provide the only personal space a student has for their artifacts (or tangible legacies). In the sharing of this space it also signifies and provides a sense of community.

*D - “What in this locker tells me who you are? What's your favourite thing?*

*Student 1 - “My journal (laugh) cause I write away things.”*
Student 2 - "Not the books but probably this cause it tells about friendship."

D - "How many times do you come back to your locker?"

Student 1 - "Lots like five or six but when I have study hall I come like eight."

D - "Does the locker mean anything to you?"

Student 1 - "Just - I don't know, somewhere to keep your books. Like I'm going to start keeping my journal in here so my mom doesn't read it. Like a private place where you can keep stuff that is private." (Tape transcription, March 20, 1997)

I was particularly interested in the use of the term 'private' by this student. It plays an important role in the evolution of the meaning of a distant and detached purely functional space to a more attached and personal one. This transition is illustrated in the history of house to home. In a historical account by Rybszynski (1986) houses in Europe after the Middle Ages contained more than one family. They were more like apartment buildings with rooms rented to tenants. People lived and worked in the same building. Around the 1600's there was a growing number of bourgeois for whom the home was exclusively a residence as compared to those shopkeepers and merchants who continued to live over the store. This separation resulted in the house becoming a more private place. Along with this privacy grew a sense of intimacy where the house was identified with family life. Comfort in the true sense slowly came about in the eighteenth century. These spaces were slowly being transformed from the public feudal household to the private, family home.

Professional Spaces

As I revisited some of the classrooms, I began to take note of the teachers' environment. Were there spaces of comfort, safety and identity reflecting notions of home? In a study by D. Jean Clandinin (1986) a teacher indicated that her classroom was "a home", an "idea of how a home should be", "a group of people interacting and cooperating together" (p. 108). The teacher also used the term 'comfortable' when referring to how it should feel. She felt very strongly about having a feeling for the space and her 'classroom
as home’ image demonstrated several elements of her personal practical knowledge. This image linked her personal life where her knowledge of home originated.

Recollecting my own space, a student could tell who I was. I wanted to create an atmosphere and environment that was comfortable, stimulating and familiar to my self as well as my students. There were concrete examples of my interests, values and personality. I exhibited my art work from paintings to photographs to calligraphy. I always maintained that there should be other living things in classrooms besides homo sapiens that needed care and nurturing, so there were plants, fish and a tarantula. I did not want my students to fear or dislike animals primarily on the basis of looks, myth and ignorance. Face to thorax confrontation develops familiarity. As questions evolved around this arachnid and answers were found, ignorance and fear seemed to vanish. Students comments became more positive and empathic. I had more volunteers willing to catch grasshoppers and crickets to feed the tarantula. This animal became an object of caring. I have hopes that this understanding extended to the myths and ignorance among humans but I will never know that.

My desk had a variety of toys that occupied an idle mind or two. There were wind up toys, balls that didn’t bounce, a tornado in a small jar, a plastic rod that would only spin clockwise, etc. I kept a stash of pens and pencils that I would pick up in the hallway, victims of carelessness, that I shared with those students who ‘lost’ theirs. There was alot of my 3D world in that room. It was my home away from home. I didn’t know that at the time. It was not a conscious effort. It was just my way.

I wondered if other teachers felt the same way. I was soon to find out.

"Hey Deirdre, as long as you’re here why don’t you come to our team meeting. It’s first period. I’ll even treat you to a cup of coffee."

That offer was too good to resist especially coming from a good friend who is tight with a nickel.

The school is a middle school with a team teaching model. I will not delve into the philosophical nature of the concept except that in my opinion
it has many advantages over a junior high organisation, especially the daily scheduling of team meetings. It provides opportunity to engage in group discourse relating to the students' successes and/or failures in a variety of classroom situations accompanied by the diverse views of professionals. I was to attend one of these meetings with my former team. I took the opportunity to conduct a very informal group interview concerning my notion of 'at home' in an educational milieu. Specifically I asked them to describe a part of the work place that displays, exudes a personal notion of home that signifies the sentiment of 'at home' in their classroom. Or is there a space within the classroom that gives a sense of identity as an individual and professional. The results were as diverse as the teachers on the team.

One teacher merely described the area that 'represents me'. She attached no meaning as to their belonging in the classroom. She concluded,

_Those are the things that are in my work place that show what I like and add to the decorations in the room._ (Written communication, January 30, 1966)

Another teacher wrote that he decided to have:

_A student area and a 'my' area. Having a space that was mine was important to me. Originally this area only reflected one of my interests, which as you have seen is wrestling. I know that not everyone has the same thoughts on athletics that I do, but I firmly believe that sports in general teach something that is very valuable in life._ (email January 16, 1996)

I pointed out to this teacher that his interest only included males and he is currently "adjusting this area to try and communicate with the female student". He continued:

_In general I want students to know about my personal life, not everything obviously, but carefully selected pieces. I think that knowing interests of a teacher helps students to develop a relationship with the teacher. The level of the relationship is a difficult thing. The teacher has to determine what is an_
acceptable relationship and one that does not compromise the respect and distance that I feel should exist between teacher and student (email January 16, 1996)

I am curious about the terms 'acceptable relationship' and 'distance' within the context of the statements. Are there predetermined criteria or does it just happen intuitively? Do we know when we have crossed an unforgiving boundary? I also wonder about the terms 'compromising respect and distance'. Is this a compound notion or are the words meant to be singularly noted? Is distance a necessary requirement for respect. What about the student? How do they know where the boundary is? 'The teacher has to determine what is an acceptable relationship...' - Is this idea a collective one or is it an individual determination? Again, what about the student with as many as six teachers during the course of a day? Where are the boundaries? This is a conversation I would like to continue at another time and thesis. There was a teacher whose views were similar to the preceding one.

Within my personal corner are my things. School materials organised on the corner, as well as school - related duties (committee things) occupy the far corners of the desk, and the top of the bookcase. These are as far away as they can be, but still reachable. Directly in front to my face is a small, square plate with a picture of Michelangelo's Pieta on it. As my life is not always the best and things in school can get tough, I like this within my view at all times to remember Mary's endurance and suffering; it helps me sometimes keep my problems in perspective; I also keep a rosary within my top desk drawer, and use it when I feel sad or hurt. To either side of the Pieta are pictures of my four cousins: Ryan, Brett, Macken, and Connor. These remind me of family and love-- that life does exist beyond work, and that people love me, even when I screw up at work. (Letter January 30, 1996)

In my view this teacher's description had a religious and emotional nature with an atmosphere of home but one that seemed to be crisis oriented,
in time of need rather than a representation of the sentiment 'at home'. This area appeared to be self-centered, more for the teacher than an inclusive interactive student/teacher display. The last sentence tells us of something of how the personal and professional life was experienced.

Perceptions of teachers and behaviours change over the years. What may be appropriate or acceptable today may not have been years ago. The following description is an excerpt from an informal taped interview with June Spencer as we were looking at old photographs.

These two are old maids. She was a schoolteacher. And maan she was a schoolteacher! You towed the mark!! And Norm always tells the story of she wasn't the greatest driver. I guess was down at Stony Creek and she went through one of the stop signs down there at the four corners and I think the policeman stopped her and made her back up and go back and stop and she was a school teacher and if you don't think that was degrading to her. They lived on Boston Street. Sister was business woman. That's Dora. She had the biggest ears. They were so pronounced. (Tape transcription, May 12, 1995)

The institutional aspect was not always a pleasant or educative one, especially for Earle. The following conversation describes his experience with schooling.

D- Did you go to school here in Saybrook?
E- Yeau. I was all mixed up. I was 11 years old and Saybrook school was a couple of months ahead of the Moodus schools and got me all confused and I had to stay over in the 6th grade the next year.

And then I graduated from High School in Saybrook.

Uh I like books and learning but I didn't like school. Nope. My mind was back here all the time. Drawing pictures of boats in school you know.
D-That was me too. I didn't learn most of what I know in school.
E-Yeup. I don't have.. I still like to learn about different things
but eh keeps me going here ah..
D-So after High School you came straight to building boats?
E-Yeah yeah. I graduated in 1939.
D-Prior to grade 6 you were in Moodus? Kindergarten?
E- No kindergarten. I was 6 years old when I didn’t ..It was like a strange place when my mother took me in that uh register me when I was six years old. (Tape transcription, June 21, 1995)

Following is an excerpt from my committee member Dr. Silvers during my proposal hearing that echoes Earle’s view.

There is the turn of century school one room schoolhouse vs. the contemporary situation. I could see where you could relate the notion of home to that setting. Child coming into the room sighed. (1st grade) Like a child going into kindergarten. Lots of trauma. It’s the family giving the child to the state. It’s one very powerful act. Which means that for whatever responsibilities the teacher and the educators may have there is no emotional connection no matter how abused the child may be at home, there’s no emotional connection in the school. So that turning over one’s child to the state which is the legal order to do, is removing the child from the home. Where as in the sense of the small community, turn of the century, it didn’t necessarily happen. Going to that schoolhouse was not turning your child over to the state. So in that sense whether or not the concept of home but what you’re looking for can be located in the contemporary setting of schooling I’m not sure about that possibility. (Tape transcription, April 28, 1995)

Most of us spend a large percentage of our lives in schooling. This fact can be interpreted two ways in terms of its influence. Peak positive and valley negative experiences in my opinion provide a lifetime connection between our professional and personal lives blurring the line of demarcation, creating an interstitial reflective space. It answers the question ‘why’ when we ask the question ‘what do we remember’?
In my analysis of the brief and limited interviews with students I found that private spaces like lockers in public places like schools play a narrative role in forming students’ concepts of home and sentiments of ‘at home’. They contribute to continuity, their narrative unity in an educational milieu.

**A Look Back and a Move Ahead**

My first teaching job was in a Connecticut inner city school. I was hired immediately following my preservice teaching. The principal was a white, Jewish, woman who in a different setting could have been a more effective educational leader. However, her personal biases, which at times she indiscreetly exhibited, prevented her from fulfilling that role. The staff was a young eclectic mix, the majority white. My years there were extraordinary. It was an exceptional introduction into an educational milieu composed of experiences whose flashbacks appear as fictional accounts.

It was for its day modern. Its tall cross-like columned tower had four metal bells juxtaposed near the top whose sounds marked the beginning and ending of a day. Below was a sprawling one story building that housed 16 classrooms, a library, all purpose room, cafeteria, and courtyard with a pampered Chinese Maple. Clustered among this icon were housing units. They provided the raw materials, the living stuff for this new conception of urban redevelopment. Everything was new. And here lay the hope.

The project was to be integrated. There were two white families, middle class and educated. The fathers were professors at a very prestigious university nearby. The mothers were housewives who were to become too involved in the workings of the school. The rest of the residents were black. Very few were on welfare. Most were working parents whose hopes for a better life were right in this project.

But a short walk due north was another project and another story. One had to meander through the manicured grounds of the new town houses, access a walkway that led to a new shopping centre complete with public library, and cross Dixwell Avenue. And there it was. One of the most deprived, depraved crime ridden housing projects in the entire city. Ugly, dirty, red brick blocks with dark green trim surrounded by broken cyclone fencing, and turf that had not experienced the softness and colour of care. Nor did anything else. The occupants of this project were our clients. These were
the children who would make up most of the population of this idyllic K-4 elementary school that lacked nothing.

Good Luck, Bad Luck

One day I read a story to my fourth grade class about a young boy that had a rabbit's foot. I shared the myth that a rabbit's foot brought good luck to anyone who had one in their possession. I remember in my younger days of being able to buy a real rabbit's foot on a key chain in the local 5 and 10 store (along with real raccoon tails for the back fender or handle bars of your bicycle). Although I haven't seen them for sale, I would probably lobby against them. How our values change. The children listened and when I finished I thought that was the end. The next day first thing in the morning I heard Eddie shout, 'Miss DeCarion! Miss DeCarion! Look what I have!' He rushed towards me. The excitement in his voice compelled me to acknowledge his enthusiasm with equal verve. I looked down into his hand that tightly clutched a small object. As he slowly loosened his grip, the sight almost made me vomit. The dried blood was still on the muscles and bones that once joined it to the rest of its body.

There were many benefactors. We were on the pervasive educational pendulum swinging towards the left—invention, open classroom, journals, creative writing, new math, etc. The staff was young, committed, and nurturing. There was a free mid-morning snack and hot lunch. There were after school programs. There was an annual 'Fixer' parade created to promote redevelopment, renewal, and pride in the neighbourhoods.

School was home to these children. It was safe and comfortable. During the racial riots of the late sixties it was their sanctuary. It was an escape for some from domestic violence. And for others it was a time to experience quiet and peace and order. They were 'at home'. Van Manen's (1994) term 'pedagogy' shares with terms such as friendship, love or family in that they evoke an implicit relational significance. These terms are part of an image of home (Clandinin, 1986; Martin, 1992; Sinclair, 1994) of many teachers.

_Among the few relationships granted to us during our lives such as friendship, love, and fellowship in the workplace, perhaps the relationship to a real teacher is the most basic one._
one which fulfills and shapes our being most strongly. (Nohl, 1982, in Van Manen, 1994, p. 143)

I believe this pedagogical relation (Van Manen, 1994) or relational knowing, the concept of knowing through relationship (Hollingsworth, Dybdahl, & Minarik, 1993) is central to the notion of classroom as home. “The pedagogical relation is the concept of a caring human vitality that captures the normative and qualitative features of educational processes” (Van Manen, 1994, p. 149). He further suggests virtuous qualities for teachers (i.e. patience, trust, diligence, believing in children, etc.) to which I would like to add empathy. I believe empathy is inherent in human nature and more importantly can be consciously learned through personal history narrative and literature. I claim that it is the language of caring that establishes the presence of the sentiment of ‘at home’. In collaborative research relationships imply a sharing, a close relationship akin to friendship (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). On the continuum of values empathy or compassion or sympathy is a neutral emotion, one that cannot be easily disputed by boards or parents about its place in the classroom or as content of societal discourse and curriculum.

Classroom as home has its epistemological implications. My research and personal history indicates there is an experiential concrete learning mode associated with home in contrast to conceptual learning associated with schooling. Home learning takes on the character of a ‘chore’, an agrarian folk experience that some say build character. There was evidence of this in the Spencer and Brockway traditions. It connects with Dewey’s (1938) “organic connection between personal experience and education” (p. 25). One would make the assumption that the methodology in this kind of classroom based on the correlation between the ideology of home and learning in the home would be ‘hands on’, experiential learning modes.

The sentiment of ‘at home’ in the classroom has to do with certain comfort levels, levels that take many forms. At a recent conference Elliot Eisner provoked many thoughts by a comment that everything in a school was ‘hard’ and ‘cold’. The more I observed (especially the furniture) the more I agreed. What are we saying to our students? His comment brought two

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41 For more information see Van Manen 1994 p. 156.
recollections to mind. Years ago I wanted to ‘soften’ my classroom and added an art deco canvas butterfly chair. I was a bit apprehensive with this experiment since I wasn’t sure how one chair was going to be shared among 25 students. I was quite surprised with the outcomes. First of all they were delighted with the new addition. Secondly, I only told them that they had to share and I wanted no arguments. It worked out fine and became a permanent fixture in the room. The other story concerned a student who found the chairs uncomfortable and complained to the teacher. The teacher told him if he didn’t like it to bring in his own chair. This was not the kind of student you say something like that to. The next day he didn’t even get a chance to unfold the plastic reclining lawn chair in his math class. You can imagine the argument that ensued and the student ended up in the office with a two day suspension. I was on the student’s side since I agreed with his evaluation of the comfort of the furniture and his teacher did tell him to bring his own in. Chairs have an interesting architectural history. According to Rybczynski (1986) a well designed chair must not only accommodate sitting but also movement. This changing of postures to communicate, indicate, show, etc. is also called body language. The ability to change positions also has its physical functions. Our bodies are not designed to stay in one position for extended periods. Motility in a chair is important for comfort and in the middle of the nineteenth century sitting comfort was achieved not by padding and upholstery but by movements such as flexing, tilting, swiveling, etc. Today these mechanical chairs are associated with offices but its origin is more domestic. In 1853 the first tilting and swiveling armchair was patented for use in the home. The traditional rocking chair’s purpose was to permit the sitter to shift positions and alleviate stresses in the legs and back. That is why they are often prescribed for people with back problems. With this knowledge we expect students to sit still all day in chairs that are not compatible with their natures.

To explore comfort and ‘at home’ in another form is to extend this concept to include institutional physical spaces in an architectural context. Kaplan (1996) describes a sense of alienation and place-lessness to the shattered ad-hoc quality of the architecture in a Central Asian city where beauty was hard to find. To follow this idea one needs to, as in Kunstlers (1996) words, look at the physical fabric of our everyday world, try to repair it,
and perhaps "many of the abandoned institutions of our civic life may follow into restoration" (p. 20).

Human settlements are like living organisms. They must grow and they will change. But we can decide on the nature of that growth, particularly on the quality and the character of it, and where it ought to go. We don’t have to scatter the building blocks of our civic life all over the countryside, impoverishing our towns and ruining farmland. We can put the shopping and the offices and the movie theatres and the library all within walking distance of each other. And we can live within walking distance of all these things. We can build our schools close to where the children live, and the school buildings don’t have to look like fertiliser plants. We can insist that commercial buildings be more than one-story high, and allow people to live in decent apartments over the stores. We can build Main Street and Elm Street and still park our cars. It is within our power to create places that are worthy of our affection. (Kuntsler, 1996, p. 149)

It is interesting to speak of school buildings in particular with affection. This unfamiliar rhetoric solicits an anthropomorphic quality not normally associated with inorganic architectural structures. To envision schools in this context can provoke new meanings for school communities. To include emotion in the concept is to construct narratives of hope and caring. My present educational milieu is an example of a strong emotional context. The maintenance of a multi-purpose space for students and teachers has been a priority in the Centre for Teacher Development. Efforts have been made to create a ‘soft’ atmosphere in the area where we meet. This space has led to the creation of a community of hope and caring. The caring is in the support provided by an (inter)active social and academic interdependence. During the five years as a member of this community I have experienced different degrees and dimensions of involvement. Even during difficult times one still felt and found support. Writing a thesis is such a lonely craft. The discipline associated with the process becomes a sense of deprivation
constantly gnawing at the soul for some kind of nourishment. The need to share and communicate is overwhelming. But I have discovered that not anyone is capable of entering into this particular milieu. Who you share your writing with is crucial. Baring your soul-text to anyone can be a painful and negative experience. Therefore there is a need for support from a mentor or colleague who is understanding and empathic.

An abstract concept like hope in this personal milieu is best understood if it is defined as the lack of a predestined future. This definition accommodates change and adaptation since change is inevitable and most of us seek change. That is why we are here. Hope legitimises change and change legitimises hope. As students we experience depths of personal and professional change. As teachers we experience and effect social change. As interdependent empathic individuals, we share hope for the future with people like the Spencers and the Brockways within our differing educational milieus. This is our bond, our connection with our participants in our research and our connection to our world.

Finally, we arrive at the recognition that civilisation needs on honourable dwelling place, and that the conditions of making that place ought to depend on what is most honourable in our nature: on love, hope, generosity, and aspiration. (Kunstler, 1996, p. 20)

**Negotiating Classroom Diversity**

'At home' in an educational milieu for teachers in my view involves collaboration and that touches friendship. "In everyday life, the idea of friendship implies a sharing, an interpenetration of two or more persons' spheres of experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988, p. 281). The inclusion of this section is inspired by my involvement in a collaborative exploration of the use of fiction in research to establish a relationship between truth and fiction utilising an art form, photography, as a method of inquiry. We discovered that the use of photographic images to generate narratives had implications for teacher development. Teachers bring forth their own narratives of practice (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) in an atmosphere of collaboration of sharing.
The use of image generated narratives has implications for linking theory with practice and renewing creative energy. The narratives “are an approach to knowledge which emerges from reflection. Photographs call forth an experience” (Barter & DeCarion with Maureen Dunne, 1995, p. 16). A teacher’s response to an image can be a non-threatening writing situation and a more comfortable method of reflection than being asked to write about oneself (Barter & DeCarion, 1995).

The significance of collaboration and professional development is in the sharing of the narratives “and the thinking, theorising, and interpreting which turn those into an inquiry” (ibid., p. 15). The interpretation and sharing of the narratives reveal the rich multiple perspectives that clearly defines the differences among teachers. Negotiating classroom diversity on all levels becomes a concrete reality (Barter & DeCarion, 1995) and can create a space of belonging, a sentiment of ‘at home’ for all classroom participants. Diversity in meaning creates the individuality among us. This political context intends to provide a relevant and effective ‘pioneering effort’ (Wolcott, 1994) for teachers and students not only working with others but learning from others.

Irony in the Milieu

As I look back on my professional history my thoughts wander through experiences that were incongruous. What was expected and what actually occurred created a portrait of dilemmas. As I approached 25 years of ‘service to humankind’ (Hesburgh, 1990) I was content in surveying the events of that past. I had worked hard and smart. I had written and supervised a science curriculum. I developed a camping program for middle school students and a science department that was well equipped for a lab-oriented developmentally-based curriculum. We had a department of five personally and philosophically compatible individuals. I knew that long term friends were part of my milieu. The last ten years of my teaching were the most productive and rewarding. So why did I leave? I wasn’t ‘burned out’, unhappy, etc. etc. not that there were not trying times.

I have included the following communication because I believe it reflects my sentiments now as then.
As I introduced myself and spoke a bit about my leaving teaching after 25 years, I failed to mention something important. I want it understood that I did not leave teaching because I was unhappy. In fact the year was one of my best ever in terms of my teaching strategies and rapport with my students. Leaving a profession that challenged my cognition and affect on a daily basis and enabled me to approach each day with gusto, continues to be a painful experience. I have a feeling that this pain or whatever it is that I am feeling, will escalate as the summer draws to an end. Severing the relationships that were established over a period of 19 years at Brown\textsuperscript{42}, saying good-bye to close friends, packing my ‘toys’ that drew a laugh from students on those difficult days, attending the last staff meeting; these moments are still very vivid memories and produce sadness within.

Attending this class and being back in education, getting to know all of you has raised my spirits. I look forward to our time together. (Letter 1300 class, July 1, 1992)

During my last year teaching, I was almost fired for putting ice cubes on a thermostat in my room to raise the temperature. It was always very cold in the winter and sometimes I had to send students to their lockers for coats. Anyway, I got caught by someone and was reported to the superintendent. He accused me of insubordination in that I was defying his energy conservation program which I didn’t even know about. Lots of jokes went around about the event and I was not disenchanted by the situation. I’ve included a cartoon that was in the local paper after the ‘news’ leaked out. So why did I leave?

I was spending a lot of time in Canada, summers and vacations, especially at the cabin. I started to have an affair with the wildness of the rural areas and the heterogeneity of the urban areas. I agreed with Canadian political and social policies. The diversity was appealing. I began to feel a sense of belonging. Change was becoming inevitable. My memories of a previous sabbatical haunted me into a state of wishful anxiety. I wanted to go back to school. Do something different. I was approaching fifty, becoming

\textsuperscript{42} The middle school where I last taught science.
more and more aware of my time remaining on this planet. So much to
learn. For two years I investigated post graduate programs and a move to a
foreign but familiar country was appealing. It was not an easy decision to
leave my home, friends and job, although it wasn’t like I was going to end of
the earth. We all promised we would keep in touch.

With friends in Toronto, a space to call home, an acceptance to the PhD
program at OISE, a cat, and a letter of resignation to the board, I packed my
bags and headed north. I never dreamed that this move would be the subject
of my study. I never dreamed that there would be so many variables, so many
events that would influence not only my personal narrative but a global
virtual narrative that would create an ongoing evolutionary educational
process with each experience. Home was not only new space but knowledge
and a thesis.

My search for home in an educational context has been extraordinary.
At the Centre for Teacher Development I have found an intellectual and
social home. It has been the continuity in my narrative unity. My ‘wings’
have transported me to a safe and comfortable space enabling me to feel ‘at
home’ in an educational milieu.
Chapter 9

Along the Way

During the most desperate years of the Great Depression, people gave up their ancestral farms before their cars, because the car represented at least a chance to start over somewhere else. (Kunstler, 1996, p. 60)

Introduction

When I originally conceived this chapter, it was to include people that I encountered in my travels 'along the way'. They were to be significant in that they had some relationship to my case studies and/or participated in shaping the thesis comprising brief 'interludes', intimate contacts connecting developing concepts of home and the nature of roots. However, there have been events and structures that have shaped the thesis. These non-human dimensions seem to 'fit' in this section among the narratives of human experience. That's what this is about. Some objects and events have become metaphorical roots as well as ancestral in that there is a relationship between the object, time, and its appropriation by family. This section explores the people, structures and objects that frame sentiments of 'at home' in a concrete form and establish metaphorical roots as I wander and wonder 'along the way'.

'At Home' On the Road

Coming and Going

Years later I was on a long tour and arrived at yet another Holiday Inn. As I sat down in the impersonal room, I thought, 'Only two more weeks and I can go home.' When I heard myself think that, I saw inherent in that statement a cause of suffering. So I got up, took the key, went out and closed the door, and walked down the hall. Then I retraced my steps to the motel room door, opened it, and yelled, 'I'm home!'
Since then I don’t experience ever leaving home. As Hakuin, the Zen poet, said, ‘Your coming and going is nowhere but where you are’. (Ram Dass, in *Where the Heart Is*, 1995, p. 113)

Spending so much time on the road from the United States to Canada to gather data was instrumental in creating this chapter. I have developed an awareness of the importance of the automobile, its place in our lives and its voice in the concept of multiple homes. Ten hours, sometimes straight driving and sometimes stopping to rest and sleep, provided too many experiences to ignore. I have rewritten the thesis a million times with thoughts that vaulted to mind at a particular exit or gas station or configuration of trees. With long distance traveling at least once a month for a period of three and a half years one does more than accumulate speeding tickets. The automobile has become one of my homes.

You think back over your past, think about your work, think about your destination and about those you have left. The dashboard display shows how fast you are driving, tells you the hour and how many more miles you have to go. The sameness of the American landscape overwhelms and liberates you from any sense of place. Familiarity makes you feel everywhere at home. A sense of time passing makes you gradually increase your speed. (Jackson, 1994, p. 152)

Narratives collected and created along the way about traditional and non-traditional concepts of home make further connections between one’s personal knowledge and cultural construct. It is the road and automobile that supply me with episodes for this chapter. Another method of travel would not have given me the diversity that has not only shaped this text but also shaped my life. In all my hours on the road, traveling to and from Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and North Carolina, I have become fascinated with some notions about narrative that play themselves out in a concrete way driving these long distances. The road has a narrative of its own. The composition, colors and textures of the
surfaces tell their stories. The bumps and depressions set the car to music giving cadence and rhythm to an otherwise monotonous sound of spinning tires. Then the lyrics appear. Driving is like reading a novel. You can experience a lifetime in a few hours, and a day can be extended into years. You experience the same temporal play in a ten hour drive or a 65 mile per hour flash moment. Driving from Toronto to Connecticut, I witnessed all four seasons in ten hours. I began my journey with a dark dismal fall-like rain mixed with freezing rain. Winter snow covered the fields and roof tops of the New York state ‘snow belt’. The state of Massachusetts surrendered itself to the scent and coolness of fall-like weather and my arrival in Connecticut was greeted with spring. There was no snow, the grasses that lined the highway showed their best greenery, and the buds on the trees were displayed in spring-like fashion.

This version of road travel presents ‘romanticized’ images and emotions. Qualities of this romantic view are sensations of freedom and autonomy. Choice of path and destination are totally within the whim of the driver. The road is a horizontal linear view of the world that captures the awe of natural phenomena: storms that pass as quickly as they arrive, huge goshawks whose white breasted bodies contrast with the dark barren winter trees, a line of grey through a palette of fall and spring foliage, moon rises and sunsets and sunrises and moon sets. I have included two drawings rendered from the narratives created by road recollections.

Not only is the visual treated to its own stimulation but the olfactory is not ignored. I have been moved by the smell of a fresh rain on heated pavement, newly cut roadside grass, memories of winter warmth as fireplaces fill valleys with vapors of burning hardwoods and the list goes on.

Driving south on Route 81 somewhere near Watertown, New York where the road is flat and spacious farmland provides an uninterrupted horizontal view, I witnessed a phenomenal sight - a sunrise and full moon set at the same time. Both celestial objects mirrored each other on the horizon as one rose and the other fell.

The Orphan Maker

This romantic view surrenders itself to a more (sur)realistic narrative. Road kills. The innocence of the victims are humanly childlike. It’s a
narrative of life and death, luck and chance. I am especially saddened by the woodchucks. Many make their homes along the highway banks where the grass is so appetising and they are so vulnerable. It's ironic that the very needs they seek, food and absence of humans, is what kills them. One wrong turn or the 'grass is greener' philosophy and they are a statistic. Their 'homes' become death knells. I used to observe families of them in my yard in Connecticut. One in particular used to go to the front where I had a pear tree. In the evening he or she would get a pear, carry it to the back yard in its mouth, climb on the stone fireplace, sit up on its hind legs and proceed to methodically chew holding it with its forelimbs. They are one of my favourite 'domestic' mammals but not so for any one who has a garden. They can be terribly destructive. My digression into the life of this animal accounts for the sadness and empathy that overwhelms me as I view them lifeless on the black or white pavement that forms the boundary of their homes and their lives. The deer also sadden me, most of which are does. In the spring I wonder how many of these animals have left orphans in the woods.

The dialectics can be observed in the life that the road kills support. My perception of the crow and vulture has changed as I observed their behaviour along the highways. Their goodness lies in their ability to clean things up, clear the woodchuck and deer carcasses and at least instill some dignity in their gruesome deaths. The road as home is once again invaded by these scavengers and readied for the next victims.

The landscape can trick you. It can make you think spring is fall. On a drive through West Virginia in April the variety of budding deciduous trees presented the illusion of fall foliage.

Then there are trees that are adorned with plastic bags tossing my imagination about from reality to folly. Ugly black and yellow and white plastic, caught on the gnarls of tree hands, discarded by careless humans, flap in the breeze like flag 'wannabees', regal and powerful symbols. Of what I wonder.

The invention of the automobile has not only affected the space it needs to operate but its proliferation has also affected the inhabitants of them. Many people view their autos as home but in my opinion not always in a healthy sense. The term 'at home' becomes synonymous with 'turf' and assumes a literal therefore territorial significance affecting the behaviour of
the inhabitant and their interaction with other inhabitants of the road. Cars can be infected by a fairly new disease phenomenon known as 'road rage'. But for most of us as Jackson (1994) says the road offers "a journey into the unknown that could end up allowing us to discover who we were and where we belonged" (p. 192).

Interludes

From Past to Present

The Wampanoag Indians shared their thanksgiving harvests with the Pilgrims in the 1620's. They gave them corn, squash and beans to insure their survival in New England's first Plymouth colony. Wampanoag means "People of the East" or "People of the Dawn" (Weinstein-Farston, 1989, p. 22). The members of this community were the original inhabitants of Martha's Vineyard. Their location on the island fairly insulated them against King Phillip's War of 1675-76 which defeated the Indians and ended their efforts to stop the English from inhabiting their land. With the presence of the new settlers and the introduction of new technologies and disease, poverty and discrimination plagued the Wampanoags. However, several communities managed to survive and have grown in size and strength during the 20th century. This is true of the reservation on the Vineyard which was started in 1711. Today they are strong and occupy one of the most spectacular multi-colored clay landscapes called Gay Head ('Aquinnah')43.

The Gay Head reservation Indians, like all other Wampanoag, were plagued by numerous problems in their efforts to preserve native lands. The Gay Headers repeatedly appealed to the colonial government over land sales and the leasing of lands to the colonists. Land was vital to their identity as Indians not only because they lived from the resources of the land, but also because they saw themselves as caretakers of the land for the Creator. (Weinstein-Farston, 1989, p. 55)

In June 1996 while on Martha's Vineyard I engaged in some

43 Gay Head is an Anglo name for this Indian land. The local tribe is in the process of changing the name to the Indian 'Aquinnah'.
conversation with a Native American Indian that led to my thesis topic. He was a new resident and a sculptor selling his art at one of the local shops. His interest in home left me with the following. "They can bury me where they find me but my home is in the Smokies." I cannot remember his name but his comment had many meanings for me. I wondered what it meant to him in terms of his concept of home. What was the significance of the Smokies? Was this 'call' to this particular landscape in keeping with communities such as the Wampanoag who have a traditional relationship to the land? Does he not care where he dies?

This brief conversation prompted me to include this small episode and brief history. It rekindled an interest in North American aboriginal groups that many years ago took me to Wounded Knee, South Dakota for evidential and authentic knowledge of the conditions that precipitated violence there in the 60's. This small diversion frames an inquiry into the concept of the North American reservation system and its dwellers’ concepts of home. It seems as though no other group has been so displaced and misplaced as the North American Indian.

A Week Behind

When I’m in Tamworth, Ontario I feel like I’m in a time warp. In fact in a recent advertisement for a local tavern the ad read "Come Back to Another Time " (Land O' Lakes Vacation Guide, 6/98, p. 6 ). Just this past May of 1998 the local corner store began stocking the New York Times. I was surprised that this small somewhat depressed farming community’s draw is in its simplicity and insulation from publications such as the Times. At the new local bakery I enquired about the paper and the owner proceeded to tell me that it was last week’s paper. I laughed. She said, “It’s kind of like the rest of life in Tamworth, a week behind.”

Pauline’s hasn’t changed since the day it opened. It has the same thick ceramic coffee cups and saucers, the same unvarnished wood paneling, and the same hand-lettered sign that says, ‘Please pay when you are served.’ It’s a live black-and-white photo, a refuge against progress and uncertainty. (Yankee Magazine, p. 108)
Kountry Kitchen - This landmark was part of a ritual. It opened at 6 AM and by 6:01 had a gathering of local men\textsuperscript{44} sipping coffee sharing (and spreading) stories. Most were resident farmers engaging in some social time before going about their chores. The restaurant abruptly closed. Rumour had it that it went bankrupt. My disappointment reflected the absence of perfect poached eggs and an owner who was cordial, hard working and well-liked. But what was more significant was that the group was bankrupted also. They split up and in my view lost a sense of community and interdependence that their morning coffee gatherings provided. I sensed the loss. That morning time belonged in my daily routine and gave me a sense of belonging to the community. I was ‘at home’ in the Kountry Kitchen. Part of the traditional group migrated down the street to the ‘corner store’ which consists of a counter, 10 stools and two booths. The other group moved up the street to the local gas station where a white plastic table, 4 chairs and a coffee maker were installed to accommodate them. The restaurant has opened again but it’s not the same. Different name, different atmosphere, different group. (Journal entry August 19, 1996)

Kountry Kitchen was the origin of ‘Ernie’ stories. Ernie was the local independent garbage collector traversing the country roads in his dented dusty green pickup with oversized plywood sides to hold his garbage collection that occasionally left a trail of his route. Then age and life-style got the best of him. He was given a large party at one of the local taverns where he was retired by the townspeople. He accepted this gesture with grace. My recollections of Ernie and sharing counter space with him at the Kountry Kitchen are not terribly appetizing but I need to share one as an example of the meaning of interdependence. One day as I sat eating an order of their fresh cut chips (which on the menu were cheaper than the McCain’s frozen), out of the corner of my eye I could see Ernie putting his tongue into the mouth of the ketchup bottle on the counter licking up what ketchup he could reach. I thought I would vomit. After he left I asked the waitress if he did that

\textsuperscript{44} At times there were women, myself being one of them. It was only after 4 years as a regular morning visitor that I was once invited to sit with the men.
Business is Closed!

My sincerest and deepest appreciation to all of my loyal customers.

Bonnie Vanags
often. She could see the paleness of my skin and the look of disdain on my face. She replied, "Oh, don't worry. We have a special bottle with his name on it that we put out when he comes in." Ernie too was 'at home' in the Kountry Kitchen.

My stories associated with familiarity have some conflicting dilemmas or to use a 'Deweyan' term tensions. Exploration, mystery and the unknown are themes in my travels yet it is the familiarity that is significant in the stories. I was asked by Dr. Connelly if my stops along the way were random. As I thought about this, a story of intimate acquaintance surfaced. 'Stops' were eventually planned and so were the routes. My choices of planned stops were based on some sense of 'curb appeal'.\textsuperscript{45} Familiarity developed at a gas and washroom stop in Pulaski, New York.

"Haven't seen you in a while. We see you mostly in summer. Where have you been?"
"I had a broken foot and a cast so I couldn't drive."

It is the recognition out of thousands. And what else?
(Thesis notes March 15, 1997)

I feel as though Jungian synchronismity has its meaning in this story. This area is off the main highway. Some of the spaces remind me of Tamworth homesteads where homes are aged and neglected mobile homes are surrounded by sheds, wood piles, and rusty cars. The names of geographic features share similarities. The Salmon River supplies the landscape with a tourist economy based on fishing river expeditions. Clarion Peak, where the cabin is located, is bordered by its namesake the Salmon River. Here are environments of the foreign becoming familiar, of 'at home' mutating.

An Edible Interlude

My interludes at times assumed unusual forms and found their way into this chapter via field notes.

This is a recipe I got at June's today. Had lunch with her and Norm. Always over food. Had beef stew and bread for an entree and English Apple Pie for dessert. I had been thinking about a

\textsuperscript{45} This term has been referred to in chapter 5 p. 18 as an emotional and spiritual response to space.
low cal low fat alternative to apple pie and I got it.

**Filling** - Apples - McIntosh, Macoun, or Granny Smith. Cut them up and mix with 1 cup sugar or honey 1/2 cup (or less) and 1 tsp. cinnamon.

**Topping** - 1/2 cup butter melted or 1/4 cup, 1/2 cup light brown sugar, 1 cup wheat flour, 1 tsp. cinnamon, dash salt. 1/2 cup nuts Stir all and sprinkle on top. Bake at 350 for 45 min.

You can cut down on the amounts of sugar or honey to taste and caloric value. Substitute margarine for butter. For the topping I have added oatmeal, wheat germ and chopped raw peanuts.

*(Field notes, October 27, 1996)*

**The Poetics of Jake**

I looked at his face and became saddened. He was all cut and bruised. A result of a prank. A senseless act of vandalism. Someone deliberately placed a large tree branch across the road. It was dark and I didn’t see it until I was almost on top of it. An alert reaction prevented a more serious situation. It was also a sad time because it was his last big trip. As we made our 400 mile journey together we experienced a diverse set of conditions that brought back many memories.

The snow we hit at the onset reminded us of the many storms we encountered on our winter trips back and forth to Canada. One in particular stands out. We were en route to Guilford and just starting out when we hit freezing rain on the 401. As we approached the border I decided to make my usual stop at the duty free shop. As I veered off the highway into the parking lot I realised Jake could not control his motion. We were on a slick frictionless surface heading fortunately for a snowbank. My knuckles went white and there in snow white arms we came to rest.

There were those trips for warmer stays in Canada where Jake’s back was packed solid with toys, clothes, furniture, two cats and a dog in preparation for two months of summer play.

Jake is now 12 years old. He has been retired to a sedentary life on Martha’s Vineyard. He is quite healthy and doing short runs to the dump and town. He is finally ‘at home’.
Stranger on a City Street

I had been in this office building several times but still became confused with the elevators. They were the kind that skipped floors. I always managed to enter the wrong set. As I realised my mistake I noticed this gentle looking elderly woman following me.

She said, “I need to go to the 14th floor.”

“That’s where I’m going”

So we entered, and with some idle talk rose together. Conversation in an elevator is always such a foreign experience. I don’t mind talking but I always wonder why people who seemingly know each other don’t usually speak. But this encounter was quite natural. I arrived at the 14th floor, exited, and conducted my business. I had to pick up a new pair of prescription glasses which cost me $313. I begrudgingly paid. As I entered the hall of elevators I met my co-rider again who insisted on following me.

“You led me to the right place before so I’m sticking with you again.”

So down we went. As we stepped into the lobby she proceeded to tell me that in two weeks she was going to be 96!!

“NO!” I said.

“I was born in 1901!”

I would not have put her a day over seventy. She had a twinkle in her eye, walked erect, and was very articulate.

I asked, “What’s your secret?”

She affectionately took my hand as we walked and replied, “I have three rules that I’ve lived by. The first is ‘what can’t be cured must be endured’. In other words don’t try to change things you can’t. The second is ‘there’s nothing so bad that it mightn’t be worse. No one in this life gets a free ticket’. We all need to cope. And the third is ‘stay out of debt’.”

I thanked her for sharing her secrets to longevity and obvious health. It was just what I needed at that time. I had just finished writing an addition to my para methodology on ‘emotion’ and had been feeling a bit low for the past few days. I am a believer in Jungian synchronisity and this was another example of that ‘meaningful chance’.
Traditional Ways

In September of 1994 I ventured off to Maine to Woodenboat School. It’s been a suppressed desire of mine for years to attend a class and surround myself with people who were as enthusiastic about traditional marine crafts as I was. Until this time I could never satisfy this desire because the courses were offered in September and what teacher can afford to take a week off either financially or emotionally at the start of school. At this time I was in the process of realigning my life and the opportunity was present.

After I enrolled in a course on traditional half hull modeling, I realized that what I was doing was related to my thesis in fitting into a folkloric framework. My love for the smell of wood and the environs of a woodshop lured me to this primarily decorative pursuit by artisans. Half hull modeling, having been the victim of technology, is not currently practiced by boatbuilders. I felt as a researcher I should be directly involved with a traditional craft that contributed to the composition of a folkloric framework. My intent was to learn the method of construction of half hulls with hopes of continuing this tradition of marine carving.

My week was a fulfilling and intense experience. Educationally it met all expectations. I had a wonderful mentor, learned the method, how to use the tools, and how to appreciate the magic of transforming a living organism, symbol of strength and life to a work of art, symbol of culture and time. I worked from morning till night and didn’t complete one of the models. An experience like this places a different value on the work of artists and craftspersons. I was reaffirmed in my belief of the importance of mentors and their sharing of experience, skills, talents, and practical knowledge. It is so vital as a teacher to be in a position of learner, especially in the concrete learning of a craft. As teachers we are always crafting. In a concrete context one recognizes the agony and ecstasy of creation.

The people I encountered contributed to the intensity. They were steeped in familial history and tradition. They were anxious to preserve their pasts for their childrens’ future. One example was John and Doris Nero from North Dakota who were enrolled in a canoe restoration course. They transported a canoe halfway across the country (a college graduation gift to Doris’ aunt in 1916) in anticipation of it remaining in the family for another century. I have included the origins and ownership of the canoe written by
Old Town Canoe
Started Nov 1915 - finished Feb 1916
Shipped to Bettineau N. Dak.
June 1916.

Mildred McIntosh Harkison's
college graduation gift.

Mildred turned 100 on Feb 20,

The canoe has been at the
family cottage in Bettineau,
N. Dak. since 1916 until
transferred to Wooden Boat
School September 1944 for
restoration by Mildred's
niece, Doris, and her husband,
John Nero from Cedar Falls,
Iowa. The family cottage was
given/sold to John and Doris
in 1972 - Bettineau, N. Dak.
Doris since it has symbolic meaning to the family and I believe meaning to outsiders. There is caring for the physical to preserve its spirit. It is an artifact with history and obvious sentiment. Similar narratives could be heard among this group of canoe restorers.

The term transformation was echoed in a very emotional description by a participant in my class. His name was Doug and to him working with wood was a ‘spiritual’ experience. It was taking something once living and shaping it into a boat. There was magic and mystery in this transformation. He said that the wood once living and now dead was like ‘mourning the loss of a ship’.

La Sardinia Loca

“The Easternmost Mexican Restaurant in the U.S.A.”

My research has not only physically transported me around the U.S. and Canada but I have also traveled vicariously. My interest in genealogy and the past moved me to search and renew people in my history that were good friends and had not been in touch with for many years. One of those persons was a best friend in high school who is the present owner and operator of this restaurant in Eastport, Maine.

Now that I am living on the east coast I’ve been winding up on Long Island sporadically. Each time I am there I experience a sense of home, familiarity. So much so, if Chuck and I had the money I would buy my Grandmother’s house (in Baldwin) and move back. And call it DIEHL’S “LA SARDINIA LOCA”. It’s a beauty parlor now. (Personal correspondence September 24, 1994)

It was a wonderful surprise hearing from you again. I’m real glad we’re keeping in touch. I must admit however, it’s a little difficult finding words because, there are sooo many - “Hey. do you remember?” “Whatever happened with so and so?” and on and on and on. Can you imagine, it’s 35 yrs. since we spoke? Wow! So much has happened in those 35 yrs. to Val Diehl. I
look back and it’s as though I’m looking at someone else’s movie. But, Nope. it’s been all mine. (Personal correspondence June 3, 1995)

My search has included other contacts with friends of my past and the memories that have bonded the relationships.

A Concept Reunited

Another result of this travel was my reuniting with the concept of family. I went through a period where I felt alienated and familial desires were nurtured in ‘chosen’ family due to distance and in some cases philosophical differences with my sister in regard to my mother’s care and finances. We have since made amends and it feels good. I’m not so sure this would have occurred had it not been for the research.

Many holidays and special occasions were celebrated with friends and friend’s families. However, in 1995 the role of family entered a new dimension with the birth and organization of a family reunion. This event took place in Scranton, Pennsylvania, home of my cousin Emy. Being surrounded by family for a weekend was like the old and new. The memories brought in the nostalgia and joy of past experience. The present surrounded me with a missed (be)longing, a state of emotion that was intensified by the topic of my thesis. I recognized how important family is in the understanding of roots, tradition, and sentiments of ‘at home’. This interlude has opened a whole new area for inquiry and one that I hope to pursue in the future.

This event brought out the teacher in me and an opportunity to share my research. I presented my genealogical evidence that the Bofill family did indeed have ancestry in Spain. I think that I aroused some interest in some of the younger members. I hope that they acknowledge the importance of their heritage somewhere along the way.

An Organic Consideration

There are literally hundreds of other episodes and interludes I could write about that belong in this chapter. Interludes along the way related to health issues have surfaced in and out of the text. In my opinion the explorative validity exists in the fact that my personal health has had a
penetrating influence on the construction and writing of this text. It is part of human experience and the narrative. The inquiry would not be complete if all aspects of the narrative were not realized.

Pauses of fatigue and pain prolonged the process and contributed to the intensity (or lack of). There were many days of sleep and resistance to mobility and motivation. Lapses of memory were also disturbing. Documenting these interludes was tedious cultivating their own kinds of pain. I encountered other doctoral students who had similar experiences. What is the significance of my health and what does it have to do with home and sentiments of at home? It was substance to the narrative. It was a part of the whole. The interpretation among the particulars will be explored in a future inquiry.

**Inferences**

I have been burdened for two days now as to how to end this chapter. Endings are always a problem. However, as I reviewed the title of the chapter it doesn’t suggest an ending which is why I have chosen the term inferences for the heading instead of conclusion. It is a ceaseless series of episodes in various contexts. My automobile will continue to travel and be a home of sorts. Because I have completed the thesis does not presume that my intimate relationship with the Spencers or memories of Earle as I revisit his homestead are also complete.

In this chapter I have explored the many spaces related to my travels and the variety of homes where I have felt ‘at home’. I pursued the theme of the road which eventually yielded to interludes, expanding and enhancing the meaning of experiences. These interludes have allowed me to represent and articulate fragments of narrative lives not only of my own but those of others who have had some influence and relevance in the crafting of my understanding, my narrative and the text. The traditional morning coffee gatherings, the reunions, the convenience store at the gas stop, all the human encounters associated with events incubate familiarity, the time and space we share. Strangers and distant acquaintances became virtual participants. Some have become intimate relationships that have established continuity among the spaces between the departures and arrivals. Experiencing and articulating these interludes have taught me about many things but what is so compelling
is that it has taught me about myself in relation to my space in this particular world of automobiles, highways, travel, and driving, I am the learner along the way.
Chapter 10

The Moral Write

This above all: To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!
(Shakespeare, from Hamlet)

Introduction

It’s a personal call. To take the photograph or not. To have the words and write them. To include their names and faces and homes. Or not to. To display them in their realities. Or not to. It’s a personal call. Ethical review? There’s some protection there. Not to harm or deceive. Sign the papers. Sign the releases. Simple. How could writing about home have such serious ethical issues? It’s the preferences. They belong to me.

Early on I had a notion about ethics that was transformed into an epiphany. It all came about after my proposal hearing. Dr. Russell suggested that the ethical review would take on greater dimensions as time went on. It was not as simple as getting papers signed by three older participants who consented to having their traditions explored and exposed. I didn’t believe him. How could I hurt or harm with such a universal topic? Everyone in the thesis became a participant.

I am the storyteller. I make the choices about which stories to tell and why. Even the stories about myself. I choose the ones that are relevant and of interest first to myself and then my audience. Connelly & Clandinin (1988) remind me of their discourse on ethics that “ethical issues become apparent as an expression of the method” (p. 273). My ethical issues revolve primarily around my images. My photographs are stories. They evoke image generated narratives. Language is also important. According to Spradley (1979) it “is more than a means of communication about reality: it is a tool for constructing reality” (p. 17). Moral engagement depends on the narrative, the quality of the story. This is in the control of the narrator. Images are part of the moral imagination. Pictures (Berger & Mohr, 1982; Mitchell, 1980) don’t
make sense without story. Is it the affection I feel for my participants and the distance from them that desires a preservation, to forever freeze those moments I spend with them? Once recorded they are public, subject to view and interpretation. Ethical issues involve issues of privacy. Perhaps it is in the attempt as narrator and narrativist to attach permanence to moments with words and photographs that is the essence of ethics.

In an educational context Connelly & Clandinin (1993) express the importance of historical and narrative contexts in knowledge and inquiry. Time is an important element in narrative and according to John Berger (1984):

> It is time that separates us from the characters we write about. It is not our knowledge about them. It is their experience of time in the story we are telling. The time, and therefore the story, belongs to them. Yet, the meaning of the story, what makes it worthy of being told, is what we can see and what inspires us because we are beyond its time. (p. 31)

If time can be controlled in a photograph or written line by the nature of its permanence then each photograph as 'truth sayer' and each disclosure about a participant presents an ethical dilemma when in the public domain. This dilemma is partially grounded in the 'untold' story of the audience and the 'other' participants in the text.

**Ethical Considerations**

The chosen participants are not the only participants. All the people and objects in the text are participants. It's like an octopus pulling in victims creating countless sub texts. Every word I write no matter how I write it and every wrinkle in the portrait of my face is subject to public scrutiny. When one ventures into the episteme beyond the rational and reason into the hermeneutic realm where we intuit and feel and interact, the complexities and ambiguities of an ethos become real. When we move from abstractions to the phenomenological world of people, events and things (Connelly & Clandinin, 1993) we enter a world of affect and meaning. Wolcott (1994) describes this as the difference between observed and inferred behaviour. It is
the difference between what we sense and what sense we make out of it. An innocent photograph of Earle's house can turn into an assault on his lifestyle.

We need to raise questions and look at the consequences of where we are going. And then we need to ask, is all of this necessary in the first place. These two questions were raised by an ethicist on a radio program and thought it would be a start. Ethics is supposed to be the philosophical study of morality and on a personal level an interpretation of what is right (Connelly & Clandinin, 1993). Set in this context I have found a truth that validates what I have written. This belief is reflected in truths not only reflected and rendered in the realities of the text (observations, data, descriptions) but in the truths in the fictions (The power of the photograph to evoke narratives and the power of the language of the aesthetic experience).

**A Textual Quagmire**

This chapter has been a real 'troubler'. Entry into the text has been ambiguous and difficult caused by my lack of understanding of the term and its application to my participants and myself. I thought that a discourse into ethics would be fairly traditional and simple since there were no real incriminating situations that would cause harm or deceit. What I have discovered is that the greatest harm and deception was potentially to myself.

"I have been reading your thesis though - enjoying it and getting to know you more and more. I think it is a great idea to come up with a thesis and the story or your life at the same time! Gosh, how you have woven the events of your thesis life into the thesis! Neat. (email Grace Bunyi, October 11, 1997)"

This epiphany surfaced as a result of a narrative of disclosure in the text that bared my soul. As I thought about this, I found myself anonymising the text with reference to self disclosure. As autobiographer I described some events that centred around isolated instances of party alcohol use and sad states of mind (or to use the pejorative term - depression). These moments in life were moods and behaviours that tested my social world and, I thought, the world of others like myself that shared in this generational era. They were young, daring, isolated and some were (mis)educative experiences (Dewey,
1938). However, over the years as I reconstructed and reflected on these situations, they were the peaks and valleys of lived experience that were times of extraordinary learning. During this period I did a photogram\textsuperscript{46} titled ‘joie de vivre’, a rendering at that time of my nature and feelings. It was the process that was so ‘joyful’. Like the photogram it was the unlikely combination of opposites compelling me to blend reason with youthful foolishness. I was searching and testing then as I am now.

\textbf{Poetics of Ethics}

Hillman’s (1989) definition of aesthetics traces the genealogy of the notion of aesthetics and adopts the Greek aisthesis, connoting perception rather than a refined sense of beauty. In this primordial sense aesthetics involves sensing the things of the world in their particularity and being affected by the many ways things present themselves. In my view ethics and aesthetics are connected. Aesthetics extend beyond the visual, embodying all the senses into an experience that is internal, much like the ‘indwelling’ of Polanyi or Bergson’s ‘education’ of the senses. It includes an existential philosophy, an innate freedom to explore and express. The verbalisation of the exploration invokes an authorial moral responsibility. This moral responsibility shrouds the text with a mist of social conscience. It factualises that I was there too. The dialogical self (Hermens \& Kempen, 1993) is formed, the self “that is formed out of the construction and reconstruction of encounters with others and the reciprocal influence of multiple others” (p. xiii). Reflexivity is born. The combination of the photograph (or ‘truth sayer’) as visible proof of some reality and the aesthetic quality, as I have described them, of both text and photograph suggest a liaison between the positivistic and qualitative nature of the inquiry or, in other terms art and science. The validity of the inquiry in this context is in this ‘moral space’ of science and art, of natural phenomena and story. \textsuperscript{47}I am including the following poem by Milton Acorn because in my view it represents the dichotomy of art and science, of natural phenomena and story.

\textsuperscript{46} A photogram is a process where an opaque object is placed on a piece of photographic paper and exposed to light leaving a clear white impression of itself.

\textsuperscript{47} These ideas are from a series of unpublished papers by Barter \& DeCarion about the ‘Truth about Fiction’ which focuses on the use of fiction in research data and reporting.


Remembering

I saw the myriad glittering points of dew in spiders' mesh;
and I thought of the trail of your fingers on my flesh.
(Milton Acorn, 1987, p. 35)

Notoriety and Reentry

When I think of ethics I not only think of truths and egalitarianism
but I also think in terms of exploitation and intrusion. A combination of
finely ground lens glass and the flesh of a human being make these terms
operative as I gaze into my living subjects eyes readying them for an assault
on their anonymous and particular lives. Permanence of this moment is
transfixed by a reaction between light and tiny silver bromide crystals.
Transformation to a transparent plastic by another chemical reaction occurs.
The sensitive responses to light throughout this process in its finality
produces a non-living rendering, a portrait. Portraits are supposed to mark
special events like birth, graduation, wedding, and common in the
what we feel about ourselves. Portraits also can make people famous. Perhaps
it is this notoriety that creates a reentry into ethics.

Of all the participants I believe Earle was the most affected by the
presence of the camera. He was the most self conscious. He would always
'pose' which meant he would stop what he was doing and at times suggest the
composition. This is not to say that all were comfortable with the camera.
This brings me to the term 'exploitation'. In a recent article in the Globe and
Mail (9/1/98) it cited that some documentary film makers like Ann Wheeler
have taken different approaches to capture their subjects. She has evolved
from documentary to fiction and based this decision on the belief that all
documentary on some level exploits its subjects. Here again are issues of
consent. I never thought to get my mother's consent until Dr. Connelly
mentioned it. Now it is too late. On my last visit her dementia was in an
advanced stage and she would not have known what she was signing.

Took cameras to participants on 9/2/96. This was the last time I
saw Earle alive. Seems as though I am always photographing
them and I wanted to see what they would photograph if they
Throughout the text I refer to ‘image generated narratives’. Within this term I believe the photograph speaks a universal language. The language spoken and thought is not a barrier to an understanding or meaning of what is viewed. I think of Oliver Sachs’ description of a blind person who could not see after having his sight restored. Sight is not just a sensual experience. It is based on experience. Reconstructed narratives from photos share the same point of reference. These differences in meaning are based on our personal experiences. It is interesting to speculate the many versions of who I am from people viewing my self portraits.

The argument that painting is about itself, that it does not need to concern itself with the description or appearance of the visible world, rests on the idea that this can be achieved much better by photography - which is like saying, we know what the world looks like: it looks like a photograph. This seems to me to make the world a duller place. I don’t think we fully know what the world looks like, because I think you begin to realise that whatever you’re looking at, what you experience is, after all, through your own consciousness. So you realise it’s not possible to separate what you’re looking at from yourself; at some point it’s connected with you when you’re looking at it. (Hockney, 1993, p. 127)

I wonder what the narratives of my collection in this text will be? What will images of June, Norm and Earle reveal to my audience? Will my mother’s recent portraits be as haunting to the stranger as to me?

What is the relationship of the photographs to home? Photographs are a part of everyone’s life. They are the only records we have of ourselves and our interactions with people and spaces and things. They show people in structures and spaces that reflect sentiments.

What informs my choices? In the composing of the moment and in the final choice I consider which of these to open to public scrutiny. My
interest and focus are portraits. Eyes and skin tell it all. Then the hands - the creators of the concrete imagination, working and moving, the voice and signature of the mind. It is exploring and revealing multiple identities within the self through photographic autobiography.

A life story does not consist of an atomistic chain of experiences, whose meaning is created at the moment of their articulation, but is rather a process taking place simultaneously against the backdrop of a biographical structure of meaning, which determines the selection of the individual episodes presented, and within the context of the interaction with a listener or imaginary audience. (Josselson & Lieblich, (eds.) 1993, p. 63)

Renegade Research

"Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity."

(Horace Mann, cited in Irons, 1990, p. xiv.)

So what does renegade research have to do with ethics? When considering this question I can only refer to Barone’s (1992) narrative of enhanced professionalism in which stories must be morally persuasive.

A persuasive story is one with the capacity for promoting a kind of critical reflection that results in the reconstruction of a portion of the reader's value system. When a persuasive story is moral, the result is a reader who has grown to understand and deplore the cruel social forces that impinge on the lives of individual characters. (Barone, 1992, p. 20)

This statement has implications for my global questions. Will my students learning be enhanced by my work and will the world be a better place to live. Only when the notion of change is transformed from abstraction to action, from theory to practice will these notions form a truth. Smith voices a political phenomenology in his concern that:
Pedagogy is concerned with mobilising the social conscience of students into acts of naming and eradicating the evils of the times. (From Pinar, 1995, p. 423)

If what I have learned cannot become motivation for some degree of activism then I have accomplished nothing. If I can't take my research to the streets and be a renegade of sorts then what I have done in my opinion has no value.

The question becomes what do I want to do in the streets? What is the social impact of my work? There is the inevitable 'so what'. My immediate response is that I don't want my work all nicely bound in a book sitting on a shelf gathering dust. It has an intended audience. It is meant to be read. I have argued in the thesis that people who move, change space, leave their homes experience emotions and construct knowledge in the process of adaptation similar to the emotions and knowledge I have experienced and expressed. Adaptation implies change and reverts back to ecological principles of survival. What if the pain and joy, the tensions that are created in survival and adaptation to arrive at harmony, are extended beyond our personal experience to the understanding of others? This is my hope, that part of the future that is undetermined. If by my presenting the historical evolution of the chair and a reader’s awareness of the impropriety of its function in our educational institutions is raised to a level understanding that maybe we should provide a different kind of chair, perhaps something softer, more to the nature of the human spirit in function and sentiment of 'at home', then my thesis has meaning. It has made its way to the streets. If by my rendering an image of home that compels the reader to construct a concept of inclusion extending beyond the cultural, thinking about what it is to feel 'at home' in various contexts, then I am in the streets. If by my visual renderings one can sense the gift and strength of Earle's hands, the beauty and serenity of the Spencer's meadow, or the suffering of my mother's dementia then again I am in the streets. And finally if my methods can contribute as Lincoln (cited in McLaughlin & Tierney, 1993) would suggest to "understanding, openness and uncertainty, which prevent 'closure' on the text, and which prompt and invite multiple interpretations and reinterpretations" (p. 34) in the context of changing space and the passions one can experience in separation, leaving
home, then I am back in the streets. Modern day situations like computers and working at home seem to breed isolation which in my opinion is contrary to our nature and spirit. Our souls are bound to a narrative empathy and understanding of events that can impact our lives. These events are not historical. They are fictions that allow us to imagine behaviours that can induce real actions and changes.

**Conclusion**

...whether we intend it so or not, the work we do does indeed have impact on people, even if only in what might appear to be relatively insignificant ways: for better or worse, it often steps outside the offices, labs, and so forth we inhabit. To the extent that this is so, we had better be cognizant both of what it is we are doing and what sort of impact we would like it to have. (Freeman, 1993, p. 229)

This chapter had its grounding in personal experience. School as institution in two situations have had tremendous value on my thinking and acting in terms of confrontations with moral and ethical dilemmas. These occurrences, one at a very young age in the early 60’s and more recently the late 90’s during my retirement year, have yielded two “time-honored, but not necessarily harmonious, traditions” (LeCompte, 1993, cited in McLaughlin & Tierney, p. 9) of storytelling and social activism both becoming central themes in my life. As joyous and at times painful the process has been, my world has become a better place authorising me to extend empathic and other passions as consequences of my learning.
Chapter 11

Going Home

“When We Get There, You’ll Find Out”

One of my most vivid recollections of childhood and home was our Sunday afternoon drives with my Aunt Nina. After the family mid-day dinner, and everyone was content and engaged in lazy conversation, she would say,

“OK. Let’s go”.

As he sat on the top stair of the front stoop, we all gave Uncle Merve our kisses goodbye, got our nickels and were off.“

“Where are we going Nina?” we all asked.

Actually we knew but she was so unpredictable we couldn’t always be 100% certain. Her reply though was predictable.

“When we get there you’ll find out !”

I remember cherishing this response because it contained the elements of mystery, adventure and surprise.

It was the four of us. Me, my cousins Emy and Minana, and my sister Susie. Nunley’s Carousel had to be the most magical, enchanting space on the planet. I was in constant awe of its ambience and seductive power. The life size horses moved up and down. The saddles and reins were real leather. I jumped and danced to the music on the cold cement platform waiting impatiently for an outside horse to become available so I would have a chance at the brass ring. It was scrambled among the silver rings and at any moment could come rolling down the wooden spout. I had to be there with my horse just at the perfect juncture preferably on the upswing since my arms were shorter than some of the bigger kids and adults that I was competing against. Or hope that everyone behind me missed and it was still there on the next revolution. My childish heart of seven still races and the vivid flashbacks recur on the big psychic screen as I relive those anticipatory moments. This was one of many Sunday stops.

*Uncle Merve was a friend of the family who used to give us a nickle to spend on our outing.*
As I think now that’s what this thesis and life is about. Sunday stops, mystery, magic, hope, enchantment, luck and chance.

Nunley’s was a home of sorts to me. The angst associated with the gold ring was balanced with a sense of awe, belonging, safety and comfort. I was with family and in an atmosphere that evoked intense passions of joy, suspense and anticipation. Immigrant Almerinda Dantas said “Family means everything in the world to me, I think, because when we are together it’s like we feel whole” (CBC, 1993, p. 25). I too felt this wholeness. Perhaps this event had its metaphorical referent. Images of family, belonging, anticipation hop about in the air like shooting stars. Illusions of my own real horse and the lure of riding into the sunset (or sunrise) over vast expanses of land danced before me as I danced to the music waiting to ride. I knew then that the closest I would come to these oneiric visions were carousel wooden horses. Some dreams are expensive. The wide open spaces were far away, my parents were poor, and horses and ranches were marbles of the wealthy. In one of our meetings Dr. Connelly asked me how I developed sentiments related to large expanses of land. My experiences, not native to any ownership or occupancy of large tracts of land, were vicarious through TV westerns. They were images of ‘home on the range’ that as a child perforated my perceptions of crowded New York streets and an overdeveloping Long Island. They were discontinuities among the continuities of narrative unity. As with many traditional historic structures (and dreams), according to my cousin, Nunley’s was torn down to make way for a shopping mall. I wonder where the horses went.

An Introduction to a Conclusion

This story conveys a great deal of meaning. My aunt’s response was always a force that pushed me beyond boundaries and borders. The notions of adventure and mystery combined with a tacit freedom compelled me to pursue movements and spaces that some may not dare. It is in this spirit that this chapter is written.

My aunt’s story with its narrative approach and method in oral history is how I came to the inquiry. Philosophically it is the inquiry. Even though the story’s position is in this last chapter, it was one of the first I had recollected and written. A composite of fragments that I prefer to call virtual
learnings follow this story and brief introduction and articulate a very complicated (re)search process. These fragments are consequences of my learnings. Some are for further research. Some continue a collision course generating molecular reaction-like tensions and passions. The inquiry has changed my life. It has altered my thinking on issues extending knowledge and understanding beyond cultural spaces supplying new areas of inquiry that formerly cruised along the margins.

If I were to compose an image of this chapter, each fragment would be a brightly colored piece of glass reflecting and refracting light in a kaleidoscopic realm representing my view of the world. The reflective process in the reconstruction of events places these events into a present context which enables me to attach meaning and recognize the significance these events play in life. My world has become a better place to live. Each time I turn the kaleidoscope the beauty of the ambiguities and the differences of the fragments is a portrait of daily life. Each piece of glass an issue born of other issues waiting to be explored within the context of home, like my mother’s and Earle’s marginalization or racism or distances. That is why this chapter has been created. The thesis would seem incomplete if not for the future of forthcoming learnings.

And so this last chapter is really a continuation of sorts. Not a denouement. I’m not ‘there’ yet. The kaleidoscope continues to turn bearing progeny with new visions and views.

“Jambo.”

“You Seem to be Forever Returning From or On Your Way to Someplace.”
(email Grace Bunyi, August 20, 1996)

Home was something that was constantly being approached but could never be reached, because we’d left it days ago ‘we’d locked the door and hidden the key’ and it was already behind us. It’s not only that you can’t go home again, you can never get there in the first place. Here we are - home at last! they would say; though home had no location, only a direction: homeward. And yet we went on - we go on - believing we are there. (M. Atwood, ed. Rooke, 1997, p. 8)
Going home, the search and the research, would be an energy consuming and energy producing process. I knew there were three components necessary to sustain my interest. One was passion. I had to possess that primordial emotion, as an operative force of activity. Moving, separation, searching and (re)searching (a) home and sentiments of ‘at home’ created and nurtured cognitive and affective passions I had never experienced. In my view the nature of narrative inquiry evokes emotional and cognitive dissonances framing the text in hermeneutical and ontological paradigms. These ideas follow Dewey’s (1938) thoughts on habit that explore the formation of attitudes that are emotional and intellectual and cover basic sensitivities and “ways of meeting and responding to all the conditions which we meet in living” (p. 35). In his discussion of continuity and interaction “knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situations which follow” (ibid., p. 44). Passions can be desires and according to Dewey (1938), they are the “ultimate moving springs of action” (p. 70). Another component was temporal. I needed something that in and of itself would last over the days, months and years of commitment and lived experience it would take to explore and complete this project wondering if I will ever ‘get there’. Within this temporal context is Connelly & Clandinin’s (1988) concept of rhythm and cyclical patterns in our narratives that connect events with personal practical knowledge forming some part of our narrative unity mediated by concepts of home. The third was a social interactive context that had some familiarity and continuity. My long term relationships with my participants and the intimacy inherent in our collaborative exploration of home created the framework for study. The fact that the events and experiences occurred in a familiar geographic space, namely my hometown, my community, (at that time) was also significant. In a study by Brantlinger (1996) research done ‘at home’ impassions the researcher to become involved in local politics since some injustices that may be unearthed are “in our own back yard” (p. 2). My environmental politics were expressed in the changes that occurred in the geographic spaces of my own ‘back yard’ and those of my participants. The Spencers inherited a ‘meadow ghetto’ and Earle had to buy more land to preserve his outdoor home. She suggests we may even act as spokespersons, as I remember offering to contact the local electrical utility for Earle. Passion,
time and interdependence summarise the qualities operative in the forming of this text.

Narrative has never been merely entertainment for me. It is, I believe, one of the principle ways in which we absorb knowledge. I hope you will understand, then, why I begin these remarks with the opening phrase of what must be the oldest sentence in the world, and the earliest one we remember from childhood: “once upon a time...” (Morrison, 1993, p. 7)

As I engaged in narrative, in the value of story and experience, and as I reflected on my own experience and notions about this new stage in my life, the qualities of passion, time, and interdependence became embedded in an evolutionary process. Home unfolded into multiple homes, diseased homes and homelessness. As my passion intensified so did my struggle with focus. I discovered that home was not simply a structure or space filled with sentimental artifacts. It possessed the ambiguity of the photograph, the lack of an articulated context, similar to Enright’s (1997) description of photographs as ‘interrupted narratives’. Imagine empty frames on either side of the photograph ready for the past and future. Imagine empty homes on either side of your personal virtual reality of home. ‘Home as’ a kinetic concept, abstract and theoretical with energising images transformed into ‘home is’. The simple quotidian euphemisms of home transformed into the particular and the worldly, the familiar and the foreign, the constant and the changing. And the dialectics continue.

Huggermuggery

My indefinite suspension from High Point College was always literally and figuratively a secret story (Connelly & Clandinin, 1996) told only to a privileged and sanctified few. Embarrassment and shame cloaked this preserved historical lived event. In Crites terms my ‘sense of self and world’ was created through this story. Today it has even greater implications in my understanding of lived stories, personal practical knowledge and the professional knowledge landscape (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994). I intended to stretch the landscape metaphor and place it in another context. This enabled
me to make a relevant connection to home and the sentiment of 'at home' addressing the essence of the classroom as a safe place, a place for secret stories. For example the reconstructed narrative of the college incident revealed hurt, confusion and anger wrought with a desire for action, to clear a name and reputation. Was (is) punishment and alienation the moral right? How forgiving and empathic are they now? Will there be reconciliation and inclusion? It is a test of the soul of a powerful and symbolic institution. The nature of the inquiry with its temporal qualities, passions, and sense of interdependence (community) and space has posited these reflections, questions and tensions.

This story today has even greater implications in my understanding of the nature of narrative inquiry and its relation to the process of writing a narrative thesis. Diamond (1993) discusses narrative forms of writing that can be used not only to interrupt traditional academic discourse but to also explore positioning and reflexivity. This text as a genre is a novel as well as autobiography. As autobiography one's identity is framed in change, discontinuity and ambiguity. Encounters are series of instant replays with each past experience assuming new interpretation and meaning. The reconstruction of the past in this story combined with the reflective process has psychological as well as narrative unity. The constant surfacing of past experience evokes emotions and passions that affect the soul of the writer, that in my view ‘psychologises’ the inquiry.

... the history one tells, via memory, assumes the form of a narrative of the past that charts the trajectory of how one's self came to be. (Freeman, 1993, p. 33)

Tony Morrison describes Marie Cardinal's project of documenting:

her madness, her therapy, and the complicated process of healing in language as exact and evocative as possible in order to make both her experience and her understanding of it as accessible to a stranger. The narrative into which life seems to cast itself surfaces most forcefully in certain kinds of psychoanalysis, and Cardinal proves herself ideal in rendering
What is significant in this quote is the language and how it creates accessibility to the reader as stranger. How much of the persona becomes public? How much of experience becomes vicarious? In these decisions is the agony of, as Annie Dillard would say, what to leave in and what to leave out. It is here that I sense a tension in the genre. Sometimes the boundary between autobiography and confessional becomes blurred. Prior to ‘autobiography’ memoir and confession were the only two forms of self-disclosure. Writing in the confessional form can have the appearance of a magazine tabloid. As (auto)biographer I became more self-conscious of separating my private life (confession centering on emotions, feelings, secrets, etc.) and memoir which is more like a chronicle of events in a person’s career (in Lives, 1981, p. 92). It is in these contexts that “the listener’s own personal resources for understanding --- reason and empathy” (Langness & Frank, 1981, p. 5) can provide a transformative experience. Dilthey (1976) muses that the reader sees broader contexts. The writer cannot see it all. From a postmodern point of view (Tierney, 1995) we make decisions not about the length of text or whether our data accurately represents reality, but how we as authors create and present reality. It is one version of reality rather than the only version.

Visiting the Master Narrative

In an educational context some writers refer to them as ‘social fictions’, new story forms that are plausible. Social fictions and science fictions in my view run a linguistic parallel in that they are both ‘eventualities’. In a political and social context they are referred to by some writers as ‘master’, ‘key’, ‘emancipatory’, a power narrative grounded in a social rather than personal context. There are segments of the text that are framed in a ‘master’ narrative. I wish to borrow this term from Tony Morrison and explore its meaning and presence. In Morrison’s descriptions of slave narratives they were the policing narratives, the ones that maintained silence among many slave authors. Okely (1993) in her exploration of autobiography claims the master narrative is personalised authority, “the I is the voice of individual skepticism from the margins; in many instances not only the I of difference, but one of subversive diffidence in the face of scientism” (p. 12). This means
to characterise women ethnographers as not fitting the norm of the generalised male. The I is one of personal experience not impersonalised authority under these situations. For Okely the "master narrative both for autobiography and ethnography is subverted" (p. 13). To me a master narrative in other genres is the one that is looking over your shoulder. For McLaren (1993):

action itself prefigures the world of narrative composition and without such narratives there can exist no ethics; however, a narrative structure is a necessary but not sufficient condition to constitute an ethical vision. Grand narratives which transcend individual biographies must not be turned into law of the sort which represses members of the community; however, the fact that some grand narratives serve absolutist and authoritarian roles should not suggest that all historical narratives are of destructive import. (In McLaughlin & Tierney, p. 207)

Dr. Connelly asked if the master narrative can be one of sensitivity and nurturing. I've not heard of it referred to as this but is interesting to consider.

Sexist language, racist language, theistic language --- all are typical of the policing languages of mastery, and cannot, do not, permit new knowledge or encourage the mutual exchange of ideas. (Morrison, 1993, p. 16)

With reference to master narrative in the contextual, procedural thesis, is there a policing narrative? An emancipatory narrative? A social fiction or an eventuality? What about the subject matter of the thesis and the master narrative? These questions posit for me a seductive course for discourse.

The Important Things
There is a statement in Robert Coles' The Call of Stories that to me is the essence in a link of literary and methodological narrative. The point is to take the stories to heart and not just analyse them and move on to the next
story. He states "we may be smarter but are we better" (p. 80). Dr. Oatley in his class ‘Understanding Narrative’ remarked that literature is about the important things in life. I believe that this autobiographical novel has had two concurrent themes that have enmeshed themselves in the text and my life - empathy and adaptation. Sachs’ (1996) thesis concerning the paradoxical role diseases, defects and disorders play exemplifies this belief. They bring out latent powers, developments, evolutions that might never have been imaginable. It is this "creative" potential (ibid., p. xvi) that is central to his thinking and forms a paradigm for my thinking. For me in this type of thinking is an element of social action as in my desire to again confront institutions and question their (im)moral authority.

For me, as a physician, nature’s richness is to be studied in the phenomena of health and disease, in the endless forms of individual adaptation by which human organisms, people adapt and reconstruct themselves, faced with the challenges and vicissitudes of life. (Sachs, 1996, p. xvi)

To this writer empathy, adaptation and social action are some of the important things in life. Earlier in the text I explored the possibility of photographs and books being able to change your life. In this section I will demonstrate how this inquiry has significantly affected my life and hopefully have meaning for my readers. In this somewhat fragmented and at times ‘playful’ segment issues such as marginalisation, palimpsests, racism, interdependence, and other adjuncts of home will be explored in the context of questions and territory whose space in the inquiry has not been homesteaded. The towns and their atmospheres have not been established. The highways have not been engineered. The actors have not arrived. The homes have not been built. Only the desire of ideas and the existential freedom to fulfill them exists.

(At) Home on the Margins

The text has in a subtle nurturing way given voice to some in the sub text who have been marginalised by their homes. In that same context their voices have been silenced by the margins. This is particularly evident in my
mother's case and others like her. She has been marginalised by the very nature of her institutional home. Her present home in my opinion is one that is diseased. It has silenced her forever. She is powerless by the (anti)social context that dictates control over her destiny. Daily decisions are made for her. When she eats, baths, dresses, and prays. Her personal possessions are not hers. They disappear, become someone else's, or are kept in a place so they don't disappear. Her choice of friends is limited to the residents. Most sleep all day. Stimulating activity and attention is minimal. Some wander. Many are confined to bed or a wheel chair⁴⁴ or are severely demented. She doesn't fit there nor does she fit on the outside. Perhaps she could with some help. So she waits for a visit from me or my sister or nieces or someone. Here I make a distinction between wait and hope. To wait is to remain inactive in anticipation. Hope is where there is an uncertain future. There is no predictable outcome. She waits for death. Her story is 'they are good to me' and 'when are you coming to see me?' And she still waits. Hers is not an 'emancipatory narrative'. The master narrative is one of power and policing and in the absence of autonomy creates a social death. Home is a concept in conflict. When we get there, we'll find out.

Earle was also marginalised. His was a bit different. His secluded lifestyle and appearance of his home were agents of his silence. Even June, after seeing photos of his home made a comment about the nature of his living circumstances. She presumed values that might accompany these conditions and since they were so different from hers, had some difficulty in understanding them.

J - I was interested to read about Earle because I know nothing about him and how he lived. I didn't realise that he didn't let YOU in the house. Were you ever in it?
D - Yes, once many years ago.
J - Everyone lives their own kind of life. How anyone can exist, that's all they are doing is existing under circumstances like that.

My mentor Dr. Connelly suggested that there was another meaning in

⁴⁴ From my experience at the Hope Centre I discovered that there was an hierarchy of sickness (or wellness) among the residents. Those with walkers or wheel chairs were considered to have less worth even though mentally they may have been more adept.
this dialogue. He thought that she was also commenting on me and my non-judgemental attitude towards Earle and my attraction towards him. Her perception was his life was mere existence and she might be disturbed by his values (Tape transcription April 8, 1998). She was also curious about his personal life. In another interview she asked if he was ever married and if he had any relatives that would take care of him. I thought this ‘caring’ was consistent with June’s values and tradition of family taking care of family.

The other factor was his negative experience in school. He was not successful and left school as early as he could. He then went to work for his father further isolating him from the social milieu of the time. It appears that grade six was a significant time in Earle’s educative process and being left back must have been quite impressionable on his young mind and spirit. According to some middle school philosophies, retention at this level is not advisable. There are many psychological arguments, mostly centering on self esteem, supporting what educators call ‘social promotion’. Having taught in middle schools for the better part of my life and thinking back on my own personal experiences at that age, I agree with this philosophy. However, not without some qualifiers in the form of support services.

In this context of marginalisation the inquiry assumes a political nature. The genre gives voice for these kinds of issues and to those wanting to tell their story. It is here where the narrative voice takes on one of the poet and unlike the historian who describes what has happened, the poet describes what can happen and can confront universals and more philosophical and serious positions. It is this combination of public and private form that “lends itself to the exploration of the differing relationships that various genres set up between author and reader” (Morson, 1981, p. 58). It is this interpersonal dimension that is central to literature and central to the inquiry.

Text Taxonomy

Scientific principles have crept into the text in various forms. Adaptation, a natural scientific phenomenon layers its way through the thesis like annual rings. As it relates to home the narrative is one of adapting concepts to experience a kind of harmony within changing spaces. It is learning to cope. It is an educational experience. There appears to be another
scientific principle within this milieu of social contexts I have discovered and is a form of analysis and in its generalisability, reliable. It is a kind of taxonomy which when applied to description yields a comparison to Dewey's (1934,1980) distinction between experience and 'an' experience. The experience had that Dewey speaks of is in an early stage. "Things are experienced but not in such a way that they are composed into an experience" (ibid., p. 35). The contrast here is that an experience is a whole with its individualising qualities. To frame this analogy within terms of qualitative research we have an interesting method of validation. For example let us consider the taxonomic terms of genus and species in an analysis of particular descriptions of the participants. As I describe myself or the Spencers or Earle we are unique individuals, particular specific people. If I place the adjective 'a' in front of DeCarion and say I have 'a' DeCarion or 'a' Spencer or 'a' Brockway then I am now in the more general 'genus' category. I have evolved from the specific to the general. I have generalised. As a narrative inquirer I would want to think in terms of the species. I would want the lived experience of the individual human beings involved. This is where the differences in narrative unities surface. The facts would be the story. As a qualitative researcher with an objective view in mind I may want to think in more general terms in order to validate my data. Here I would interpret the facts and as analyst I would make that "dramatic shift of role or manner intended to mark boundary between fact and interpretation" (Wolcott, 1994, p. 25), between description and analysis. Nielsen (1995) supports the notion that analysis must point beyond itself. "An analysis --- whether it is presented in figures or text --- that in every dimension only concerns something quite specific becomes not just uninteresting, but also in fact incomprehensible"(p. 7). She claims that qualitative research must demand some sort of generalisation. Generalisability, as defined by Shulman (1988) is the "degree to which findings derived from one context or under one set of conditions may be assumed to apply in other settings or under other conditions"(p. 9). He further states that "all researchers strive for some degree of generalisability for their results. They are rarely content to have the research they have conducted generate some understanding that is relevant only to the particular cases that were observed" (ibid., p. 9). Perhaps here is an attempt to depsychologise the text by generalising to more of a world view of the data
allowing me and the reader to move from the personal to a social and political inquiry and imagine broader issues. Can our empathic emotions be realised and heightened in this analogy? Ordinary people can be extraordinary heroes.

**Palimpsests**

So many times I have been walking and thinking about nothing. Suddenly I get an idea, need to rush home and put it on paper, most likely the small yellow post-it notes that decorate my books, desk, computer screen and door. It was so original. Then I read a journal article and there is my idea. Is this what 'stream of consciousness' is? There’s an irony in this. I am comforted that someone else thinks like I do especially if he or she is a big name. I am dismayed by the fact that my thought was not original. Did they steal my idea? Intellectual property. Or did I steal theirs? At some subconscious level was it stored in memory waiting to be surfaced by something I read or thought or experienced?

**The Capitalist At Home**

One of the images in this chapter is an advertisement for the Canadian Automobile Association. I am illustrating this to show that marketing 'home', the essence of 'belonging' can be a profitable endeavor. This ad captures the sentiments with its portrayal of family and the comfort of space. McDonald’s of the golden arches has recently been using the term ‘our’ McDonald’s to connote possession which implies sentiments of belonging or being a part of a homing culture or space. One sees and hears the term home more and more in advertising and literature. I recently received a catalogue titled *Coming Home* with Land’s End. I include this small sketch to illustrate in my opinion a growing concern for the lack of a homing culture and the search among our population for a sense of identity, even if it is at the golden arches over a paper bag full of soggy french fries or in the purchase of a CAA membership.
I belong...

There is nothing more comforting than feeling a true sense of belonging.
At CAA Insurance you're not just a customer. You're a Member. That's why thousands of Canadians are proud to say "I belong" to CAA—an organization that they have grown to trust and depend on for all their insurance needs.

Call today for a free no obligation quote on vehicle and property insurance.
1-877-222-3939 8:30am - 8:00pm & Sun 10:00am - 6:00pm
Other Insurance Services 1-877-222-1717

CAA INSURANCE COMPANY (ONTARIO)
(Mis) Educative Distances

Through my research and course work with Dr. Connelly I have become intrigued with the notion of the term distance in two contexts. One is within the research process. As I have previously mentioned ‘distance’ was not a typical or traditional concern with my participants. I was shocked to read in Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) that:

Ethnographers, then, must strenuously avoid feeling ‘at home’. If and when all sense of being a ‘stranger’ is lost, one may have allowed the escape of one’s critical, analytic perspective. (p. 102)

I have laboured over this statement and wondered if my perspective was clouded. I think that if my research had not revolved around such a personal and intimate concept like ‘home’ then I would be more concerned. I do however, wonder if my lack of need to negotiate entry into their homes and lives enabled me to take certain situations or social constructions for granted. It would be interesting to examine the data at a later date to see if this were true or even possible. Another project for another time.

The other context is within education, the teacher/student ‘distance’. I have explored the surface of this concept in chapter eight. In my view this ‘distance’ is an imaginary line teachers (and students) create to separate themselves from each other. This separation has many forms. In chapter eight one of the teachers said that ‘the teacher has to determine what is an acceptable relationship and one that does not compromise the respect and distance that I feel should exist between teacher and student’ (email, 1/19/96). In one of our meetings Dr. Connelly mentioned it was one of the rules of thumb in his 1300 course. One of the practical principles that teachers express is to maintain a ‘distance’. I am intrigued by this concept and would like to pursue this as an extension of the thesis. I would attempt to make a connection between a student’s concept of home and sentiment of ‘at home’ and the virtual reality of the ‘distance’ students perceive (or do not perceive) in the classroom. The methodology would be similar, the approach from a student’s point of view. I believe I would be seeking some kind of description of the term ‘distance’ from both student and teacher and where they would draw the line individually and collectively. According to Hargreaves (1996)
teachers' experiences of the classroom are very different from those of their students. He argues that there is a space between teachers and students not always as a function of difference in age or power but as a result of large group management, impersonality that goes with increased size, and fragmented relationships created by specialisation. "Teachers' communication with parents in meetings or student reports mostly take place around students or aside from them, with students rarely being involved in this process themselves" (ibid., p. 14).

With so much in the media on sexual abuse, harassment, etc. other issues surface. How much affection, how much touching, how much interest can teachers show without intentions being misunderstood? How does one establish an 'at home' sentiment with a stranger and within current social constraints? How much of our personal lives are lived in the classroom for both student and teacher?

**Racism: A Different Space**

My writings, readings and thinkings have introduced a different dimension in thinking about racism. Diseased concepts of home surface themselves in abstractions and dialectics in this form of alienation of not being 'at home' in a social or political context. Some authors (von Eckert, 1967; Gallagher, 1993) have claimed an economic than moral view of racism in relation to space. Racism in their view is not a question of colour, or ethnicity, etc. but a matter of economics. This phenomenon is most obvious in poorer neighbourhoods where wealthier clients move in regardless of their race and the resentment begins. Race has a political context which usually includes an economic component of capitalism as well as colour. Tony Morrison (1993) the slaves had inherited a long history of the meaning of colour. It was not so much the distinctive colour but that it 'meant' something. To observe the meaning of race from a socioeconomic perspective is to understand it in a different way. McIntosh (1990) explores racism in terms of white privilege, and states:

I was taught to see racism only in individual acts of meanness, not in invisible systems conferring dominance in my group.

(p. 31)
A colleague Carol Mullen recently published an article in our Among Teachers journal concerning white preservice teachers and their journey to become multicultural educators. She was experimenting with ‘whiteness’ in a multicultural education that would work for all students. She had her students “try on” a black ethnic identity to articulate potential meanings. This perspective is interesting. My point is that there are different ways to view racism and viewing it as an issue of space would be one worth pursuing.

Another phenomenon related to alienation worthy of further study in the context of home is gang membership. This type of identity and its significance to home can be socially dangerous. As my mentors Dr. Connelly and Dr. Kilbourn pointed out in my proposal meeting, this phenomenon is connected to a sense of ‘at home’ but in a negative almost criminal sense and can create social outcasts. This sense of home can be socially destructive.

Mortality

In my thesaurus among the nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs there were 12 categories for the term ‘life’ and 36 for the term ‘death’.

Death. A paradox.
It separates and disconnects and bonds and connects.
It compels to preserve and reclaim.

Memories of childhood steeped in cultural experience.

Consciousness of mortality.
Embodied and abstract.


Urgency to immortalize.

Death awakens culture. Stories revived and relived.
Harmony.
(DeCarion 1994 p. 27)
The thesis process from its inception has created an interest in mortality that to some is disturbing. It is not unusual for one to become aware of this phenomenon as one approaches middle age. Psychologist Robert N. Butler suggests that the "spontaneous reminiscence or 'life review' is a universal feature of old age, one that is prompted by a person's recognition of impending death and the dissolution of the self" (In Langness and Frank, 1981, p. 103). Women feminist writers like Carol Heilbrun (1997) write about the significance of turning fifty and celebrating it as a right of passage. She decided not to choose a suicidal death at seventy. "I find it powerfully reassuring now to think of life as 'borrowed time'. Each day one can say to oneself: I can always die; do I choose death or life? I daily choose life the more earnestly because it is a choice" (ibid., p. 10). Thoughts of mortality evoke a passion for the mysterious, the unknown. It requires attention. To speak of death in any context is to speak of the unspeakable. As he reread my prologue Dr. Connelly questioned my preoccupation with death. "I'm older than you and you think about these things. I've not felt compelled to write what you've written. So why are you writing about this when you're still young?" In my opinion I believe women have more of an awareness of life cycles because of the menopausal physiological changes that take place in our bodies. They are like the smooth barks of young trees that become rough and scaly as they age warning us of change and passing time. At fifty four I was flattered to be referred to as young. But to answer his question the writing of the thesis had its seed in my life history. Separation and loss are themes in the narrative of a (re) search for home. They in a sense connote death. There is also the desire to be somewhere safe and comfortable if you know you are going to die or want to die. I want to be home and feel 'at home'.

And death occurs in other ways than the flesh. The slow social death of my mother has been a strong and significant influence. There is the death of notions, dreams, and community. I experienced this in the closing of a local restaurant. For years a loyal group of townspeople would gather at opening time (6 AM) to have coffee, a bite to eat, and a bit of gossip, news and weather before going about their chores. It was a ritual. They sat at the same tables, same chairs, same menu. This all ended with the closing of the restaurant. Even after new owners took over it was not the same. The group was not to be seen together again.
Notions of mortality have their place among the genres of the autobiographical novel or memoir. One cannot write of living a life without thinking about one's own or another's mortality.

**A Spiritual Component**

Home has a strong spiritual component. This has been previously expressed in the 'spirit' of spaces. I am curious about the role religion plays. It certainly provides another group and another space for one to relate to the sentiment of 'at home'. Religion for many identify who they are. Religious groups historically provide concrete and spiritual support to those in need particularly associated with the phenomenon of moving. A religious group can provide a comfort to an individual or collective that experiences this traumatic psychological and special shock. It makes the transition easier to deal with in terms of leaving home and creating a new space.

Religious holidays are significant in that they gather and celebrate family and friends. I'm not so sure how this plays out in a secular world. I would think that it would carry an existential ideology. One must choose...

[to] create values, and indeed create himself, by choosing the kind of person he is moment by moment, year by year. His essence, that which he 'really' is, turns out to be the identity he defines for himself as he lives. (Greene, 1967)

In this context a secular spiritualism takes on a different dimension. Holidays and celebrations and the other facets of religious groups are not collective or organised or historically written. The history is missing yet the essence of home in spirituality are the holidays and gatherings.

What brings us together with people is not that we live near each other, but that we share the same timetable: the same work hours, the same religious observances, the same habits and customs. That is why we are more and more aware of time, and of the rhythm of the community. It is our sense of time, our sense of ritual, which in the long run creates our sense of place, and of community. (Jackson, 1994, p. 160)
Traditional family gatherings existed among the Spencer and DeCarion/Bofill clans during holiday seasons. Most represented religious observations such as Christmas, Easter, Three King’s Day, and Thanksgiving. Birthdays, anniversaries, and other celebrations included family and friends. One aspect of my family and I know from experience is the same in the Spencer tradition that I am proud of and was always comfortable with was inviting people who had no place to go during these special times. There was always extra space and food at the table.

The Brockway tradition was unique and compatible with his reclusive lifestyle. His motives for not participating in family celebrations are only speculative. The following excerpt is from an email October of 1997 from his nephew Doug. This issue was one of many that I never had the opportunity to discuss with Earle directly because of his untimely death.

Earle used to spend Thanksgiving with my father and quite often Clayton and myself when we were younger, say up through the mid ’70s. Then for a period neither Clayton nor myself were around until about ‘81 or so. I think Earle stayed home except on maybe two or three occasions over the years. I remember a couple of times when he went over to people’s houses who invited (insisted) him over. For the past 15 years or so Clay or I would always bring him a plate of food and spend time with him but he didn’t want to come over and we didn’t press it. He didn’t even want to go down to the houseboat in the creek where Clay was staying. He always said he had to keep working.

How do we analyse and interpret this message? Was Earle not ‘at home’ at home? I reviewed my transcriptions and field notes. (Tape transcription, June 20, 1995)

I also sent an email to a neighbour regarding Earle’s religious habits since I never had the opportunity to ask him myself.

Yes earl was religious but he felt that it was too important to work on the boats than go to church. (email April 4, 1998)
On a more personal note I have become interested in the rhetoric of secular prayer and its connection to sentiments of ‘at home’. May Sarton (1977) quotes Simone Weil’s “absolute attention is prayer”.

I have used the sentence often in talking about poetry to students, to suggest that if one looks long enough at almost anything, looks with absolute attention at a flower, a stone, the bark of a tree, grass, snow, a cloud, something like a revelation takes place. Something is ‘given,’ and perhaps that something is always a reality outside the self. We are aware of God or some other deity only when we cease to be aware of ourselves, not in the negative sense of denying the self, but in the sense of losing self in admiration and joy. (Sarton, 1977, p. 99)

**Dew Points**

I must make this short comment on my (re)reading of Dewey’s writing. I introduce this section with the title ‘dew points’ because it refers to a saturation point and also part of his name. I have noticed how saturated his language is with political incorrectness. In one sense I find this refreshing. How else do we engage in meaningful discourse?

No one would question that a child in a slum tenement has a different experience from that of a child in a cultured home; that the country lad has a different kind of experience from the city boy, or a boy on the seashore one different from the lad who is brought up on inland prairies. (Dewey, 1938, p. 40)

Several thoughts come to mind as I reflect on this sentence. Dewey did not deal with euphemisms. Where do we see the term ‘slum tenement’ any more? And for him to contrast it to a ‘cultured home’ assumes that the child in the slum has no culture which I think today would be disputed. His play with the terms ‘lad’ in one context and ‘boy’ in another would also be subject to criticism. This vignette is a bit of play on my part at the end of one of the long and arduous days of writing.
Non-change Among Change: A Startling Epiphany

It is an ineffable passion that the title of this section evokes in its significance to the writing of this thesis. Since the fall of 1994 when I first conceived the title of my thesis it is the only notion that has never changed and my only notion that has no dialectic. It has been the continuity and root among the discontinuous and the moving. Home: A Space Called Anywhere was, as I stated in the introduction, a theory unrealised. A space called anywhere has supplied the fragmentation among the flow. Anywhere is anywhere. There is no pattern or destination. It has put its mark on the text.

Conclusion

Someone told me that the best place to find fossils is among the exposed dirt and roots of a larger older tree that had been blown over. As I passed this immense mass of rocks and soil embedded in the gnarled and twisted roots that towered over me, I realized that this object I had just photographed did not contain any fossils. The treasure was more subtle. It contained a metaphor. It was my self-portrait. Uprooted.

(DeCarion, 1994, *The Music I See: Harmony of the Soul*, p. 40.)
Epilogue

The Nature of Narrative - The Narrative of Nature

The preceding page is a drawing of annual rings. There are 54. That is my present age. It took me almost two hours to create them free hand. I did this once before except that I started from the outside in. I enclosed myself in the bark preventing growth, stopping the formation of more rings. The bark, though, is the tree's protection from disease, insects and bad weather. When I presented this image to a class, one of the participants shuddered. She became emotional about the symbolism of the process. I too to this day am curious as to why I approached the drawing this way and the meaning of this representation.

Trees have always fascinated me. Looking, seeing their rings arouse passion. They tell and mean so much. Perhaps this explains my love for wood. To me they are symbolic of nature’s narrative and narrative’s nature. They not only speak for themselves but they also speak for all the flora and fauna of the planet. And that is the purpose of this discourse. It is to explore the time identity, adaptation, continuity and discontinuity hidden in the dark and light bands, the soul of this living organism.

Their collective concentricity link the historical fragments and identities of the narrator and author. Their individual spheres represent an internal intimate personal and solitary nature true to the inquiring narrativist. The dark and the light are reflective, looking back and looking forward. Each tells of the experience of the year. What were the seasons like? Was I hungry or thirsty? Did my leaves present their usual show or were they dull and unappealing to the thousands traversing country roads to be aesthetically moved. Will someone carve their initials into my life line and end it? Or strip my skin reconstructing my narrative?

As the tree adapts so do I. This life experience, this educative experience of moving or leaving a home space is one that not only I but others also experience. It is a learning process that is continuous as our spaces change, one that we are constantly learning to cope with. The scope of a concept of home has no boundary or time. Nor does this study.
A Return to Imaginary History

Imaginary history is some aspect of history that never happened. It asks ‘what if’?

What if my students’ learning were enhanced by my research?

What if the world were a better place to live as a result of my research?
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Middle School

Anthony Rawlings and Peter Bloch. New York: Plus Ultra Educational
Publishers, Inc.

Brown and Company.


Photographs and Illustrations

xxvi  The Spencer Meadow
xxvii The DeCarion House
xxviii The Brockway House
xxix  The Spencer House

Chapter 1
   p.2 - A Moving Icon.
   p.5 - Mother 1993.
   p. 6, 7, 8 - Letter from mother.

Chapter 2
   p. 21 - Deirdre and Hammerhead Shark - This is an old treasured self portrait. I was in awe of this huge animal and wanted everyone to think I caught it. I was about 12 and a real ‘dock rat’. The docks in Freeport, Long Island were home.
   p. 25 - Deirdre and Earle - This is one of my favorite photos because Earle kept anything of value in the trunks of derelict cars scattered about on his land. After his death they found the deed to his house in one of the trunks.

Chapter 3
   p. 31 - Carcass of skunk.
   p. 37 - Earle with boat model.
   p. 42 - Earle in backyard.
   p. 49 - From the Spencer archives. According to June’s recollection, it’s her Grandmother Coulter’s family and neighbours waiting for the train to go to the Connecticut River for a cruise.
   p.54, 55, 56, 57 - Letter from my mother.
   p. 59 - This is one of two photos that belonged to my father taken in his youth. He is with his sister, my aunt, whom I never knew.
   p. 64 - Deirdre singing on Eroica.
   p. 66 - Mother 1997.
   p. 69 - Mother laughing.
   p. 73 - Deirdre’s hands.
   p. 83 - This was Norm’s favorite photograph from his ‘assignment’. It appeared in living color.
   p. 84 - Deirdre, June and Ann - This was June’s favorite from her ‘assignment’.
   p. 94 - Self Portrait, circa 1964?
   p. 96 - Map.
   p. 97 - Map.
Chapter 4
p. 99 - Deirdre with Earle’s oak tree the day after his funeral.
p. 104 - Mother on Eroica cooling off.
p. 112 - This is the second of two photos of my father.
p. 113 - Neville.
p. 115 - Deirdre and Earle having lunch ‘at home’.
p. 118 - Earle’s and his father’s models.
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p. 126 - Earle’s hands.
p. 139 - Earle’s coffin.

Chapter 5
p. 151 - June in one of her work spaces. One of my favorites.
p. 154 - Norm at his drill press in his workspace.
p. 161 - My grandmother’s hairpin box.
p. 164 - A friambra, the Puerto Rican version of a lunch box.

Chapter 6
p. 171 - My grandmother, Mama, circa 1970’s.
p. 175 - Map.
p. 177 - Aunt Titi at the ‘sugar shack’ in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico.
p. 182 - Aunt Nina on the beach on Grass Island, Guilford, Ct.
p. 185 - My mother at my father’s grave in Charlotte, N.C.

Chapter 7
p. 191 - The Meadow Ghetto.
p. 196 - This bulldozer is for Dr. Connelly, reminiscent of our ‘debates’ concerning (over) development.
p. 200 - This photo of Earle was taken in the early ’70s. It is one of my favorite portraits.
p. 207 - Father with hose at 3 Van Buren Street.
p. 211 - Even the town dump can be home to some.

Chapter 8
p. 222 - Locker bank in a middle school.
p. 224 - Familiar scene.
p. 236 - There is story with this oil painting. This was my classroom in an egg crate inner city middle school with a population of almost 1000 students. The room was a former custodial closet. The significance of the image is the coloring. The room was depressingly dark with gray being the dominant color. I did the painting from memory and must have been wishing for something else. Also notice that there is no chair at my desk. I can’t recall if this was intentional. This was a difficult year for me. Lots of

Chapter 9
  p. 243 - Trees on Highway 401, Ontario, Canada. Drawn from memory.
  p. 249 - Sign on door of Kountry Kitchen after it abruptly closed.
  p. 252 - Another set of trees drawn from memory on the 401, Ontario, Canada.

Chapter 10
  p. 264 - Photogram.
  p. 268 - My mother’s 87th (August 1998) birthday in her ‘home’. I used to take her to my sister’s for her birthdays but as the dementia advanced she became disoriented and agitated. During this celebration she couldn’t remember eating the cake and accused me of not giving her any.
  p. 271 - This photograph of my mother was taken when she was being overly medicated resulting in mood swings and a general solemn and unhappy demeanor, circa 1984?

Chapter 11
  p. 294 - Going Home, where ever that is.
  p. 295 - My annual rings.
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UMI
This historiography was prepared individually for the De Carion surname on November 11, 1974 at the request of

Mrs. William W. De Carion
4533 Kavanaugh Drive
Charlotte, N Carolina 28205

The coat of arms illustrated left was drawn by a heraldic artist based upon information about the De Carion surname and its association with heraldry. In the language of the ancient heralds, the arms are described as follows:

"Quartered: 1st, or; the letter "D" sa.; 2nd and 3rd, az.; two wings conjoined prr.; 4th, sa.; a fess or. Charged with a small inner shield az."

The De Carion arms is translated:

Divided into quarters: 1st quarter, gold background; a black initial "D". 2nd and 3rd quarters, blue background; 2 natural wings joined together. 4th quarter, black background; a gold horiz. band. A small blue inner shield placed over all.

Wings symbolize quickness, freedom and protection. Seven vivid colors were chosen for use on shields of armor clad knights to easily identify them at a distance. The heraldic colors gold, silver, purple, blue, green, black, and red were preserved on colorless drawings by dot and line symbols. The De Carion coat of arms incorporated blue. The color blue represents loyalty and or splendor.

Information available indicates that in 1973 there were less than 50 households in the U. S. with the old and distinguished De Carion name. In comparison, some family names represent over 400,000 households in the United States.

This report does not represent individual lineage of the De Carion family tree and no genealogical representation is intended or implied.
**WORTHINGTON SOUTHEAST REGION AIR COMPRESSOR DISTRIBUTOR SALES SCHOOL**

**HOLIDAY INN - AIRPORT**
Atlanta, Ga.
March 31-April 1, 1969

**DETAILED AGENDA**

**Tuesday, April 1, 1969**
Convene 8:30 A.M.

**SUBJECT**
Type YC, Water Cooled Compressor Packaged Units, Sales Tools

Coffee Break

Type R
Questions & Answers

**SPEAKER(S)**
J. Shearer/W. Jaros

A. C. Holder/H. VanOrmer

**12:00 Noon - LUNCH**

Convene 1:00 P.M.

The Air Compressor Market - And Selling In It
Profit Opportunities with the Worthington Air Compressor Franchise
Why Rent Air Compressors

What a Distributor Must do to be Successful

What a Service Department Does to Improve Sales

Stand Tall - Hold Fast - And be Yourself

Break

Cooperation - The Distributor and the Worthington Sales Office
Distributor Training at the Local Level
A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words
Use of Worthington Sales Promotion Material to Improve Sales Effectiveness

Questions & Answers

Wrap-Up

**SPEAKER(S)**
J. Shaffer
E. M. Richman
E. Scott - Air Components and Equip. Co.
E. H. Lindsay - Pye Barker Supply Co.
L. Pratt - Carlos well Supply Co.
W. DeCarion - Supply Specialties, Inc.
T. G. Strong
J. C. Porter
E. Fry
M. Biesc
J. Shaffer/E. Richman
I AM THE SALES MAN — THAT GRAND DIVINE ETERNAL SALES MAN
LIFE ITSELF AM I.

WITH THE AID OF OUR ART ALL LIFE AND INDUSTRY PULSES
COMPUTERS, THE PROMOTORS, THE MARQUEE OF ALL INDUSTRY'S
ANNUAL REPORT.

WITH THE PRECISION OF THE SKILLED SURGEON, WE SET THE
STAGE;

FOR HOW MANY ACTS OUR PROFESSION BEARS HAS NO EQUATION
THE ELENTION IN VICTORY AND THE Sting IN DEFEAT.

WE ARE TRADERS IN EVERY HUMAN EMOTION, CREATING THE
LAUGH — AND AT TIMES THE TEAR.

WE BEAR THE INSCRIBIA "THE PEDDLER", BUT CALL US WHAT
YOU WILL, OUR PROFESSION IS A PROUD ONE

FOR WE CREATE THAT STREAM FROM WHAT ALL LIFE AND IN-
DUSTRY MOVES.

YES, I AM THE SALES MAN — THAT GRAND DIVINE ETERNAL
SALES MAN
LIFE ITSELF AM I!

By BILL DECARION
SUPPLY SPECIALTIES
CHARLOTTE, N. C.
HIGH POINT COLLEGE
HIGH POINT, N. C.

Office of
THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

June 7, 1963

Miss Deirdre DeCarrion
3 Van Buren Street
Freeport, New York

Dear Dee Dee:

The Executive Committee of the Faculty will meet Monday, June 17, at 1:30 P.M. to hear charges to be brought against you.

If you would like to be present, please be in my office by 1:15 P.M. If you are unable to be present, and would like to write a letter to be read for you by the Chairman of the Committee, Dr. Wendell M. Patton, President, he will be pleased to do so.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Jesse L. Taylor
Dean of Student Personnel
MISS D-EIRE DE CARION
3 Van Buren Street
Freeport, Long Island
New York

Dear Miss DeCarion:

This is to inform you officially of the action taken by the Executive Committee of High Point College at their meeting of June 17, 1963, in which theft of articles from the Kroger Grocery Store in College Village was discussed.

The decision of the Executive Committee was that you should be suspended from High Point College indefinitely.

Sincerely yours,

J. Fryhover, Secretary
Executive Committee

Florida.
To The President
High Point College
High Point, N.C.

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your reply of January 27th, stating the decision of High Point College relative to our daughter Beedee.

Perhaps we have been passive in our thinking about Beedee's situation until this late date. My dwelling and questioning of both Beedee and my wife, coupled with complete digestion and analysis of correspondence exchange, telephone conversations, etc; we might say after careful consideration of certain facts, has triggered itself, I believe, into a situation of unnecessary mammoth proportions.

The phrase "theft of articles from Kroger Grocery Store" was stated in your July 25th letter, signed by J. Pfyhauer, Secretary, Executive Committee.

Dr. Patten, there was no "Theft" at all from Kroger store. An admitted "intent" was honestly and frankly admitted. The merchandise was paid for within the confines of said store.

Beedee this last summer applied for admission to Florida State University. A rejection followed. A telephone call ensued to Dean Taylor requesting contents of a letter written to this University by Dean Taylor. From my understanding, there was a flat refusal to divulge any contents of this correspondence. I was not aware of this until very recently.

Transcripts and letter writing to other universities in addition to grades form an image of the party applying. A letter or remark, no matter how delicately shaded, with reference to "theft" would have far reaching implications, bordering on slander and libelous.

Sincerely, perhaps it was a grave error on my part to shunt this unfortunate incident. I rather thought a severe reprimand and some penalty would evolve, clearing this stigma once and for all. We cannot, at this writing, deduce that our thinking was correct.

Dr. Patten, I must come to the point. The gist of this letter obviates any need for further words. Beedee's future college matriculation, while awaiting a reply transcript or letter from another university, has given rise to grave doubt and mental anguish as to its contents by all of us. I do hope that our feelings are unjustified.
I would most sincerely request a copy of any transcript or letter that has emanated from High Point to this day, in addition to any future transcripts or letter to other colleges.

We understand there might be a slight charge for this service, for which we will gladly pay.

Thank you for your kind consideration,

Sincerely,

Wm. De Carion
Dr. Patton, President
High Point College
High Point, N.C.

Dear Dr. Patton:

Thank you for your letter of February 26th, replying to ours of the 17th.

Frankly, Dr. Patton, "no holds barred", I am utterly disappointed with this entire affair. I believe mature judgement has surrendered to either discrimination or a personality clash (Dean Taylor

High Point states "It is possible that an admission officer may prod further information regarding Disciplinary Suspension", and High Point would "do their best to protect the student, etc."). How is it possible to shade "theft" as it is mentioned in your letter of July 27th by your Executive Committee Secretary, J. Fryhover? Since there was no "theft" what would High Point give as an explanation to "Disciplinary Suspension". This would then nullify both, if I reason correctly.

Why was Joyce McIlvaine only suspended and then permitted to attend night school? (Note): This young lady we know personally and we are very fond of Joyce.

Dean Taylor threatened to have Deedee arrested when she appeared on campus. How ludicrous!

I have discussed this entire matter with my attorney. I am making a final plea to your Executive Committee to review your decisions with meticulous care. It appears by your stand, that institution of legal action is my only way out to clear your charge of theft and disciplinary action. This is most repulsive to my entire family.

It is your decision, and we most reverently hope this letter will successfully conclude further correspondence.

Thank you.

William W. De Carion
DeCarion, Dalila

10/19/90

BP: 136/78 R: 12 P: 76 Weight: 107 lbs.

S: Mrs. DeCarion is a 79 yow who lived alone until the past 2 years when she lived with a daughter and apparently lifestyle had changed dramatically. She has decreasing short term memory and occasional dizzy spells without syncope, chest pain or palpitations. She is a delightful lady, articulate, jovial with previous histories of hypertension, currently treated with Reserpine .25 mgs. every other day. She had previously been on Trental 400 mgs. which she is not taking currently. Increased sinus symptoms with postnasal drip, intermittent cough, treated with Dimetapp at home, some ear pressure occasionally. No intermittent claudication, insomnia or night cramps.

Past Medical History: Allergies: Hay fever only with eye symptoms. Operations: None. GYN: G: 2 P: 2 AB: 0. Tetanus: Unknown. Right handed. Wears seatbelts. Had measles, unsure of mumps or chicken pox, no rheumatic fever or scarlet fever. She was born in Puerto Rico. Family History: Father died in his 70's of an MI with a stroke, mother died in her 80's in Puerto Rico, dying in her sleep. Two brothers and two sisters who are alive and well. No family history of diabetes mellitus, cancer, stroke, gallbladder disease, hypercholesterolemia, thyroid or kidney disorder. Social History: Widowed, non-smoker, has about 2 cups of coffee daily and has a glass of wine before dinner most days. She was a housewife and was unaware of any previous toxin or solvent exposure. ROS: Dizziness is usually associated with sinus congestion, has some right neck spasms. No SOB with exertion. Occasional palpitations are not accompanied by any other symptoms and do not limit activity in any way. Previous trauma with fractured right tibia and fibula. Bowel movements have been normal, years ago had blood in the stool but none recently.

O: General alert woman, identifies date as 10/18/90, serial 7's (100, 93, 86, 79, 72), could not identify President but then later identified Bush as Governor of Connecticut. Patient in no acute distress. EOM's intact without nystagmus. Bilateral cataracts are present obscuring fundus. Pharynx: No inflammation. Neck: No adenopathy, carotid bruit or thyromegaly. Lung fields are free of rales, rhonchi and rubs. Slight upper thoracic kyphosis. No spinal tenderness to percussion. Breasts are atrophic with minimal fibrocystic changes. Heart: Regular rhythm without ectopics. No murmurs, gallops or cardiomegaly. Abdomen: Scaphoid, bowel sounds are intact, no hepatosplénomegaly, rebound, tenderness or guarding. Pelvic: Atrophic external genitalia. Pelvic attempted but could not get good visualization of vault and blind pap was taken. Uterus was atrophic by manual exam. Rectal: Negative occult blood, one small hemorrhoid is noted. Intact pin in lower extremities, leg lifts to 80 degrees, Babinski's toe flexion, 1+ knee and upper DTR's, 1+ ankle jerk. Hand grasp was equal. Finger/nose intact. Lab shows mildly elevated cholesterol at 222. EKG has a sinus rhythm, slight left axis deviation, non-specific STT wave changes.
DECARION, Dalila

10/19/90 (continued)

Impression:
1) Data Base.
2) Allergic rhinitis.
3) Previous history of hypertension.
4) Arteriosclerotic heart disease.
5) Hypercholesterolemia.
6) Mild forgetfulness.

Plan:
Mrs. DeCarion is a delightful woman who has had decreased recent memory but has intact ability to calculate and is a pleasant person who can manage most of her activities independently but needs a safe environment. She would be a contributing and delightful addition to any rest home type environment. She has no evidence of congestive heart failure, cardiac arrhythmias and her adequate blood pressure control—and chronic sinusitis would warrant a trial off Reserpine. Will D/C Reserpine and patient will be returning for cerumen lavage.

R. Kahrimanis, M.D.

10/23/90

S: Returns for cerumen lavage after Debrox treatments and both ears were lavaged without difficulty. No evidence of otitis externa. Repeat blood pressure was 138/80 and off Reserpine. Have suggested potential mammogram and chest x-ray.

R. Kahrimanis, M.D.
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